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WITCOMB PROJECT MANAGEMENT LTD.

Land at the George Hall and the Old Post Office, George Street, Huntingdon

Archaeological Evaluation Report (Addendum)

JULY 2016

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Archaeological Evaluation Report (Addendum)

July 2016

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SUMMARY

Wardell Armstrong Archaeology was commissioned by Witcomb Project Management Ltd. to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land at the George Hall and the Old Post Office, George Street, Huntingdon (NGR: TL 2364 7183). The evaluation by trial trenching was undertaken in two phases, the first in June 2015 and the second in February 2016. It was requested to investigate the potential archaeological resource and assess its impact from the redevelopment of the current properties into a hotel and public house for which planning has been approved by Huntingdon District Council.

The first phase of the archaeological investigations revealed significant archaeological deposits and features dating from the early medieval period through to the 19th and 20th centuries. A pit and several linear features that dated from the early medieval and medieval features were seen to truncate the natural substrate and demonstrated that the site has been actively used from at least the 13th/14th centuries. These features were then covered and in some instances truncated by later activity and a deliberate build-up of the ground level with some of the final stages seen related to the expansion of the still upstanding buildings in the 19th century. The latter part of the timeline was demonstrated in the second phase of works where a former post-medieval garden soil was seen to have been covered by successive dumps of material used to raise the ground level. These were subsequently truncated by the foundation trench within which the concrete foundation of the current building was placed and the building constructed. It is expected that earlier deposits underlie those seen in phase 2, however, they were not reached due to them extending below the proposed level of impact of the redevelopment and health and safety considerations.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Wardell Armstrong Archaeology would like to thank Witcomb Project Management Ltd. for commissioning the project, and in particular Andrew Witcomb for all his assistance throughout the work. Also, to Catherine Sanderson of Sanderson Limited who helped in organising the access, plant and welfare hire. Wardell Armstrong Archaeology extends its thanks to Gemma Stewart, Assistant Archaeologist, Historic Environment Team, Cambridgeshire County Council for her assistance.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Circumstances of the Project

1.1.1 Wardell Armstrong Archaeology (WAA) was commissioned by Witcomb Project Management Ltd (hereafter referred to as 'the client') to undertake an archaeological evaluation at the George Hall and the Old Post Office, George Street, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire (NGR: TL 2364 7183; Figure 1). The evaluation by trail trenching was undertaken in two parts and was required to inform upon the potential archaeological resource and the impact upon it from the proposed development to allow the Local Planning Authority to make an inform decision should further mitigation be required.

1.1.2 The development of the current properties comprises altering George Hall and the former Post Office into a public house with associated cellars and services. An old Sorting Office in the northwest corner of the development site is to be demolished and a new hotel constructed. This redevelopment will include work on the Old Post Office which is a grade II listed building formerly known as Sandford House. The redevelopment of the site has been approved by Huntingdon District Council (Planning References: 1401704FUL and 1401046LBC).

1.1.3 Evidence of Prehistoric, Romano-British, early-medieval and medieval occupation have all been found in the immediate vicinity, especially to the east and southeast of the site. The main Roman trunk road Ermine Street (HER Ref: **CB 15034**) runs along the line of Huntingdon's current high street to the east, whilst excavations at the rear of Nos. 9 and 10 George Street to the immediate south revealed evidence of 13th and 14th century activity (HER Ref: **MCB 15671**). The development was therefore believed to have high potential to impact on significant archaeological remains. As a result the Local Planning Authority required a programme of archaeological evaluation by trial trenching to investigate this.

1.1.4 The definition of an archaeological field evaluation is a 'limited programme of non-intrusive and/or intrusive fieldwork which determines the presence or absence of archaeological features, structures, deposits, artefacts or ecofacts within a specified area or site. If such archaeological remains are present field evaluation defines their character, extent, quality and preservation, and enables an assessment of their worth in a local, regional, national and international context as appropriate' (CIFA 2014a).

1.1.5 This project conforms to a brief prepared by Gemma Stewart, Assistant Archaeologist, Historic Environment Team, Cambridgeshire County Council (Email: dated 28 May 2015). A written scheme of investigation (WAA 2015) was then produced to provide a specific methodology based on the brief provided prior to the fieldwork taking place. This is in line with government advice as set out in Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2012).

1.1.6 In addition the archaeological evaluation conforms to the guidelines and standards laid down in the following documents:

- *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Evaluation*, Chartered Institute of Field Archaeologists: Reading (CIFA 2014a).
- *Code of Approved Conduct for the Regulation of Arrangements in Field Archaeology*, Chartered Institute of Field Archaeologists: Reading (CIFA 2014b).
- *Standard and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials,* Chartered Institute of Field Archaeologists: Reading (CIfA 2014c).
- *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England,* East Anglian Archaeology (EAA 2003).
- *Research and Archaeology Revisited: a revised framework for the East of England,* East Anglian Archaeology (EAA 2013).
- *Management of Archaeological Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (Morphe), English Heritage (2006).
- *Wardell Armstrong Archaeology: Excavation Manual*, Wardell Armstrong Archaeology, internal document, edition 1.2 (WAA 2012).

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 The Field Evaluation

2.1.1 The evaluation was carried out in two separate phases. The first phase of the evaluation comprised the excavation of four trenches measuring 20m, 15m, 5m and 5m in length by 1.80m in width (at their base) across the proposed development area that measured 0.2 ha. The trenches were placed using a random array representing a *c*.4.05% sample of the overall site. The site supervisor was given discretion to move the location of the trenches, within reason, in order to avoid services and allow suitable access and egress from the site. The second phase comprised the excavation of two hand excavated trenches 2m in length by 0.90m in width that were placed inside the former Sorting Office in the northwest corner of the site. They were placed by the client parallel along the northern wall in order to investigate the depth, construction and state of the concrete footings.

2.1.2 The general aims of these investigations were:

- to establish the presence/absence, nature, extent and state of preservation of archaeological remains and to record these where they were observed;
- to establish the character of those features in terms of cuts, soil matrices and interfaces;
- to assess the impact of the application on the archaeological site;
- to recover artefactual material, especially that useful for dating purposes;
- to recover palaeoenvironmental material where it survives in order to understand site and landscape formation processes.

2.1.3 During the first phase of the investigations, deposits considered not to be significant were removed by a 360^0 tracked mechanical excavator with a toothless ditching bucket under close archaeological supervision. By contrast both trenches during the second phase were excavated entirely by hand and undertaken by ground workers provided by the client. All trial trenches were subsequently cleaned by the archaeologist by hand, all possible features were inspected and deposits were excavated by hand to retrieve artefactual material and environmental samples. Once completed all features were recorded according to the Wardell Armstrong Archaeology standard procedure as set out in the Excavation Manual (WAA 2012).

2.1.4 Artefact characterisation was undertaken onsite with all deposits being hand sieved for 90 litres of soil or 100% of the deposit, whichever was smaller. All deposits were scanned with a metal detector to make sure that no ferrous objects were missed.

2.1.5 All finds encountered were retained on site and returned to the office where they were identified, quantified and dated to period. A *terminus post quem* was then produced for each stratified context under the supervision of the Wardell Armstrong Archaeology Finds Officer, and the dates were used to help determine the broad date phases for the site. On completion of this project, the finds were cleaned and packaged according to standard guidelines (*Ibid*). Please note, the following categories of material will be discarded after a period of 6 months following the submission of this report, unless there is a specific request to retain them (and subject to the collection policy of the relevant depository):

- where unstratified;
- modern pottery;
- material that has been assessed as having no obvious grounds for retention.

2.1.6 On completion the evaluation trenches were reinstated by replacing the excavated material.

2.2 The Archive

2.2.1 A full professional archive has been compiled in accordance with the project specification, and the Archaeological Archives Forum recommendations (Brown 2011). The archive will be deposited with Cambridgeshire County Council County Archaeological Store under the unique event reference number **ECB 4491**, Digital copies of the report will be sent to the Cambridge HER and physical copies can be required upon request. The archive can be accessed under the unique project identifiers **GSH-A**; **CP11375** for the first phase and **GSH-B; CP11375 ECB 4649** for the second phase.

2.2.2 Wardell Armstrong Archaeology supports the **O**nline **A**cces**S** to the **I**ndex of Archaeological Investigation**S** (**OASIS**) project. This project aims to provide an on-line index and access to the extensive and expanding body of grey literature, created as a result of developer-funded archaeological work. As a result, details of the results of this project will be made available by Wardell Armstrong Archaeology as a part of this national project. It can be accessed by the unique identifier: **wardella2-216627**.

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 Location and Geological Context

3.1.1 The site is located on the corner of George Street and St. John's Street, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire. Domestic properties are located to the immediate north of the site and Godwin House bounds the site to the west. The site lies c.250m to the northeast of Huntingdon railway station with the river Great Ouse to the south. The A14 is also located to the south where it curves towards the northwest.

3.1.2 The area of investigation is approximately 0.2 hectares in size and is roughly square-shaped with a second smaller square area situated to the immediate north of the of the northwest quadrant (Figure 2).

3.1.3 At the time of the investigations the site comprised three disused buildings, two of which, the Old Post Office to the west and George Hall to the east, front George Street whilst the third, the Old Sorting Office, is situated in the northwest corner of the area of investigation. A roughly L-shaped courtyard runs between these buildings and the domestic properties to the north. Entrances to the courtyard open to the north of George Hall onto St John's Street and to the west of the Old Post Office onto George Street. The ground rises steadily to the southeast from c.16m AOD (Above Ordnance Datum) in the northeast corner of the site to c.17.3m AOD at the southwest tip.

3.1.4 The underlying solid geology is mapped as mudstone of the Oxford Clay formation laid down approximately 156 to 165 million years ago during the Jurassic period. Formed in a shallow sea the mudstone is comprised from clasts of silicate minerals deposited as a combination of mud, silt, sand and gravel. No superficial geology is known to be present (BGS 2015).

3.2 Historical and Archaeological Background

3.2.1 A search was undertaken of the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (HER) for the known historical and archaeological background of the site and the surrounding area.

3.2.2 The earliest known evidence for human activity recovered from the centre of Huntingdon is a Palaeolithic flint assemblage (HER Ref. **MCB 18576**) that was recovered during excavations at Pathfinder House in 2007 (Site Ref. **HUPH 07**) to the southeast. Further dispersed activity is seen in the Neolithic with a ditch being revealed during an evaluation at the land to the rear of Walden House *c.*100m to the southeast which also revealed evidence of continual activity from at least the early-medieval period through to the modern day (HER Ref. **MCB 16320**).

3.2.3 Known activity and probable occupation began in the Iron Age and this continued through the Romano-British period and became focused to the southeast of the current area of investigation. It was centred round the main crossing point of the Great River Ouse and along the route of one of the main Roman trunk roads, Ermine Street (HER Ref. **CB 15034**) tracing what is still the main High Street through the centre of Huntingdon's historic core.

3.2.4 Excavations to the rear of 9-10 George Street to the immediate south revealed evidence of 13th and 14th century activity (HER Ref. **MCB 15671**). Although evidence of Prehistoric, Romano-British, early-medieval and medieval occupation have all been revealed in the immediate vicinity, especially to the east and southeast.

