

**LAND EAST OF AVALON,  
KIRKGATE,  
TYDD St GILES,  
CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

**NGR REF: TF 4293 1651**



***ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION***  
**(OASIS ID: independ1-219960)**  
**(EVENT NR: ECB4520)**

**AUGUST 2015**

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## **Summary**

*An archaeological evaluation was conducted by Independent Archaeology Consultants for the construction of a new dwelling with associated garage, access and new services on land east of Avalon, Kirkgate, Tydd St Giles, Cambridgeshire. Two evaluation trenches were opened up inside the development area, but no archaeological features were encountered during the investigation.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 An archaeological evaluation was carried out on land east of Avalon, Kirkgate, Tydd St Giles (NGR: TF 4293 1651) in accordance with the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations* issued by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2015), as well as discussions with Kasia Gdaniec, Archaeological Officer at Cambridgeshire County Council.
- 1.2 Independent Archaeology Consultants is an archaeological consultancy company based in Peterborough, Cambridgeshire. The company subscribes to the *Code of Conduct, the Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations* (CIfA 2014), *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (EAA Occasional Paper 14) and *Research and Archaeology Revisited: a revised framework for the East of England* (EAA Occ. Paper No 24, 2011). All relevant CIfA Codes of Practice will be adhered to throughout the course of the project.

## **2 PROJECT BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Planning Permission has been granted (F/YR15/0461/F) for a new development on land east of Avalon, Kirkgate, Tydd St Giles. The development comprised the construction of a 2-storey 4-bed dwelling with detached garage, new services and access. No archaeological features were known from within the development area prior to the investigation.
- 2.2 The plot enclosed an area of some 2500m<sup>2</sup> at an average height of 5m AOD. The geology of the site comprised Tidal Flat Deposits over Amphthill Clay and Mudstone Formations (British Geological Survey).
- 2.3 The site was situated within an area of archaeological potential, as defined by the CHER. Therefore, an archaeological evaluation was required prior to any construction on the site. This condition was mentioned in the Planning Permission granted by Cambridgeshire County Council, and was in line with standards described in NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework).



Figure 1. The location of Tydd St Giles in England.



Figure 2. Site Location in Tydd St Giles. (Ordnance Survey maps produces with License nr: Ordnance Survey 0100031673).



Figure 3. Site Outline and Trench Location. (Ordnance Survey maps produces with License nr: Ordnance Survey 0100031673).

### 3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Although, there were no known archaeological remains within the proposed development area a number of archaeological sites are known from the surroundings.
- 3.2 Tydd St Giles, located in the Cambridgeshire silt fen, lies at the northern boundary of the county, where it is separated from Lincolnshire by the Shire Drain (formerly Lady Nunn's Old Eau- named after the wife of a 14th century Tydd land owner (VCH IV: 224)). As well as separating counties this historic winding drain also separated two dioceses and is the perceived boundary between two Anglo-Saxon sub kingdoms recorded in the 7th century Mercian Tribal Hidage, possibly the Northern and Southern Gyrwe- or the Southern Gyrwe and the Wixna.
- 3.3 The application site was located within the Medieval core of Tydd St Giles. To the west of the proposed development there was a well known Saxon settlement (HER MCB 117744), and it was thought that this settlement might have extended into the development area. To the east of the site Medieval remains were revealed during archaeological investigations in the 1990s (HER No. MCB 15604).
- 3.4 Historic buildings occurred to the east and north east of the development area: Kirkgate House to the immediate east (National Historic List for England 1161185), and Manor House (NHLE 1125929), both late 16<sup>th</sup> century. Manor House's 18<sup>th</sup> century listed barn lied further to the north east (NHLE 1310201).

- 3.5 The proposed development site therefore contained the potential for the preservation of archaeological deposits predominately relating to the Saxon, Medieval and Post-Medieval periods. This did not, however, prejudice the investigation against features and finds relating to other periods.

