

**Report 2635**



nau archaeology

**Archaeological Evaluation of Land adjacent to  
4 Old Church Lane, Colne, Cambridgeshire**

ECB 3589



**Prepared for**  
M A Jones Homes Ltd  
c/o Peter Humphrey Associates Ltd  
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<i>Issue 1</i>		

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BAU 2635

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Location:	4 Old Church Lane, Colne, Cambridgeshire
District:	Huntingdonshire
Grid Ref.:	TL 3697 7598
HER No.:	ECB 3589
OASIS Ref.:	101377
Client:	M A Homes Ltd
Dates of Fieldwork:	5 May 2011

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## **Summary**

*An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by NAU Archaeology on the site of a proposed single dwelling and associated landscaping at land adjacent to 4 Old Church Lane, Colne, Cambridgeshire. The proposed development was situated 50m south of a Scheduled Monument - a medieval moated site (Historic Environment No. DCB271).*

*A single trench measuring 15m by 1.8m was excavated within the footprint of the proposed development, however, no archaeological features or deposits were observed*

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

A proposal to develop land adjacent to 4 Old Church Lane, Colne, Cambridgeshire (Fig. 1) required a programme of archaeological works to assess the potential effects of the proposals on the archaeological resource.

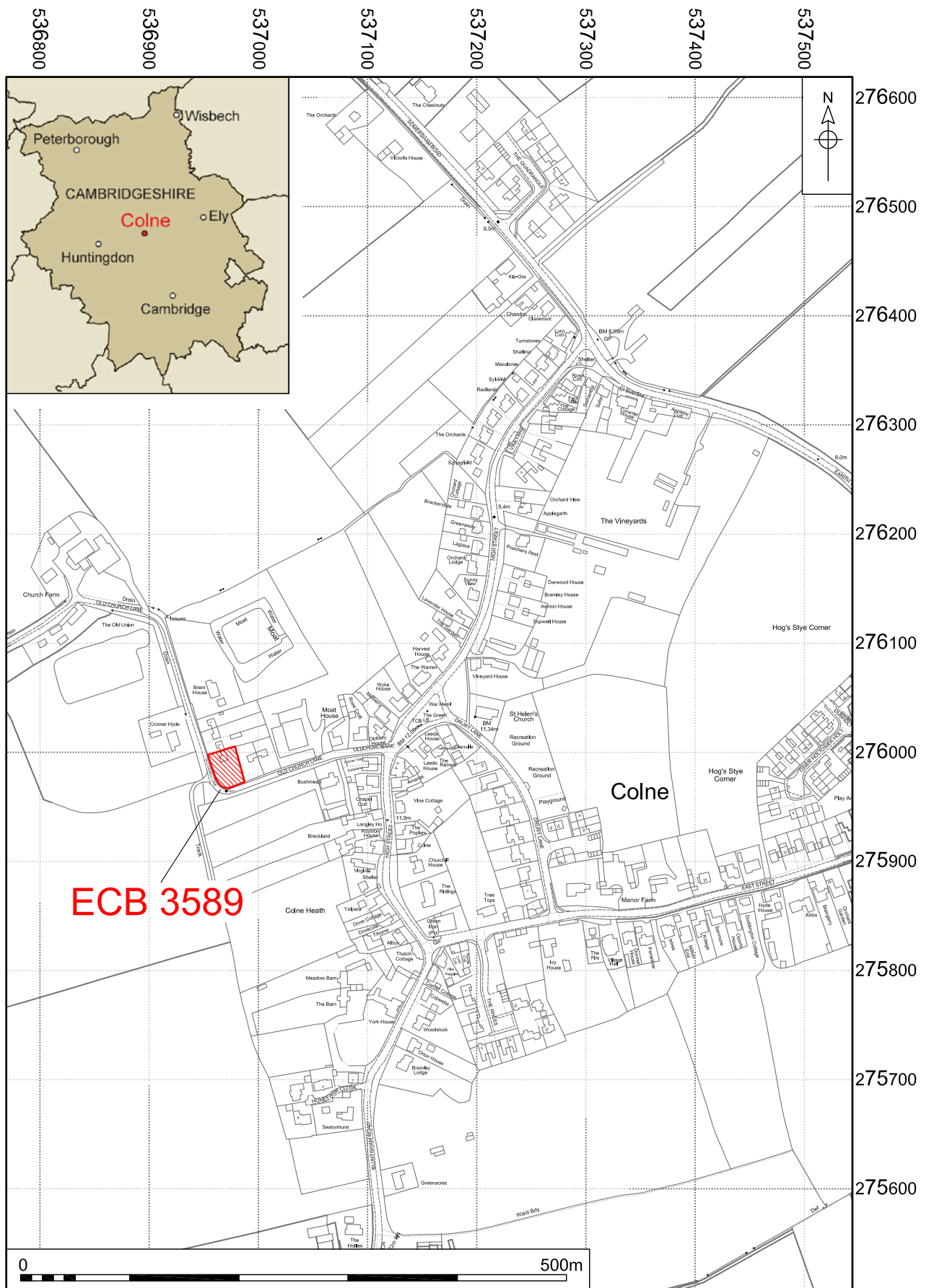
This work was undertaken to fulfil a planning condition set by Cambridgeshire Archaeology Planning & Countryside Advice office (Planning Application: 1000650FUL) and a Brief issued by Cambridgeshire Archaeology Planning & Countryside Advice office (December 14, 2010). The work was conducted in accordance with a Project Design and Method Statement prepared by NAU Archaeology (Ref. NAU/BAU2635/NP). This work was funded M A Homes Ltd and commissioned by Peter Humphrey Associates Ltd.

