



**CAM ARC Report Number 930**

**Iron Age Remains at the New  
Children's Centre, Land  
Adjacent to Christie Drive,  
Hinchingsbrooke,  
Cambridgeshire**

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**An Excavation**

Alexandra Howe

April 2007

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Alexandra Howe BA (Hons)

With contributions by Ian Baxter and Rachel  
Fosberry

Site Code: STU HIN 07

CHER Event Number: ECB 2426

Date of works: 8th– 15th January 2007

Grid Ref: TL 2214 7198

Editor: Mark Hinman

Illustrator: Alexandra Howe BA (Hons)

## CAM ARC OASIS Report Form

OASIS Number:cambridge1-25705

PROJECT DETAILS				
Project name	Excavation at New Children's Centre, Land south of the Forensic Science Laboratory, Hinchingsbrooke			
Short description	The excavation revealed a number of small ditches, two post holes and a large curvilinear feature. The ditches and curvilinear feature are dated to the Iron Age. Ridge and furrow was observed on a NNE – SSW alignment.			
Project dates	Start	08.01.07	End	15.01.07
Previous work	Hinman, M., 2005 Bob's Wood PXA CCC AFU Report 772 Hinman, M., 2000 CCC AFU Report 173		Future work	unknown
Associated project reference codes	STU HIN 07, CHER: ECB 2464			
Type of project	Excavation			
Site status	None			
Current land use (list all that apply)	None			
Planned development	Child Care Facility			
Monument types / period (list all that apply and use <a href="#">thesaurus of monument types</a> )	Iron Age – enclosure ditches, pit, postholes			
Significant finds: Artefact type / period (list all that apply and use <a href="#">MDA object thesaurus</a> )	Later Iron Age pottery			
PROJECT LOCATION				
County	Huntingdonshire	Parish	The Stukeleys	
HER for region	Cambridgeshire			
Site address (including postcode)	New Children's Centre, Land south of the Forensic Science Laboratory, Hinchingsbrooke			
Study area (sq.m or ha)	1393 sq m			
National grid reference	Easting (6 figure)	522182	Northing (6 figure)	271959
Height OD	Max OD	29.79	Min OD	28.23
PROJECT ORIGINATORS				
Organisation	Cambridgeshire County Council, CAM ARC			
Project brief originator	Cambridgeshire Archaeology Planning and Countryside Advice (CAPCA)			
Project design originator	Cambridgeshire County Council, CAM ARC			
Director/supervisor	Alexandra Howe			
Project manager	Mark Hinman			
Sponsor or funding body	The Office of Corporate Services, Property and Asset Management, Cambridgeshire County Council			
ARCHIVES	Location and accession number	Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone, database, context sheets etc)		
Physical	CAM ARC offices	Pottery, animal bone, iron object		
Paper	CAM ARC offices	Plans sections proforma sheets, photographs		
Digital	CAM ARC offices	Pdf Report, digital photos, AutoCAD drawings		
BIBLIOGRAPHY				
Full title	Iron Age remains at New Children's Centre, land south of the Forensic Science Laboratory, Hinchingsbrooke. An Interim Statement			
Report number	CAM ARC report 930			
Series title and volume	N/A			
Page numbers	N/A			
Author(s)	Alexandra Howe			
Date	January 2007			

## **Summary**

Between the 8th and 15th January 2007 CAM ARC, Cambridgeshire County Council (formerly Archaeological Field Unit) carried out an archaeological excavation on land adjacent to Christie Drive, Hinchingsbrooke, Cambridgeshire.

The excavations on the site of the proposed new childcare facility represent a significant addition to a continuing programme of archaeological investigation on the Bob's Wood Site that have taken place in advance of development since 1997.

The excavation revealed elements of a series of Later Iron Age field systems and enclosures and a heavily truncated pit. The pottery was of an East Midlands Scored Ware type dating to around 300 – 100 BC was recorded from a ditch terminus.

## Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Geology and Topography</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Archaeological and Historical Background</b>	<b>1</b>
3.1	By Period	1
3.1.1	<i>Prehistoric – General</i>	1
3.1.2	<i>Neolithic</i>	2
3.1.3	<i>Bronze Age</i>	2
3.1.4	<i>Iron Age</i>	3
3.1.5	<i>Romano-British</i>	3
3.1.6	<i>Anglo-Saxon</i>	4
3.1.7	<i>Medieval/Post-Medieval</i>	4
3.2	Previous Investigations in the Immediate Area	5
3.2.1	<i>The 1997 Excavations</i>	5
	Area 1	
	Area 2	
3.2.2	<i>The 2000 Investigations</i>	7
3.2.3	<i>Bob’s Wood Excavations</i>	7
3.2.4	<i>Parkway Evaluation</i>	9
3.2.5	<i>Parkway Excavation</i>	9
<b>4</b>	<b>Methodology</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Results</b>	<b>11</b>
5.1	Overburden	11
5.2	Archaeology	11
5.2.1	<i>2000 Evaluation</i>	12
5.2.2	<i>2003 Excavation</i>	12
5.2.3	<i>2007 Excavation</i>	12
	<i>Ditches</i>	12
	<i>Postholes</i>	13
	<i>Pits</i>	14
	<i>Natural</i>	14
	<i>Uncertain</i>	14
	<i>Ridge and Furrow</i>	14

<b>6</b>	<b>Discussion</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Conclusions</b>	<b>16</b>

**Acknowledgements**

**Bibliography**

### **List of Figures**

- Figure 1: Location of excavation with the development outlined (red)
- Figure 2: Areas of previous archaeological investigations
- Figure 3 Sections and Plan of excavation area

### **List of Appendices**

- Appendix 1: Context Summary
- Appendix 2 Animal Bone
- Appendix 3: Environmental Remains, by Rachel Fosberry

## **1 Introduction**

This archaeological excavation was undertaken in accordance with a Brief issued by Kasia Gdaniec of the Cambridgeshire Archaeology, Planning and Countryside Advice team (CAPCA; Planning Application H/05011/06/CC), supplemented by a Specification prepared by Mark Hinman of CAM ARC, Cambridgeshire County Council (formerly Archaeological Field Unit).

The work was designed to preserve by record any archaeological remains within the proposed redevelopment area, in accordance with the guidelines set out in *Planning and Policy Guidance 16 - Archaeology and Planning* (Department of the Environment 1990).

The site archive is currently held by CAM ARC and will be deposited with the Cambridgeshire County Council stores at Landbeach in due course.

## **2 Geology and Topography**

The site overlies Boulder Clay (British Geological Survey 1993). It is located approximately 2km to the north-west of the Huntingdon/Godmanchester crossing of the River Great Ouse. It lies at approximately 30mOD.

## **3 Archaeological and Historical Background**

### **3.1 By Period**

#### **3.1.1 Prehistoric (general)**

The major river systems within Cambridgeshire have traditionally been seen as the focus for much of the prehistoric activity within the county. The results of aerial photographic studies and excavations have shown the Ouse Valley to be particularly rich in such remains. Palaeolithic remains have been found within the terrace gravels of the river system. Mesolithic and Neolithic finds appear to be sparse in comparison to the later Neolithic and Bronze Age. To the west of the subject site lies the Late Neolithic and Early Bronze Age ceremonial complex of Brampton (SAM 121).

### **3.1.2 Neolithic**

Late Neolithic and Early Bronze Age remains (SAM 121), have been recorded to the west of the site in Brampton. Neolithic monuments within this complex include henges, a cursus and a long mortuary enclosure. These monuments are considered to form a ceremonial complex (Malim 2000). A Neolithic mortuary enclosure at the end of a cursus, forming part of this complex was investigated in 1990-1991 (Malim 1990).

A series of parallel ditches interpreted as Neolithic territorial markers or field systems was found during an archaeological excavation on Thrapston Road itself which is situated 2km south-west of the subject site (Malim and Mitchell 1993).

Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age field systems and an enclosure were revealed 2km to the west of the subject site at Huntingdon Racecourse in 1993 (Macaulay 1993; Last and Macaulay unpublished.). The enclosure ditch discovered here contained a series of placed deposits including a broken quernstone and sherds of Neolithic pottery.

Another ceremonial complex was discovered on the south side of the Ouse, 3km to the south-east of the subject site at Rectory Farm, Godmanchester (McAvoy forthcoming). This site was investigated by English Heritage during 1989-91 and revealed evidence for a large atypical trapezoidal ditched enclosure with standing timber posts within. A cursus, some secondary enclosures and a number of ring ditches were also found.