#### 4 AIMS

- 4.1 The aims of the archaeological evaluation were achieved through pursuit of the following specific objectives:

- i) to gain information about the heritage assets within the proposed development area;
- ii) to provide detailed information regarding the date, character, extent, integrity and degree of preservation of the identified heritage assets,
- iii) to inform a strategy for the recording, preservation and/or management of the identified assets;
- iv) to mitigate potential threats,
- v) to inform proposals for further archaeological investigations (namely targeted area excavations) within the ongoing programme of research;
- vi) to define the sequence and character of activity at the site, as reflected by the excavated remains;
- vii) to interpret the archaeology of the site within its local, regional and national archaeological context.

- 4.2 The evaluation also considered the general investigative themes outlined by: Medlycott, M. 2011 (ed.) *Research and Archaeology Revisited: a Revised Framework for the East of England*, East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 24; *Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties* (Glazebrook 1997; Brown & Glazebrook 2000), *English Heritage Archaeology Division Research Agenda* (1997); *Discovering the Past, Shaping the Future: Research Strategy 2005 - 2010* (English Heritage 2005).

- 4.3 Specifically the following investigative aims were accommodated in the programme of archaeological work:

- \*characterisation of the site in the broader landscape;
- \*characterisation of the activities identified on the site;
- \*characterisation of changes affecting land-use through time

## **5 METHODOLOGY**

### **5.1 Trial Trenching**

The evaluation aimed at determining the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains liable to be threatened by the proposed development. Based on the results of a field walking across the site, which was carried out in July 2015, it was proposed that two evaluation trenches were opened up across the site. It was suggested that one 15m long and one 25m long machine cut trench, both with a width of 2m, were opened up under constant archaeological supervision using a flat bladed ditching bucket. The total length of trenching was therefore 40m, totalling 80m<sup>2</sup>, or ca. 3% of the proposed development area of 2500m<sup>2</sup>.

The location of the trenches targeted areas of proposed ground disturbance and provided representative sample coverage. The location of the trenches were, however, slightly flexible and took into consideration potential above- and below-ground constraints and/or hazards, such as trees, utility trenches, overhead cables and areas of modern disturbance. The investigation area was searched for live cables and other potential threats prior to the evaluation.

The trenches were excavated to the upper interface of natural deposits. Thereafter, hand-excavation was required to sample any deposits exposed. The field evaluation was not carried out at the expenses of the heritage assets of the site and was minimally intrusive to archaeological remains.

### **5.2 Metal Detecting**

Metal detector sweeps of exposed deposits and spoil heaps were carried out in advance of, and during, the excavation process.

### **5.3 Hand Excavation**

All man-made features were investigated. Apparently natural features (such as tree throws) were sampled sufficiently to establish their origin and to characterise any related human activity. Hand excavation and sampling was sufficient to establish the date and character of all deposits exposed, and to allow appropriate recording.

Deposits and layers (including buried horizons of top- and subsoils) were sampled sufficiently to enable a confident interpretation of their character, date and relationships with other features. A characterisation of the artefact contents of the ploughsoil was attempted to provide an understanding of the presence/absence and condition of possible underlying archaeological remains. The ploughsoil was bucket sampled in 90 litre samples. Thereafter, mechanical removal and visual scanning for artefacts was acceptable.

### **5.4 Recording**

A numbered single context-based recording system, written on suitable forms and indexed appropriately, was used for all elements of the archaeological recording programme.

Measured plans were produced showing all exposed deposits (including natural and modern features etc.) and excavated areas. Individual measured plans and sections were produced for all excavated deposits. These were accurately tied into trench plans/trench location plans, that in turn were accurately related to the Ordnance Survey grid and to suitably mapped local features (boundaries, buildings, roads etc.). All sections and plans were related accurately to Ordnance Datum. A photographic record comprising monochrome and digital photos formed part of the excavation record. A selection of digital photographs was also used in this report.

## **6 RESULTS**

### **Trench 1**

- 6.1 Trench 1 was 15m long, 2m wide and up to 0.67m deep. Underlying all other deposits in the trench was the natural deposits consisting of yellow, plastic silty clay with occasional small stones and roots. No archaeological features were visible in the trench.
- 6.2 Overlaying the Natural was the 0.35m thick subsoil of light-brown, plastic silty clay with occasional small stones and roots. The uppermost deposit in Trench 1 was the 0.32m thick topsoil of dark brown, plastic silty clay with occasional small stones and roots. Bucket samples of 90 litres were taken from the topsoil, but contained only modern finds, such as rusty nails, pieces of modern bricks and concrete. The finds were not kept in the archive.

