LAND WEST OF 4 COATES DROVE, ISLEHAM, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

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Abstract

From the 20th to 30th of October 2020 Britannia Archaeology Ltd (BA) undertook an archaeological evaluation at Land West of 4 Coates Drove, Isleham (TL 6440 7470) on behalf of TLC Groundwork & Construction Ltd. The archaeological work was undertaken as a condition of planning application 18/01736/OUM in advance of the construction of 10 houses and associated works (Fig. 1).

The site had a high potential for Roman period activity; particularly the continuation of the Roman agricultural activity previously identified on several sites adjacent to the development site. There was a moderate-high potential for Saxon, medieval, and post-medieval finds and features, again particularly a continuation of the features from these periods identified adjacent to the site. The potential for prehistoric remains was moderate given the presence of a small number of features from this period identified adjacent to the site.

The evaluation successfully revealed 3 broad phases of occupation at the site.

Phase 1 relates to the prehistoric activity at the site. This is focused on trench 1. Given that the foci of prehistoric activity in the surrounding area returned by the CHER search is between 700m and 1 km away, this phase likely represents a form of minimal peripheral activity possibly temporary in nature.

Phase 2 relates to the period of Roman occupation that was also seen in the excavations directly adjacent to the site at 32 – 34 Church Lane, Isleham. The excavation revealed that the Roman phases appears to have ceased in the late 2nd century which can be also seen in the current evaluation. The features in this phase represent an extension of those seen in the adjacent excavations and are clearly domestic in nature. The nature of this activity is difficult to ascertain within the limited scope of archaeological evaluation; it is however likely that it represents peripheral domestic activity to a concentrated area of occupation during this period nearby.

The final phase of activity relates to the medieval period, specifically the 12th – 15th century. The finds assemblage represents a continuation of the medieval features that were present in the adjacent excavations with the assemblage representing dumped household waste from nearby domestic occupation. No structural features were

encountered in the evaluation, so it is likely that the concentration of this activity is located further to the south or east closer to the current village's core.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

From the 20th to 30th of October 2020 Britannia Archaeology Ltd (BA) undertook an archaeological evaluation at Land West of 4 Coates Drove, Isleham (TL 6440 7470) on behalf of TLC Groundwork & Construction Ltd. The archaeological work was undertaken as a condition of planning application 18/01736/OUM in advance of the construction of 10 houses and associated works (Fig. 1).

The evaluation was undertaken in response to a design brief issued by Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Team (CHET) (Gdaniec, K. 29th June 2020) which required a programme of linear trial trenching to sample 4% of the area threatened by the development. The trenching comprised three trenches measuring 30.00m x 1.80m and a single trench measuring 20.00m x 1.80m (Fig. 4).

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION (Fig. 1)

The site was situated within the northern outskirts of the village of Isleham, Cambridgeshire, which is located approximately 9km south-east of the cathedral city of Ely. The site comprised a single parcel of land, which was in use as agricultural land, to the east and north of modern housing developments (Fig. 1). Isleham is located on a fen island at the edge of the southeast Cambridgeshire Fen.

2.1 Site Geology

The underlying bedrock geology is described as Zig Zag Chalk Formation - Chalk. This Sedimentary Bedrock was formed approximately 94 to 101 million years ago in the Cretaceous Period when the local environment was previously dominated by warm chalk seas (BGS, 2021).

No superficial deposits have been recorded in this area at the time of writing this document.

3.0 PLANNING POLICIES

The archaeological investigation was carried out on the recommendation of the local planning authority, following guidance laid down by the *National Planning and Policy Framework* (NPPF, DCLD 2019). The relevant local planning policy is the *East Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2015).*

4.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND (Figs. 2 & 3)

The following archaeological background draws on the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (CHER) (1km search centred on the site), English Heritage PastScape (www.pastscape.org.uk), and the Archaeological Data Service (www.ads.ahds.ac.uk) (ADS) (Fig. 2 and 3).

4.1 Significant Records

Archaeological investigation in the field immediately adjacent to the west side of the site revealed evidence of multi-period activity (ECB4707, ECB4610, MCB20915, MCB24948). The earliest activity was Bronze Age – Early Iron Age and represented by two pits near the southern boundary. Two undated ring ditches were also present in the same area and were likely contemporary. Roman activity was found to be the predominant period represented on the site. The activity took the form of an intensive phase of agricultural activity represented primarily by two large enclosures with associated ditches and pits of early Roman date. A later Roman phase represented a change in use of the site with a series of ditches being interpreted as likely strip quarrying activity. By the medieval period the activity present was greatly reduced, and a quarry pit from this period likely represents an increased demand for building material due to the rise in the number of buildings being constructed following the expansion of Isleham Priory (07528). A large northeast-southwest ditch running the length of the site represented the post-medieval activity and was likely a field boundary separating two plots which was later redefined as a modern ditch.

Further excavations adjacent to the southern site boundary also identified evidence of Roman agricultural activity (ECB5260, MCB24946). It is deemed likely that this activity is a continuation of the Roman agricultural features from the above site. In addition, Saxon-early medieval field boundaries with connected animal enclosures were also identified. Later medieval activity saw a redefining of the site replacing the earlier field boundaries with an east-west aligned trackway in the southern area of the site. To the north of this trackway a more complex arrangement of ditches formed a series of irregular enclosures.

An evaluation adjacent to the south of ECB5260, and just c.70m south of the site, revealed residual Romano-British finds, comprising re-used ceramic building material which included floor tile, roof tile, box tile and tesserae suggesting the presence of substantial

Roman activity and occupation nearby (ECB4634). It is likely this represents a continuation of the Roman activity present immediately adjacent to this site. In addition, ditches of Saxon date were also present.

4.2 Prehistoric

Relevant records from the prehistoric period include a Mesoltihic find scatter (10883) located on the periphery of the search area, west of the site. The finds scatter included tranchet axes as well as various flint flakes, scrapers and arrowheads. There is evidence for Early Bronze Age settlement remains at Prickwillow Road (11896) located 620m to the north west of the site. An evaluation along the route of the Ely to Isleham pipeline discovered a concentration of features at this location. These comprised a ditch, post holes, a pit with a cow burial and numerous flints. Further evidence for Bronze Age settlement activity was recorded in subsequent excavations at the site including a cluster of pits and post-holes located in a slight natural depression.

4.3 Romano-British

An evaluation just c.70m south of the site revealed residual Romano-British finds, comprising re-used ceramic building material which included floor tile, roof tile, box tile and tesserae suggesting the presence of substantial Roman activity and occupation nearby (ECB4634). Roman metal objects (07589) discovered 1km to the west of the site. The objects recovered included 5 lead fishing weights, 2 bronze shoe buckles, 1 thimble, a bronze object, a fragment from the top of a bronze vase. Further evidence of Roman activity can be seen in the south west where a Roman brooch (10863) and saddle quern (10864) were discovered. These finds were located 700m from the site.

4.4 Saxon and Medieval

The medieval period accounts for the majority of the records retuned. The most significant are those of earthworks to the north of Isleham Priory (07528) as well as the scheduled remains of Isleham priory itself located c.220m southwest of the site (DCB221, 27101). The only standing priory building remaining is the Chapel of St Margaret of Antioch (a Grade I Listed Building, (48821) to the north of which lie the buried foundations of the conventual buildings and the earthwork remains of the associated agricultural complex

(07528). The priory is thought to have been founded around AD 1100 however by 1440, the priory was granted to Pembroke College, Cambridge, and after the Reformation the chapel was converted into a barn. The site lies to the north of Saint Andrews church (MCB9178). Located approximately 250m to the south the church is of Norman design with possible Anglo-Saxon origins. Further medieval records of note include MCB19750 and MCB19712, both located within a 100, of the site. MCB19750 refers to sherds of Early Medieval Sandy ware recovered from a test pit located on Pound Lane, while MCB19712 refers to further medieval pottery recovered from a test pit at 17 Church Lane.

4.5 Post-medieval and Modern

Development in the post medieval period is dominated by the construction of additional buildings in the area of the medieval village core and evidence of agricultural activity represented by field boundaries. The majority of the post-medieval records within the search radius are of listed buildings none of which were located within 100m of the site.

4.6 Archaeological Potential

Given the above, there was a **high** potential for Roman period activity; particularly the continuation of the Roman agricultural activity previously identified on several sites adjacent to the development site. There was a **moderate-high** potential for Saxon, medieval, and post-medieval finds and features, again particularly a continuation of the features from these periods identified adjacent to the site. The potential for prehistoric remains was **moderate** given the presence of a small number of features from this period identified adjacent to the site.

No previous archaeological field work has been undertaken on this part of the site.

5.0 PROJECT AIMS

The CHET brief stated that the evaluation should aim to determine, the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains liable to be threatened by the proposed development. An adequate representative sample of all areas where archaeological remains were potentially threatened was studied (Gdaniec, K. 2020, Brief, Section 3.1).

All aspects of the trial trenching will be undertaken in accordance with the *CIfA Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation*, 2020 and *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*, 2003.

6.0 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Research objectives for the project are in line with those laid out in *Research and Archaeology Revisited: a revised framework for the East of England,* East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 24 (Medlycott, 2011).

Specific objectives outlined in the brief (section 3.4) stated that a particular importance be placed on:

- the presence or absence of a palaeosol and old land surface soils/deposits
- the character of deposits and their contents within negative features
- palaeochannels
- site formation processes

7.0 FIELDWORK METHODOLOGY

The CHET brief required a programme of linear trial trenching to sample 4% of the site ahead of the construction of houses. This was achieved by excavating three trenches measuring 30.00m x 1.80m and a single trench measuring 20.00m x 1.80m.

The evaluation was undertaken in accordance with *CIfA Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations, 2020* and *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England, 2020.*

A 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket was used to machine down to the first archaeological horizon, thereafter all excavation work was undertaken by hand.

The trenches characterised the full archaeological sequence down to the natural deposits. In the interests of reproduction of the results, a single context planning methodology was used.

The archaeology was recorded using pro-forma record sheets, drawn plans and section drawings and appropriate photographs were taken.

8.0 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS (Fig. 5 - 14)

A professional metal detectorist was used to scan the trenches locations prior and post excavation including the upcast spoil heaps. Bucket sampling was undertaken whereby a total of 90 litres of spoil from the topsoil was hand sorted at 3 points along each trench. Only demonstrably modern finds were present which were not retained. Similarly, all stratigraphic layers were scanned for metal and non-metal finds and only finds of demonstrably modern date were recovered.

Full finds reports are at Appendix 3.

8.1 Trench 1 (Fig.5 - 7)

Trench 1 was located in the southern area of the site on a NE-SW orientation and measured 30.00m x 1.80m. It contained a total of 14 archaeological features.

Gully **1003** (2.30m+ x 0.55m x 0.07m) was linear in plan with moderately sloping sides and a concave rounded base. It was located at the SW end of the trench on a NE-SW orientation. It contained single fill **1004** which was comprised of mid brownish grey, compact, silty sand. A single pottery sherd (6g) dated to the 12th – 14th century was recovered from fill **1004**.

Gully **1005** (1.80m+ x 0.66m x 0.10m) was linear in plan with moderately sloping shallow sides and a concave rounded base. It was located at the SW end of the trench on an E-W orientation. It contained single fill **1006** which was comprised of mid brownish grey, compact, silty chalk. No finds were present within fill **1006**.

Gully **1007** (1.80m+ x 0.70m x 0.19m) was linear in plan, with moderately sloping shallow sides and a concave rounded base. It was located at the SW end of the trench on an E-W orientation. It contained single fill **1008** which was comprised of mid whitish grey, compact silty chalk. No finds were present within fill **1008.**

Ditch **1009** (1.85m+ x 0.40m x 0.11m) was linear in plan with moderately sloping shallow sides and a concave base. It was located at the SW end of the trench on an E-W orientation. It contained single fill **1010** which was comprised of mid brownish grey,

compact, silty chalk with frequent inclusions of small-medium sized chalk nodules. Two sherds of 12th -14th century pottery were recovered from fill **1010**.

Ditch **1012** (1.80m+ x 1.05m x 0.15m) was linear in plan, with moderately sloping shallow sides and a concave rounded base. It was located in the centre end of the trench on an E-W orientation. It contained single fill **1011** which was comprised of mid brownish grey, firm, silty chalk. A single pottery sherd (1g) dated to the 1st – 2nd century was recovered from fill **1011**. Despite being very abraded it has been identified as La Graufesenque samian ware, (Fawcett, 2021, this report).

Ditch **1015** (1.80m+ x 0.46m x 0.14m) was linear in plan with gently sloping sides and a concave rounded base. It was located in the centre end of the trench on an E-W orientation. It contained single fill **1016** which was comprised of mid brownish grey, firm, silty chalk. No finds were present within fill **1016**.

Ditch **1017** (1.80m+ x 0.70m x 0.17m) was linear in plan with moderately sloping sides and a concave rounded base. It was located in the centre end of the trench on an E-W orientation. It contained single fill **1018** which was comprised of mid brownish grey, firm, silty chalk. No finds were present within fill **1018**.

Ditch terminus **1019** (1.40m+ x 0.58m x 0.22m) was linear in plan with steep sides and a flat base. It was located at the NE end of the trench on a NW-SE orientation. It contained single fill **1020** which was comprised of mid brownish grey, compact, silty chalk. No finds were present within fill **1020**.

Ditch **1022** (1.80m+ x 1.02m x 0.43m) was linear in plan with moderately sloping sides and a flat base. It was located at the NE end of the trench on a NW-SE orientation. It contained single fill **1021** which was comprised of light brownish grey, firm, chalky clay. Fill **1021** contained 24 sherds (71g) of pottery and a single fragment of CBM (1g). The pottery assemblage from this feature is made up from unsourced, locally produced coursewares and dated no later than the 2nd century (Fawcett, 2021, this report).

Ditch **1024** (1.80m+ x 1.92m x 0.42m) was linear in plan with moderately sloping shallow sides and a concave rounded base. It was located at the NE end of the trench on an E-W orientation. It contained single fill **1023** which was comprised of light brownish grey, firm, chalky clay with frequent inclusions of small-medium chalk nodules. Fill **1023** contained

35 sherds of pottery (207g), a single fragment of CBM (105g) and 70 fragments of animal bone (687g). The pottery is similar to that found in adjacent ditch **1022** and is made up of unsourced local coursewares, also with a date no later than the 2nd century. The CBM is of an equivalent date and is a Roman flat/brick or brick (Fawcett, 2021, this report). The animal bone assemblage from this feature included cattle, equid and mammal fragments. These included many examples of chopping and cutting leading to the conclusion that this is food production waste, (Curl, 2021, this report). A single sample was taken from the fill and processed for environmental analysis however only shells of non-marine molluscs were recovered from the flotation and residue, (Law, 2021, this report).

Pit **1026** (1.80m+ x 1.30m x 0.53m) was sub-circular in plan with moderately sloping sides and a concave rounded base and was located at the NE end of the trench. It contained single fill **1025** which was comprised of mid blueish grey, compact, silty chalk. No finds were present within fill **1025**.

Ditch **1028** (2.00m+ x 1.40m+ x 0.20m) was linear in plan with moderately sloping sides and a concave rounded base. It was located at the NE end of the trench on an E-W orientation. It contained single fill **1027** which was comprised of dark brownish grey, firm, silty chalk. A single sherd of E/M – LIA pottery was recovered from fill **1027**.

Gully **1030** (0.81m+ x 0.20m+ x 0.26m) was linear in plan with moderately sloping sides and a concave rounded base. It was located at the NE end of the trench on a N-S orientation. It contained single fill **1029** which was comprised of mid greyish brown, firm, silty chalk. No finds were present within fill **1029**.

Pit **1041** (1.80m+ 2.17m x 0.35m) was presumed sub-circular in plan as the edges of the feature extended beyond the trench. The feature had with moderately sloping sides, a concave rounded base and was located at the NE end of the trench. It cut ditches **1022A** and **1024**. It contained single fill **1040** which was comprised of mid greyish brown, compact, sandy clay with frequent inclusions of manganese and small chalk nodules. No finds were present within fill **1040**.

8.2 Trench 2 (Fig. 8 – 9)

Trench 2 was located in the eastern area of the site on a NW-SE orientation and measured 20.00m x 1.80m. It contained a total of 3 archaeological features.

Ditch **1042** (1.80m+ x 3.44m x 0.96m) was linear in plan with moderately sloping sides and a V-shaped concave base. It was located at the E end of the trench on a NW-SE orientation and cut gully **1047**. It also cut buried soil layer **1049**. It contained four fills. Primary fill **1043** was comprised of mid greyish brown, compact, sandy chalk which contained no finds. Secondary fill **1044** was comprised of mid whitish brown, firm, chalky silt. 17 sherds of 12th – 14th century pottery were recovered from this layer, (Fawcett, 2021 this report) however given the stratigraphic evidence it is likely that these sherds are residual in nature and potentially originally from buried archaeological features that were destroyed and the material redistributed through this fill. Tertiary fill **1045** was comprised of light greyish white, compact chalk and contained no finds. Quaternary Fill **1046** was comprised of light white, compacted, chalk and contained no finds. Compacted chalk **1046** appeared to form a rammed chalk surface possibly a trackway or path.

Gully **1047** (1.80m+ x 0.88m x 0.24m) was linear in plan with moderately sloping sides and a V-shaped concave base. It was located at the E end of the trench on a NW-SE orientation. It was cut by ditch **1042** and was sealed by buried soil **1049**. **1048** which was comprised of dark greyish brown, compact, silty sandy chalk and contained no finds.

Ditch **1031** (1.80m+ x 0.82m x 0.22m) was linear in plan with gently sloping sides and a flat base. It was located at the W end of the trench on a N-S orientation. It contained single fill **1032** which was comprised of mid brownish grey, firm, silty chalk with frequent inclusions of small chalk nodules. Two sherds of 12th – 15th century pottery were recovered from fill **1032**.

8.3 Trench 3 (Fig. 10 - 12)

Trench 3 was located in the northern area of the site on a N-S orientation and measured 30.00m x 1.80m. It contained a total of 9 archaeological features.