This programme of work was designed to assist in defining the character and extent of any archaeological remains within the proposed redevelopment area, following the guidelines set out in *Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment* (Department for Communities and Local Government 2010). The results will enable decisions to be made by the Local Planning Authority about the treatment of any archaeological remains found.

The site archive is currently held by NAU Archaeology and on completion of the project will be deposited with the County Store, Cambridgeshire Archaeology Planning and Countryside Advice following the relevant policies on archiving standards.

## **2.0 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY**

The solid geology consists of Jurassic Corallian rocks overlain by drift geology in the form of terrace sand and gravels.



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Figure 1. Site location. Scale 1:5000

Colne was formerly located within the county boundary of Huntingdonshire but is now designated as being in Cambridgeshire. The village is located 15 miles north-west of Cambridge and 7 miles north-east of Huntingdon.

The site lies at an elevation of 13.56m OD.

### **3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

The site was situated in a rich archaeological landscape. A number of archaeological investigations have taken place in recent years, revealing extensive evidence of past activity in the area.

The Cambridgeshire Historical and Environmental Records (CHER) has been consulted and the most relevant entries are discussed in broad chronological order below.

#### **Roman**

CHER 03604 located to the east of the development site records four 4th-century coins.

#### **Medieval**

MCB 17926 located to the south-east of the site revealed a Late Saxon sunken feature building and a number of medieval pits and post-holes which may represent occupation fronting onto East Street. A rectangular feature with timber foundations set in clay may indicate an 18th-century building close to East Street

CHER 03650 located to the north-west of the development records the site of the first St. Helen's church built in part in the 13th century, although mainly of 14th century and later. The church was virtually destroyed when the tower collapsed in 1896. The New Church of St. Helen (MCB 17086) was completed in 1900, replacing the old church which had been demolished. The New Church incorporates several features of the old church in its construction including re-used ashlar, 13th- and 14th-century windows in the chancel and nave and 15th-century windows in the aisles. Three fragments of coffin-lids of late 13th-century and early 14th-century date are to be found in the tower. The font and piscina are 14th-century in date.