### **Trench 2**

- 6.3 Trench 2 was 25m long, 2m wide and up to 0.97m deep. The stratigraphy was very similar to that of Trench 1. Underlying all other deposits in the trench was the natural deposits consisting of yellow, plastic silty clay with occasional small stones and roots. No archaeological features were visible in the trench.
- 6.4 Overlaying the Natural was the 0.35m thick subsoil of light-brown, plastic silty clay with occasional small stones and roots. The uppermost deposit in Trench 1 was the 0.62m thick topsoil of dark brown, plastic silty clay with occasional small stones and roots. Bucket samples of 90 litres were taken from the topsoil, but contained only modern finds, such as rusty nails, pieces of modern bricks and concrete. The finds were not kept in the archive.
- 6.5 The surface in the central parts of the site, where Trench 2 was located, was about 0.30m higher than the rest of the site. This is probably a result of human activity, where garden soil has been brought into the area for growing vegetables. For this reason some of the modern finds from the topsoil could have been brought in from elsewhere, and are therefore not representative for the history of the site itself.





*Figure 4. Trench 1. Overview. South facing photo.*



*Figure 5. Trench 2. Overview. East facing photo.*

## 7 DISCUSSION

- 7.1 The archaeological evaluation described in this report was carried out on land east Avalon, Tydd St Giles, Cambridgeshire, a village situated in the Cambridgeshire Fenland. Because of its location and geological history the stratigraphy within the site turned out to be very deep, with several meters of various clay- and silt- deposits covering the natural bedrock. The various silts and clays recorded in the two evaluation trenches are sediments associated with early phases of marine and freshwater inundation, but no archaeological features or deposits were found in any of the trenches.
- 7.2 As no features or artefacts of archaeological interest were present in the two trenches the results of the evaluation were scarce. The surrounding area contains however a number of documented archaeological sites and future investigations in the area can hopefully tell us more about the history of Tydd St Giles.

## 8 ARCHIVE

The archive consists of the following:

### Paper Record

The project brief

Written Scheme of Investigation

The photographic and drawn records

The project report

The primary site records

The archive is currently maintained by Independent Archaeology Consultants.  
The archive will be transferred to:

The Archaeological Collections for Cambridgeshire County Council.

## 9 BIBLIOGRAPHY

*British Geological Survey*. Internet based service.

*English Heritage Archaeology Division Research Agenda (1997); Discovering the Past, Shaping the Future: Research Strategy 2005-2010* (English Heritage 2005).

*HER for Cambridgeshire*. Cambridgeshire County Council. Cambridgeshire 2014.

*NPPF 2012*. (National Planning Policy Framework). Department for Communities and Local Government. London 2012.

*Research and Archaeology Revisited: a Revised Framework for the East of England*, Medlycott, M. 2011 (Ed.) East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 24.