Pit **1060** (1.60m x 1.50m x 0.05m) was sub-rectangular in plan with moderately sloping shallow sides, a concave rounded base and was located at the N end of the trench. It contained single fill **1061** which was comprised of mid yellowish grey, soft, chalky silt which contained no finds.

Ditch **1062A** (4.00m+ x 1.20m x 0.32m) was linear in plan with moderately sloping sides and a V-shaped concave base. It was located at the centre of the trench on a NW-SE orientation and contained two fills. Primary fill **1078** was comprised of mid whitish grey, compact, silty chalk and contained no finds. Secondary fill **1063** was comprised of dark brownish grey, loose, sandy chalky silt. Finds recovered from fill **1063** included 8 sherds of pottery (77g) and 2 fragments of animal bone. The ceramic evidence has provided a date of mid-12th – 13th century (Fawcett. 2021, this report) while the animal bone consisted of cattle and sheep/goat (Curl. 2021, this report). A single sample was taken for environmental processing which returned a large amount of non-marine mollusc remains (Law. 2021. This Report).

Ditch **1062B** (4.00m+ x 0.35m+ x 0.25m) was linear in plan with moderately sloping sides and a concave rounded base. It was located at the N end of the trench on a NW-SE orientation and cut ditch **1065**. It contained single fill **1064** which was comprised of mid brownish grey, soft, sandy chalky silt. A further 5 sherds (35g) of mid-12th – 13th century pottery were recovered from fill **1064** as well as another 4 fragments of animal bone.

Ditch **1065** (1.30m+ x 1.11m x 0.10m) was linear in plan with moderately sloping shallow sides and a concave base. It was located in the centre of the trench on a NE-SW orientation and was cut by ditch **1062B**. It contained single fill **1066** which was comprised of mid brownish grey, firm, chalky silt. No finds were present within fill **1066**.

Ditch **1067A** (1.50m+ x 0.46m x 0.12m) was linear in plan with moderately sloping sides and a V-shaped concave base. It was located at the centre end of the trench on an E-W orientation and cut ditch 1062. It contained single fill **1068** which was comprised of dark brownish grey, loose chalky silt. No finds were present within fill **1068**.

Ditch **1067B** (1.50m+ x 0.50m+ x 0.20m) was linear in plan with moderately sloping sides and a V-shaped concave base. It was located at the S end of the trench on an E-W orientation and was cut by ditch **1070A**. It contained single fill **1069** which comprised of mid greyish brown, loose, sandy chalky silt. 4 sherds (15g) of 12th – 13th century pottery were recovered from the fill along with a fragment of cattle bone (2g), a fragment of mortar (1g), fragments of shell (7g) and a single Fe nail (4g).

Ditch **1070A** (6.00m+ x 0.20m+ x 0.14m) was linear in plan with moderately sloping shallow sides and a concave rounded base. It was located at the S end of the trench on a

NW-SE orientation and cut ditch **1067B**. It contained single fill **1071** which was comprised of mid brownish grey, loose, sandy chalky silt. No finds were present within fill **1071**.

Ditch **1070B** (6.00m+ x 0.75m x 0.10m) was linear in plan with moderately sloping shallow sides and a concave rounded base. It was located at the southern end of the trench on a NW-SE orientation and cut buried soils **1073** and **1074**. It contained single fill **1072** which was comprised of dark greyish brown, loose, sandy chalky silt. No finds were present within fill **1072**.

Ditch **1070C** (6.00m+ 0.40m+ x 0.19m) was linear in plan with moderately sloping sides and a concave rounded base. It was located at the S end of the trench on a NW-SE orientation and cut buried soils **1073** and **1074**. It contained single fill **1075** which was comprised of dark greyish brown, loose sandy chalky silt. No finds were present within fill **1075**.

8.4 Trench 4 (Fig. 13 - 14)

Trench 4 was located in the western area of the site on a NW-SE orientation and measured 30.00m x 1.80m. It contained a total of 5 archaeological features.

Gully **1051** (1.80m+ x 0.45m x 0.21m) was linear in plan with moderately sloping sides and a concave rounded base. It was located at the E end of the trench on a N-S orientation. It contained single fill **1050** which comprised a dark blueish grey, firm, chalky clay with small infrequent inclusions of manganese and chalk nodules. 5 sherds (118g) of 12th – 13th century pottery were recovered from fill **1050**, along with 6 fragments of animal bone (155g) including cattle and sheep/goat.

Ditch **1053** (1.80m+ x 0.86m x 0.45m) was linear in plan with moderately sloping sides and a concave rounded base. It was located at the W end of the trench on a N-S orientation. It contained single fill **1052** which was comprised of dark reddish brown, firm, sandy clay with occasional inclusions of small chalk nodules. No finds were present within fill **1052**.

Gully **1055** (1.80m+ x 0.44m x 0.09m) was linear in plan with moderately sloping shallow sides and a concave rounded base. It was located at the W end of the trench on a N-S

orientation. It contained single fill **1054** which comprised of mid whitish grey, firm, silty clay with occasional inclusions of small chalk nodules. No finds were present within fill **1054**.

Gully **1057** (1.80m+ x 0.65m x 0.17m) was linear in plan with moderately sloping sides and a concave rounded base. It was located at the W end of the trench on a NE-SW orientation. It contained single fill **1056** which was comprised of mid brownish grey, firm chalky silt with occasional inclusions of small chalk nodules. No finds were present within fill **1056**.

Pit **1059** (0.40m+ x 0.60m x 0.19m) was sub-circular in plan with moderately sloping sides and a V-shaped concave base and was located at the W end of the trench. It contained single fill **1058** which was comprised of mid greyish brown, soft, sandy clay. No finds were present within fill **1058**.

9.0 DEPOSIT MODEL (Fig. 5 - 14)

The deposit model was broasldy consistent across the site with the exception of the presence of buried soils **1049, 1076** and **1077** in the west of the site).

The first layer in the stratigraphic sequence was topsoil **1000**. This comprised a mid brownish grey, firm, silt sand and was present to a maximum depth of 0.37m in sample section 4. This layer represents the modern topsoil layer under pasture. The land has also been used by local residents as a waste dumping ground for a number of years. This would explain the increased amount of modern material in the topsoil such as car parts, waste material and garden refuse.

The next layer stratigraphically was subsoil **1001**. This consisted of light greyish brown, compact, chalky silt and was present to a maximum depth of 0.68m in sample section 4. This layer likely represents a postmedieval plough soil that formed overtime due to agricultural practice.

The next layer in the sequence present in trench 2 was buried soil layer **1049**. This layer comprised a mid-brown, soft, sandy chalky silt. was present to a depth of 0.98m. During the excavation two sherds of 12th – 14th century pottery were recovered from the layer. With the agreement of the CHET Archaeologist, further samples were taken from the length of the trench from the layer where it was present. A total of 40L was samples and sieved by an environmental specialist for finds retrieval however, no additional finds or dating evidence were recovered. This layer likely represents a former medieval or earlier occupation layer or land surface located near the fen edge of the site. While the layer did contain two sherds of medieval pottery this evidence cannot be relied upon to provide a firm date for layer **1049**.

Within trench 2, at the western end of the trench ere two further buried soil layers, **1076** and **1077**. Layer **1076** comprised a light greyish yellowish brown, compact, sandy silt and contained 15 sherds of mid-12th – 15th century pottery. This layer seems likely to be associated with dumping activity during the medieval period at the edge of the site, possibly to aid in land reclamation from the fen. Layer **1076** was present to a depth of 0.80m in sample section 2C. Layer **1077** comprised a light greyish brown, compact, sandy chalky silt and contained no finds. Similar to layer **1076** stratigraphically above, this has been interpreted as an accumulation of material that was disposed of at the edge of the

site closer to the fen and may similarly be deposition during the medieval period. The layer was present to a depth of 1.10m in sample section 2C.

The final layer in the sequence is natural geology **1002** which comprised a light greyish white compact chalk across the whole site.

10.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The site had a high potential for Roman activity; particularly the continuation of the Roman agricultural activity previously identified on several sites adjacent to the development site. There was a moderate-high potential for Saxon, medieval, and post-medieval finds and features, again particularly a continuation of the features from these periods identified adjacent to the site. The potential for prehistoric remains was moderate given the presence of a small number of features from this period identified adjacent to the site.

The evaluation successfully revealed 4 broad phases of occupation at the site.

Phase 1 relates to the prehistoric activity at the site. This is focused on trench 1. Given that the foci of prehistoric activity in the surrounding area returned by the CHER search is between 700m and 1 km away, this phase likely represents a form of minimal peripheral activity possibly temporary in nature. On the adjacent excavation site to the west, prehistoric activity was also present although limited in scope; similar to the current evaluation site, its origin was likely associated with domestic waste disposal.

Phase 2 relates to the period of Roman occupation that was also seen in the excavations directly adjacent to the site at 32 – 34 Church Lane, Isleham. The excavation revealed that the Roman phases appears to have ceased in the late 2nd century which can be also seen in the current evaluation. The features in this phase represent an extension of those seen in the adjacent excavations and are clearly domestic in nature. The nature of this activity is difficult to ascertain within the limited scope of archaeological evaluation; it is however likely that it represents peripheral domestic activity to a concentrated area of occupation during this period nearby. The concentration of securely dated Roman archaeological features was in trench 1. Ditches **1012**, **1013**, **1022** and **1024** are all located in the south west of the site while another concentration of gullies, **1035, 1037** and **1039**, appear in trench 4. The previous excavations adjacent to the site identified two enclosure systems forming part of an agricultural field system at the edge of the former fen environment (potentially for damp grazing). These features show a continuation of the same trend whether that is peripheral in nature with a more concentrated form of occupation nearby is something that cannot be ascertained within the limited scope of an evaluation.

Phase 3 relates to the medieval period, specifically the 12th – 15th century. The majority of the dated contexts within the evaluation area are from this phase. Features from this phase were present in all trenches with the majority located in trenches 3 (**1062**, **1067** and **1072**) and 4 (**1051**, **1053** and**1055**). These trenches were situated in the north and east of the site. The previous excavations adjacent to the site did identify features dating to this period however they were quite limited in number. Isleham does see expansion in this period with the additions made at the nearby Priory which saw a rise in the number of buildings been constructed in the area. In trench 2 Ditch **1042** contained medieval pottery, however the feature cut both buried soil **1049** and later subsoil **1001** likely making these finds residual. A further medieval feature was identified in this trench, Ditch **1031** located at the western end of the trench; this potentially marks the western limit of a plot in the medieval period. Beyond this the two buried soil layers **1076** and **1077** have accumulated pointing to their possible origin being the build-up of deliberate domestic waste disposal for land reclamation. The finds assemblage likely represents a continuation of the similar medieval features that were present in the adjacent excavations, the assemblage of which represents dumped household waste from nearby domestic occupation. No structural features from this period were encountered within the evaluation, so it is likely that the concentration of this activity is located further to the south or east, closer to the village core.

The final phase relates to the undated features on the site. These features likely relate to periods of water and drainage management. Definition of these features would need to be ascertained via further analysis during future mitigation within the sites bounds.

11.0 ARCHIVE DEPOSITION

The final archive will be deposited following the acquisition of the transfer of title. The deposition will be made with Cambridgeshire County Council's Archaeological Archive Storage Facility – Deep Store, subject to agreement with the legal landowner where finds are concerned. An appropriate accession number will be obtained in advance of deposition. The digital archive will be stored with the Archaeological Data Service (ADS).

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www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/protection/process/national-heritage-list-for-england

DEFRA Magic

APPENDIX 1 – DEPOSIT TABLES

TRENCH 1

Trench No	Orientation	Height AOD	Shot ID
1	NE-SW	5.60m	

Sample Section No	Location	Facing
1	NW side	SE facing

Context No	Depth	Deposit Description
1000	0.00-0.33m	Topsoil: Mid brownish grey, firm, sandy silt.
1001	0.33-0.60m	Subsoil: Light greyish brown, compact, chalky silt.
1002	0.60m+	Natural: Light greyish white, compact, chalk.

Context Descriptions

Feature Context	Feature Type & Description (m)	Layer/Fill Context	Layer/Fill Description
1003	Gully (2.30m+ x 0.55m x 0.07m) Linear in plan with moderately sloping sides and a concave base. On a NE-SW orientation.	1004	Primary Fill. Mid brownish grey, compact, silty chalk.
1005	Gully (1.80m+ x 0.66m x 0.10m) Linear in plan moderately sloping shallow sides and a concave base. On an E-W orientation.	1006	Primary Fill. Mid brownish grey, compact, silty chalk.
1007	Gully (1.80m+ x 0.70m x 0.19m) Linear in plan, with moderately sloping shallow sides and a concave base. On an E-W orientation.	1008	Primary Fill. Mid whitish grey, compact silty chalk.
1009	Ditch (1.85m+ x 0.40m x 0.11m) Linear in plan with moderately sloping shallow sides and a concave base. On an E-W orientation.	1010	Primary Fill. Mid brownish grey, compact, silty chalk with frequent inclusions of small-medium sized chalk nodules.
1012	Ditch (1.80m+ x 1.05m x 0.15m) Linear in plan, with moderately sloping shallow sides and a concave base. On an E-W orientation.	1011	Primary Fill. Mid brownish grey, firm, silty chalk.
1015	Ditch (1.80m+ x 0.46m x 0.14m) Linear in plan with gently sloping sides and a concave base. On an E-W orientation.	1016	Primary Fill. Mid brownish grey, firm, silty chalk.
1017	Ditch (1.80m+ x 0.70m x 0.17m) Linear in plan with moderately sloping sides and a concave base. On an E-W orientation.	1018	Primary Fill. Mid brownish grey, firm, silty chalk.

1019	Ditch terminus (1.40m+ x 0.58m x 0.22m) Linear in plan with steep sides and a flat base. On a NW-SE orientation.	1020	Primary Fill. Mid brownish grey, compact, silty chalk.
1022A	Ditch (1.80m+ x 1.02m x 0.43m) Linear in plan with moderately sloping sides and a flat base. On a NW-SE orientation.	1021	Primary Fill. Light brownish grey, firm, chalky clay.
1024	Ditch (1.80m+ x 1.92m x 0.42m) Linear in plan with moderately sloping shallow sides and a concave base. On an E-W orientation.	1023	Primary Fill. Light brownish grey, firm, chalky clay with frequent inclusions of small-medium chalk nodules.
1026	Pit (1.80m+ x 1.30m x 0.53m) Sub-circular in plan with moderately sloping sides and a concave base.	1025	Primary Fill. Mid blueish grey, compact, silty chalk.
1028	Ditch (2.00m+ x 1.40m+ x 0.20m) Linear in plan with moderately sloping sides and a concave base. On an E-W orientation.	1027	Primary Fill. Dark brownish grey, firm, silty chalk.
1030	Gully (0.81m+ x 0.20m+ x 0.26m) Linear in plan with moderately sloping sides and a concave base. On a N-S orientation.	1029	Primary Fill. Mid greyish brown, firm, silty chalk.
1041	Pit (1.80m+ 2.17m x 0.35m) Presumed sub-circular in plan with moderately sloping sides and a concave base. Cuts ditches 1022A 1024	1040	Primary Fill. Mid greyish brown, compact, sandy clay with frequent inclusions of manganese and small chalk nodules.

TRENCH 2

Trench No	**Orientation**	**Height AOD**	**Shot ID**
2	NW-SE	5.20m	19

Sample Section No	**Location**	**Facing**
2A	NE side, SE end	SW

Context No	**Depth**	**Deposit Description**
1000	0.00-0.28m	Topsoil: Mid brownish grey, firm, sandy silt.
1001	0.28-0.66m	Subsoil: Light greyish brown, compact, chalky silt.
1049	0.66-0.98m	Buried Soil: Mid brown, soft, sandy chalky silt.
1002	0.98m+	Natural: Light greyish white, compact, chalk.

Trench No	Orientation	Height AOD	Shot ID
2	NW-SE	5.30m	24

Sample Section No	Location	Facing
2B		

Context No	Depth	Deposit Description
1000	0.00-0.28m	Topsoil: Mid brownish grey, firm, sandy silt.
1001	0.28-0.60m	Subsoil: Light greyish brown, compact, chalky silt.
1049	0.60-0.76m	Buried Soil: Mid brown, soft, sandy chalky silt.
1002	0.76m+	Natural: Light greyish white, compact, chalk.

Trench No	Orientation	Height AOD	Shot ID
2	NW-SE	5.26m	39

Sample Section No	Location	Facing
2C		

Context No	Depth	Deposit Description
1000	0.00-0.35m	Topsoil: Mid brownish grey, firm, sandy silt.
1001	0.35-0.60m	Subsoil: Light greyish brown, compact, chalky silt.
1076	0.60-0.80m	Buried Soil: Light greyish yellowish brown, compact, sandy silt.
1077	0.80-1.10m	Buried Soil: Light greyish brown, compact, sandy chalk silt.
1002	1.10m+	Natural: Light greyish white, compact, chalk.

Context Descriptions

Feature Context	Feature Type & Description (m)	Layer/Fill Context	Layer/Fill Description
1022B	Ditch (1.80m+ x 0.30m+ x 0.30m) Linear in plan with moderately sloping sides and a flat base. On a NW-SE orientation.	1033	Primary Fill. Light brownish grey, firm chalky clay with frequent inclusions of small chalk nodules.
1042	Ditch (1.80m+ x 3.44m x 0.96m) Linear in plan with moderately sloping sides and a V-shaped base. On a NW-SE orientation. Cuts gully 1047.	1043	Primary Fill. Mid greyish brown, compact, sandy chalk.
		1044	Secondary Fill. Mid whitish brown, firm, chalky silt.
		1045	Tertiary Fill. Light greyish white, compact chalk.
		1046	Quaternary Fill. Light white, compact, chalk.
1047	Gully (1.80m+ x 0.88m x 0.24m) Linear in plan with moderately sloping sides and a V-shaped base. On a NW-SE orientation, cut by ditch 1042. Sealed by buried soil 1049.	1048	Primary Fill. Dark greyish brown, compact, silty sandy chalk.
1031	Ditch (1.80m+ x 0.82m x 0.22m) Linear in plan with gently sloping sides and a flat base. On a N-S orientation.	1032	Primary Fill. Mid brownish grey, firm, silty chalk with frequent inclusions of small chalk nodules.

