

BIRMINGHAM UNIVERSITY
FIELD ARCHAEOLOGY UNIT

**THE NEW PARSONAGE, LONGSTANTON,
CAMBRIDGESHIRE**
AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
1998/1999

B.U.F.A.U.



Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit
Project No. 531
September 1999

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By

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**The New Parsonage, Longstanton,
Cambridgeshire**

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1.0 Summary

Archaeological monitoring and investigation was carried out at Longstanton, Cambridgeshire during groundworks for the construction of The New Parsonage, an associated access road, and a service trench for mains sewerage.

The depth of groundworks at the street frontage was not sufficient to disturb potential archaeological deposits. No deposits of archaeological interest were observed further away from The High Street, within the building footprint of The New Parsonage.

2.0 Introduction

This report describes the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out during the development of land fronting The High Street, Longstanton, Cambridgeshire, prior to the construction of The New Parsonage (NGR TL 399 644, Figure 1). This work was carried out by Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit (BUFAU) on behalf of The Diocese of Ely.

The archaeological monitoring and investigation was carried out in accordance with a brief issued by the County Archaeology Office of Cambridgeshire County Council (Kancr 1998), and a specification prepared by BUFAU (Cutler 1998). The project was carried out in accordance with guidelines set down in *Standard and guidance for archaeological watching briefs* (Institute of Field Archaeologists 1994), and conformed to requirements set down in Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 (Department of Environment 1991).

3.0 Site Description and Archaeological Background (Figure 1)

The southwestern edge of the site fronts onto The High Street. To the east is the medieval parish church of All Saints (SMR 03512). The remains of one of the manors of Longstanton (SMR 10296) lies to the south of the church, either Tony's Fee or Walwyn's. The Domesday Book records Long Stanton All Saints and Long Stanton St. Michael and their respective parishes as having 67 Tenants (VCH Cambs). Recent archaeological excavations in Longstanton, to the north of Over Road, have revealed evidence of agricultural and settlement activity from the 11th century onwards (Cutler, Ellis, Raitkai Forthcoming).

4.0 Objectives

The objective of archaeological monitoring was to ensure that any archaeological deposits which were located or disturbed were to be excavated and *preserved by record*, as were those deposits affected by the insertion of services.

Specific research objectives were to provide data on the depth, nature and the extent of any archaeological remains that may contribute to the understanding of the development of the area during the medieval period.

5.0 Method

Groundworks were monitored at various points between April 1998 and February 1999, by adhering to the conditions set down in the Cambridgeshire County Council Design Brief (Kaner 1998). Topsoil stripping within the building footprint, access route, service trench and car parking area was monitored by a qualified archaeologist. All stratigraphic sequences were recorded, even where no archaeological deposits or features were present. Contextual information was supplemented by scale drawings, plans, sections and photographs which form the site archive. This is presently housed at Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit.

6.0 Archaeological Results (Figure 1)

Access Road

Stripping of the overburden along the access road was limited to a depth of 0.30m. This exposed an area approximately 3m by 40m. The earliest deposit was a dark brown silty clay (1001, 1003 and 1006), containing ash and fragments of yellow brick. This appeared to be cut by three linear features (F1, F2 and F3) aligned northwest-southeast. Equally spaced, approximately 13m apart, F1, F2 and F3 were filled by a redeposited sand and gravel (1002, 1005 and 1008). Within the upper fills of Feature F2 were deposits of charcoal (1004) containing modern pottery. These Features (F1, F2 and F3) may represent drains or service trenches. All deposits were sealed by 0.28m of topsoil.

Car Park

The topsoil was removed within the area of the car park to a depth of 0.30m, revealing a brown silty clay (1009). In the southeastern corner of the car park was a deposit of brown silty clay and rubble with ash (1010), which contained modern pottery. The natural subsoil horizon was not exposed.

Building Foundation

Foundation trenches 0.80m wide were excavated to a depth of 1.15m. At the base of the trenches the upper surface of an orange silty clay natural subsoil was exposed.

This was overlain by layers of dark silty clays (1023-26), which had a combined depth of 0.72m. No artifacts were recovered from these deposits. These were disturbed by a large cut, the fill of which contained fragments of modern brick and was evident in most areas of the building foundation. This may represent an in-filled pond.

The Service Trenches

The service trenches were excavated, using a mini-digger, to a width of 0.30m and to depths varying between 0.4m and 0.7m. Along the majority of the access road, the deposits were characterised by an orange-brown silty clay subsoil which was encountered at a depth of 0.4m. This was sealed by a mixed brown silty clay (1027), which contained modern glazed pottery and glass. This in turn was sealed by a dark brown humic topsoil (1000) measuring 0.28m in depth. Towards the High Street frontage modern disturbance was noted in the form of brick and rubble makeup layers (1029).

A sondage 1.2m square and 2m in depth was excavated along the line of the sewer, approximately 40m from the road frontage. The natural subsoil was exposed at a depth of 0.50m. This was sealed by a brown silty clay (1028) containing modern brick and pottery and having a depth of 0.20m. The topsoil/garden soil measured approximately 0.30m in depth.