CHER 01080 is located to the north-west of the site and north of the site of St. Helen's church. Evidence of a deserted medieval village at Colne appears to be based solely on the existence of the 13th-century church and may indicate later settlement shift to the medieval core of the village situated to the east.

SAM 33271 is found to the north of the development site and is a moated site formed of a roughly square 'island' raised 0.50m above the surrounding ground level and measuring approximately 40m on its north-west to south-east axis and 42m north-east to south-west. This moated site is traditionally believed to represent the site of the manor of Colne, known variously as Colnes Dunholts and Drury's manor. It was held by the de Colne family in the 12th, 13th and 14th centuries and was passed to the Dunholt family who held it until mid 16th century. The manor came into the ownership of the Drury family in the earlier part of the 17th century until the mid-18th century. A house which formerly stood on the moated site was demolished in the late 18th century.

CHER 01079 is located to the west of the development site and records a moated site situated west of the St Helen's church (CHER 03650). It is considered to probably be the site of La Leghe Manor which was destroyed prior to 1787.

### **Post medieval**

There are five Grade II listed buildings (CHERs 53821, 53822, 53823, 53824 and 53825) recorded along the High Street and four Grade II listed buildings (CHERs 53817, 53818, 53819, and 53820) along East Street in Colne.

## **4.0 METHODOLOGY**

The objective of this evaluation was to determine as far as reasonably possible the presence or absence, location, nature, extent, date, quality, condition and significance of any surviving archaeological deposits within the development area.

The Brief required that a 5% sample (468m<sup>2</sup>) of the development site be investigated.

Machine excavation was carried out with a wheeled hydraulic 360° excavator equipped with a toothless ditching bucket and operated under constant archaeological supervision.

Spoil, exposed surfaces and features were scanned with a metal-detector. All metal-detected and hand-collected finds, other than those which were obviously modern, were retained for inspection.

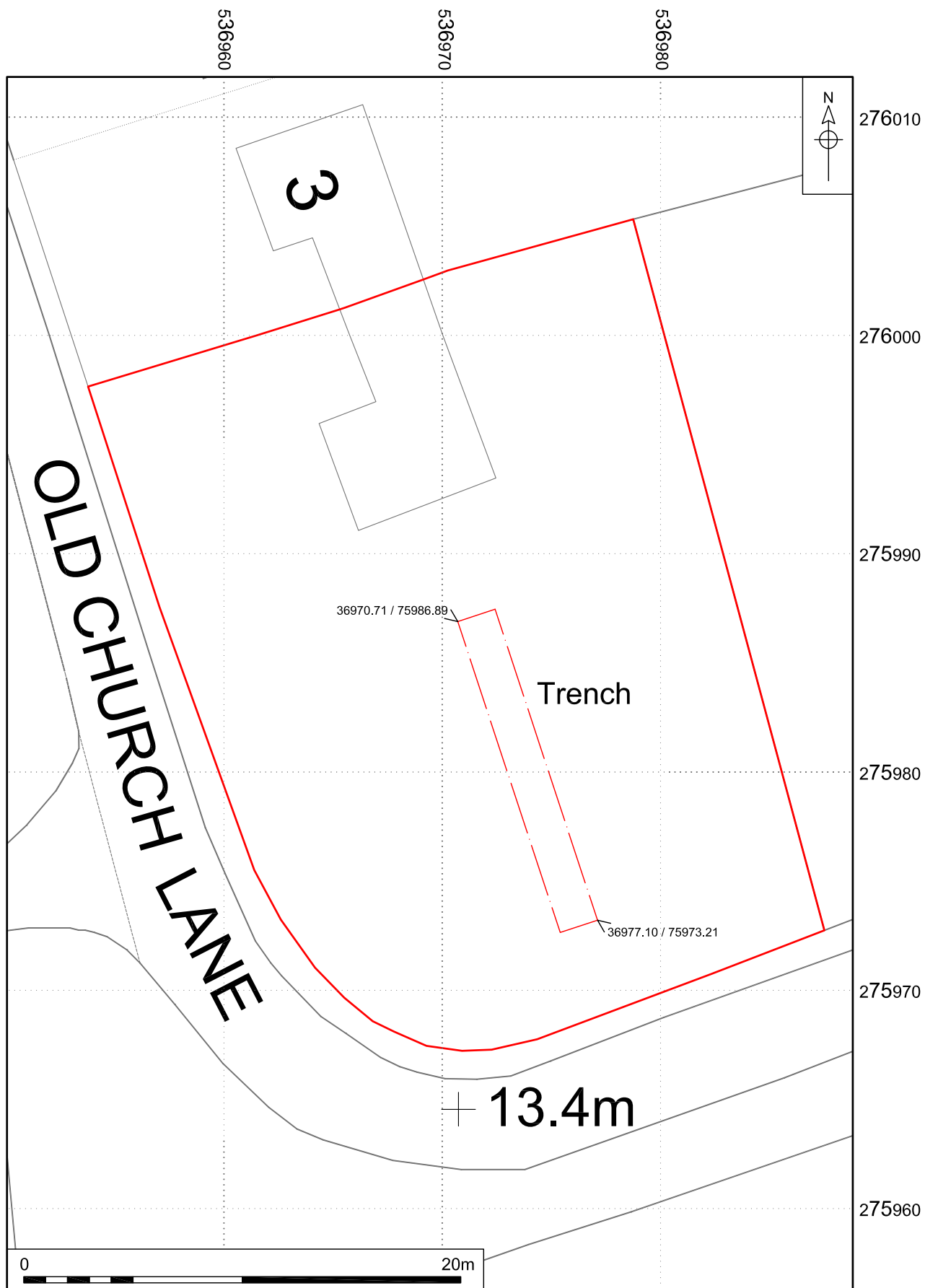
No environmental samples were taken.