TRENCH 3

Trench No	Orientation	Height AOD	Shot ID
3	N-S	4.96m	

Sample Section No	Location	Facing
3		

Context No	Depth	Deposit Description
1000	0.00-0.16m	Topsoil: Mid brownish grey, firm, sandy silt.
1001	0.16-0.32m	Subsoil: Light greyish brown, compact, chalky silt.
1002	0.32m+	Natural: Light greyish white, compact, chalk.

Context Descriptions

Feature Context	Feature Type & Description (m)	Layer/Fill Context	Layer/Fill Description
1060	Pit (1.60m x 1.50m x 0.05m) Sub-rectangular in plan with moderately sloping shallow sides and a concave base.	1061	Primary Fill. Mid yellowish grey, soft, chalky silt.
1062A	Ditch (4.00m+ x 1.20m x 0.32m) Linear in plan with moderately sloping sides and a V-shaped base. On a NW-SE orientation.	1078	Primary Fill. Mid whitish grey, compact, silty chalk.
		1063	Secondary Fill. Dark brownish grey, loose, sandy chalky silt.
1062B	Ditch (4.00m+ x 0.35m+ x 0.25m) Linear in plan with moderately sloping sides and a concave base. On a NW-SE orientation. Cuts ditch 1065.	1048	Primary Fill. Mid brownish grey, soft, sandy chalky silt.
1065	Ditch (1.30m+ x 1.11m x 0.10m) Linear in plan with moderately sloping shallow sides and a concave base. On a NE-SW orientation. Cut by ditch 1062B.	1066	Primary Fill. Mid brownish grey, firm, chalky silt.
1067A	Ditch (1.50m+ x 0.46m x 0.12m) Linear in plan with moderately sloping sides and a V-shaped base. On an E-W orientation. Cuts ditch 1062.	1068	Primary Fill. Dark brownish grey, loose chalky silt.
1067B	Ditch (1.50m+ x 0.50m+ x 0.20m) Linear in plan with moderately sloping sides and a V-shaped base. On an E-W orientation. Cut by ditch 1070A.	1069	Primary Fill. Mid greyish brown, loose, sandy chalky silt.
1070A	Ditch (6.00m+ x 0.20m+ x 0.14m) Linear in plan with moderately sloping shallow sides and a concave base. On a NW-SE orientation. Cuts ditch 1067B.	1071	Primary Fill. Mid brownish grey, loose, sandy chalky silt.

1070B	Ditch (6.00m+ x 0.75m x 0.10m) Linear in plan with moderately sloping shallow sides and a concave base. On a NW-SE orientation. Cuts buried soils 1073 and 1074.	1072	Primary Fill. Dark greyish brown, loose, sandy chalky silt.
1070C	Ditch (6.00m+ 0.40m+ x 0.19m) Linear in plan with moderately sloping sides and a concave base. On a NW-SE orientation. Cuts buried soils 1073 and 1074.	1075	Primary Fill. Dark greyish brown, loose sandy chalky silt.

TRENCH 4

Trench No	**Orientation**	**Height AOD**	**Shot ID**
4		5.60m	

Sample Section No	**Location**	**Facing**
4		

Context No	**Depth**	**Deposit Description**
1000	0.00-0.37m	Topsoil: Mid brownish grey, firm, sandy silt.
1001	0.37-0.68m	Subsoil: Light greyish brown, compact, chalky silt.
1002	0.68m+	Natural: Light greyish white, compact, chalk.

Context Descriptions

Feature Context	Feature Type & Description (m)	Layer/Fill Context	Layer/Fill Description
1051	Gully (1.80m+ x 0.45m x 0.21m) Linear in plan with moderately sloping sides and a concave base. On a N-S orientation	1050	Primary Fill. Dark blueish grey, firm, chalky clay with small inclusions of manganese and chalk nodules.
1053	Ditch (1.80m+ x 0.86m x 0.45m) Linear in plan with moderately sloping sides and a concave base. On a N-S orientation.	1052	Primary Fill. Dark reddish brown, firm, sandy clay with occasional inclusions of small chalk nodules.
1055	Gully (1.80m+ x 0.44m x 0.09m) Linear in plan with moderately sloping shallow sides and a concave base. On a N-S orientation.	1054	Primary Fill. Mid whitish grey, firm, silty clay with occasional inclusions of small chalk nodules.
1057	Gully (1.80m+ x 0.65m x 0.17m) Linear in plan with moderately sloping sides and a concave base. On a NE-SW orientation.	1056	Primary Fill. Mid brownish grey, firm chalky silt with occasional inclusions of small chalk nodules.

1059	Pit (0.40m+ x 0.60m x 0.19m) Sub-circular in plan with moderately sloping sides and a V-shaped base.	1058	Primary Fill. Mid greyish brown, soft, sandy clay.

APPENDIX – 2 CONCORDANCE OF FINDS

Context	Cut	Type	Trench No	Spot date	Pot No	Wgt/g	CBM No	Wgt/g	Animal No	Bone Wgt/g	Other
1000	None	Top-soil	1	M1st-M/L2nd?+	1	5					
1000	None	Top-soil	3				2	49			
1000	None	Top-soil	4	M12th-M15th & L18th-20th	2	22	3	126			**SF2** Pb Weight 1@14g, Cu Alloy object 1@3g
1001	None	Sub-soil	1	M1st-E2nd & L12th-14th	2	14			1	48	**SF1** Cu Alloy Ring 1@1g, W.Flint 1@7g
1001	None	Sub-soil	2	M12th-M15th	23	662			1	13	Fe Object 3@154g
1001	None	Sub-soil	4	?M1st-M/L2nd? & 11th-14th	9	74	1	5	4	32	**SF3** Cu Alloy Object 1@4g, Lava quernstone 12@54g, ?W.Flint 1@18g
1004	1003	Gully	1	12th-14th	1	6	1	1			
1010	1009	Ditch	1	12th-14th	2	6	4	13			
1011	1012	Ditch	1	M1st-E2nd	1	1					Coal 1@<1g
1014	1013	Ditch	1	Roman	1	18			1	20	Shell 1@7g
1021	1022	Ditch	1	M1st-M/L2nd?+	24	71	1	249	72	687	W. Flint 1@2g, Shell 6@5g
1023	1024	Ditch	1	L1st-M/L2nd?+	35	207	1	105	70	1036	
1027 (Surface)	1028	Ditch	1	E/M-LIA	1	2					

1032	1031	Ditch	2	M12th-M15th	2	51					
1034	1035	Gully	4	L1st-M/L2nd?+	2	8					
1036	1037	Gully	4	?M1st-M/L2nd?+	1	1			1	2	
1038	1039	Gully	4	?M1st-M/L2nd?+	2	10					
1043	1042	Ditch	2						6	377	
1044	1042	Ditch	2	M12th-M14th	17	447					
1049 (Surface)	None	Layer	2	12th-14th	1	62					
1049	None	Layer	2	M12th-M15th	2	26			14	153	
1050	1051	Gully	4	M12th-M13th?+	5	118			6	155	Shell 3@8g
1052	1053	Ditch	4	M12th-M13th?+	16	105	1	6	9	49	Shell 22@116g
1054	1055	Gully	4	12th-M13th?+	2	8			1	1	
1056	1057	Gully	4								Coal 1@<1g
1063	1062 A	Ditch	3	M12th-M13th?+	8	77			2	19	Fe Object 1@87g, Coal 1@<1g
1064	1062 B	Ditch	3	M12th-M13th?+	5	35			4	16	
1069	1067 B	Ditch	3	12th-M13th?+	4	15			1	2	Mortar 2@1g, Shell 3@7g, Fe Nail 1@4g
1071	1072 A	Ditch	3	12th-M13th?+	2	6			3	18	
1073	None	Layer	3	M1st-M/L2nd?+	2	8					

1076	None	Layer	2	M12th-M15th	15	613			3	116	
Totals					**188**	**2678**	**14**	**554**	**199**	**2744**	SF's **1-3**, Metal objects **6@24g**, Mortar **2@1g,** W. Flint **3@27g**, Lava quernstone **2@54g**, Shell **35@143g**, Coal **3@3g**

APPENDIX – 3 SPECIALIST REPORTS

3.1 Pottery

The Roman and post Roman pottery from the Land west of 4 Coates Drove, Isleham, Cambridgeshire (ECB 6344): An assessment report

Andy Fawcett

Introduction

A total of 188 sherds of pottery with a weight of 2678g were recovered from the archaeological trial trenching at Coates Drove. Table 1 shows the quantities of pottery recorded within each trench.

Trench	No	%	Wgt/g	%
One	68	36	320	12
Two	60	32	1861	70
Three	21	11	141	5
Four	39	21	346	13
Totals	**188**	**100**	**2668**	**100**

Table 1. The pottery by trench

This report firstly describes the methodology used in the recording of the pottery, and then goes on to describe the assemblages from the prehistoric, Roman, and medieval periods. This is then followed by an overall conclusion, and any recommendations that might be required for further work on the assemblages.

Methodology

The pottery has been rapidly scanned at x20 vision, and the principle fabrics in each context have been identified and allocated fabric codes.

The Roman codes are based upon those used by Going at Chelmsford (1987), Suffolk County Council Archaeology (which are in use across east Anglia as a whole), as well as those developed by Tomber and Dore as part of a national system (1998).

The medieval codes are based upon those utilised by Suffolk County Council Archaeology (which are in use across east Anglia as a whole), as well as those registered by Spoerry in his *corpus* of medieval pottery production in Cambridgeshire (2016).

Wherever pottery forms are encountered within the assemblage, regardless of which period they belong to, they have been simply described for example, jar, dish, jug and so on.

The recorded pottery assemblage can be seen in full within Appendix 1, and a list of fabric and abrasion codes are listed in Appendix 2.

Prehistoric

A total of four body sherds of prehistoric pottery were recorded. These were noted solely in ditch features, three of which were in Trench 3 and the other in Trench 4.

Although the sherds display only slight abrasion, they nevertheless occur alongside later assemblages of Roman and medieval pottery and are therefore considered to be of a residual nature.

Their fabrics are all reduced and contain either flint (HMF), organics (HMSO), or just quartz sand (HMS), and are dated from the late Bronze to late Iron Age.

Roman

The Roman pottery within in Trench 1 was retrieved from the top-soil (1000), sub-soil (1001) as well as from four ditch fills (1011, 1014, 1021 and 1023). Two of the ditch fills contained only single sherds, whereas 1021 held twenty-three sherds and 1023 a total of thirty-four.

The sherds from this trench are often quite fragmentary, however they exhibit, for the most part only minor abrasion. Two body sherds of La Graufesenque samian ware (LGF SA) were recorded, one in the sub-soil (1001) and the other (a very abraded and small example) in Ditch fill 1011.

Apart from fourteen sherds of the local fabric Horningsea reduced ware (HOR RE) in Ditch fill 1023, the remainder of the assemblage is composed of unsourced coarsewares. However, it is likely that the vast majority of these fabrics were locally produced, in particular sherds in the UNS WH group. This is a very distinct fabric, having a partly oxidised body and an off-white surface. Sherds in this fabric were noted in the top-soil (1000), as well as in ditch fills 1021 and 1023. The mineral arrangement within this fabric, shares some similar traits to that of the Horningsea industry (Evans et al 2017, 51), however they too contain a distinct mix of common red/brown iron rich grog. The UNS WH sherds within Ditch fill 1023 represent the remains of a flagon, however the only form characterized by a rim sherd, was that of a bead rimmed jar in fabric GRS in Ditch fill 1021.

Due to the lack of form types and the presence mainly of long-lived coarseware fabrics, the dating of contexts has fallen back on combinations of these long-lasting wares.

However, none of the contexts containing Roman pottery are dated beyond the mid/later 2nd century. Interestingly, the presence of a small number of La Graufesenque samian ware sherds, might well suggest (when looking at the Roman contexts as a whole), that many of these fills are no later than the early 2nd century.

Two body sherds of Roman greyware (GRS) were recorded in Ditch fill 1032 in Trench 2. These however, occurred alongside medieval pottery, and are therefore considered to be residual.

Only two joining body sherds of the Romanising fabric BSW were noted in Trench 3. These were identified in Layer 1073 and are dated from the mid 1st to the mid/later 2nd century.

A total of four contexts within Trench 4 contained Roman pottery, these include the sub-soil (1001) and three gully fills (1034, 1036 and 1038), however these only yielded an assemblage of nine sherds. A further six sherds were recorded within Ditch fill 1052, however these occurred alongside a medieval assemblage, and are considered to be residual.

The sherds generally display only slight abrasion however, no rim or base sherds were recorded within these groups, and they are entirely made up of long-lived coarsewares.

The dating of these groups must be considered poor, due to the small number of sherds within each context, as well as the long-lived nature of the fabrics, although none of the fills appear to be dated beyond the mid/late 2nd century.

Medieval

Medieval sherds were recorded in Trench 1 within the sub-soil (1001), Gully fill 1004 and Ditch fill 1010, a total of three sherds.

The sub-soil contained a single sherd of Grimston-type ware (GRIM), whilst the other two fills contained body sherds of the unsourced medieval coarseware MCW. The sherds from the sub-soil are dated from the late 12th to 14th century, while those in the remaining fills are dated from the 12th to the 14th century.

Trench 2 contained six contexts that held medieval pottery, these include the sub-soil (1001), two ditch fills (1032 and 1044) as well as two layers (1049 and 1076). A total of sixty sherds were recovered from these contexts, with good groups noted within the sub-soil and layer 1076.

All of the medieval contexts within this trench are dated between the mid 12th and mid 15th century. These assemblages are dominated by south-east fenland calcareous buff ware (SEFEN), as well as the occasional presence of Ely ware (MEL). Two bowls in SEFEN were noted in the sub-soil (1001), one has a lightly thumbed rim, the other is squared off and displays horizontal lines on the rim and surfaces; many of these sherds also exhibit sporadic traces of green glaze.

Another bowl in fabric SEFEN was noted in Layer 1049, this also had a squared off rim with horizontal lines. Finally, in Layer 1076 a further two bowls were recorded one with a squared off rim and one with a lightly thumbed rim.

The sherds from these contexts show only very minor wear and many are of a good size. It should be noted that often there appeared very little difference between fabrics SEFEN and MEL, both in terms of colour and as well as in the presence of some inclusions.

However, this rapid scan has demonstrated the consistent presence of red/brown iron rich grog in some sherds (which does not appear in Spoerry's description of MEL), therefore many have fallen into the SEFEN category (2016, 189/195).

Four ditch fills within Trench 3 contained medieval pottery (1063, 1064, 1069 and 1071) totalling nineteen sherds.

These contexts are not dominated by fabrics SEFEN and MEL, as was noted in Trench 2, other fabrics are present. In particular there is a consistent presence of the early medieval fabric EMW, alongside MCW, occasionally MEL as well as unsourced glazed wares (UPG) have been noted too. The occurrence of EMW suggests a slightly earlier date range for these contexts (*c* mid 12th to mid 13th century) by comparison to those recorded in Trench 2. Unfortunately, no rim sherds were present in any of these fills, only a partial handle in context 1063 (SEFEN), and a base fragment in fabric EMW (1064).

Medieval sherds (twenty-two) were recorded in both the top and sub-soil in Trench 4, as well as in Gully fills 1050 and 1054 and Ditch fill 1052. The ditch and gully fills contained a total of sixteen sherds, and as noted in the previous trench, all three of these contexts contained varying numbers of fabric EMW. This occurred alongside fragments of MCW, SEFEN, as well as one instance of St Neots ware (Ditch fill 1052).

Although these groups are not large most exhibit only slight abrasion, however the assemblage in Ditch fill 1052 is fragmentary and suffers too from more abrasion.

The SEFEN strap handle fragment in Gully fill 1050 has a line of stabbing down its centre, the only other diagnostic sherd is a very small bowl rim sherd (NEOT) in Ditch fill 1052.

The contexts in this trench are dated from around the mid 12th to mid 13th century.

Conclusion

All of the prehistoric sherds recorded within this current pottery assemblage are residual. However, they fall within the same date range as those recovered from 32 and 34 Church Lane, Isleham (Fawcett 2016a & 2018). The main focus of prehistoric activity is between 700m and 1 kilometre away (ECB 2288, MCB 9100, 9224, 12762, 12788, 15282 and

19744) from the current site, these sherds therefore represent some form of unknown minimal and periphery activity, that may have been temporary or of a more settled nature.

The Roman assemblage from 32 and 34 Church Lane Isleham contained assemblages that were dated from the late 1st century to the later the 2nd century (Fawcett 2016a & 2018). Indeed, it was thought that Roman activity ceased on the site somewhere around the mid 2nd century AD. These date ranges are virtually mirrored within the current Roman assemblage from Isleham.

This assemblage also shares other similar features with the Church Lane group (Fawcett 2018), in terms of the extremely low number of finewares, the range of coarseware fabrics and the almost negligible presence of forms associated with dining, such as dishes, beakers, cups and flagons. This group represents an extension of the activity previously recorded at Church Lane, which is clearly of a domestic nature although of a fairly low status. It is however highly likely that this activity is taking place on the periphery of a more concentrated area of Roman settlement within Isleham, whose focus may well be aligned with that of the villa identified at Temple Road (HER 1161).

The medieval assemblage contains several good form profiles, as well as some interesting fabric combinations. These fabric combinations, as well as the overall date range of the assemblage, are very similar to those recorded at the adjacent site of 32 and 34 Church Lane, Isleham (Anderson 2018). The current features represent a continuation of dumped household waste from some form of nearby domestic occupation.

Recommendations for further work

It is recommended that should another phase of archaeological intervention take place on the site, and further ceramic assemblages are recovered, then reference to this current Roman assemblage should be made.

The medieval assemblage contains several pottery groups that require a more detailed analysis of both their fabrics and forms (1001 Tr2, 1044 Tr.2, 1050 Tr. 4, 1052 Tr.4, 1063/1064 Tr.3 and 1076 Tr.2). These should be included within any subsequent groups retrieved from the site that are to be recorded in full, either as part of a grey literature or publication report.