3.2.5 A castle is thought to have been present in Huntingdon since before the Norman Conquest. This castle overlooked the crossing point of the river, the original motte and bailey castle was destroyed around 1082AD when the enlarged motte of the later Norman castle was established. The Norman castle was itself destroyed around 1174AD and a fine medieval castle was constructed in its stead which can still be seen as earthworks on top of the motte (HER Ref. **01774**).

3.2.6 The town was chartered by King John in 1205AD and prospered as a market town due to its position on the main crossing point of the River Great Ouse, with a series of bridges being built including the still extant 14th century stone built Huntingdon Bridge (HER Ref. **02544**). The former Romano-British Ermine Street continued to be used as the main transport and trade route and the town prospered as a market town from this. This prosperity continued throughout the post-medieval period and into the 18th and 19th centuries when its importance as a coaching town overtook its market-town status.

3.2.7 The Old Post Office building in the southwest corner of the site is a Grade II listed brick building which dates to the 1850s and was formerly known as Sandford House. It was the residence of Charles Sandford Windover the maker of carriages and later coaches and Rolls Royce car bodywork. The coach works originally stood to the immediate west of the Old Post Office but are now demolished. The Post Office is still connected by a covered walkway to the structure in the northwest corner of the site which was originally used as a Sorting Office in associated with the Post Office and is believed to be of similar construction date. George Hall, constructed in 1845, was originally the Chapel of Saint John the Evangelist. It is believed to stand on the site of a former Georgian theatre. (The Hunts Post January 2015). Both the Old Post Office and George Hall were recently used as a retail showroom for furniture with associated storage and offices whilst the Post Office Sorting Office was converted into a warehouse providing storage for the furniture store.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The first phase of evaluation was undertaken between 09th June and 12th June 2015 with four trenches excavated across the proposed development area. The trenches were placed using a random array to investigate a representative area of the proposed development. The two shorter trenches, c.5m in length, were excavated as such due to the limited space and large number of services, the trenches were located behind the Old Post Office building on the northwest side. The other two trenches measured c.20m and c.15m in length and were located in the open areas to the northwest and west of George Hall (Figure 2).

4.1.2 The second phase of evaluation took place between the 11th February and 15th February 2016 and involved the excavation by hand of two trial trenches 2m in length by 0.90m in width (trenches 5 and 6), these were placed by the client to investigate the depth and construction of the current foundation of the former Sorting Office in the northwest corner of the site (Figure 2).

4.2 Results

4.2.1 **Trench 1:** Trench 1 was situated in the open space to the west of George Hall and east of the Old Post Office (Figure 2). The trench was aligned northwest to southeast and measured 19.20m in length and 1.80m in width at its base. The natural substrate **(104)** was revealed at a depth of 0.70m below the present ground level (15.60m AOD) (Plates 1 and 2). In the northwestern half of the trench the silty rich clay natural substrate **(104)** was covered by 0.66m of silt rich made ground **(115)** which in turn was sealed by a rubble layer **(101)** 0.16m in depth, containing animal bone and 19th century bricks. Covering these deposits was a levelling layer of modern hardcore **(128)** which measured 0.11m in depth and was sealed by 0.05m of modern yellow gravel **(100)** (Figure 3, Section 21; Plate 2).

4.2.2 In the southeastern half of the trench the stratagraphic sequence was somewhat different, the natural substrate **(104)** here was covered by 0.25m of silt rich made ground **(103)** containing animal bone, post-medieval pottery sherds, ceramic building material (CBM) and oyster remains. This in turn was sealed by 0.30m of light greyish brown silt **(102)** containing animal bone fragments, CBM and iron objects. Over this was a layer of rubble **(101)** 0.16m in depth containing animal bone and 19th century brick and CBM fragments. This in turn was covered by 0.05m of modern yellow gravel **(100)** (Plate 1).

4.2.3 At the southeast end of the trench, cut into the natural substrate **(104)** were four features consisting of three pits **[107]**, **[109]**, **[113]** and a narrow linear feature **[111]** (Figure 3; Plan and Sections 1-5; Plate 1). All these were at c.15.55m AOD. Linear feature **[111]** ran northeast to southwest across the trench. Measuring 0.38m in width and 0.15m in depth, it contained a single brown silty clay fill **(112)** from which two fragments of later medieval pottery were recovered (Figure 3, Plan and Section 3; Plate 3). The linear feature **[111]** cut the fill **(110)** in pit **[109]**. A circular pit **[107]**, measuring 0.38m in diameter and 0.14m in depth, contained a single brown silty clay fill **(108)** from which two fragments of animal bone and a single sherd of post-medieval pottery were recovered (Figure 3, Plan and Section 1; Plate 4) Pit **[109]** was sub-rectangular in shape, measuring 1.15m in length and 0.55m in width and had a depth of 0.28m. The fill **(110)** consisted of a brown silt from which was recovered five medieval and early medieval pottery sherds (Figure 3, Plan and Section 2; Plate 5). Pit **[113]** was circular in shape measuring 0.35m in diameter and had a depth of 0.17m. The single fill **(114)** consisted of brown silt (Figure 3, Plan and Section 5; Plate 6). The pit **[113]** cut the linear feature **[111]**.

4.2.4 At a distance of 4.10m from the southeast end of the trench a large, stepped ditch **[116]** crossed the trench in a northeast to southwest direction (Figures 3, Plan and Section 8; Plate 7). The ditch measured 5.60m in width and 1.70m in depth. The base lay at 13.76m AOD, 2.48m below current ground level. The ditch contained three fills **(106)**, **(105)** and **(119)**. The primary fill **(106)** measured 1.70m in width and 0.30m in depth. It consisted of a very dark brownish black organic silty clay with a single medieval pottery fragment recovered from it. Sealing this was the secondary fill **(105)** which consisted of a mid-greyish brown silty clay and measured 3.20m in width and 0.30m in depth, animal bone and post-medieval material were recovered from this fill. The tertiary fill **(119)**, a mid-orange brown silty clay measured 5.60m in width by 1.12m in depth and a sherd of post-medieval bottle glass was recovered from it. The above was covered by a greyish brown rubble **(118)** containing a large percentage of brick fragments. This measured 0.17m in depth and was overlain by an orange, silty sand deposit **(117)**, measuring 0.10m in depth. The rubble layer **(101)** and a modern band of gravel **(100)** in turn sealed the above sequence.

4.2.5 A strip of modern concrete crossed the trench diagonally in a north-south direction 11.00m from the southeast end of the trench. The concrete measured 0.22m in width (Figure 3, Plan).

4.2.6 At a distance of 13.60m from the southeast end of the trench a yellow, gault brick and mortar wall **(122)** crossed the trench in a northeast to southwest direction (Figure 3, Plan; Plate 8). This had a foundation trench **[121]** cut into the natural substrate **(104)**. It measured 0.46m in depth and 0.40m in width. The wall measured 0.38m in width and was observed to a depth of 0.18m. The top of the wall was 15.74m AOD, 0.53m below current ground level. It was sealed by rubble deposit **(101)**, yellow hardcore layer **(128)** and a bed of modern gravel **(100).**

4.2.7 2.15m to the northwest of wall **(122)** was a brick and mortar floor **(125)** constructed from the same yellow, gault brick (Figure 3, Plan; Plate 8). Orientated northwest to southeast it measured 1.96m in length and 1.08m in width at a height of 15.54m AOD, 0.69m below the current ground level. A single line of bricks **(123)** were placed along the southeastern edge (Figure 3, Plan; Plate 8) and measured 1.10m in length and 0.10m in width. Both these structures were sealed by a grey white cindery deposit **(127)** 0.20m in depth and contained three fragments of post-medieval roof tile, two leather shoe heels, two metal legs of an unknown appliance and a single green bottle. On the southwest and northwest sides, brick floor **(125)** was butted by two yellow, gault brick and mortar walls. The southwest wall **(124)** measured 2.15m in length and 0.20m in width (Figure 3, Plan; Plate 8). Truncated as part of the current investigation works the wall originally had a height of 0.40m and was keyed into the northwest wall **(126)**. The yellow, gault brick and mortar wall **(126)** crossed the trench from northeast to southwest, running parallel to brick wall **(122)** to the southeast (Figure 3, Plan; Plate 8). The wall **(126)** measured 0.38m in width and 0.55m in depth. The top of this wall was revealed at a height of 16.14m AOD, 0.13m below the current ground level.

4.2.8 **Trench 2:** Trench 2 was situated in the open space northwest of George Hall and west of the main entrance to the site (Figure 2).

4.2.9 The trench was aligned northeast to southwest and measured 14.90m in length by 1.80m in width at its base. Due to the depth of deposits the trench was stepped for health and safety reasons. The archaeology was noted to slope gently towards the northeast. A yellowish orange, silt rich clay natural substrate **(203)** was revealed at a depth of 15.81m AOD at the southwestern end of the trench and 15.17m AOD at the northeast end. This is 0.59m and 0.92m below current ground level respectively (Plates 9 and 10).

4.2.10 At the southwest end of the trench the natural substrate **(203)** was covered by made ground **(204)** consisting of a greyish brown silty clay, measuring 0.62m in depth which in turn was sealed by a modern, levelling layer **(202)** of modern hardcore measuring 0.16m in depth overlain by a gravel bedding **(210)** measuring 0.05m in depth (Figure 4, Section 20; Plate 9). At the northeastern end of the trench the natural substrate **(203)** was sealed by made ground **(204)** measuring 0.54m in depth which in turn was sealed by a mixed rubble deposit **(211)** containing full bricks, CBM and mortar in a silty rich matrix, measuring 0.40m in depth. This was covered by the same modern gravel bedding **(210)** as seen above and measured 0.05m in depth at this point (Plate 10).

4.2.11 At the southwestern end of the trench, two linear features **[200]** and **[205]** along with a sub-circular pit **[208]** were observed cut into the natural substrate **(203)** (Figure 4, Plan and Sections 12-14; Plate 9). Both linear features ran into the northwest end of the trench. Linear feature **[200]** measured 1.05m in length and 0.48m in width, it had a maximum depth of 0.18m (Figure 4, Plan and Section 12; Plate 11). The single fill **(201)** comprised of a brown silty clay containing two sherds of the same medieval pot. The linear appeared to terminate 1.05m from the southwest end of the trench. Running parallel and northwest of this feature was a similar linear feature **[205]** (Figure 4, Plan and Section 13; Plate 12). Truncated at its northeast end, it measured at least 1.20m in length and 0.42m in width and contained a single fill **(206),** consisting of a brown silt rich clay from which two sherds of medieval pottery were recovered. Both linear features showed the same profile in section, both notably deeper on their southeast side and sealed by the made ground **(204).**

4.2.12 At a distance of 1.90m from the southwestern end of the trench was a sub-circular pit **[208]** (Figure 4, Plan and Section 14; Plate 13). This measured 1.00m in length and had a width of 0.80m, the fill comprised a mid-greyish brown silt **(209)** measuring 0.13m in depth and contained two fragments of animal bone.