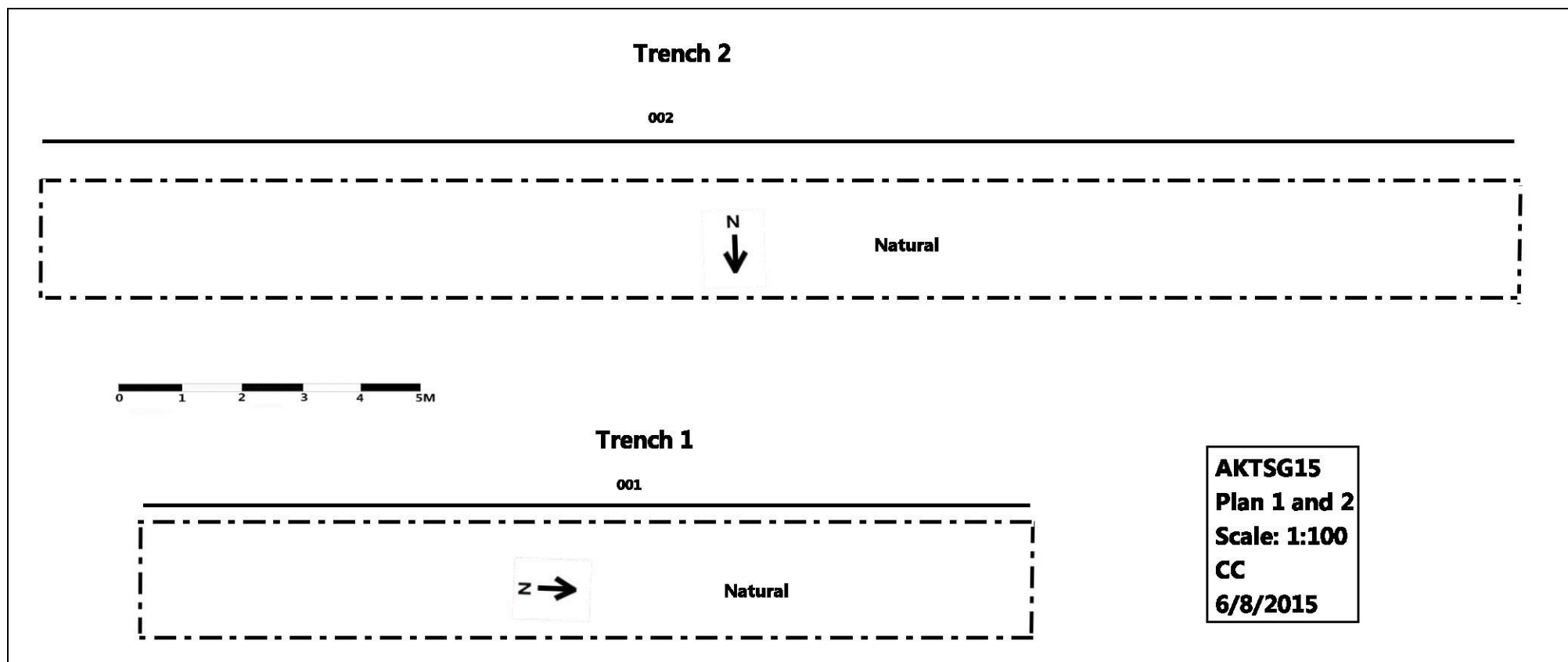
*Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties* (Glazebrook 1997; Brown & Glazebrook 2000)

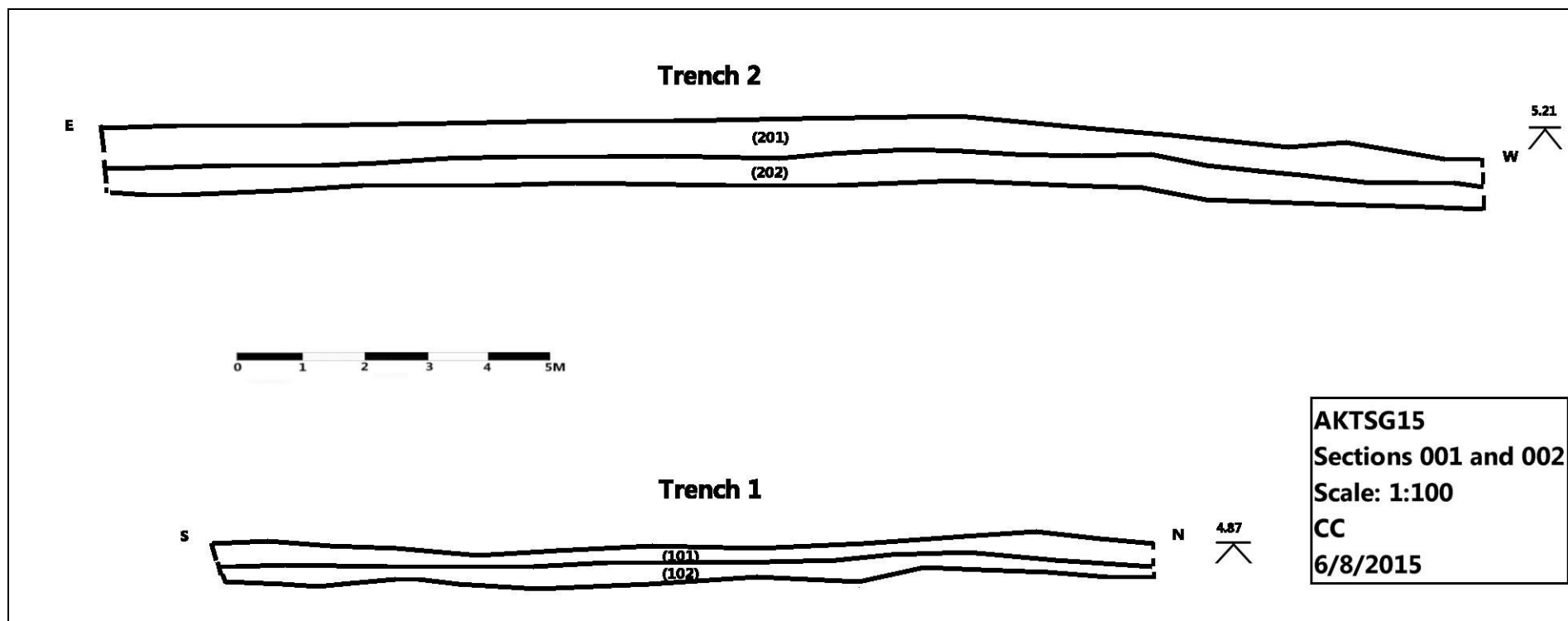
*Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluation*. Chartered Institute for Archaeologists 2015. Reading.