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Appendix 2: Fabric and abrasion codes

Prehistoric

HMF	Hand-made flint tempered ware
HMS	Hand-made sand based fabric
HMSO	Hand-made sand and organic tempered ware

Roman

LGF SA	La Graufesenque samian ware (southern Gaul)
UNS OX	Unsourced oxidised ware
UNS WH	Unsourced white ware
BSW	Black surfaced/Romanising grey ware
GRS	Unsourced sandy grey ware
HOR RE	Horningsea reduced ware
WAT RE	Wattisfield reduced ware

Medieval

GRIM	Grimston type ware
UPG	Unprovenanced glazed ware
MEL	Medieval Ely ware
NEOT	St Neots type ware
SEFEN	South-east fenland medieval calcareous buff ware
EMW	Early medieval ware
MCW	General high medieval sandy wares

Post-medieval

REFW	Refined white earthenware

Abrasion

Very = very abraded, Abr = abraded, Abr/sli = variably abraded, Sli = slightly abraded, Gd = good

3.2 CBM

The ceramic building materials (CBM) from the Land west of 4 Coates Drove, Isleham, Cambridgeshire (ECB 6344)

Andy Fawcett

Introduction

A total of fourteen fragments of CBM with a weight of 554g were recovered from the archaeological trial trenching at Coates Drove.

This report firstly describes the methodology used in the recording of the CBM and then goes on to describe the assemblage. This is then followed by an overall general conclusion and any recommendations that might be required for further work on the material.

Methodology

The CBM has been recorded by fragment count and weight. The fabrics in each context have been identified by rapid scanning at x20 vision, and these have been allocated codes using simple letter combinations, based upon those developed by Suffolk, Norfolk and Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Services, and used within East Anglia as a whole.

Form types have been allocated plain descriptions, such as roof tile or brick and so on, and where present measurements of depth, width and length have also been undertaken. The recorded CBM assemblage can be seen in Appendix 3, and a full list of fabric and abrasion codes can be seen in Appendix 4.

The assemblage

The top-soil from Trench 3 contained two small and abraded fragments of CBM (49g). The first is an unidentifiable fragment in a medium sandy fabric (Ms), the second piece is part of a roof tile dated to the medieval period. This is oxidised with a thick grey core and has a depth of 14mm and contains abundant calcite with some quartz (Msc).

Three small and abraded post-medieval fragments were recorded in the top-soil of Trench 4 (126g). Two of these are part of a brick, which is oxidised with common ferrous inclusions (Msfe), whilst the other is part of a fully oxidised roof tile. This has a depth of 13mm, it is very dense, hard fired and contains common well-spaced calcite (Msc).

Gully fill 1004 in Trench 1 contained a single very abraded and unidentifiable fragment of CBM (Ms). It is oxidised and weighs less than 0.5g, it is broadly dated from the medieval to post-medieval period. The pottery retrieved from this fill is dated from the 12th to 14th century.

A further three ditch fills (containing CBM) were recorded in Trench 1, the first of these 1010, held four considerably abraded and unidentifiable fragments (13g), as well as pottery dated from the 12th to 14th century. These are brown in colour and contain fairly well sorted quartz with brown grog (Msg). The style of fabric suggests that these are residual pieces which were originally dated to the Roman period.

The second ditch context (1021) contained the largest CBM fragment recovered from the site (249g). This is an abraded Roman *tegula* fragment which is in an orange/powdery fabric that contains abundant quartz alongside orange/brown grog (Msg). The flange has a height of 40mm and the tile depth is 26mm; it is accompanied by pottery dated from the mid 1st to mid/late 2nd century +?.

Finally ditch fill 1023 contained a single abraded fragment (105g) of Roman flat/brick or brick. This is in an orange fabric with quartz, orange grog and sparse large flint (Msg) and occurs alongside pottery dated from the late 1st to mid/late 2nd century?+. The fragment is shattered however, it has a minimum depth of *c* 26mm.

Ditch fill 1052 in Trench 4 contained a single small and abraded Roman fragment of CBM (6g). This is in an orange fabric with orange grog (Msg) and is noted alongside medieval pottery and is therefore considered to be residual.

Conclusion

The CBM assemblage is made up of fragments which are dated to the Roman, medieval and post-medieval periods, however Roman pieces are the most frequent within the group. The assemblage is in a poor state of preservation as well as being predominantly quite fragmented. Almost fifty percent of the assemblage was recorded in either top-soil or sub-soil contexts, and at least two fragments within the cut features are of a residual nature. The assemblage has mainly been recovered from Trench 1 and is made up of roof tile, possible bricks as well as unidentifiable fragments. Of note in Ditch fill 1021 (Tr.1) is a *tegula* fragment which is also accompanied by Roman pottery.

The level of wear, fragmentation as well the number of pieces per contexts, indicates that none of the fragments are in their original place of deposition. It is likely that several fragments may have been reused at a later date or ended up within the layers or features of the site as rubbish, incorporated into the manuring process for example.

Recommendations for further work

The CBM has been identified and described to the required level of analysis; therefore, it is recommended that no further work on the assemblage will be required. However, should a further stage of archaeological intervention take place on the site and finds are recovered, then reference to this current assemblage should be undertaken.

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Fabric and abrasion codes

CBM

Ms	Medium quartz sand
Msfe	Medium quartz sand with ferrous inclusions
Msg	Medium quartz sand with grog
Msc	Medium quartz sand with varying amounts of calcite

3.3 Animal Bone & Shell

ECB6344, Isleham
The faunal remains and molluscs assessments
by Julie Curl –Sylvanus – Archaeological, Natural History & Illustration Services

THE ANIMAL BONE (Appendix1, Tables 1 and 2)
Methodology

The summary assessment was carried out following a modified version of guidelines by English Heritage (Davis, 1992) and Baker and Worley, 2014. All of the bone was examined to determine range of species and elements present. A record was also made of butchering and any indications of skinning, hornworking and other modifications. When possible ages were estimated along with any other relevant information, such as pathologies. Measurements considered where appropriate following Von Den Driesch, 1976, for the teeth, Hillson, 1996 and few could be taken and to save time later were recorded at the assessment stage, those that could be taken were recorded directly into the catalogue. Counts and weights were noted for each context and counts made for each species. Where bone could not be identified to species, they were grouped as, for example, 'large mammal', 'bird' or 'small mammal'. Attempts were made, where possible, to refit possible fragments in the same bag and these were included in NISP counts. Information was recorded into an Excel datasheet and this is available in the digital archive, a catalogue is available in the appendix.

The bone assemblage

Quantification, provenance and preservation

A total of 2,473g of bone, consisting of 199 elements, was recovered from this site, with the assemblage quantified by weight and count in Table 1.

The assemblage is in good condition, but heavily fragmented from butchering from wear. No canid gnawing was found in the assemblage, which might suggest the lack of dogs or scavenging animals at this site, but given the small sample size, this cannot be ruled out. No burning was seen in these remains, which would suggest burial was the favoured method of

disposal. The low level of invertebrate (insect, isopod, mollusc) damage further suggests the waste was rapidly buried.

Feature Type	Period, weight and count			Total
	Medieval	Roman	Undated	
Ditch	99g/19	1743g/143	377g/6	2219g/168
Gully	158g/8			158g/8
Layer	269g/17			269g/17
Subsoil	108g/6			108g/6
Total	634g/50	1743g/143	377g/6	2754g/199

Table 1. Quantification of the faunal remains by weight and count

Species range and modifications and other observations

Three species were positively identified in the assemblage, which is quantified by species, feature and NISP in Table 2.

Cattle were most frequently seen and recovered from twelve deposits, with all cattle bone recovered coming from adults. A variety of body parts are represented, including head elements, spine, upper and lower limbs. The bulk of the cattle remains were found in Roman ditch fills, with a range of head and body elements in the Ditch fill 1023. Some ageing evidence is present and numerous cattle bones are butchering. The butchering includes one metatarsal that has been split lengthways to access the marrow, a butchering method often deemed typical of the Saxon period (Hagan, 1992) which might suggest some Saxon activity or a continuation of processing methods into the Medieval period at this site.

Equid were seen in two Roman ditch fills with middle and lower limb fragments and teeth. One complete tibia was found that can produce a range of equids. Some of the equid bone was butchered, suggesting meat and perhaps use of the skin.

Sheep/goat was found mostly Medieval ditch fills, with one pelvis in a Roman ditch fill. Ageing data is present for the ovicaprid remains.

Some of the bone was only identifiable as **‘mammal’** and showed no diagnostic features that can provide species identification.

Species	Period and NISP			Totals
	Medieval	Roman	Undated	
Cattle	23	34	6	63
Equid		9		9
Mammal	23	99		122
Sheep/goat	4	1		5
Totals	50	143	6	199

Table 2. Quantification of the faunal remains by species and NISP.

Discussion and conclusions

This is a small assemblage of Roman and Medieval date. The remains consist of the main domestic stock mammals. Butchering was frequent and includes butchering of equid. The assemblage initially appears to represent simple processing and consumption of meat from the main stock and, despite good preservation, does not appear to show any birds or evidence of hunting.

Assemblage potential and recommendations for further work

- If further excavations are carried out at this site, it is recommended that samples are taken for sieving from any bone rich features to maximise the recovery of small bones and teeth which will add to the dietary and husbandry evidence and practices at this site.

- Any samples that have already been taken need to be examined if bone was produced and these need to be added to the catalogue.

- Analysis and research can be completed once all bone is recorded and final dating and phasing is ready. The site can be compared to other similar sites.

- Analysis can include examination of butchering methods, including the longitudinal splitting. Stature and age of animals can help to determine health and husbandry. Comparison between periods could be made.

- Without any additional material, a maximum of a further day is required for completion to final report level. Any additional material costs would need to be determined when weights and counts of other material is known.

THE MOLLUSC ASSEMBLAGE (Appendix 2, Table 3)

Methodology

The molluscs were identified to species using a variety of reference material. Shells were catalogued by species and where appropriate, counts were made of the number of individual species present (NISP), counts of top and base shells and an estimate of the minimum number of individuals (MNI). Bivalve shells are known to be used as painter's palettes and the remains are examined for any traces of pigments. Shells are also examined for any cut marks that would confirm their use for food from the prising apart of the shells or removal of meat with a knife. Information was recorded directly into an appendix with this report.

The assemblage

A total of 143g of shell, consisting of 35 elements, was recovered from this excavation. Shell was recovered from four ditch fills and one gully, with the remains found in association with Roman or Medieval ceramic material. The mollusc assemblage is quantified by feature type in Table 3 by feature, species and NISP.

Context	Trench	Type	Feature	Date	Ctxt Qty	Weight	Freshwater	Marine	Land	Fossil	Species	NISP
1014	1	Ditch	1013	Roman	1	7		1			Oyster	1
1021	1	Ditch	1022	Roman	6	5		1			Mussel	1
1021	1	Ditch	1022	Roman					5		White-Lipped Snail	5
1050	4	Gully	1051	Medieval	3	8		3			Mussel	3

1052	4	Ditch	1053	Medieval	22	116		3			Cockle	3
1052	4	Ditch	1053	Medieval				18			Mussel	18
1052	4	Ditch	1053	Medieval				1			Oyster	1
1069	3	Ditch	1067B	Medieval	3	7		1			Oyster	1
1069	3	Ditch	1067B	Medieval				2			Mussel	2

Table 3 Quantification of the mollusc assemblage.

Species and observations

The marine shell consisted of three species with the Common Mussel found in four deposits and were the most common in terms of NISP. Single shells of Common Marine Oyster were seen in three fills and three pieces of Cockle were found in the Ditch fill 1052. There are traces of marine sponges on some of the shells, attesting to their recovery from a marine environment , rather than from farmed stock. No clear cut marks were seen from the prising open of these bivalves, but it is most likely that they were collected for food use.

The land molluscs consist of two shells of *Cepaeca hortensis*, also known as a Garden Snail or White-Lipped Snail, which were discovered in the Roman Ditch fill 1021 from Trench 1. This species is found in woods, hedge and shrubs, generally it prefers wetter and cooler places than the related Brown-lipped Snail, so its presence in a ditch environment is expected. These snail shells are close to the maximum adult size, so probably died naturally at the end of their life.

Discussion and conclusions

This is a small shell assemblage that consists largely of the remains of the most frequent food marine species on archaeological sites. Common Oyster, Mussel and Cockle are found all around the British coast, even in quite shallow waters. Such molluscs could be collected by individuals, but are perhaps more likely to be sold at local markets. The marine shells are most

likely to be from supplementing of the diet, but collection of shell for crushing and tempering clay for pottery is possible.

The White-Lipped Snail is a wild species expected in ditch environments, these snails often appearing high on reeds and other plants around ditches and burying themselves in damp ditches in adverse conditions.

Assemblage potential and recommendations for further work

- If further excavations are carried out at this site, it is recommended that samples are taken for sieving from any shell rich features to maximise the recovery of small land molluscs that can provide environmental evidence.

- Any samples that have already been taken need to be examined if shell was produced and these need to be added to the catalogue.

If no further shell is recovered, then sufficient recording has been made of this particular assemblage and no further work is required. Any additional material costs would need to be determined when weights and counts of material is known.

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Appendixes 1 and 2

1. Summary catalogue of the animal bone
2. Catalogue of the mollusc assemblage.

Appendix 1

Catalogue of the animal bone recovered from ECB6344

Listed in context order.

A full catalogue (with additional information) is available as an Excel file in the digital archive.

Key:

NISP = Number of Individual Species elements Present

Measure – following Von Den Driesch, 1976

Count – Following Davis, 1992

Ctxt	Feature	Trench	Type	Period	Residual	Ctxt Qty	Wt (g)	Species	NISP	Adult	Juv	Neo	MNI	Element range	Measure	Count	Butchering	Gnawing	Path	Comments
1001	1001	1	Subsoil	Medieval	Roman	6	108	Cattle	3	1				scapula, humerus fragment, metatarsal shaft			split/chopped			split lengthways
1001	1001	1	Subsoil	Medieval	Roman			Mammal	3					fragments						
1014	1013	1	Ditch	Roman		1	20	Cattle	1	1				lower molar 2						
1021	1022	1	Ditch	Roman		72	687	Equid	3	1				lower molars 2 and 3, tibia	1	1	chopped			GL:310
1021	1022	1	Ditch	Roman				Sheep/goat	1	1				tibia shaft			chopped			
1021	1022	1	Ditch	Roman				Mammal	58					fragments						
1021	1022	1	Ditch	Roman				Cattle	10	1				Metatarsal fragments		1	cut			

1023	1024	1	Ditch	Roman		70	1036	Cattle	23	1				jaw fragments, isolated upper M1, M2 and P4, lower M1 and M2, rib, radius frags, humerus fragments, lumbar vertebra, talus			chopped, cut			
1023	1024	1	Ditch	Roman				Equid	6	1				lower M1 and M2, Metatarsal shaft and proximal end frags, tibia						small equid
1023	1024	1	Ditch	Roman				Mammal	41					fragments						
1036	1037	4	Gully	Medieval		1	2	Mammal	1					single fragment						
1043	1042	2	Ditch	Undated		6	377	Cattle	6	1				mandible and mandible frags, rib	1	1	chopped, cut			P4 missing, M1=J, M2=H, M3=G
1049	1049	2	Layer	Medieval		7	110	Cattle	7	1				isolated LM1/M3, Upper M2, mandible frags		1				
1049	1049	2	Layer	Medieval				Mammal	6					fragments						
1049	1049	2	Layer	Medieval		7	43	Cattle	1	1				mandible condyle fragment						
1050	1051	4	Gully	Medieval		6	155	Cattle	6	1				pelvic and ulna fragments						
1052	1053	4	Ditch	Medieval	IA/Roman	9	44	Sheep/goat	1	1				pelvis		1	chopped			
1052	1053	4	Ditch	Medieval	IA/Roman			Cattle	1	1				talus		1	chopped			saggital chop
1052	1053	4	Ditch	Medieval	IA/Roman			Mammal	7					fragments						
1054	1055	4	Gully	Medieval		1	1	Mammal	1					single fragment						
1063	1062A	3	Ditch	Medieval		2	19	Cattle	1	1				lower molar						
1063	1062A	3	Ditch	Medieval				Sheep/goat	1	1				pelvic fragment						
1064	1062B	3	Ditch	Medieval		4	16	Cattle	1					incisor						
1064	1062B	3	Ditch	Medieval				Sheep/goat	1	1				proximal phalange		0.5				
1064	1062B	3	Ditch	Medieval				Mammal	2					fragments						

1069	1067B	3	Ditch	Medieval		1	2	Mammal	1					single fragment						
1071	1072A	3	Ditch	Medieval		3	18	Sheep/goat	1	1				third molar						molar in full wear
1071	1072A	3	Ditch	Medieval				Mammal	2					fragments						
1076	1076	2	Layer	Medieval		3	116	Cattle	3	1				vertebra frags						

Appendix 2. Catalogue of the mollusc remains from ECB6344

Context	Trench	Type	Feature	Date	Ctxt Qty	Weight	Freshwater	Marine	Land	Fossil	Species	NISP	Top	Base	MNI	Apex	Frag	Distort	Worms	Sponge	Barnacles	Attached	Cuts	Burnt	Gnaw
1014	1	Ditch	1013	Roman	1	7		1			Oyster	1		1	1	1				1					
1021	1	Ditch	1022	Roman	6	5		1			Mussel	1			1	1									
1021	1	Ditch	1022	Roman					5		White-Lipped Snail	5			2	2	3								
1050	4	Gully	1051	Medieval	3	8		3			Mussel	3			2	3									
1052	4	Ditch	1053	Medieval	22	116		3			Cockle	3			1	2	1								
1052	4	Ditch	1053	Medieval				18			Mussel	18			9	9	9								
1052	4	Ditch	1053	Medieval				1			Oyster	1	1		1	1				1					
1069	3	Ditch	1067B	Medieval	3	7		1			Oyster	1		1	1	1									

1069	3	Ditch	1067 B	Medieval				2			Mussel	2			1	2								

3.4 Metalwork

Metalwork Assessment – Rebecca Sillwood

Introduction

A total of nine metal finds were submitted for assessment; this breaks down as five of iron, three of copper alloy, and one of lead. Most of the finds were recovered from the topsoil (1000) and subsoil (1001) of four different trenches. Two iron finds were recovered from ditches.