All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using NAU Archaeology pro forma. Trench locations, plans and sections were recorded at appropriate scales. Colour and monochrome were taken of all relevant features and deposits where appropriate.

The temporary benchmark used during the course of this work was transferred from an Ordnance Survey benchmark with a value of 13.40m OD, located on Old Church Lane.

Site conditions were good, with the work taking place in fine weather.





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Figure 2. Trench location. Scale 1:250

## 5.0 RESULTS

(Fig. 2)

The single trench measured 15m by 1.8m and was excavated to a depth of 0.70m at its southern end and 0.20m at its northern end. The trench appears to have been excavated on a natural terrace with the base of the trench at 13.26m OD (north) and 12.87m OD (south).

The excavated overburden consisted of homogeneous dark blackish brown clayey sand (01) which contained frequent lumps of charcoal, occasional fragments of brick rubble and rusted iron objects. No subsoil was seen in section and the natural ground consisted of very firm clayey sandy gravels. Deposit (01) appears to be typical garden soil which has been disturbed over a period of time and has evidence of being affected by bonfires and other household activities.



Plate 1. Evaluation trench, looking south-east

## 6.0 CONCLUSIONS

The mixed deposit overlying the natural ground gave the appearance that disturbance had taken place within this area some time in the past and did indicate a natural soil build-up. It suggested that truncation had taken place in the past which may explain the lack of subsoil and archaeological features within the development area.

Recommendations for future work will be based upon the results of this report by Cambridgeshire Archaeological Planning and Countryside Advice.

## **Acknowledgements**

The author would like to thank M A Jones Homes Ltd for funding the project and Peter Humphrey Associates Ltd for commissioning it.

Thanks are also extended to Bryn Williams Civil Engineering. The author and Lilly Hodges undertook the fieldwork. The report was produced by David Dobson and edited by Jayne Bown.

## **Bibliography**

Department for Communities and  
Local Government

2010 *Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic  
Environment* TSO, London

## **Appendix 1: Context Summary**

<b>Context</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Period</b>
01	Deposit	Topsoil	Mixed deposit of black charcoal rich clayey sand which contained fragments brick rubble and iron	Modern