## APPENDICES

### CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Context nr	Depth (m)	Description	Younger than	Older than
		<b>Trench 1 (15m by 2m)</b>		
(101)	0.32	Topsoil of dark brown, plastic silty clay with occasional small stones and roots	(102)	-
(102)	0.35	Subsoil of light-brown, plastic silty clay with occasional small stones and roots	Natural	(101)
Natural	-	Yellow, plastic silty clay with occasional small stones and roots	-	(102)
		<b>Trench 2 (25m by 2m)</b>		
(201)	0.62	Topsoil of dark brown, plastic silty clay with occasional small stones and roots	(202)	-
(202)	0.35	Subsoil of light-brown, plastic silty clay with occasional small stones and roots	Natural	(201)
Natural	-	Yellow, plastic silty clay with occasional small stones and roots	-	(202)





## OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM

### Project details

Project name	Land East of Avalon, Kirkgate, Tydd St Giles, Cambridgeshire. Archaeological Evaluation.
Short description of the project	An archaeological evaluation for the construction of a new dwelling with detached garage and driveway.
Project dates	Start: 05-07-2015 End: 06-07-2015
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	AKTSG15 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	F/YR15/0461/F - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	Local Authority Designated Archaeological Area
Current Land use	Other 1 - Allotment
Monument type	N/A None
Monument type	N/A None
Significant Finds	N/A None
Significant Finds	N/A None
Methods & techniques	"Fieldwalking", "Metal Detectors", "Sample Trenches", "Visual Inspection"
Development type	Rural residential
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

### Project location

Country	England
Site location	CAMBRIDGESHIRE FENLAND TYDD ST GILES Land East of Avalon, Kirkgate, Tydd St Giles
Postcode	PE13 5LB
Study area	2500 Square metres
Site coordinates	TF 4293 1651 52.7269564101 0.116781157928 52 43 37 N 000 07 00 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 4m Max: 6m

### Project creators

Name of Organisation	Independent Archaeology Consultants
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	Independent Archaeology Consultants
Project director/manager	Christer Carlsson
Project supervisor	Christer Carlsson
Type of sponsor/funding body	Landowner

### Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Cambridgeshire HERI
Physical Contents	"other"
Digital Archive recipient	Cambridgeshire HER



Digital Contents	"Stratigraphic"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Images vector"
Paper Archive recipient	Cambridgeshire HER
Paper Contents	"Stratigraphic"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Photograph","Plan","Report","Section"

### **Project bibliography 1**

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Land East of Avalon, Kirkgate, Tydd St Giles, Cambridgeshire. Archaeological Evaluation
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Carlsson, C
Date	2015
Issuer or publisher	Independent Archaeology Consultants
Place of issue or publication	Peterborough
Entered by	Christer Karlsson (contact@independentarchaeology.co.uk)
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