The finds ranged in date from medieval to late post-medieval.

Methodology

The metalwork was catalogued by count and weight, with spot dates and descriptions produced where possible. This data can be found within an Excel spreadsheet which is provided separately to this report and will be available as part of the archive.

Measurements were recorded in millimetres using digital calipers, which were checked for accuracy often. Weight was recorded in grams, to the nearest 0.1g, using digital scales, which were also checked for accuracy frequently using a known weight.

The Assemblage

The earliest find retrieved here was a copper alloy strap loop, which was recovered from the topsoil (1000) of trench 4. The piece consisted of a rectangular loop with flat sides and a bevelled edge to the outer part of the frame. There is a drilled hole in the centre of one of the flat sides. Loops such as these are common finds and can date to *c.* 1350-1400 (Egan & Pritchard, 2013, 232, fig. 147).

The second earliest find was a lead uniface token (SF2), also from the topsoil of trench 4. The piece is flat with a moulded design on one face. The design is a little unintelligible but appears to have a pellet to one edge of it, which could make it a Powell Type 3 (2010). This has a broad date range *c.* 14th-17th century.

A fragment of a copper alloy buckle (SF3), of probable 18th century date was found in the subsoil of trench 4 (1001).

A plain copper alloy finger ring (SF1), of D-sectioned band, was recovered from the subsoil of trench 1 (1001). The ring was possibly a trinket or 'fairing' type of jewellery and of *c.* 1750-1850 date (Foreman, 2020).

Three conjoining pieces of iron formed a possible vessel of late post-medieval date. These pieces were found in the subsoil of trench 2 (1001).

A curving iron rod of probable late post-medieval date was recovered from ditch fill (1063) in trench 3, along with a nail from ditch fill (1069) from the same trench.

Statement of Potential

The only datable metalwork from this site was unstratified but provided evidence for activity of medieval date along with post-medieval material.

The stratified material was iron and appeared to be of later post-medieval date.

The assemblage has little further potential to inform the phasing of the site.

Recommendations for Further Work

This assemblage has been fully recorded and no further work is necessary.

Should publication of the site be proposed the above text should be sufficient to add as a note.

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Lava Assessment

Twelve pieces of lava quern were recovered from the subsoil of trench 4 (1001). The pieces were of grey vesicular lava and were formless fragments, weighing 54g in total.

Lava was imported from the Rhineland region of Germany from the Roman period onwards for use as a quernstone material. In the case of these examples from Isleham they are likely to be medieval in date.

3.5 Environmental

Assessment of Samples

COATES DRIVE ISLEHAM

On behalf of Britannia Archaeology Ltd

By Matt Law PhD ACIfA

L-P:ARCHÆOLOGY

Assessment of Samples

COATES DRIVE ISLEHAM

Client:	Britannia Archaeology Ltd
Author:	M Law
Doc Ref:	LP2255E-EAR-v16.1
Site Code:	ECB 6344
Date:	January 21

L-P:ARCHÆOLOGY

A trading name of L – P : Heritage LLP

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1. Introduction and Methods

1.1. Ten samples taken during archaeological work at land to the west of 4 Coates Drove, Isleham, Cambridgeshire were presented for assessment. The samples each comprised 10 litres of sediment, and were processed using a Siraf-style flotation tank by Miriam Weinbren of L - P : Archaeology. The washover (flot) of each sample was caught on a 250µm mesh sieve, and the heavy fraction (residue) was retained on a 1mm mesh, with the exception of Sample 1, from context (1049) which comprised 40 litres of sediment, and was washed using a 1mm mesh for artefact recovery only.

1.2. The residues were weighed and air dried, then sorted into fractions using a nest of sieves (4mm, 2mm, 1mm, 500µm, 250µm) before being scanned under a low power microscope. After items of interest were removed and bagged, the geological material was discarded. The flots were weighed and scanned wet, before being air dried and scanned again. Assessment was carried out by Dr Matt Law of L – P : Archaeology. Biological remains were identified using a low power microscope.

1.3. Information about molluscan ecology is derived from Evans (1972), Kerney and Cameron (1979), Kerney (1999), and Davies (2008). Molluscan nomenclature follows Anderson and Rowson (2020).

2. Results and Discussion

2.1. Estimated abundance of items present in the samples are presented in APPENDIX 1.

2.2. Modern root material is present within all of the flots. This means there is a likelihood that some smaller items in the samples are intrusive. Ratios of obviously recent shells (glossy and translucent in appearance or maintaining the protein-based periostracum on the shell's exterior) to more worn and opaque shells are low however.

2.3. Charcoal and charred cereal grains are present in very low quantities, and are likely to be chance inclusions rather than reflecting direct discard of cereal processing waste into the sampled features.

2.4. A small number of uncharred weed seeds are present. These are exclusively robust seeds such as those of elder (*Sambucus nigra*), cleavers/ bedstraw (*Galium* sp.), and goosefoot (*Chenopodium* sp.).

2.5. The shells of non-marine molluscs are abundant in all samples. The assemblage is a mixed one. Although *Vallonia* spp., one of the more common genera in all of the samples, are usually associated with open, grassy environments, they are also found in more shaded and damp habitats, and their co-dominance with *Trochulus* spp., a fairly ubiquitous snail with wide ecological tolerances, rather than other open grassland species is likely to reflect conditions within the sampled features.

2.6. Species of shaded habitats, including some like *Merdigera obscura* that are generally associated with woodland or *Pomatias elegans*, associated with rubbly conditions or broken ground, are present in Medieval period, while a number of true freshwater species, including *Viviparus contectus*, a species more common in the east of England than elsewhere in Britain, are present in ditch fills, suggesting that these features permanently held water.

2.7. Overall, the non-marine shell assemblage reflects locally shaded conditions around water-bearing ditches and gullies, in a more broadly open landscape, as suggested by low numbers of species like *Helicella itala*, *Pupilla muscorum* and *Vertigo pygmaea*. This does not appear to change appreciably through time.

2.8. There are a small number of marine shells in the assemblage. Mussel (*Mytilus* sp.)

fragments are present in Medieval contexts (1050), (1052) and (1054), where they are likely to represent discarded food waste. A juvenile rough periwinkle (*Littorina saxatalis* agg.) shell in (1052) would seem to be the result of accidental collection among mussels: unlike other *Littorina* species, rough periwinkles are not generally eaten as their viviparous nature gives the meat a gritty texture due to the embryonic shells they often contain, besides this particular shell is too tiny to have yielded any meat.

2.9. Other remains in the samples include low quantities of animal bone and ceramic sherds. Sample 1, from context 1049, contained only animal bone and non-marine mollusc shell; the shells have not been identified or discussed here.

3. Statement of Potential and Recommendations

3.1. The non-marine mollusc shell assemblage from Isleham is sizeable and contributes to an understanding of environmental conditions at the site. Other remains offer only minor contributions to understanding the site environment and food consumption there.

3.2. Analysis of the mollusc assemblage from all samples (except for Sample 1) would contribute to an understanding of environmental conditions and potentially land use at the site. Any analysis should include identification to species level of all shells, and a full quantification.

3.3. No other work is recommended for the remainder of this assemblage.

SOURCES CONSULTED

BIBLIOGRAPHIC

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MOLLUSCA

APPENDIX I

Context Number	1049	1050		1052		1054		1034		1021		1023		1029		1063		1072	
Sample Number	1	2		3		4		5		8		9		10		11		12	
Context Description		Gully		Ditch		Gully		Gully		Ditch		Ditch				Ditch		Ditch	
Provisional Date	12th - 15th century	12th-13th century		12th - 13th century		12th - 13th century		1st - 2nd century		1st-2nd century		1st-2nd century				12th -13th century		12th-13th century	
Sample Volume (L)	40	10		10		10		10		10		10		20		10		10	
		Flot	Residue	Flot	Residue	Flot	Residue	Flot	Residue	Flot	Residue	Flot	Residue	Flot	Residue	Flot	Residue	Flot	Residue
Weight after processing (g)	1986	14	1932	23	879	20	933	10	2344	30	1551	40	1337	28	2409	28	773	20	2372
% modern roots	NA	60		60		40		40		50		60		60		40		60	
Estimated proportion 'fresh' : 'worn' shells	NA	1:10		1:5	1:15	1:5	0:1	1:10	0:1	1:50	0:1		0:1	1:10	0:1	1:10	0:1	1:50	0:1
CHARCOAL				+															
CHARRED GRAIN		+		+				+		-				+					
SEEDS																			
Chenopodium sp.														+					
Galium sp.		+		+															
Sambucus nigra		+																	
SHELL	+– (<1g)		– (2g)		+– (9g)		+ (5g)		–+		++		+ (<1g)				– (<1g)		– (3g)
Oxychilus/ Aegopinella sp.		+		+												+		+	
Discus rotundatus		+		+		+		+		–	–	+				+		–	
Carychium spp.		+		+		+				–		–						+	
Pomatias elegans																			–
Clausilia bidentata																			
Merdigera obscura		+				+										+			

Context Number	1049	1050		1052		1054		1034		1021		1023		1029		1063		1072	
Sample Number	1	2		3		4		5		8		9		10		11		12	
Cepaea sp.				+															
Cochlicopa sp.		+		+	–	+	–	+		–	–	–+		+		–	–	–	
Cornu aspersum							–												
Punctum pygmaeum																			
Trochulus spp.		++		++	++	+––	–	+–	++	++	++	++	++	++	+	++	–	++	
Helicella itala		–		+	+	+			–			+		+		–		+	
Pupilla muscorum		+		++		+		+		–		–		+		–		–	
Vallonia spp.		++		++		+–	–	+–	+	++		++		–+		++		++	
Vertigo pygmaea		+		+		+		+		–		–		+		–		–	
Vertigo pusilla																–			
Succinea/ Oxyloma spp.					–				+		–	–	–				–		
Ampullaceana balthica				+											+				
Galba truncatula		+		+	–			+	+	–	–	+	+				–		
Anisus leucostoma		+														–			
Planorbis planorbis				+	–												–		
Physa fontinalis										–									
Viviparus contectus					–														
Sphaerium corneum				+															
Cecilioides acicula		––		++		––		+						+		–			
Mytilus sp. Mussel			+		+		–												
Littorina cf. *saxatalis*					–														
BONE	+ (3g)	+ (<1g)		+ (11g)		+ (3g)											–		–
POT		+ (17g)		+ (7g)		+ (5g) (includes glazed		+ (6g)				– (39g)							

Context Number	1049	1050	1052	1054	1034	1021	1023	1029	1063	1072
Sample Number	1	2	3	4	5	8	9	10	11	12
				fragment 1						

APPENDIX – 4 OASIS FORM

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

List of Projects | Manage Projects | Search Projects | New project | Change your details | HER coverage | Change country | Log out

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OASIS ID: britanni1-403864

Project details

Project name	Land west of 4 Coates Drove, Isleham, Cambs
Short description of the project	From the 20th to 30th of October 2020 Britannia Archaeology Ltd (BA) undertook an archaeological evaluation at Land West of 4 Coates Drove, Isleham (TL 6440 7470). The site had a high potential for Roman period activity; particularly the continuation of the Roman agricultural activity previously identified on several sites adjacent to the development site. There was a moderate-high potential for Saxon, medieval, and post-medieval finds and features, again particularly a continuation of the features from these periods identified adjacent to the site. The evaluation revealed 3 phases of occupation at the site. Phase 1 relates to prehistoric activity at the site. This is focused on trench 1 and likely represents a form of minimal peripheral activity possibly temporary in nature. Phase 2 relates to the period of Roman occupation that was also seen in the excavations directly adjacent to the site at 32 - 34 Church Lane, Isleham. The excavation revealed that the Roman phases appears to have ceased in the late 2nd century which can be also seen in the current evaluation. The features in this phase represent an extension of those seen in the adjacent excavations and are clearly domestic in nature. The nature of this activity is difficult to ascertain within the limited scope of archaeological evaluation.
Project dates	Start: 20-10-2020 End: 30-10-2020
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	ECB6344 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Cultivated Land 4 - Character Undetermined
Monument type	PITS Medieval
Monument type	DITCHES Iron Age
Monument type	DITCHES Roman
Monument type	DITCHES Medieval
Monument type	LAYER Medieval
Significant Finds	CERAMICS Iron Age
Significant Finds	CERAMICS Roman
Significant Finds	CERAMICS Medieval
Significant Finds	CBM Roman
Significant Finds	ANIMAL BONE Medieval
Methods & techniques	""Sample Trenches""

Development type	Rural residential
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country	England
Site location	CAMBRIDGESHIRE EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE ISLEHAM Land west of 4 Coates Drove, Isleham, Cambs
Postcode	CB7 5WF
Study area	0 Square metres
Site coordinates	TL 6440 7470 52.345266900282 0.413763883062 52 20 42 N 000 24 49 E Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Britannia Archaeology Ltd
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	Lousia Cunningham
Project director/manager	Martin Brook
Project supervisor	Martin Brook
Type of sponsor/funding body	developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Shanrye Surveying and Architectural Services

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Cambridgeshire HER
Physical Archive ID	ECB6344
Physical Contents	"Animal Bones","Ceramics","Environmental","Metal"
Digital Archive recipient	Cambridgeshire HER
Digital Archive ID	ECB6344
Digital Contents	"Animal Bones","Ceramics","Environmental","Metal"
Digital Media available	"Database","GIS","Images raster / digital photography"
Paper Archive recipient	Cambridgeshire HER
Paper Archive ID	ECB6344
Paper Contents	"Animal Bones","Ceramics","Environmental","Metal"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Drawing","Map","Miscellaneous Material","Photograph","Plan","Report","Section","Survey"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Land West of 4 Coates Drove, Isleham, Cambridgeshire
Author(s)/Editor(s)	M. Brook
Other bibliographic details	R1279
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Issuer or publisher	Britannia Archaeology Ltd
Place of issue or publication	Bury St Edmunds
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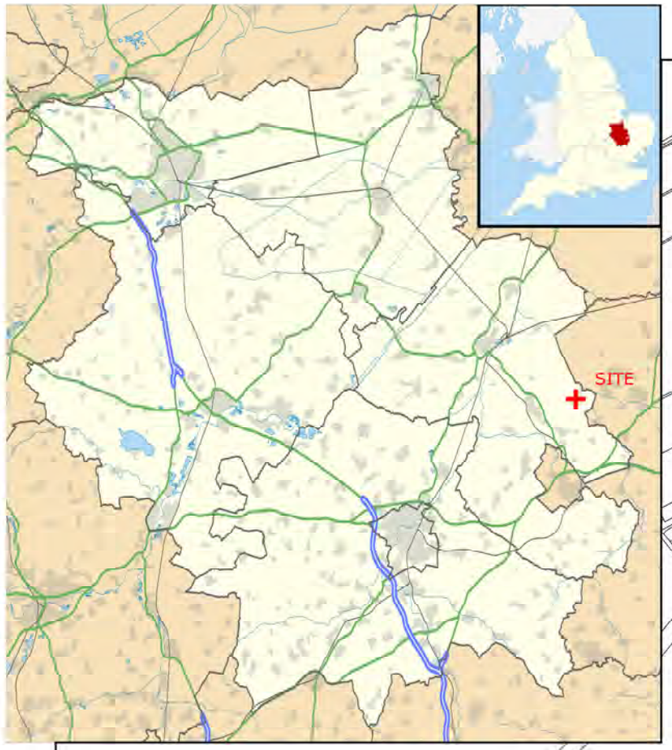