4.2.13 At a distance of 4.10m from the southwestern end of the trench a brick structure **(207)**, possibly the remains of a poorly constructed wall, was uncovered at 15.98m AOD, 0.32m below current ground level (Figure 4; Plan; Plate 14). The structure consisted mainly of orange bricks but also some yellowish ones with three lines of holes through them and appeared to be only one course in depth (c.0.10m), measuring 0.58m in length it crossed the trench in a northwest to southeast direction. The wall was sealed by 0.27m of modern hardcore **(202)** and 0.05m of modern gravel bedding **(210)**.

4.2.14 The northeastern two thirds of the trench contained no archaeological features (Plate 10).

4.2.15 **Trench 3:** Trench 3 was situated to the rear of the former Post Office building along its northwestern elevation (Figure 2).

4.2.16 The trench was aligned northeast to southwest and measured 4.70m in length and 1.80m in width at its base, due to the depth of the archaeology the trench was stepped for health and safety reasons. The natural substrate **(306)** was revealed at a depth of 16.30m AOD, 0.72m below current ground level and comprised a firm clay, as seen elsewhere. The natural substrate was sealed by a deposit of made ground **(302)** consisting of a humeric dark brown silty clay measuring 0.35m in depth. This in turn was covered by a levelling deposit of modern hard core **(301)** that measured 0.32m in depth and was itself overlain by 0.05m of modern gravel bedding **(300)** (Figure 5; Plan and Section 15; Plate 15).

4.2.17 Linear feature **[303]** was revealed truncating the underlying natural substrate running diagonally across the trench, east to west. The feature measured 4.00m in length and 0.69m in width and had a maximum depth of 0.28m (Figure 5, Plan and Section 4; Plate 15). The fill **(304)** (Plate 16) comprised of a mottled orange-brown silty clay from which was recovered four sherds of medieval and early medieval pottery and three fragments of animal bone. The ditch fill was sealed by made ground deposit **(302)** containing eight fragments of animal bone and one sherd of post-medieval pottery. Initial machining of the trench revealed modern services, a blue alkathene pipe in the southwest corner at 16.40m AOD and a 4 inch cast iron pipe in the northeast corner (16.53m AOD) (Figure 5). The cast iron pipe was lying on top of a red brick and mortar structure **(305)**. This measured 2.14m in length by 0.24m in width and had a depth of 0.12m.

4.2.18 **Trench 4:** Trench 4 was situated to the rear of the former Post Office building immediately to the north of a former glass canopied roof (Figure2).

4.2.19 The trench was aligned northwest to southeast and measured 4.90m in length and had varying widths ranging from 1.80m to 2.60m in width at the base, this was due to a combination of the practicalities of opening the trench and having to step the sides due to the depth of the archaeological deposits and to avoid modern and 19th century service runs. A yellowish orange, silt rich clay natural substrate **(410)** that was revealed at a depth of 16.16m AOD (0.75m below current ground level). The natural substrate **(410)** was covered by a deposit of made ground **(402)** that comprised a humeric dark brown silty clay measuring 0.35m in depth. This in turn was sealed by a hard, made ground deposit **(409)** of dark brownish black silty clay containing small brick fragments and cinder. This was overlain by a levelling layer **(401)** of modern hardcore measuring 0.18m in depth. Gravel bedding **(400)** was sat atop this for a thickness of 0.06m (Figure 6, Plan and Section 10; Plate 17).

4.2.20 In the southeastern end of the trench, along its southwestern edge, three sides of a yellow gault brick and mortar structure **(403)** was revealed (Figure 6, Plan; Plate 17). A construction cut **[411]** and fill **(411)** ran parallel along the southwestern edge. The uncovered structure measured 2.30m in length by 0.60m in width. The wall itself measured 0.22m in width and was observed to a depth of 0.63m. The wall top was revealed at a height of 16.75m AOD (0.15m below current ground level). It was sealed by a modern hardcore, levelling deposit **(401)** and a band of gravel bedding **(400)**.

4.2.21 In the northwest half of the trench, orientated northeast to southwest, a shallow linear **[406]** measuring 1.52 m in length and 0.28m in width, was revealed cut into the natural substrate (Figure 6 Plan and Section 10; Plate 17). This contained a single, mottled orange brown silty clay fill **(407)** that measured 0.07m in depth. Immediately adjacent to this on its northwestern edge, again orientated northeast to southwest was a sub-rectangular pit **[404]** measuring 0.68m in length by 0.58m in width (Figure 6, Plan and Section 10; Plate 18). The pit measured 0.14m in depth and contained a single, greyish black cindery fill which contained a single large brick fragment.

Two modern service pipes were uncovered in the south eastern half of the trench. A ceramic drain revealed at a height of 16.55m AOD and measuring 0.14m in diameter, ran northeast to southwest and was cut at its southwestern end by the brick wall **(403)**. Over the ceramic drain, ran a steel pipe orientated northwest to southeast that measured 0.03m in diameter and seen at a height of 16.58m AOD.

4.2.22 **Trench 5:** Trench 5 was located inside the large southern room of the old Sorting Office, placed at the northeast side of the room and orientated northeast-southwest, measuring 2m in length and 0.90m in width (Figure 7; Plate 19). It was excavated by hand to investigate the state of the concrete foundation **502** used by the current building and was dug to a maximum depth of 1.30m below the present floor level (16.31m AOD). The earliest deposit seen was a humic rich former garden soil **(507)** at least 0.37m in depth that contained occasional mortar and charcoal flecks throughout, this was sealed by a thin band of concrete rubble **(506)** 0.15m in thickness that was in turn covered by a band of ash rich silty sand **(505)**. This band that measured 0.11m in depth appeared to be the result of imported industrial material that had been dumped onto the site to aid in the building up of the general ground area. Band **(505)** was overlain by 0.65m of rubble rich silty sand **(504)** that was also demonstrated to have been deposited through a deliberate tipping event used to build up the general ground level.

4.2.23 All of the above were then truncated by the construction **[503]** cut for the currently upstanding building and aligned northeast to southwest and measuring at least 0.75m in width and 1.21m in depth and noted as being a steep sided V-shaped ditch that became vertical 0.19m above the base that was flat in nature and within which concrete beam **502** was placed. Beam **502** was demonstrated to measure at least 0.38m in width by 0.19m in thickness, the shape of cut **[503]** suggested that a wooden box had been used during the construction to shape the concrete upon pouring, no evidence was noted for metal rebar being used as an internal support and the southern external wall of the former store was built up from this. Beam **502** was buried by a 1.02m of redeposited material **(501)** that was seen to be comprised of a combination of contexts **(504)** to **(507)** that had become highly mixed during the excavation and filling of **[503]**.

4.2.24 **Trench 6:** Trench 6 was excavated to the southwest of Trench 5 within the same room against the northern external wall of the former Sorting Office. Orientated northeast-southwest this trench was also hand excavated to a length of 2m by 0.90m in width (Figure 7; Plate 20). The Trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.30m (16.31m AOD) and the earliest deposit revealed was a humic rich former topsoil **(609)** at least 0.22m thick and extending below the limit of the excavation. This was overlain by 0.13m of deliberately dumped rubble **(608)** made up primarily of a combination of concrete fragments, gravels and mortar which was in turn sealed by 0.28m of industrially rich ash and sand **(607)** that had been clearly imported and dumped on the site to help further increase the level of the ground surface. This was in turn covered by a general make up deposit **(606)** that contained fragments of CBM, ash, charcoal and mortar flecks throughout and measured 0.37m in height, along with the other deposits described it was truncated by construction cut **[604]** that was aligned northeast to southwest and was shaped in an identical fashion to **[503]** and can be stated beyond reasonable doubt to be a continuation of the same feature. At this point it was seen to measure at least 0.69m in width and to descend at least 0.71m in depth, unlike **[503]** the base of the cut was not seen. Foundation concrete beam **605** was recorded as measuring at least 0.40m in width by at least 0.17m in height and like **502** was constructed of concrete with no internal rebar being noted and appeared to have been shaped by a wooden box placed within the vertical base of cut **[604]**.

4.2.25 The upstanding southern exterior wall was built directly off this and the whole was sealed by at least 0.71m of deliberately deposited infill **(603)** that comprised a highly mixed combination of the deposits through which cut **[604]** had truncated. This infill deposit measured at least 0.71m in depth by 0.69m in width and had a hollow to the southeast that was infilled with a mid-reddish brown silty sand **(602)** that measured 0.43m in thickness by 0.44m in width. The above was butted by a modern brick wall **601** that was orientated northwest to southeast and constructed using well fired frogged machine made bricks, laid in a stretcher bonding pattern and bonded together using a cement based mortar. The wall was recorded as being one course thick (0.12m) and measured three courses high (0.36m), it had been constructed as a base upon which the concrete slabs making the current floor surface are placed to create a suspended floor surface with a void 0.36m being present between the floor and the underlying deposits.

5 FINDS ANALYSIS

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 A total of 49 artefacts, weighing 6,460g, were recovered from 16 contexts during the archaeological evaluation on land at the George Hall and the Old Post Office, George Street, Huntingdon.

5.1.2 All finds were dealt with according to the recommendations made by Watkinson & Neal (1998) and to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Standard & Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (2014c). All artefacts have been boxed according to material type and conforming to the deposition guidelines recommended by Brown (2011) and Cambridgeshire County Council County Archaeological Store.

5.1.3 The material archive has been assessed for its local, regional and national potential and further work has been recommended on the potential for the material archive to contribute to the relevant research frameworks.

5.1.4 Quantification of finds by context is shown in Table 1.

Context	Trench	Material	Quantity	Weight (kg)	Period
101	1	CBM	2	44	PM
102	1	CBM	4	109	PM
103	1	CBM	4	137	PM
105	1	CBM	1	107	PM
127	1	CBM	3	749	PM
211	2	CBM	1	2239	PM-MOD
409	4	CBM	1	2440	PM-MOD
102	1	Ceramic	1	7	PM
103	1	Ceramic	3	35	PM
103	1	Ceramic	3	34	Early to High Med
105	1	Ceramic	1	16	PM
106	1	Ceramic	2	6	Med
108	1	Ceramic	1	1	PM
110	1	Ceramic	2	10	Early Med to Med?
110	1	Ceramic	3	18	Med
112	1	Ceramic	2	7	Later Med?
201	2	Ceramic	2	11	Med
206	2	Ceramic	2	42	Med
302	3	Ceramic	1	10	PM
304	3	Ceramic	2	8	Med
304	3	Ceramic	2	49	Early Med to Med?
u/s	1	Ceramic	3	83	Med
119	1	Glass	1	5	PM
127	1	Glass	1	263	PM
102	1	Iron	1	30	PM
TOTAL			**47**	**6453**	

Table 1: Quantification of Bulk Finds by Context

5.2 Early Medieval & Medieval Ceramics

5.2.1 Nineteen sherds of early medieval and medieval ceramics, weighing 250g, were recovered from six contexts (Table 1). The sherds are in good condition and show little sign of post-depositional damage.

5.2.2 *Early Medieval Ceramics.* A total of seven sherds of undecorated early medieval handmade pottery, weighing 82g, were recovered from three deposits (Table 1). No carbonised residues or accretions are evident on any of the surfaces.