7.0 Discussion

No deposits of archaeological interest were identified. The area of highest archaeological potential, along The High Street frontage, was not excavated to a depth that exposed *in situ* archaeological remains. Groundworks for the access road and car park removed the topsoil to a depth of only 0.3m. The area around the building footprint has been heavily disturbed in recent years, and most of the deposits in this area would appear to relate to recent in-filling of a pond or depression.

Excavations at Home Farm, Longstanton have demonstrated the high potential for the survival of archaeological deposits within the village (Cutler, Ellis and Ratkai). The groundworks were, however, of insufficient depth to expose archaeological deposits in plan.

8.0 References

- Kaner, S. 1997 Design Brief for Basic Archaeological Investigation at The New Parsonage, Longstanton, Cambridgeshire.
- Cutler, R. 1998 Archaeological Specification. Archaeological Monitoring and Investigation, The New Parsonage, Longstanton, Cambridgeshire.

Cuttler, R., Ellis, P. and Ratkai, S. Forthcoming. Late Saxon and Medieval Remains at Longstanton, Cambridgeshire; Archaeological Excavations at Home Farm 1997.

VCH Cambs. Victoria County History, Cambridgeshire.

9.0 Acknowledgments

This project was sponsored by The Diocese of Ely. Thanks to Stephen Layton (Site Surveyor). The monitoring of groundworks was undertaken by Andy Hammon and Richard Cuttler. Nigel Dodds prepared Figure 1.

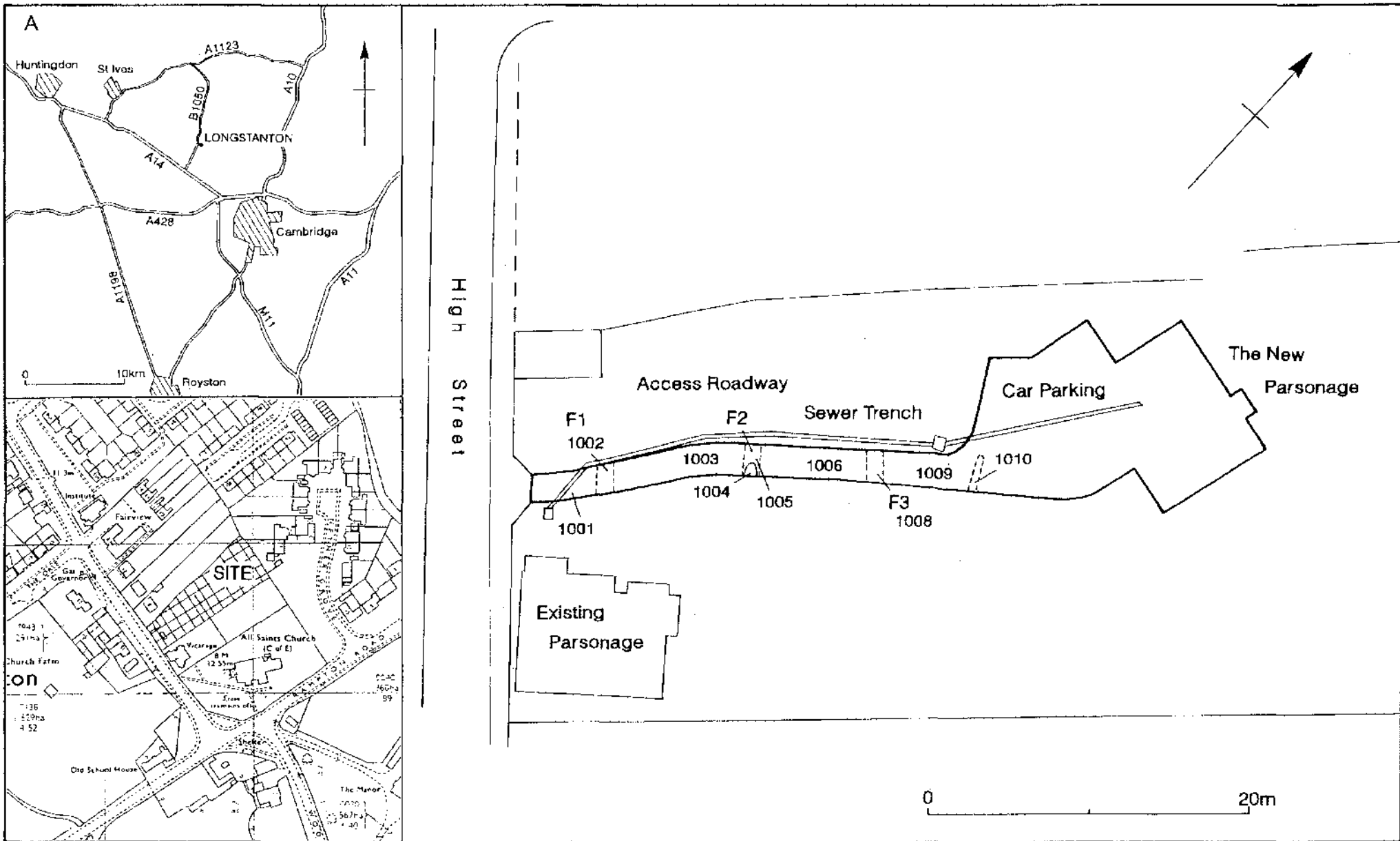


Fig.1