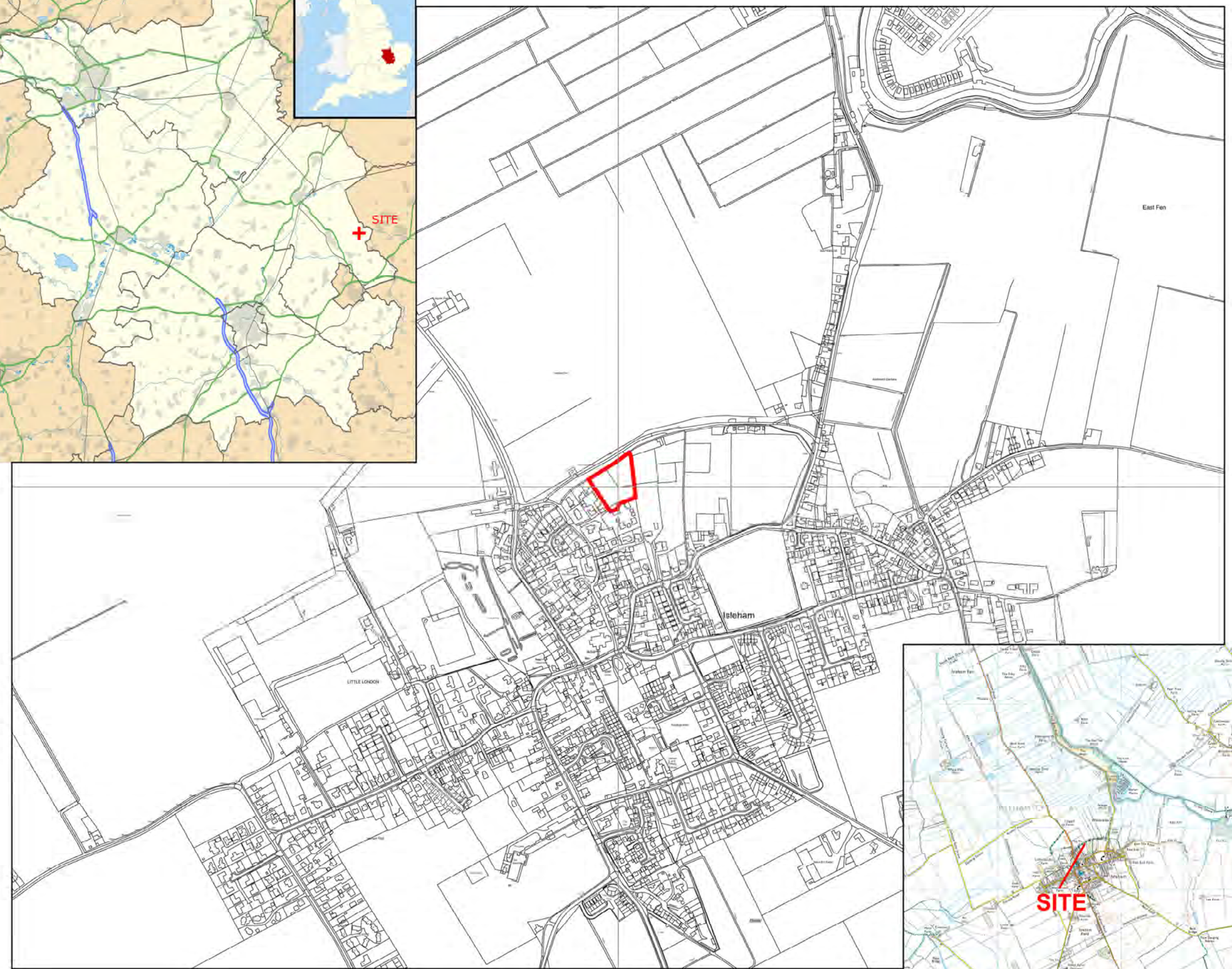

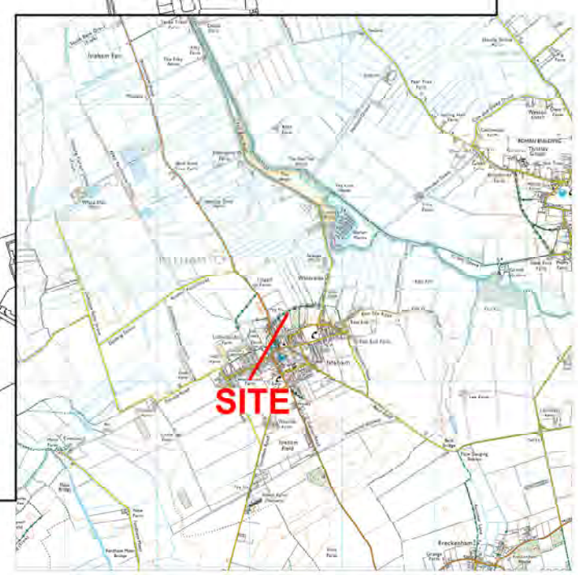

N

Site Boundary

NGR:	564400 274700
REF:	R1279
PROJECT:	LAND WEST OF 4 COATES GROVE, ISLEHAM, CAMBRIDGESHIRE
DESCRIPTION:	GENERAL LOCATION PLAN
CLIENT:	SHANRYE SURVEYING & ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES

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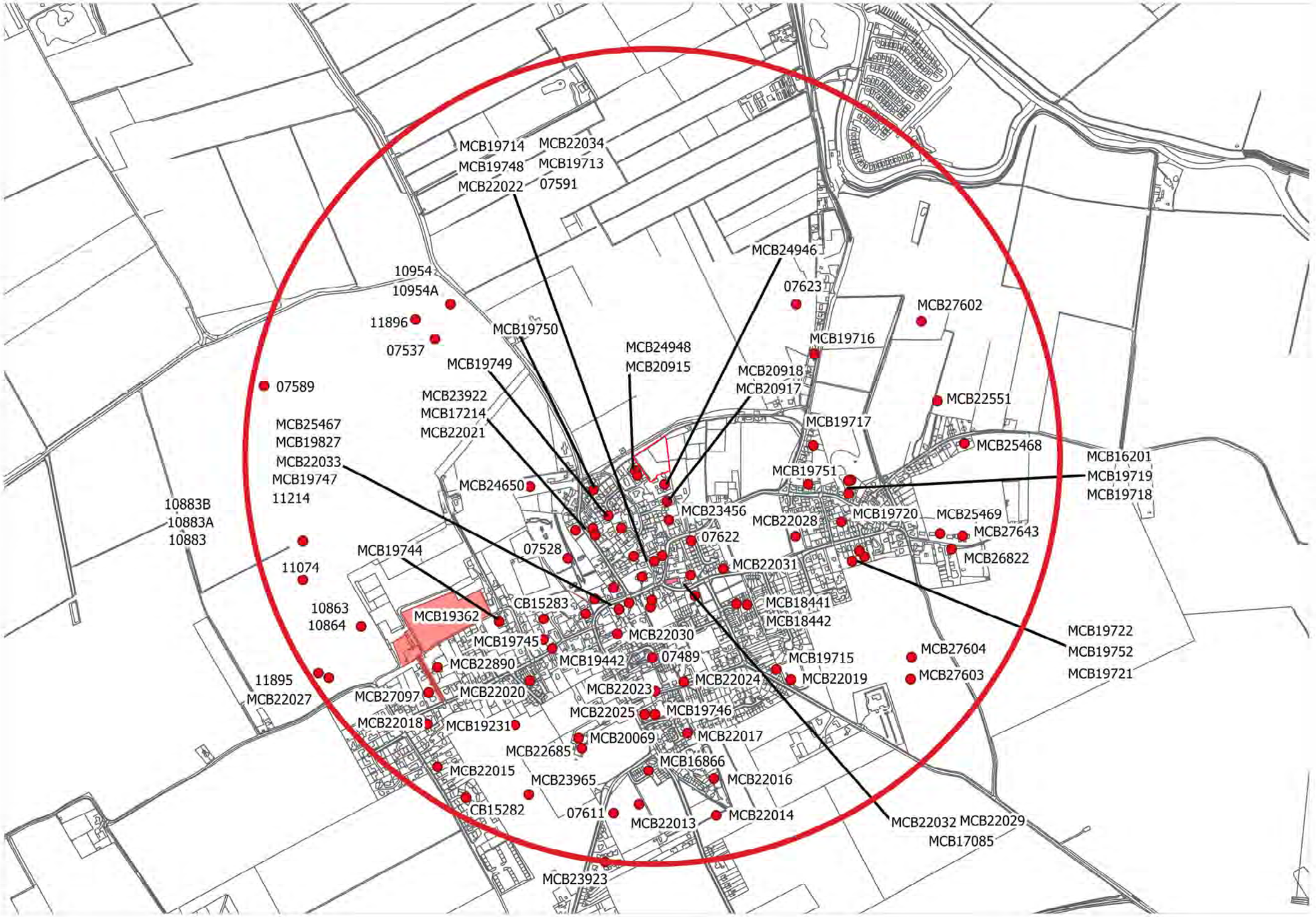
DATE: NOV 2020	PLOT: A3	VERSION: 1
AUTHOR: HG		FIGURE: 1
APPROVED: DPM		



N

HER Search Area
Site Boundary
Uncategorised Record

0 1:10000 500m

NGR: 564400 274700 REF: R1279

PROJECT: LAND WEST OF 8 COATES GROVE, ISLEHAM, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

DESCRIPTION: HER DATA : MONUMENTS

CLIENT: SHANKYE SURVEYING & ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES

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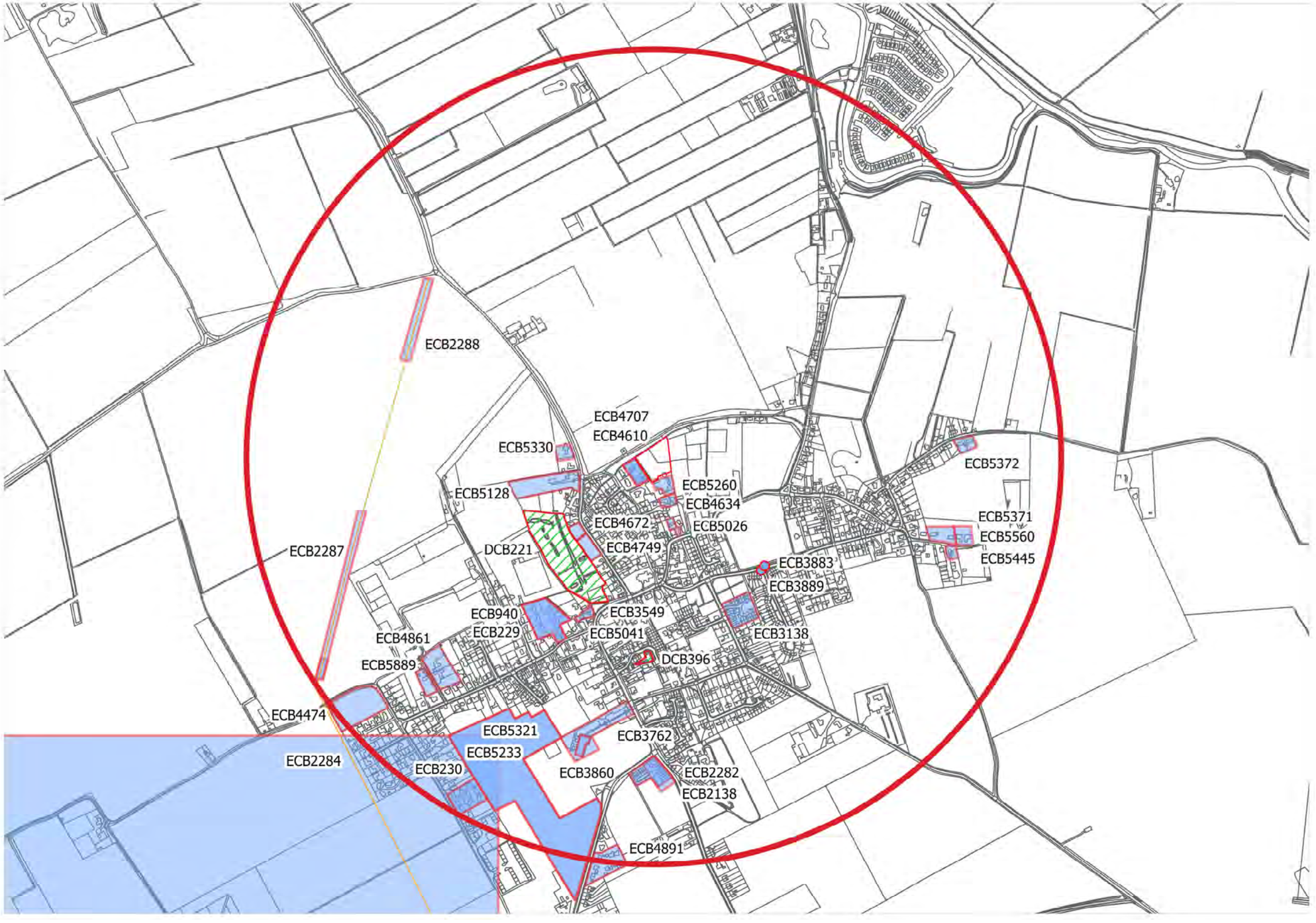
DATE: NOV 2020 PLOT: A3 VERSION: 1
DRAWN: HG
APPROVED: DPM
FIGURE: 2



N

HER Search Area
Site Boundary
Archaeological Event
Registered Garden

0 1:10000 500m

NGR: 564400 274700 REF: R1279

PROJECT: LAND WEST OF 4 COATES GROVE, ISLEHAM, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

DESCRIPTION: HER DATA - EVENTS AND REGISTERED GARDENS

CLIENT: SHANRYE SURVEYING & ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES

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FIGURE: 3

Track

Pumping Station

TT2

TT3

TT4

TT1

34

ASHFIELD GARDENS

N

Site Boundary
Trench
Archaeological Features
2016 Site Boundary
2016 Excavation Area
2016 Archaeological Features
Section Line
Excavated Feature
Limit of Excavation
Sample Section
Natural Feature

0 1:500 30m

NGR: 564400 274700
REF: R1279

PROJECT: LAND WEST OF 4 COATES GROVE, ISLEHAM, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

DESCRIPTION: CURRENT EVALUATION TP AND 2016 EXCAVATION AREA

CLIENT: SHANRYE SURVEYING & ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES

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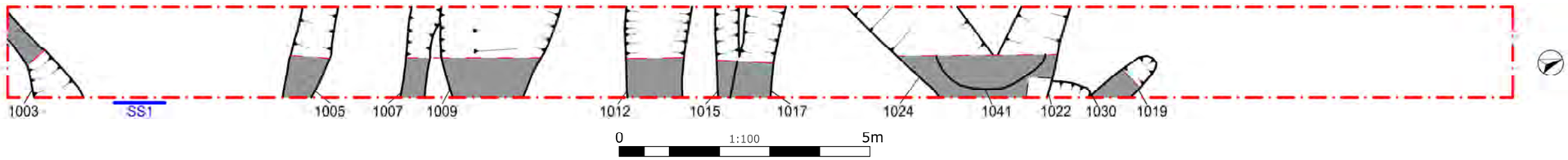
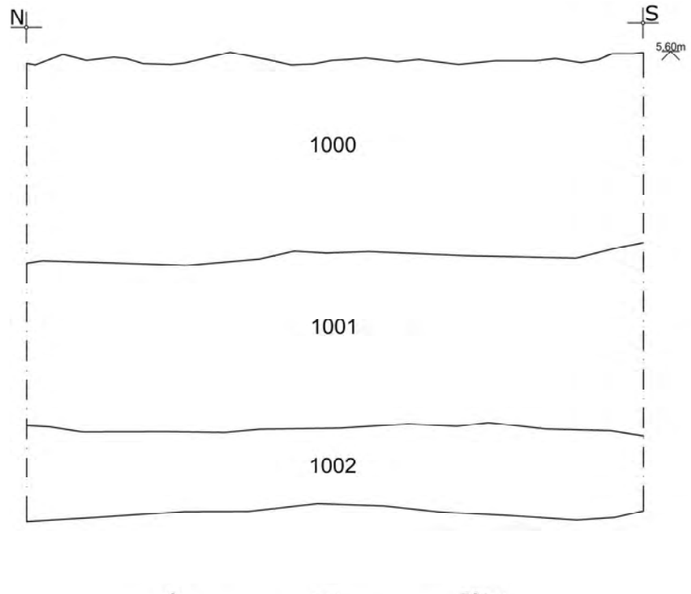
FIGURE: 4

TRENCH 1



DP2 - TRENCH 1 - VIEW S

TRENCH 1 - SAMPLE SECTION 1



DP3 - TRENCH 1 - VIEW N

DP14 - SAMPLE SECTION 1 - VIEW E

Trench
Archaeological Features
SS1 Sample Section
Section Line
Excavated Feature
Limit of Excavation

NGR: 564400 274700
REF: R1279

PROJECT: LAND WEST OF 4 COATES GROVE, ISLEHAM, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

DESCRIPTION: TRENCH 1 - PLANS, SECTIONS AND PHOTOGRAPHS

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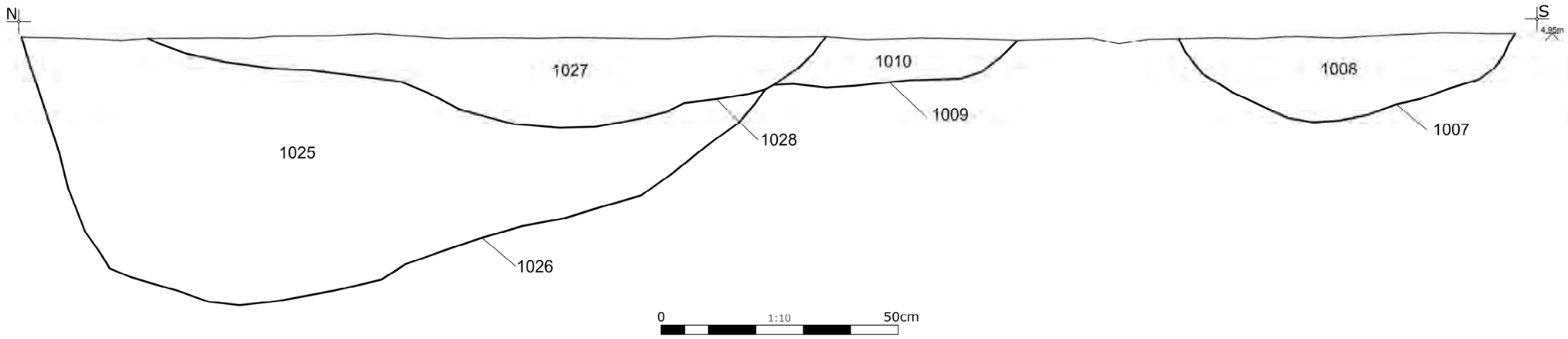
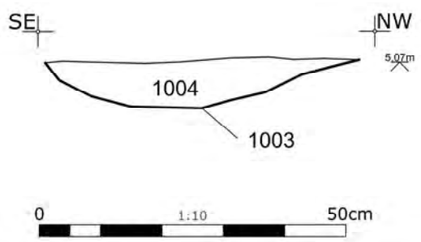
PLOT: A3
VERSION: 1
AUTHOR: HG
APPROVED: DPM
FIGURE: 5

TRENCH 1 - GULLY 1007, PIT 1026 AND DITCHES 1009 AND 1028



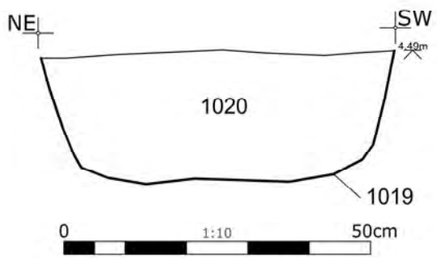
DP9, 10 - GULLY 1007, PIT 1026 AND DITCHES 1009 AND 1028 - VIEW E

TRENCH 1 - GULLY 1003

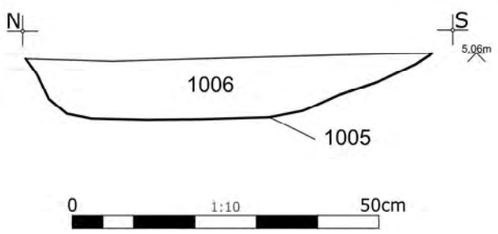


TRENCH 1 - GULLY 1003 - VIEW SW

TRENCH 1 - DITCH TERMINUS 1019



TRENCH 1 - LINEAR 1005



TRENCH 1 - LINEAR 1005 - VIEW E

TRENCH 1 - DITCH TERMINUS 1019 - VIEW SE

NGR: 564400 274700 | REF: R1279

PROJECT: LAND WEST OF 4 COATES GROVE, ISLEHAM, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