5.2.3 The sherd colour ranges from mid-red to dark-grey brown and the temper comprises frequent, well-sorted organic (shell) inclusions. The fabric is similar to coarseware early medieval sherds recovered from Cambridgeshire (**CAM 056B45**, PAS online 2015). A rim fragment was recovered from deposit (**304**) which is similar in profile to an early medieval rim fragment recovered from excavations at 197 High Street, Exeter (Allan 1984, 43 No. 60).

5.2.4 *Medieval Ceramics.* Twelve sherds of medieval pottery, weighing 168g, were recovered from seven deposits (Table 1).

5.2.5 Fabric types include red-brown sandy wares, whitewares and reduced greyware of post early 14th century date. The sherds are undecorated with the exception of one sherd recovered from deposit (**206**). The sherds are all wheelthrown and four sherds have a light olive-green glaze on one surface.

5.2.6 A date range of 11th to 14th century is appropriate for the medieval ceramics assemblage.

5.2.7 Two sherds of medieval pottery weighing 7g were recovered from deposit (**112**). One rim sherd comprises a whiteware fabric with a light yellow-green glaze and the other sherd comprises a red gritty fabric with a drab, dark olive glaze on one surface. A possible date of 13th to 15th century is appropriate for this deposit

5.3 Post-Medieval Ceramics

5.3.1 Nine sherds of post-medieval ceramics, weighing 80g, were recovered from six contexts (Table 1). The sherds are in good condition and display little evidence of post-depositional damage or abrasion.

5.3.2 Fabric types comprise refined white earthenware, Transfer Print (Willow Pattern), China and reddish-buff stoneware.

5.3.3 The pottery is of 19th to 20th century date. No further analysis is warranted on this assemblage.

5.4 Ceramic Building Materials (CBM)

5.4.1 Sixteen fragments of ceramic building material, weighing 5825g, were recovered from seven contexts (Table 1). The fragments are in moderate to good condition and display some evidence of post-depositional damage/abrasion.

5.4.2 The fragments comprise brick, tile and land drain fragments and the assemblage is of 19th to 20th century date.

5.4.3 Two complete bricks were recovered from contexts (**409**) and (**211**). One brick has "LBC PHORPRES 17" and one brick has "Eastwoods 4pressed" engraved on the surfaces. The former represents a brick made by the London Brick Company and the trade-name Phorpres came about because Fletton Bricks made in Bedfordshire are pressed twice in each direction, or 'four-pressed' (Penmorfa online 2015). The Eastwoods brick company was established in Kent in 1815 but the brick-making industry flourished in the post-war periods (Eastwoods Group online 2015). This brick is of likely early to mid 20th century date.

5.4.4 No further analysis is necessary on the ceramic building material assemblage.

5.5 Glass

5.5.1 Two glass fragments, weighing 268g, were recovered from two deposits (Table 1). The artefacts are in moderate to good condition.

5.5.2 The glass artefact recovered from (**127**) comprises an almost complete green bottle which was likely used as a non-food related household liquid / substance (HGBI online 2015). The fragment recovered from deposit (**119**) comprises a small green glass base shard fragment.

5.5.3 The artefacts are of late post-medieval to modern date.

5.5.4 No further analysis is necessary on these artefacts.

5.6 Iron

5.6.1 A single iron nail, weighing 30g, was recovered from deposit (**102**). The artefact is in moderate condition and displays a degree of rust corrosion.

5.6.2 The artefact is of late post-medieval to modern date.

5.6.3 No further analysis is warranted on this artefact.

5.7 Statement of Potential

5.7.1 The recovery of early medieval and medieval pottery is of high local archaeological potential and indicates domestic activity of this date on the site and in its environs.

5.7.2 The recovery of post-medieval pottery, ceramic building material, glass and iron is of low archaeological potential.

6 ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 During the course of the archaeological evaluation 11 soil samples were taken for the purposes of archaeobotanical analysis and bone was hand collected for the purposes of zooarchaeological analysis. The soil samples were taken to extract material that may aid the understanding the depositional history of these contexts, as well as understand the levels of organic preservation found within the excavated area. Due to the context of the evaluation and the nature of the recovered artefacts it was believed that all material would relate to the medieval or post-medieval periods.

6.2 Archaeobotancial Analysis

6.2.1 The samples were processed using standard procedures for archaeobotanical analysis. The methodology employed required that the whole earth samples be broken down and split into their various different components: the flot, the residue, the clay-silt and the sand-silt. The sample was manually floated and sieved through a 'Siraf' style flotation tank. In this case the residue and the flot are retained while the sand-silt-clay components are filtered out. The sample was flotted over a 0.5mm plastic mesh, into which the residue was collected, then air-dried and sorted by eye for any material that may aid our understanding of the deposit. The residue samples were also scanned with a hand magnet to retrieve forms of magnetic material. This was done to retrieve residues of metallurgical activity, in particular hammer scale, spheroid hammer scale, fuel-ash slag and vitrified material which might be indicative of other high temperature non-metallurgical processes. Processing procedures and nomenclature follows the conventions set out by English Heritage Centre for Archaeological Guidelines publication (2015).

6.2.2 The wash-over was dried slowly and scanned at x60 magnification for charred and uncharred botanical remains. Identification of these was undertaken by comparison with reference material held in the Environmental Laboratory at Wardell-Armstrong Archaeology and by reference to relevant literature (Cappers et al. 2010) (Jacomet 2006). Plant taxonomic nomenclature follows Stace (2010).

6.2.3 Favourable preservation conditions can lead to the retrieval of organic remains that may produce a valuable suite of information, in respect of the depositional environment of the material, thus enabling assessment of anthropogenic activity, seasonality and climate and elements of the economy associated with the features from which the samples are removed. In this case the samples consisted of a mixture of clay sediments and sandy sediments, which lead to differential preservation across the site; the clay deposits from waterlogged contexts containing a broader range of species than the sandy deposits from non-waterlogged portions of the site.

6.2.4 Sample numbers appear in brackets thus < >, whilst context numbers appear in brackets thus ( ) for all analysis and discussion below. For material from the residue the relative abundance is based on a scale from 1 (lowest) to 3 (highest). Cereals are counted in terms of the number of individuals counted. The other plant remains have been recorded on a scale from A-E. This is calculated as; A=1, B=2-10, C=11-30, D=30-100, E=c.100+. The exception being unidentified seeds, where the numbers of unidentified species is given, rather than their relative abundance. The secondary flots (i.e. the flot which is produced by the re-processing of the dried residue after it has been examined for artefacts) have not been examined at this time, but have been placed in storage should further work be required. A rapid scan of this material showed that little extra plant remains were present.

6.2.5 For the purposes of clarity the references to 'seeds' identified here refer to the seed or fruit structures unless otherwise stated; that is to say the propagule or disseminule structures. Cereal grain was recovered in a charred condition and where mentioned refers to the charred caryopsis. Chaff fragments are specified in the text as being either rachis, paleas, lemmas, glumes, awns or culms and culm nodes. *Carex* sp nutlets are classed as either lenticular or trigonus, though further identification was not undertaken. As these plants did not occur with particularly high frequency, and as they generally indicated wet environments it was not thought that a more detailed examination would improve our knowledge of the context in which these remains occur.

6.3 Discussion of the Plant Remains

6.3.1 The remains from the 11 samples were in general quite rich, with both waterlogged and charred remains being present, though the samples with the richest waterlogged remains produced relatively few charred plant remains. The remains are outlined in Table 2.

6.3.2 The richest remains came from ditch fill **(106)**, the primary fill of **[116]**. Remains of cereals were relatively low, however a range of wild plants were recovered. This is likely to reflect the damp, sheltered environment of the ditch when it was open. These plants included nettle, vervain, woundwort, sedges and deadly-nightshade. However, seeds of fig, were also recovered. In conjunction with this yellow-green material adhering to charcoal from the flot was tentatively identified as containing some faecal remains, which might suggest the ditch, when open, received faecal waste from a nearby settlement. The other samples produced relatively fewer wild plant remains, but charred cereal grains were very common in some cases. In the case of pit feature **[109]** the charred remains of stinking chamomile, broom grass, thistle, poppy and wild grasses are likely to represent seeds of species growing in the cereal fields and gathered with the harvest. The remains of hazelnut shell and a possible apple seed from this feature suggest that remains from within the pit may be coming from multiple sources. The sample from pit **[109]** produced over 160 charred cereal grains, while smaller numbers were recovered from other features. In other cases, however, there was a dominance of wheat type forms, with smaller numbers of oat type forms. The exception to this was the sample from linear **[111]**, which produced oat and barley remains. The lack of chaff means it is difficult to ascribe the cereal grains to specific species. In particular it is unclear whether the oat remains are wild or domestic types due to the lack of preserved floret bases. However, the wheat remains were represented by an abundant number of compact bread wheat type forms (*Triticum aestivo-compactum*). This might broadly suggest that in these cases the remains are likely to derive from the later rather than early medieval period.

6.3.3 The exception to these remains was the sample from pit feature **[404]**. This was dominated by blast furnace slag, as well as modern brick fragments, glass, coal and pottery. This feature was clearly of post-medieval date.

6.4 The Heavy residue

6.4.1 The heavy residue produced material of archaeological interest, including pottery fragments from seven contexts. Anthropogenic magnetic residues were recovered from eight contexts. Some of this material may represent iron working activities during the medieval period; though the absence of slag suggests this may be smithing of processed iron rather than iron smelting. The large amount of (post-medieval) blast furnace slag from sample <7> **(405)** may represent material brought in to level ground, or for road metalling.