DESCRIPTION: TRENCH 1 - SECTIONS AND PHOTOGRAPHS

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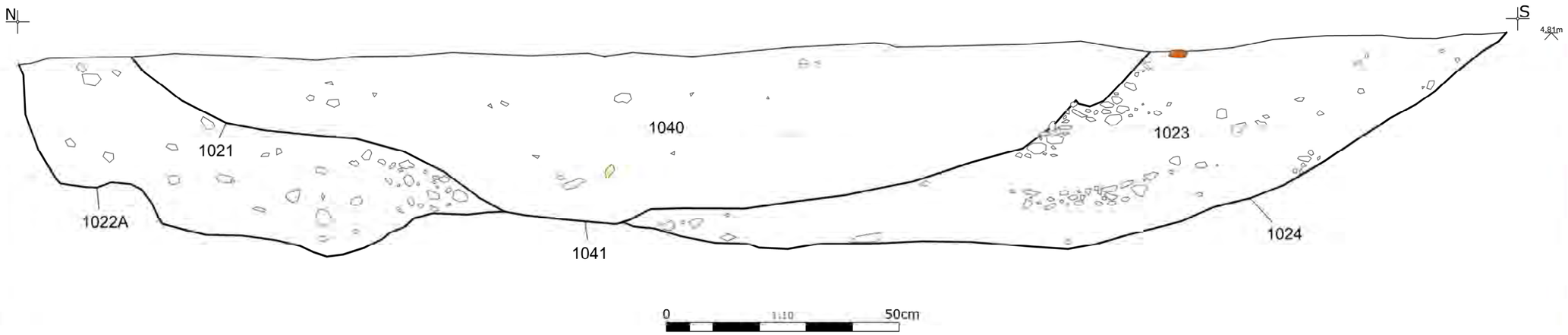
DATE: NOV 2020 | PLOT: A3 | VERSION: 1

AUTHOR: HG | APPROVED: DPM

FIGURE: 6

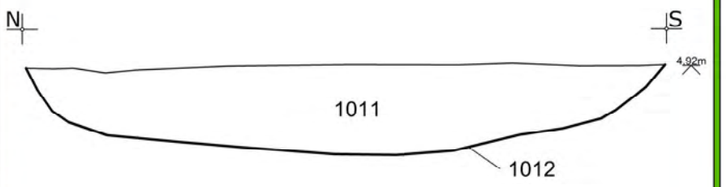
TRENCH 1 - PIT? 1041 AND DITCHES 1022A AND 1026



Chalk
Pottery
Bone

DP6 - PIT? 1041 AND DITCHES 1022A AND 1026 - VIEW N, E

TRENCH 1 - DITCH 1012



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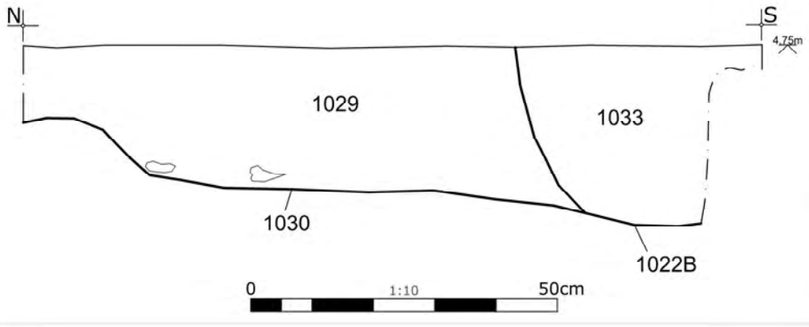
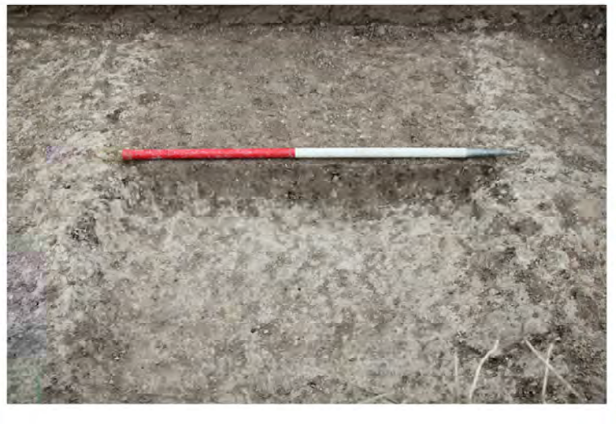
TRENCH 1 - GULLY 1030 AND DITCH 1022B

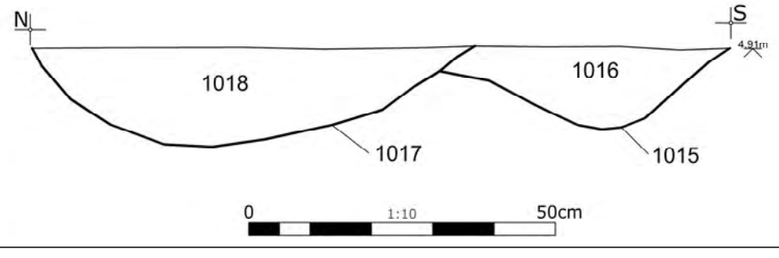


DP5 - GULLY 1030 AND DITCH 1022B - VIEW E

TRENCH 1 - DITCH 1012 - VIEW E



TRENCH 1 - DITCHES 1015 AND 1017



DP7 - DITCHES 1015 AND 1017 - VIEW E

NGR: 564400 274700
REF: R1279

PROJECT:
LAND WEST OF 4 COATES GROVE, ISLEHAM, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

DESCRIPTION:
TRENCH 1 - SECTIONS AND PHOTOGRAPHS

CLIENT:
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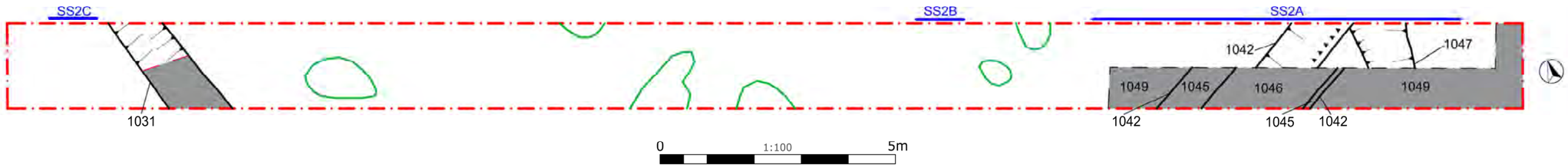
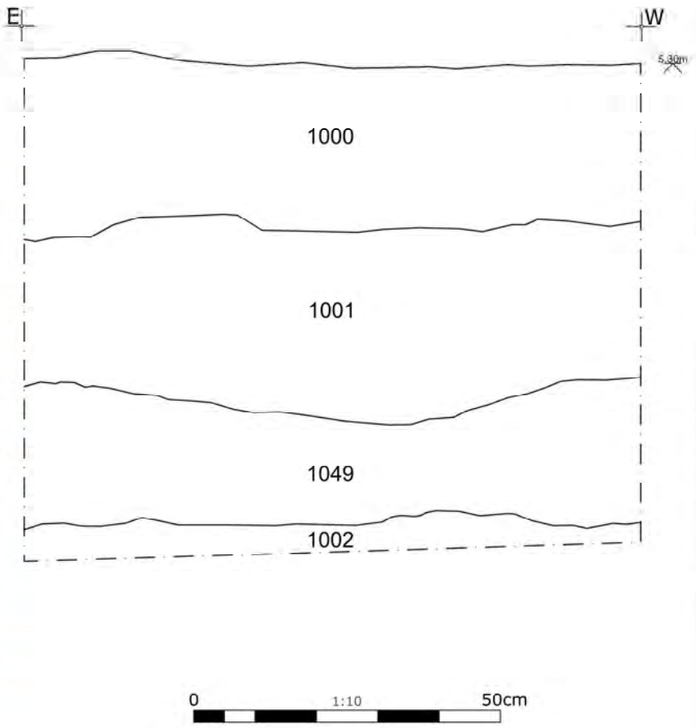
PLOT: A3
VERSION: 1
AUTHOR: HG
APPROVED: DPM
FIGURE: 7

TRENCH 2

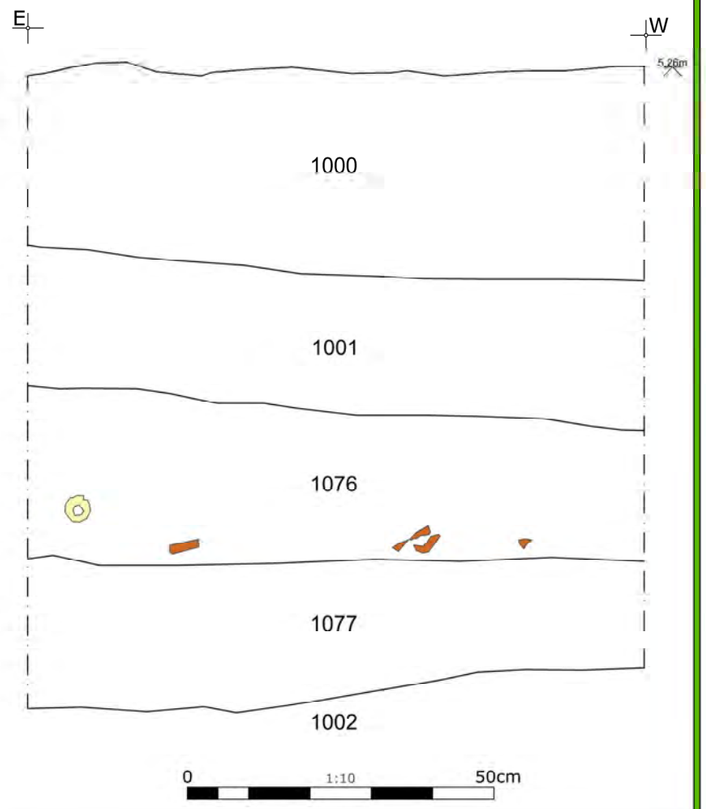


DP18 - TRENCH 2 - VIEW NW

TRENCH 2 - SAMPLE SECTION 2B



TRENCH 2 - SAMPLE SECTION 2C



DP24 - SAMPLE SECTION 2B - VIEW NE

DP39 - SAMPLE SECTION 2C - VIEW NE

- Trench
- Archaeological Features
- Sample Section
- Section Line
- Excavated Feature
- Limit of Excavation
- Pottery
- Bone
- Natural Feature

NGR: 564400 274700 | REF: R1279

PROJECT: LAND WEST OF 4 COATES GROVE, ISLEHAM, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

DESCRIPTION: TRENCH 2 - PLANS, SECTIONS AND PHOTOGRAPHS

CLIENT: SHANRYE SURVEYING & ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES

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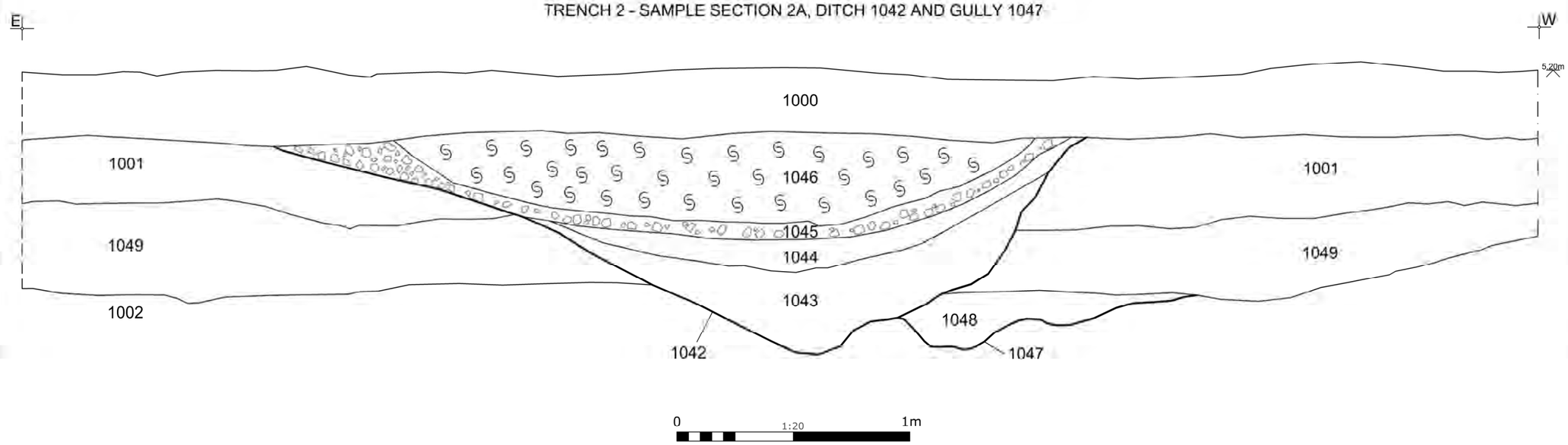
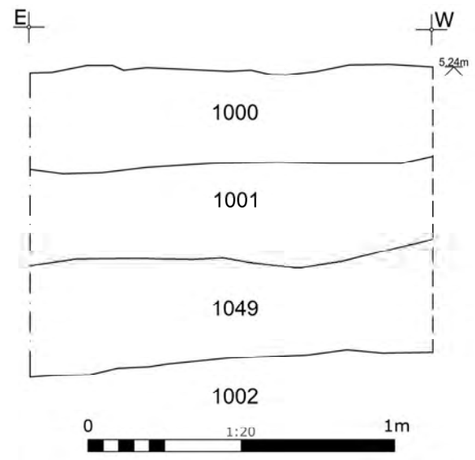
FIGURE: 8

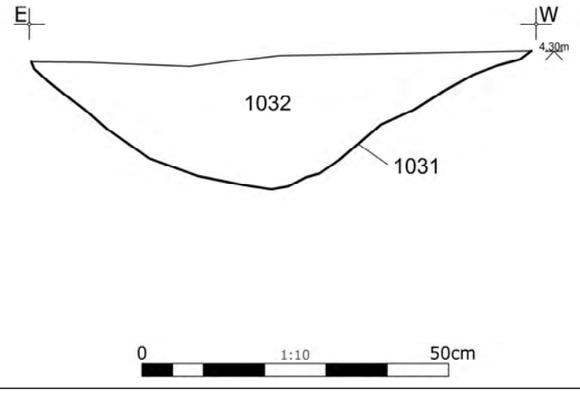
TRENCH 2 - SAMPLE SECTION 2A, DITCH 1042 AND GULLY 1047



TRENCH 2 - SAMPLE SECTION 2A, DITCH 1042 AND GULLY 1047 - CONTINUED



TRENCH 2 - DITCH 1031



DP17 - DITCH 1042 AND GULLY 1047 - VIEW S

DP19 - SAMPLE SECTION 2A, DITCH 1042 AND GULLY 1047 - VIEW N

DP15 - DITCH 1031 - VIEW N

Chalk Brash
Chalk

NGR:	564400 274700
	A1279
PROJECT:	LAND WEST OF 4 COATES GROVE, ISLEHAM, CAMBRIDGESHIRE
DESCRIPTION:	TRENCH 2 - SECTIONS AND PHOTOGRAPHS
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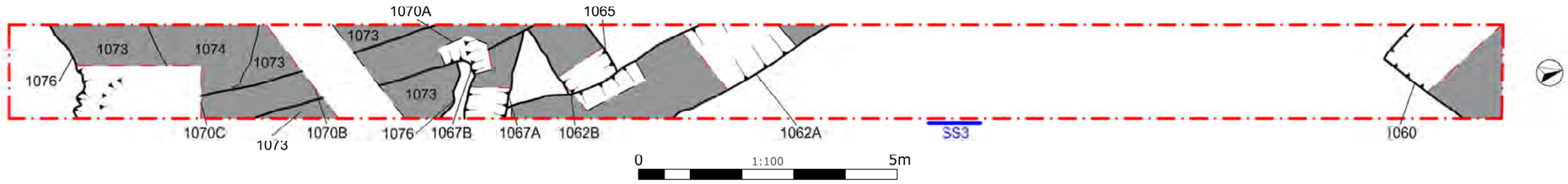
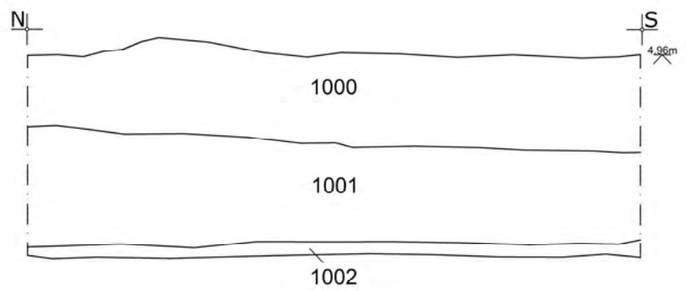
AUTHOR:	HG	FIGURE:	9
APPROVED:	DPM		

TRENCH 3



DP35 - TRENCH 3 - VIEW N

TRENCH 3 - SAMPLE SECTION 3



DP34 - SAMPLE SECTION 3 - VIEW E

Trench
Archaeological Features
SS1 Sample Section
Section Line
Excavated Feature
Limit of Excavation