Sample	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Context	106	108	110	112	114	304	405	407	201	206	209
Cut	116	107	109	111	113	303	404	406	200	205	208
Feature type	Dtch	Pit	Pit	Linr	Pit	Linr	Pit	Linr	Linr	Linr	Pit
Volume processed (litres)	40	20	60	10	20	30	20	10	10	10	10
Volume of retent(grams)	1500	900	2600	400	550	600	1200	500	600	500	500
Weight of flot (grms)	>25	>25	>25	>25	>25	>15	>25	>5	>25	>25	>25
Samples suitable for radiocarbon dating	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			Y	Y	Y
Residue contents (relative abundance)											
Bone/teeth, burnt bone	1	1		1			1	1	1	1	1
Charcoal	1	1		1			1		1		
Coal							2				
Glass (Fragment count)							3				
Magnetic Residue	1	1		1			1	1	1	1	1
Metal work (Fe) Fragment count							1				
Pottery (fragment count)	3	3		2			3	1		3	3
Slag							3				
Stones/gravel	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	3	3	3	3
Flot matrix (relative abundance)											
Charcoal		3;		3;	3;		2;	2;	2;		3;
Modern roots	1;	1;		1;	1;			3;	2;		
Charred rhizome											
Charred herbaceous stem	1;			1;							
Herbaceous material	3;	1;			1;			1;			
Fuel ash							2;				
Faecal concretions	?1;										
Sclerotia	1;										
Charred plant remains (total counts)											
Avena species grains (Oat)		11;	23;	28;	32;	4;			1;	5;	21;
Hordeum species grains (Barley)	1;		8;	11;						1;	
Secale cereale grains (Rye)											?3;
T. cf. aestivo-compactum grains (Bread wheat)	6;	8;	80;		5;	2;			4;		16;
Triticum sp. Indeterminate (Spelt/bread wheat)					7;						
Triticum species grains (diococcum?)				?1;							
Indeterminate charred grain		10;	50;	14;	15;	11;			3;	7;	41;
Other plant remains (relative abundance)											
Aethusa cynapium (Fool's Paresley)	B;										
Anthemis cotula (Sticking chamomile)			B*;								
Bromus species (Broom grass)		B*;	B*;		B*;						
Carex sp Trigonus (Sedge)	B;	A*;									A*;
Chenopodiaceae species (Goosefoots)		A;	A*;								A*;
*Cirsium species (*thistle)			A*;		A*;						
Corylus avellana (Hazelnut)			A*;								
Euphorbia helioscopia (Sun spurge)	B;										
Ficus carica (Fig)	B;										

Galium species (Bedstraws)		B;	B;								
Lamium cf. maculatum (Spotted Deadnettle)	B;										
Malus species (Apple)			?A*;								
Papaevar species (Poppy)			A*;								
Poaceae (Grasses)		C*;	C*;		C*;					A*;	
Ranunculus subsp. Ranunculus (Buttercup)	B;										
Rubus cf. fructicosus (Blackberry)	B;										
Rumex sp. (docks)											A*;
Sambucus nigra (Elder)	C;	A;			A/A*;	D;			A;		
Silene species (Campions)	A;										
Solanum dulcamera (Bittersweet)	C;										
Sonchus asper (Prickley Sowthistle)	B;										
Stachys sp. (Woundwort)	B;					A;					
Taraxacum officinale (Common Dandelion)	B;			A;		B;				A;	
Urtica dioica (Stinging nettle)	D;										
Verbena officinalis (Vervain)	B;								A;		
Vica species (Field bean)		B*;	B*;	B*;						A*;	A*;
Unidentified individual	C;	A;		?B;	?B;						
Unidentified	1*;					1;		1;			

Table 2: Assessment of plant remains from soil samples

6.5 Zooarchaeological Analysis

6.5.1 The purpose of this study is to:

- Quantify the bones collected from the excavation by deducing their anatomical position and the Genus of the animal from which they originate (if possible). This is done by comparing the material with reference material held at the Environmental Laboratory at Wardell Armstrong Archaeology.
- To assess the presence of butchery evidence on all bones.
- To assess evidence which may allow comments to be made regarding the pathology of the original animal population and other factors such as age at death and sex of animals.
- To assess the taphonomic history of the bone from the creation of the death assemblage to their examination for this report.

6.5.2 Mammal bones were recovered from nine contexts; **(101)**, **(102)**, **(103)**, **(105)**, **(108)**, **(112)**, **(209)**, **(302)**, **(304)** and a small amount of material from unstratified contexts. The material recovered was generally in very low amounts; with most contexts producing less than five fragments (the remains are summarised in Table 3).

6.5.3 The exception to this was context **(105)**, which produced a number of cattle bones. However, the bone represented (thoracic vertebra, ribs, left scapula, left humerus, left radius-ulna), suggest this forms a part of a cattle burial, or associated bone group (Morris 2011).

Context	Grams	Notes
101	30	Two large mammal rib midshaft fragments
102	200	Bos pelvis and humerus frag (gnawed), Ovis m-carpal and radius frag, 2 rib frags
103	50	Ovis molar and m-tarsal, dog tibia (unfused), oyster shell
105	1500	Bos bones (see report for discussion)
108	15	Two fragments
112	20	?Bos maxilla fragment
204	10	Oyster shell
209	15	Medium mammal skull and long bone fragment
302	200	Bos m-carpal, tibia frag, Ovis innominate and m-podial frag
304	20	Ovis atlas and axis fragment (unfused)

Table 3: Assessment of animal bones by context

6.6 Statement of Potential

6.6.1 The archaeobotanical material for this site represents a rich suite of charred cereal remains, as well as wild plants, particularly from ditch fill **(106)**. In particular the possibility that ditch fill **(106)** contains human faecal material may point to local long term settlement in the medieval period. The find of fig seeds from this deposit suggests the material may come from a relatively prosperous household who could afford imported exotics. The charred cereals suggest a high or later medieval date for the deposits, though this is based on the high proportions of compact bread wheat types and should be considered a guide to a possible date.

6.6.2 The zooarchaeological material is less significant, consisting of infrequent remains. The exception to this is context **(105)**, which may form part of an animal burial. The dating for this is significant as it may be a relatively modern burial of a dead animal, rather than a medieval burial.

7 CONCLUSIONS

7.1.1 The archaeological evaluation undertaken at the George Hall and Old Post Office development site revealed significant archaeological features recorded in four of the six trenches undertaken and it is believed that this is primarily a result of the depth excavations were taken to rather than a true reflection of the archaeology present. The features revealed span a wide date range from the early medieval period (11th century) through to the industrial revolution of the 19th century.

7.1.2 Trenches one and three contained features which can be ascribed to an early medieval date from between the 11th and 14th centuries. This is of high archaeological potential and may be an indicator of continual domestic activity in the area for at least 700 years.

7.1.3 Trench two was found to contain features relating to the medieval and late medieval periods of between the 13th and 15th centuries, and this again represents high archaeological potential. The two linear features at the southwest end of the trench were of similar shape and profile and possibly the result of a specific industrial or agricultural process.

7.1.4 The early medieval and medieval evidence revealed in trenches one, two and three can be viewed in context with the evidence from excavations carried out at numbers 9 and 10 George Street to the immediate south. Here material culture suggested 13th and 14th century activity, helping to further the evidence that the George street area may have been the site of concentrated occupation from at least the 13th and 14th centuries.

7.1.5 Trenches one, two, three and four all revealed brick structures of some kind. These can be ascribed to between the mid 19th and early 20th century. The yellow gault brick walls and floor in trench one are believed to be the remains of a northeast to southwest wing once attached to the northwest end of George Hall and seen on the 1888 1st edition OS. The three sides of the yellow gault brick structure revealed in trench four are likely to be associated with the mid 19th century Sandford House phase of the Old Post Office building.

7.1.6 Trenches three, four, five and six all revealed a fairly humic 'garden soil' deposit that was revealed between a height of 16.51m and 16.68m (AOD) and appeared to dip to the east and northwest from a high ridge running between trench five (16.68m AOD) and trench three (16.65m AOD). Whilst these deposits appear to date to the 19th century, the only clearly dateable material coming from **(302)**, they are interesting as they can be used as a benchmark under which significant archaeology was seen in trenches three and four and can be postulated to continue under trenches five and six.

7.1.7 Trenches five and six demonstrated that the northwest part of the development area had been subjected to additional ground build up with the area upon which the former Sorting Office currently sits being elevated by up to 1m of additional overburden. The reason for this is unclear, although it is noted that this build up must have occurred over a relatively short time between the 'garden soil' deposits and the construction of the current building in the 19th century. At present it is thought that this build up may have been occurred as part of the construction of the old Sorting Office although there is currently little evidence to confirm this.

7.1.8 Excavations at the rear of the Old Post Office Building were somewhat hampered during the current investigations due to the number of services encountered and limited space. The services were all considered to be functioning and prevented reaching the natural substrate in some areas particularly in trench four where late 19th century deposits may have covered earlier archaeological features.

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APPENDIX 1: TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS

Trench 1

Length: 19.20m Width: 1.80m Orientation: North-West/South-East

Average Depth: 0.70m Maximum Depth: 2.55m

Context Number	Context Type	Description	Height/Depth	Discussion
100	Deposit	Yellow 10mm gravel	16.30m AOD	Modern and covers most of the site
101	Deposit	Rubble layer containing 19th brick and brick fragments	16.12m AOD	19th century made ground
102	Deposit	Light grey / brown silt containing CBM fragments	16.10m AOD	19th century made ground
103	Deposit	Brown silt containing CBM fragments	15.80m AOD	19th century made ground
104	Natural Substrate	Yellow /orange, silty /clay	15.56m AOD	Geological
105	Fill	Secondary fill of ditch [116] consisting of mid grey / brown, silty / clay which measured 3.20m in width and0.30m in depth	14.36m AOD	
106	Fill	Primary fill of ditch [116] consisting of a dark brown /black, organic, silty / clay. Measured 1.70m in width and 0.30m in depth	14.06m AOD	
[107]	Cut	A circular pit measuring 0.38m in diameter and 0.14m in depth. Change of slope at the top was sharp with steep sloping sides to a curved base.	15.51mAOD (Top)	
108	Fill	Single brown, silty/clay fill	15.37m AOD (Base)	
[109]	Cut	Sub-rectangular pit measuring 1.15m in length, 0.55m in width and 0.28m in depth.	15.61mAOD (Top)	Cut by linear feature [111]
110	Fill	Single fill consisting of a brown silt	15.33m AOD	Ceramic finds suggest a Saxon / Early Medieval date
[111]	Cut	Linear feature running north-east to south-west. Measured 0.38m in width and 0.15m in depth. Change of slope at the top was sharp with moderately curved slopes down to a narrow, rounded base.	15.57m AOD (Top)	Cuts pit [109] Cut by pit [113]

112	Fill	Single brown, silty/ clay fill	15.42m AOD(Base)	
[113]	Cut	Circular pit measuring 0.35m in diameter and 0.17m in depth	15.55mAOD (Top)	Cuts linear feature [111]
114	Fill	Single fill consisting of brown silt	15.38m AOD (Base)	
115	deposit	Brown silt	15.85m AOD	19th century made ground
[116]	Cut	Wide and deep ditch orientated north-east to south-west. Measures 5.60m in width and 1.70m in depth.	13.76m AOD (Ditch Base)	Possibly stepped
117	Deposit	Light yellow / orange, silty / sand measuring 0.10m in depth	15.65m AOD	
118	Deposit	Grey / brown, rubble deposit containing brick fragments and stone. This measured 0.17m in depth	15.60m AOD	Sealed ditch [116] deposits (106), (105) and (119)
119	Fill	Tertiary fill of ditch [116] consisting of mid orange / brown silty / clay measuring 5.60m in width and 1.12m in depth	15.48m AOD	
120	Deposit	Orange, silty /sand deposit measuring 0.18m in depth.	15.75m AOD	
[121]	Cut	Foundation cut for yellow gault brick wall (122) measuring 0.46m in depth and 0.40m in width		19th century
122	Structure	Yellow, gault brick and mortar wall orientated north-east to south-west Measures 0.38m in width and 0.18m in depth.	15.74m AOD,	19th century. Runs parallel to brick wall (126)
123	Structure	Yellow gault brick and mortar, single line of bricks orientated north-wet to south-east. Contains floor (125) on its south-eastern edge. Measures 1.10m in length and 0.10m in width.	15.55m AOD	19th century
124	Structure	Yellow gault brick and mortar wall orientated north-west to south-east. Measures 2.15m in length, 0.20m in width and 0.40m in depth. Keyed into the north-west wall (126).	15.55m AOD	19th century. Truncated by machining in order to expose floor (125).