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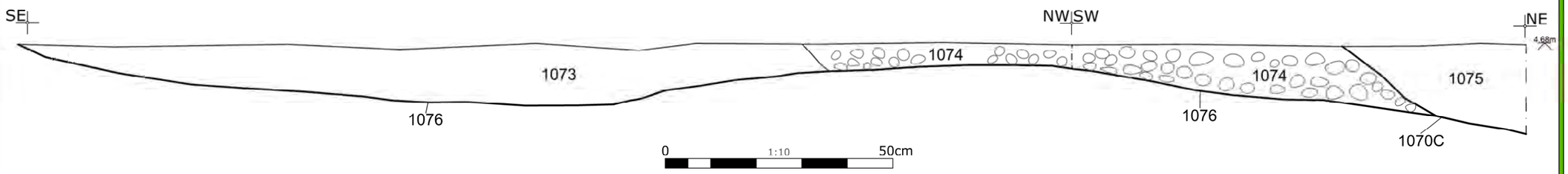
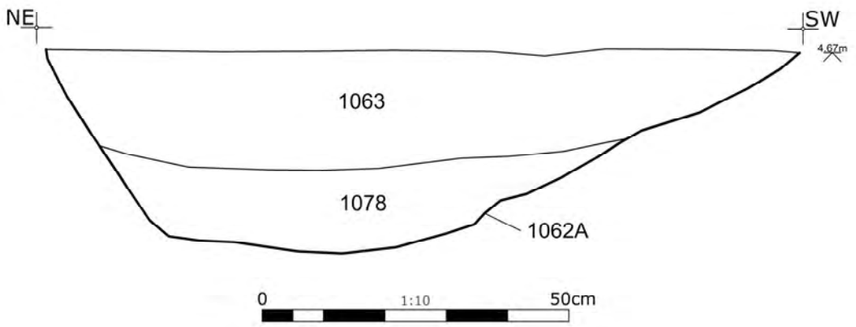
FIGURE: 10

TRENCH 3 - DITCH 1070C



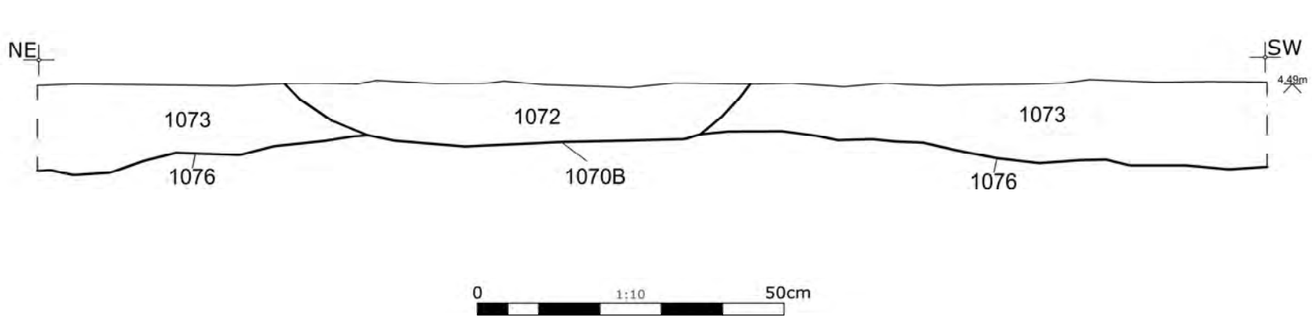
DP37, 38 - DITCH 1070C - VIEW W, N

TRENCH 3 - DITCH 1062A



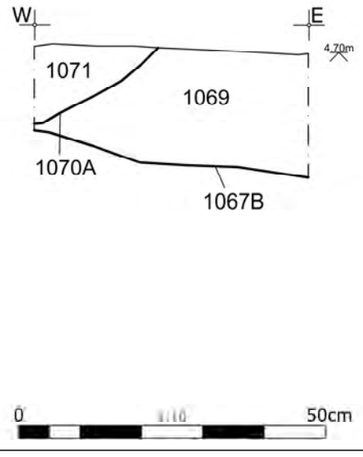
Chalk Brash

TRENCH 3 - DITCH 1062A



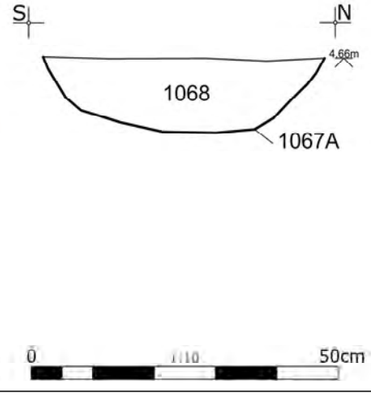
TRENCH 3 - DITCH 1062A - VIEW SE

TRENCH 3 - DITCHES 1067B AND 1070A



DP31 - DITCHES 1067B AND 1070A - VIEW N

TRENCH 3 - DITCH 1067A



DP30 - DITCH 1067A - VIEW W

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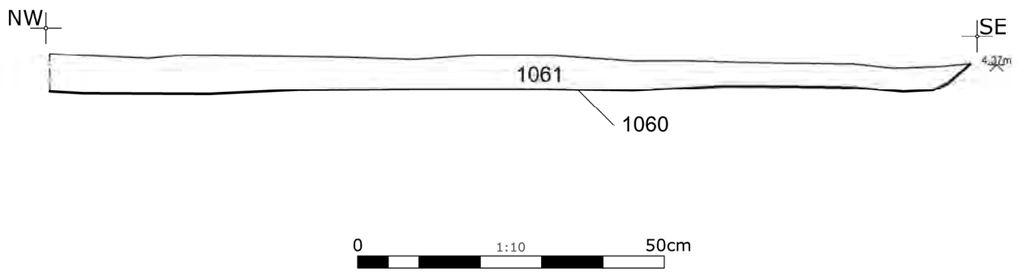
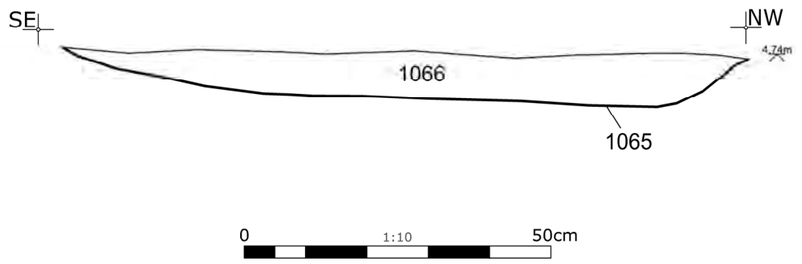
AUTHOR: HG
DPM

FIGURE: 11

TRENCH 3 - PIT 1060



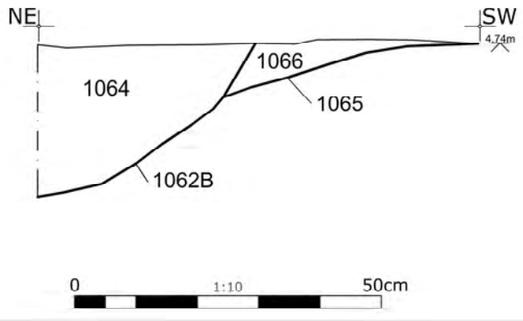
TRENCH 3 - DITCH 1065



DP26 - DITCH 1060 - VIEW NE

DP29 - DITCH 1065 - VIEW SW

TRENCH 3 - DITCHES 1062B AND 1065



DP28, 33 - DITCHES 1062B AND 1065 - VIEW NE, NW

NGR: 564400 274700 | REF: R1279

PROJECT: LAND WEST OF 4 COATES GROVE, ISLEHAM, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

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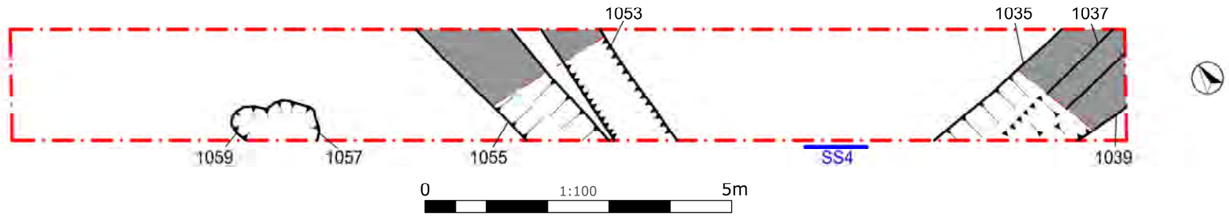
AUTHOR: HG | CHECKED BY: DPM

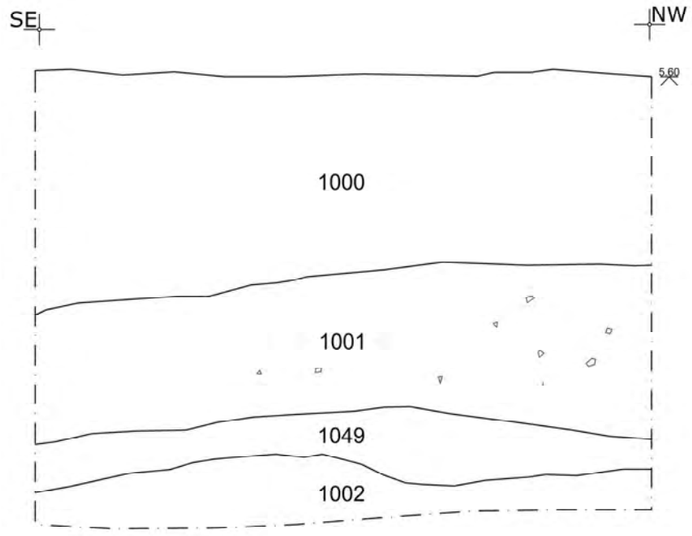
FIGURE: 12

TRENCH 4



DP22 - TRENCH 4 - VIEW SE

TRENCH 4 - SAMPLE SECTION 4



DP32 - SAMPLE SECTION 4 - VIEW SW

Trench
Archaeological Features
SS1 Sample Section
Section Line
Excavated Feature
Limit of Excavation
Chalk

NGR: 564400 274700
REF: R1279

PROJECT: LAND WEST OF 4 COATES GROVE, ISLEHAM, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

DESCRIPTION: TRENCH 4 - PLANS, SECTIONS AND PHOTOGRAPHS

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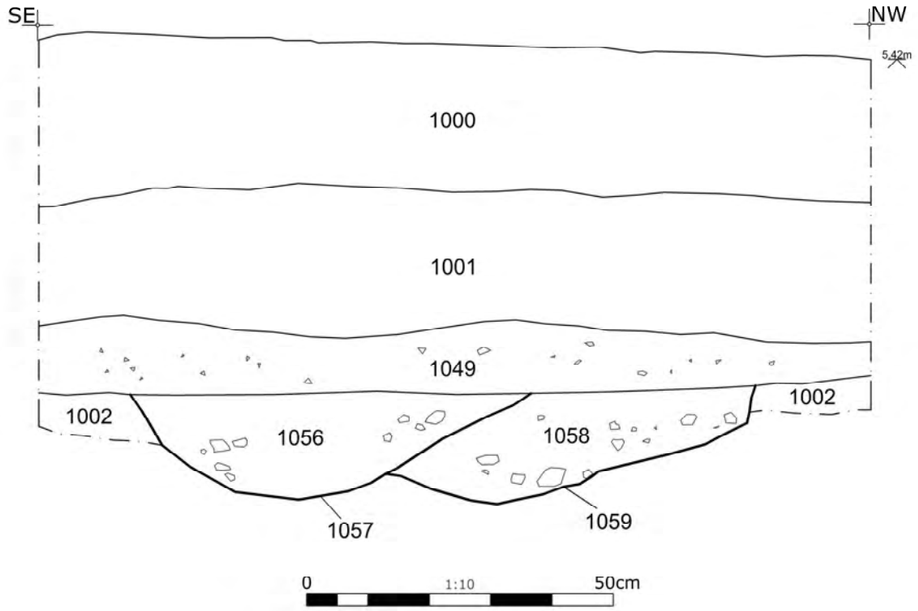
APPROVED: DPM

FIGURE: 13

TRENCH 4 - GULLIES 1057 AND 1059

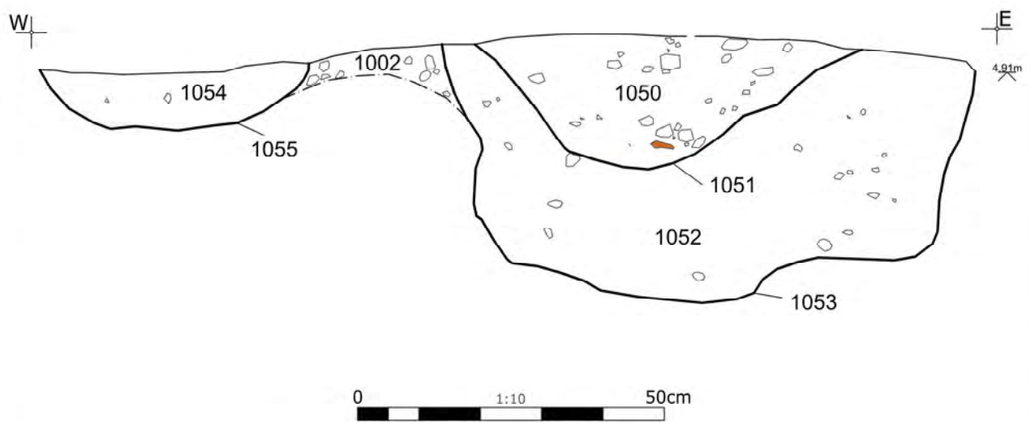


DP25 - GULLIES 1057 AND 1059 - VIEW SW

TRENCH 4 - SAMPLE SECTION 4

DP16 - GULLIES 1035, 1037 AND 1039 - VIEW E

TRENCH 4 - DITCH 1053 AND GULLIES 1051 AND 1055



DP23 - DITCH 1053 AND GULLIES 1051 AND 1055 - VIEW N

Pottery

Chalk

NGR: 564400 274700

REF: R1279

LAND WEST OF 4 COATES GROVE,
ISLEHAM, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

DESCRIPTION:
TRENCH 4 - SECTIONS AND PHOTOGRAPHS

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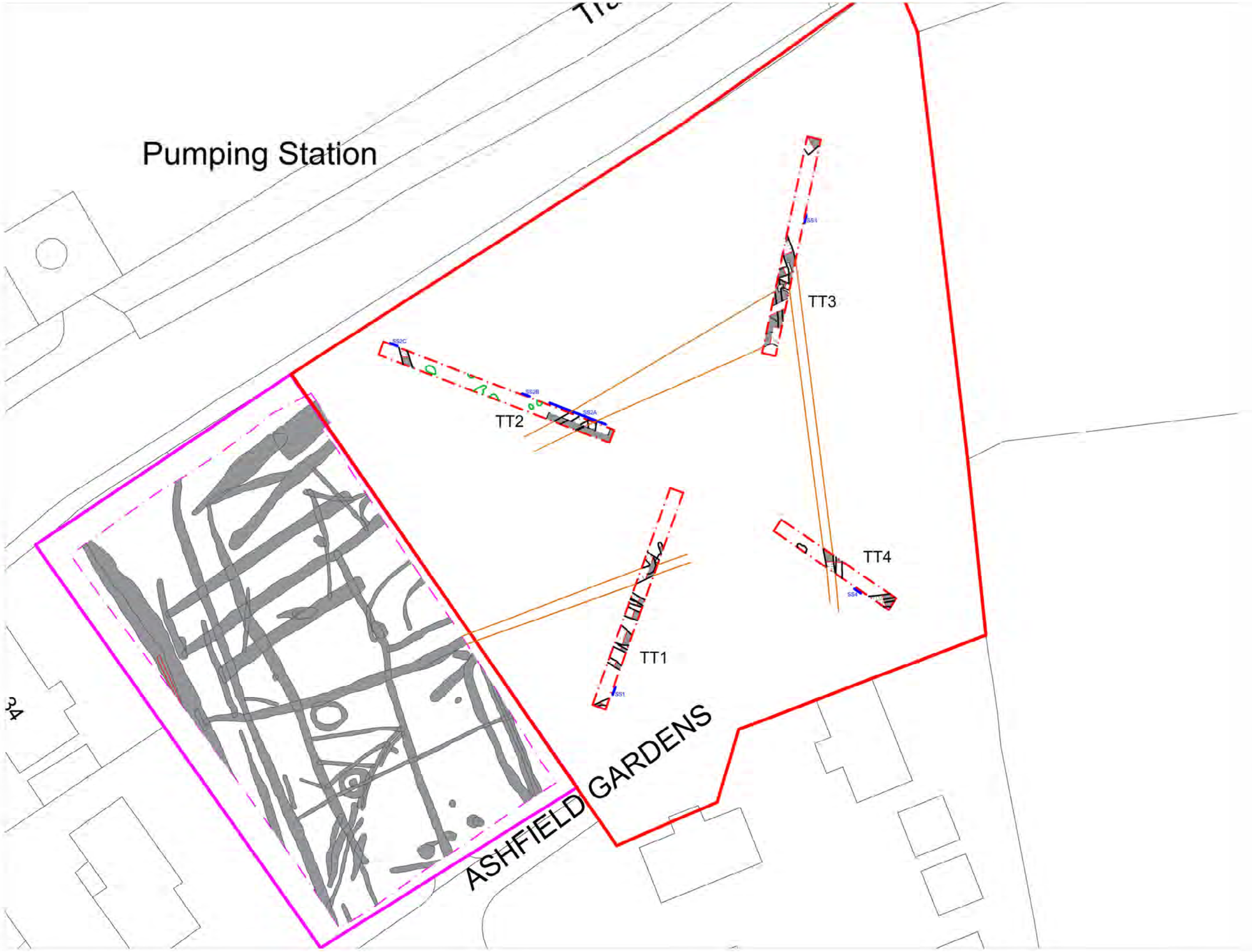
APPROVED: DPM

FIGURE: 14



N

- Site Boundary
- Trench
- Archaeological Features
- 2016 Site Boundary
- 2016 Excavation Area
- 2016 Archaeological Features
- Section Line
- Excavated Feature
- Limit of Excavation
- Sample Section
- Natural Feature
- Feature Projection

0 1:500 30m

NGR: 564400 274700 REF: R1279

PROJECT: LAND WEST OF 4 COATES GROVE, ISLEHAM, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

DESCRIPTION: EVALUATION POSSIBLE FEATURE PROJECTIONS

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DRAWN: HG APPROVED: DPM

FIGURE: 15

N

Site Boundary

Trench

0 1:500 30m

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PROJECT: LAND WEST OF 4 COATES GROVE, ISLEHAM, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

DESCRIPTION: EVALUATION PLAN OVER 1847 TITHE MAP

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DRAWN: DPM APPROVED: MB

FIGURE: 16