125	Structure	Yellow, gault brick and mortar floor orientated north-west to south-east, measuring 1.96m in length and 1.08m in width.	15.54m AOD	19th century
126	Structure	Yellow, gault brick and mortar wall orientated north-east to south-west. Measures 0.38m in width and 0.55m in depth	16.14m AOD	19th century. Runs parallel to brick wall (122)
127	Deposit	Grey white cindery deposit orientated north-west to south-east, measuring 1.96m in length, 1.08m in width and 0.20m in depth	15.74m AOD	Appeared to cover yellow, gault brick floor (125)
128	Deposit	75mm, Yellow hardcore	16.22m AOD	Modern levelling deposit found over much but not all of the site
129	Fill	Fill of foundation trench cut [121] consisting of light orange /yellow, silty sand	15.56m AOD	

Trench 2

Length: 14.90m Width: 1.80m Orientation: North-East/South- West

Average Depth: 0.80m Maximum Depth 1.60m

Context Number	Context Type	Description	Height/Depth	Discussion
[200]	Cut	Linear feature running north-east to south-west. Cut measures 1.05m in length, 0.48m in width with a maximum depth of 0.18m. Sharp change of slope at top and base. Sides are steep. Base slopes markedly downhill from north-west to south-east	15.81m AOD (Top)	Feature terminates at its north-east end
201	Fill	Single fill of [200] comprising of brown, silty / clay	15.63m AOD (Base)	Ceramic finds suggest a late medieval date
202	Deposit	75mm, Yellow hardcore	16.35m AOD	Modern levelling deposit found over much but not all of the site
203	Natural Substrate	Yellow /orange, silty /clay	15.81m AOD (SW end of trench) 15.17m AOD (NE end of trench)	Geological
204	Deposit	Grey /brown, silty /clay	16.19m AOD	Made ground; 19th century

[205]	Cut	Linear feature running north-east to south west. Cut measures 1.20m in length, 0.42m in width with a maximum depth of 0.15m. Sharp change of slope at top and base. Sides are steep. Base slopes markedly downhill from north-west to south-east	15.80m AOD (Top)	Truncated at the north-east end by machining
206	Fill	Single fill of [205]comprising of brown, silty / clay	15.65m AOD (Base)	Ceramic finds suggest a medieval date
207	Structure	Orange and yellow brick and brick fragment wall orientated north-west to south–east. Measures c.0.09m in depth and 0.58m in width	15.98m AOD	Bricks appear to be 19th century / modern
[208]	Cut	Cut for sub circular, shallow pit measuring 1.00m in length, 0.80m in width and 0.13m in depth. Sharp change of slope at top and base with steep sides. Very gently curving base.	15.41m AOD (Top)	
209	Fill	Single fill of [208] comprising of mid grey / brown silt	15.28m AOD (Base)	
210	Deposit	Yellow 10mm gravel	16.40m AOD (SW End) 16.09m AOD (NE End)	Modern and covers most of the site
211	Deposit	Bricks, brick fragments and mortar in a silty matrix	16.04m AOD	Made ground; 19th century

Trench 3

Length: 4.70m Width: 1.80m Orientation: North-East/South-West

Average Depth: 0.75m Maximum Depth: 0.85m

Context Number	Context Type	Description	Height/Depth	Discussion
300	Deposit	Yellow 10mm gravel	17.00m AOD (Ground Level)	Modern and covers most of the site
301	Deposit	75mm, Yellow hardcore	16.95m AOD	Modern levelling deposit found over much but not all of the site
302	Deposit	Dark brown silty / clay	16.64m AOD	Made ground; 19th century

[303]	Cut	East to west linear that measured 0.69min width with a steep top break of slope that dropped onto moderately steep sides and a V shaped base	16.28m AOD (Ditch Top)	
304	Fill	Single fill of [303] comprising mottled orange / brown, silty / clay	16.04m AOD (Ditch Base)	Ceramic finds suggest a Saxon /Early Medieval date
305	Structure	Red brick and mortar	16.42m AOD	Appears to support a 4" cast iron service pipe running through the trench (19th century)
306	Natural Substrate	Yellow /orange, silty /clay	16.30 m AOD	Geological

Trench 4

Length: 4.90m Width: 1.80-2.60m Orientation: North-West/South-East

Average Depth: 0.40m Maximum Depth: 0.96m

Context Number	Context Type	Description	Height/Depth	Discussion
400	Deposit	Yellow 10mm gravel	16.93m AOD (Ground Level)	Modern and Covers most of the site
401	Deposit	75mm yellow hardcore	16.85m AOD	Modern levelling deposit found over much but not all of the site
402	Deposit	Dark brown, silty / clay	16.48m AOD	Made ground; 19th century
403	Structure	Three sides of a structure made of yellow gault bricks and mortar on the south-west side of the trench. Measured 2.30m in length with 0.60m of width exposed	16.75m AOD (Top of Wall)	Located close to the rear of the Old Post Office building and may be a structure associated with the original Sandford House (19th century)
[404]	Cut	Sub-rectangular pit orientated north-east to south-west, measuring 0.68m in length, 0.58m in width and 0.14m in depth. Cut has a sharp change of slope at the top with steep sides curving moderately into the base which is flat but uneven.	16.16m AOD (Top)	19th century
405	Fill	Single fill of [404] comprising of a black	16.02m AOD (Base)	19th century

		cinderscontaining a half brick with holes in it		
[406]	Cut	Narrow linear feature, orientated north-east to south-west and measuring 0.28m in width and 0.07m in depth. Cut has a sharp break of slope at the top, gently sloping sides and a shallow curved base	16.15m AOD (Top)	
407	Fill	Single fill of [406] comprising of a mottled orange / brown, silty / clay	16.08m AOD (Base)	
408	Deposit	Very hard deposit yellow white and grey in colour. Consists of mixed concrete, brick fragments and modern 75mm hardcore. Measured 0.60m in width and c.0.09m in depth	16.62m AOD	19th century and Modern
409	Deposit	Very hard dark brown / black, silty clay matrix containing cinder, ash an small red brick fragments	16.59m AOD	Made ground; 19thcentury
410	Natural Substrate	Yellow /orange, silty /clay	16.01m AOD	Geological
[411]	Cut	Cut for foundation trench for gault brick and mortar wall (403). Measures 2.30m in length and 0.46m in observed depth.		19th century
412	Fill	Backfill of foundation trench [411] consisting of an orange brown sandy /silt		19th century

Trench 5

Length: 2.0m Width: 0.90m Orientation: Northeast-southwest

Average Depth: 1.30m Maximum Depth: 1.30m

Context Number	Context Type	Description	Height/Depth	Discussion
(501)	Deposit	Firm light greyish brown silty sand and gravels with inclusions of brick, concrete, angular to sub-angular stones, charcoal and mortar flakes	1.02m	Modern backfill of construction cut for concrete foundation (502). Deposit appears to be a mixed redeposition of the deposits (504)-(507) and certainly small quanitites of the humic nature of (507) can be seen. The deposit seals foundation beam 502

				and butts the wall of the building. Although highly mixed it is thought to have been opened and closed relatively rapidly.
(502)	Deposit	Light blueish grey concrete deposit.	0.19m	Concrete foundation beam for upstanding building constructed in the 19th century. It is clear that they constructed a fairly narrow base into which they poured the concrete. No petrological samples or windows were created and no evidence was seen for metal rebar internal support. The red brick wall was constructed directly on it and no special additional preparation appears to have taken place.
Context Number	**Context Type**	**Description**	**Height/Depth**	**Discussion**
[503]	Cut	A linear foundation cut with a sharp top of slope, with sheer sides that drop onto a vertical finish. Break of slope and base not seen during works.	1.21m	Construction cut for foundation beam for upstanding Sorting Office dating to the 19th Century. Foundation trench is relatively wide before dropping onto a narrow U shaped base of approximately 0.38m in width. It is thought that this is reflective of the construction method, with a wide area opened to allow relatively easy access and a wooden frame being constructed to allow for the pouring of concrete (502). The construction cut truncated four deposits and it is clear that this feature was external at the time of its creation.
(504)	Deposit	Firm, mid-greenish brown, partly humic silty sand with frequent inclusions of concrete, CBM, angular to sub-angular gravels and moderate inclusions of	0.65m	General make-up/reclamation layer that appears to have been deposited during the 19th century and used to build up the general ground level One interesting point is

		charcoal and mortar flecks.		that this deposit appears to be a former garden soil and it is possible that this deposit may have been a former external deposit i.e garden area before the current building was constructed.
Context Number	**Context Type**	**Description**	**Height/Depth**	**Discussion**
(505)	Deposit	Firm dark greyish blue silty sand with a large amount of clinker and ash and moderate inclusions of angular to sub-rounded stones.	0.11m	Moderately thin band of industrial rich make-up/reclamation deposits. Its rich industrial nature suggests it is probably imported material used to help build up the level of the site.
(506)	Deposit	Friable light greyish white mortar/concrete layers with some CBM inclusions.	0.15m	Relatively thin band of concrete rubble which appears to have been deliberately dumped for reasons unknown.
(507)	Deposit	Soft/friable humic rich dark greyish blue silty sand with occasional inclusions of charcoal, mortar flakes, CBM, concrete and angular gravels.	0.37m+	This deposit is extremely interesting as its make-up and form are all consistent with Victorian 'dark earth' garden soils seen in many urban environments across the country. At present it is thought that this deposit represents a former external garden area that was then sealed during the deliberate dumping of material in this part of the site.

Trench 6

Length: 2.0m Width: 0.90m Orientation: Northeast-southwest

Average Depth: 1.30m Maximum Depth: 1.30m

Context Number	**Context Type**	**Description**	**Height/Depth**	**Discussion**
(601)	Masonry	Internal foundation for concrete floor slab made from well fired, frogged red bricks, laid in a stretcher bond and bonded with cement mortar.	0.36m	Internal brick wall constructed directly off the underlying deposits to create a space between deposits and existing concrete slab floor. This wall butts the external wall

				of the current build and the brick type and bond are all indications that they are not contemporary. Based on the brick type and concrete floor it is thought likely that this was constructed in the mid-20th century although at present this cannot be confirmed.
Context Number	**Context Type**	**Description**	**Height/Depth**	**Discussion**
(602)	Deposit	Moderately compacted mid-reddish brown silty sand with inclusions of CBM, charcoal, mortar flakes and angular limestone gravels.	0.43m	Upper backfill of construction cut [604] associated with the placing of concrete foundation (605) used to support the south-eastern external face of the current build. It is clear from the inclusions and composition that this deposit is the result of a high energy deliberate backfill which is believed to have occurred at a roughly contemporary time as the placing of (605) and (603).
(603)	Deposit	Firm dark blueish grey silty sand with frequent inclusions of charcoal and mortar flakes and moderate inclusions of angular to sub-angular gravel.	0.71m+	Lower infill deposit of construction cut [604]. Used to place concrete foundation beam (605) used as a foundation of the existing southeast face of current build. As with (602), it is believed that this deposit was a deliberate high energy backfill undertaken at a roughly contemporary time as the placing of (605) and construction of the upstanding building. A thin band of this deposit runs down the northwest face of the foundation beam

				(605) which suggests that a wooden box was used to form the shape of (605).
[604]	Cut	A linear foundation cut, with a sharp top of slope and step sides that drop to near verticality. The base was not excavated.	0.71m+	Construction cut excavated during the construction of the current building. This cut is thought to be the same as [503] and used to place foundation beam (605). The change in shape towards the base of the cut is believed to provide evidence that a wooden frame was used to create a box shape into which concrete was poured to create (605).
Context Number	**Context Type**	**Description**	**Height/Depth**	**Discussion**
(605)	Deposit	Light blueish grey concrete foundation beam.	0.17m+	Foundation beam used to construct current build. Thought to be the same as (502).
(606)	Deposit	Firm mid-reddish brown silty sand with occasional charcoal, mortal flecks and angular gravel inclusions.	0.37m	General make-up deposit thought to be 19th century in date and the result of a deliberate deposition, a partial leg bone of a large mammal was seen with no clear butchery marks noted.
Context Number	**Context Type**	**Description**	**Height/Depth**	**Discussion**
(607)	Deposit	Moderately compacted dark greyish blue humic silty sand with occasional mortar flecks, moderate inclusions of charcoal and frequent clinker and ash.	0.28m	Deposit appears to be an industrially rich, deliberately dumped deposit that has been used to artificially raise the ground level. The material is clearly imported and it is interesting to note that it appears to have been combined with a topsoil-like material.
(608)	Deposit	Moderately compacted light greenish white mortar.	0.13m	Relatively thin deposit of possible demolition material which appears to have been deliberately dumped as part of a general make-up.
(609)	Deposit	Friable mid-blueish grey humic silty sand with occasional charcoal and mortar flecks.	0.22m+	This deposit is interesting as it appears to be a former Victorian 'dark earth' garden soil and it is

				postulated this this may represent a formerly exposed surface level which was sealed by a deliberate land reformation and general build-up area.

APPENDIX 2: PLATES

Plate 1: *Trench 1; note features [107], [109], [111] and [113] in the foreground (facing northwest; 1m and 2m scales)*

Plate 2: *Trench 1; (facing southeast; 1m and 2m scales)*

Plate 3; *Trench 1; northwest facing section through linear [111], (112) showing the relationship with pit [109], (110); (facing southeast; 1m scale)*

Plate 4: *Trench 1; south facing section through pit [107], (108); (facing north: 0.40m scale)*

Plate 5: *Trench 1; north facing section through pit [109], (110); (facing south; 0.40m scale)*

Plate 6: *Trench 1; south facing section through pit [113], (114); (facing north; 0.20m scale)*

Plate 7: *northeast facing section through ditch [116], (106), (105) and (109); (facing southwest; 2m scale)*

Plate 8: *Trench 1; walls (122) foreground and (126) background, crossing the trench. Also brick floor (125) and containing walls (123) and (124) (facing northwest; 1m and 2m scales)*

Plate 9: *Trench 2, southeast end showing features [200], [205], [208] and (207); (facing northeast; 1m and 2m scales)*

Plate 10: *Trench 2; (facing northwest; 1m and 2m scales)*

Plate 11: *Trench 2; northeast facing section through linear [200], (201); (facing southwest; 0.40m scale)*

Plate 12: Trench 2; north-east facing section through linear [205], (206) (facing southwest; 0.40m scale)

Plate 13: Trench 2; northeast facing section through pit [208], (209); (facing southwest; 0.40m scale)

Plate 14: Trench 2; wall (207); (facing northwest; 1m scale)

Plate 15: Trench 3: showing southeast facing section and linear [303], (304) (facing west; 1m and 2m scale)

Plate 16: Trench 3: showing west facing section through linear [303], (304); (facing east; 0.40m section)

Plate 17: Trench 4; showing the black of pit [404] and the yellow, gault brick structure (403); (facing southeast; 1m and 2m scale)

Plate 18: Trench 4: west facing section through cinder pit [404], (405): (facing east: 0.40m scale)

Plate 19: Trench 5; southwest facing section through all contexts revealed: (facing northeast; 1m scale)

Plate 20: Trench 6; southwest facing section through all contexts revealed: (facing northeast; 1m scale

APPENDIX 3: FIGURES

PROJECT:	Land at the George Hall and Old Post Office, George Street, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire
SCALE:	1:25,000 at A4
REPORT No:	CP11375
CLIENT:	Witcomb Project Management Ltd.
DRAWN BY:	AB
DATE:	March 2016
FIGURE:	1

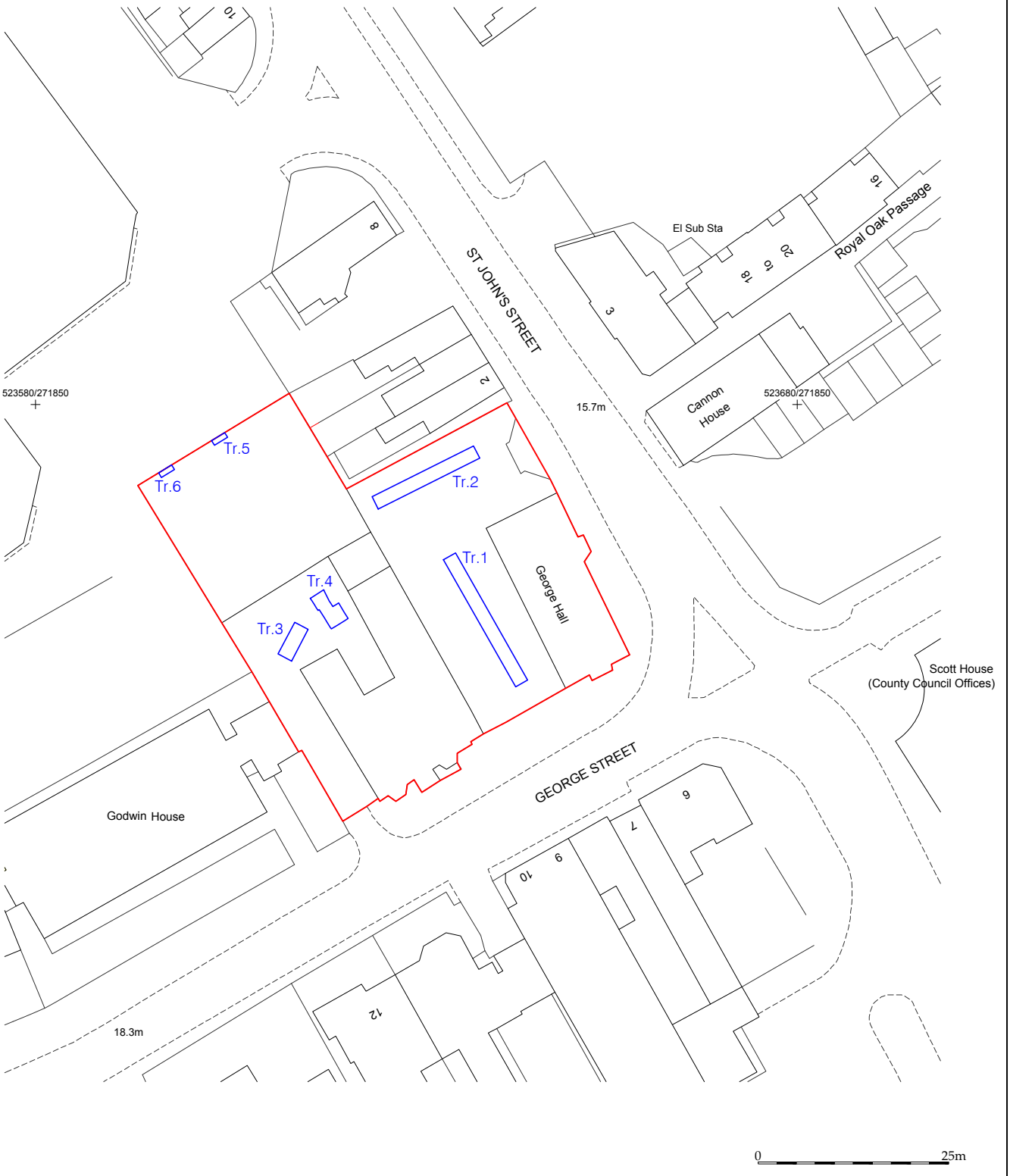
KEY:

Site location

wardell armstrong archaeology

Wardell Armstrong Archaeology 2016

Figure 1: Site location.



PROJECT:	Land at the George Hall and Old Post Office, George Street, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire
SCALE:	1:750 at A4
REPORT No:	CP11375
CLIENT:	Witcomb Project Management Ltd.
DRAWN BY:	AB/JW
DATE:	July 2016
FIGURE:	2

KEY:

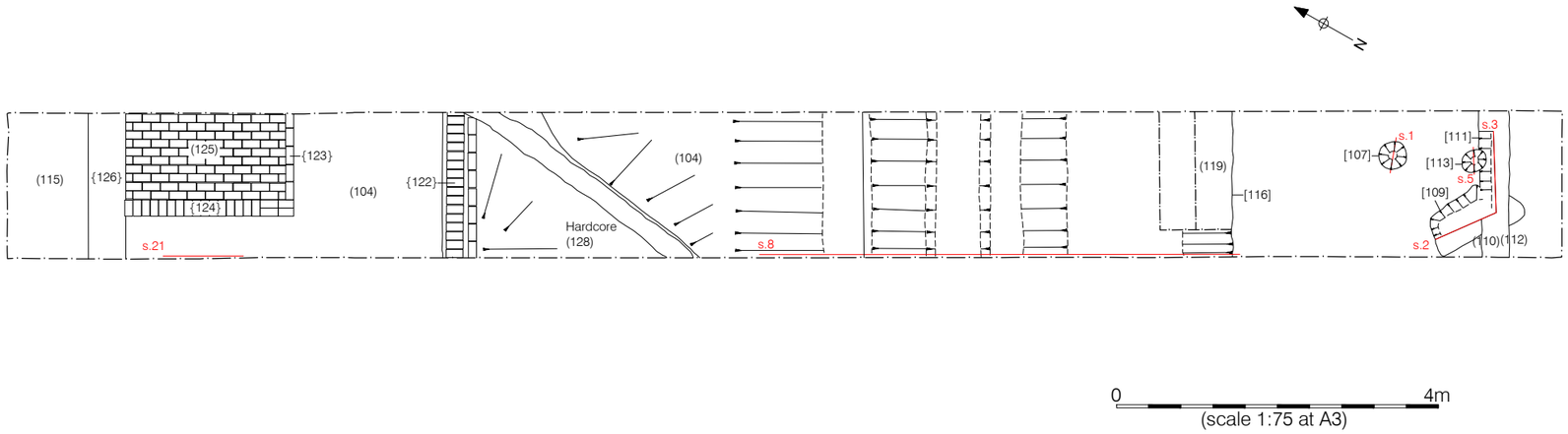
Site boundary

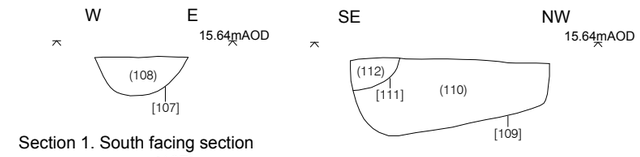
Evaluation trenches

wardell armstrong archaeology

Wardell Armstrong Archaeology 2016

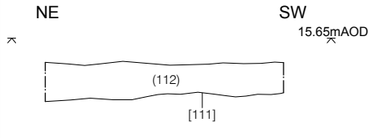
Figure 2: Location of evaluation trenches.



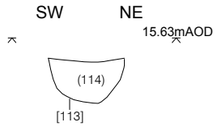


Section 1. South facing section across [107].

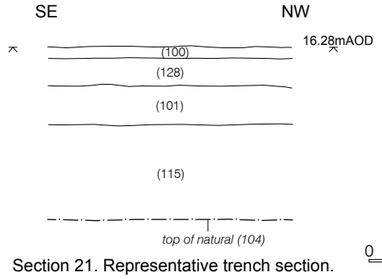
Section 2. North-east facing section across [109] and [111].



Section 3. North-west facing section across [111].

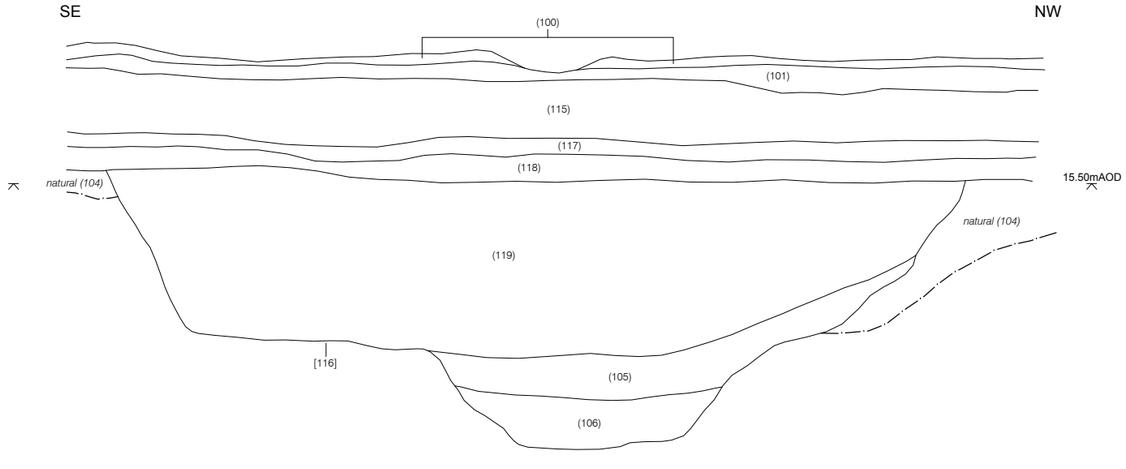


Section 5. South-east facing section across [113].



Section 21. Representative trench section.

0 1m
(scale 1:25 at A3)



Section 8. North-east facing section across [116].

0 2m
(scale 1:40 at A3)

Wardell Armstrong Archaeology 2016

PROJECT:

Land at the George Hall and Old Post Office, George Street, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire

CLIENT:

Witcomb Project Management Ltd.

DRAWN BY: AB

DATE: July 2016

KEY:

(101) Context number
Height mAOD
Section location
Limit of excavation

REPORT No:

CP11375

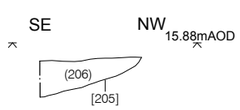
FIGURE:

3

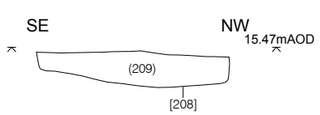
Figure 3: Trench 1; plan and sections.

0 4m
(scale 1:75 at A3)

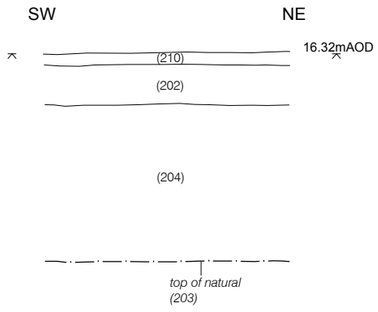
Section 12. North-east facing section across [200].



Section 13. North-east facing section across [205].



Section 14. North-east facing section across [208].



Section 20. Representative trench section.

0 1m
(scale 1:25 at A3)

(101) Context number
Height mAOD
Section location
Limit of excavation

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2016

PROJECT:

Land at the George Hall and Old Post Office, George Street, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire

CLIENT:

Witcomb Project Management Ltd.

DRAWN BY: AB

DATE: July 2016

KEY:

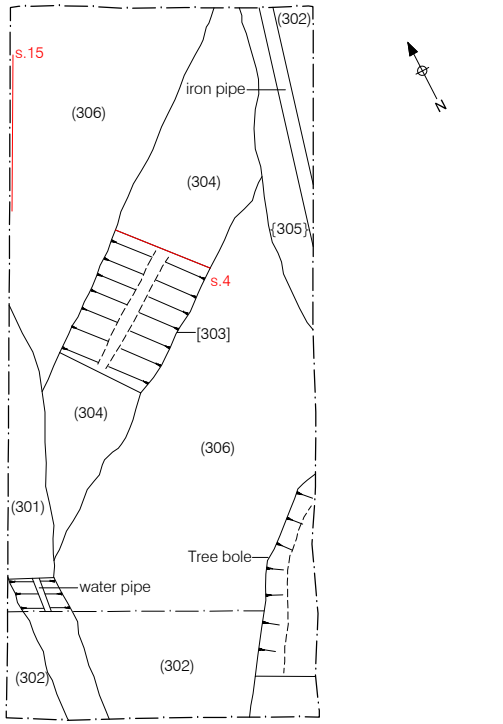
REPORT No:

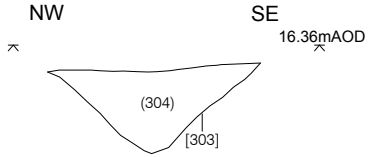
CP11375

FIGURE:

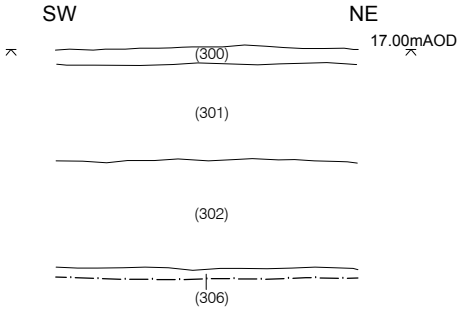
4

Figure 4: Trench 2; plan and sections.





Section 4. South-east facing section across [303].



Section 15. Representative trench section.

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(101) Context number
Height mAOD
Section location
Limit of excavation

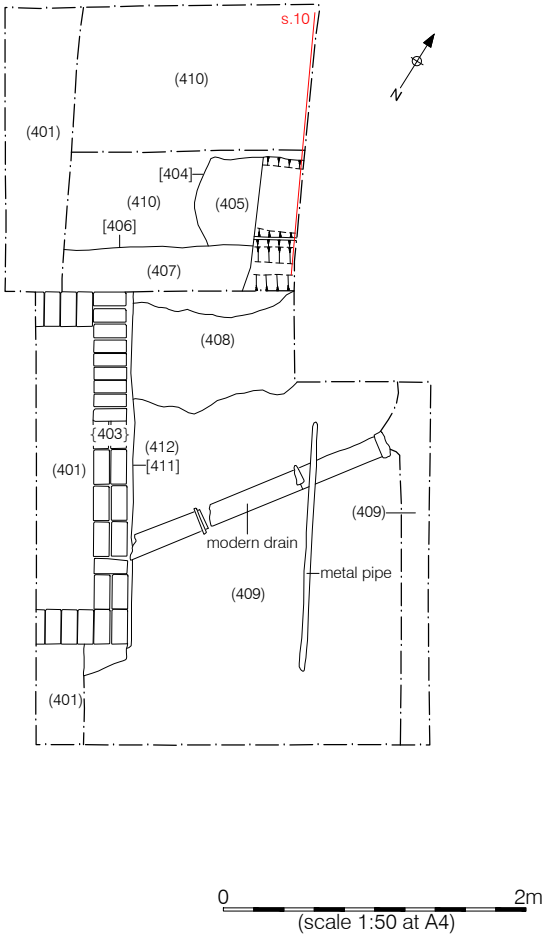
REPORT No:

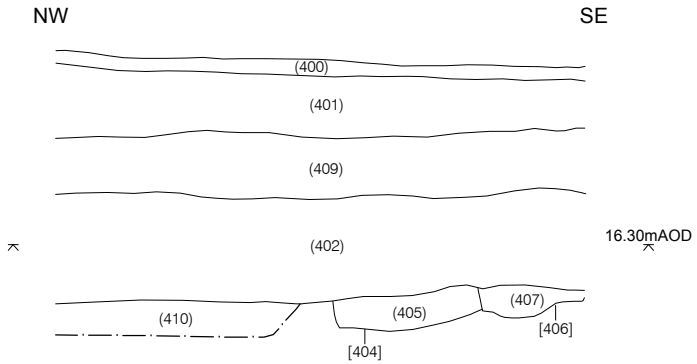
CP11375

FIGURE:

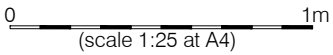
5

Figure 5: Trench 3; plan and sections.





Section 10. Representative trench section showing [404] and [406].



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KEY:

(101) Context number
Height mAOD
Section location
Limit of excavation

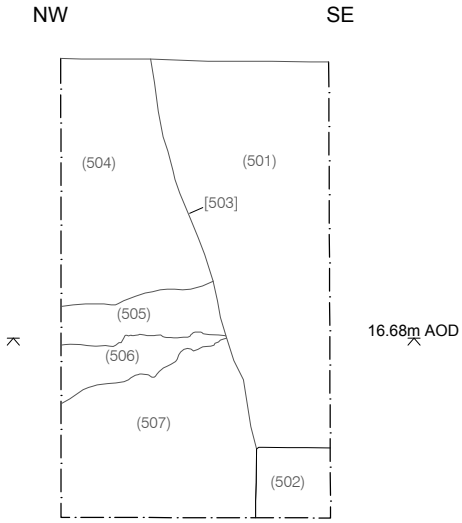
REPORT No:

CP11375

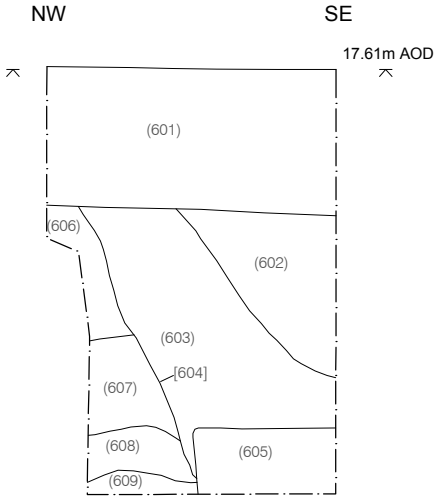
FIGURE:

6

Figure 6: Trench 4; plan and section.



Trench 5. South-west facing section.



Trench 6. South-west facing section.

0 1m

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Figure 7: Trenches 5 & 6 sections.

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