Excavation on the Bob's Wood project (Hinman 1997a, b; 2000, 2005 and Fletcher 2004), produced a range of lithic artefacts including flakes, tools and an arrowhead (barbed and tanged) as well as a single pit containing structured deposits of Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age ceramics, lithics, animal bone and stone.

### **3.1.3 Bronze Age**

The area surrounding the site is similarly rich in Bronze Age remains. A Bronze Age triple ring ditch (SMR 02117) was uncovered during excavations immediately east of Thrapston Road in 1966 before the construction of the Miller Way housing estate (White 1969).

A small pit containing fragments of Bronze Age Beaker pottery including fragments of charcoal and burnt bone was uncovered during



an archaeological assessment on the area south of Thrapston Road (SMR 11176) during September 1993.

Bronze Age field systems and a Bronze Age round barrow (burial monument) were uncovered during excavations at Huntingdon Racecourse (Macaulay 1993), situated 2km west of the site.

Evaluation in advance of the new Parkway School development highlighted a presence during the Bronze Age which included a number of pits, one of which contained a series of placed or structured deposits (Hinman and Cooper, 2001).

### **3.1.4 Iron Age**

A number of Iron Age sites have been identified within a 5 mile radius of the subject site. Iron Age finds have been located within Huntingdon including Scored ware pottery dating from the Middle to Late Iron Age, including Watersmeet, Huntingdon (Cooper and Sperry 2000).

A rectilinear enclosure containing two circular huts with eavesdrop gullies was discovered as part of SAM 121, just 1.5km south-west of the subject site during an excavation in 1966 (White 1969).

A roundhouse and associated ditched field systems were uncovered during excavations on the western half of White's site on the south-west corner of Thrapston Road in 1992 (Malim and Mitchell 1993).

A series of Iron Age farmsteads have been located at intervals along the gravel terrace in Godmanchester, 3km from the subject site (Green 1977).

Significant Iron Age remains were uncovered from the area to the north-west of the current site (Hinman 1997a, 2000 Fletcher and Hinman 2004, Fletcher 2004) the findings of which are summarised below.

### **3.1.5 Romano-British**

The proximity of Godmanchester, 3km to the south-east of the development site, is significant since this town was a major focus for settlement during this period.

Inskip Ladds (Page, Proby and Ladds 1932), Dickinson (various unpub. manus.) and Green (1977) have all in the past attempted to

locate the line of Ermine Street between Godmanchester and the northern edge of Huntingdon.

A Roman villa with an ornamental pond was investigated in the 1970s and 1980s (Green unpublished) and between 1990-92 (McAvoy forthcoming) at Rectory Farm, Godmanchester, 3km to the south-east of the present site. A cremation cemetery was found associated with this villa.

A Roman farm was discovered in Brampton in 1991 (Malim 2000), as part of A14 salvage excavations.

Significant Romano-British remains were uncovered from the area to the north-west of the current site (Hinman 1997a, 2000 Fletcher and Hinman 2004, Fletcher 2004).

### **3.1.6 Anglo-Saxon**

The borough of Huntingdon to the west of the site is thought to have originated during the Anglo-Saxon period. It is recorded in the Anglo-Saxon chronicle for AD656 as '*Huntedune-porte*'. No activity from the period has yet been identified within the immediate area of the subject site.

### **3.1.7 Medieval/Post-Medieval**

There are a number of sites of note in the vicinity which include a medieval bridge, recorded to the south-east of Hinchingbrooke House (SMR 2589). There is a medieval church and churchyard (SMR 2655) to the north-west of the site and the SMR documents one piece of medieval pottery discovered on the subject site itself (SMR 9963).

The subject site is located within the boundaries of the former estate of Hinchingbrooke House, previously the site of the Benedictine nunnery of St James. The origins of the nunnery at Hinchingbrooke are unclear. It was claimed at the time of the Dissolution that the nunnery had been founded by William the Conqueror. In the 16th century, however, Leland (in Page, Proby and Ladds 1932) claimed that the house was in fact founded by the Benedictine nuns of Eltisle who moved here in the early 13th century. The situation is complicated, although for the purposes of this study it is sufficient to note that the earliest surviving structural elements are dateable to c.1100 (Dickinson 1972) and the first record of a building on the site comes in 1228 (Haigh 1988).

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Between the suppression of the nunnery in 1538 and 1627 the house was largely rebuilt and extended by the Cromwell family. Following a serious fire in 1830 the house was restored and rebuilt by Blore, with further restoration undertaken in 1894 and the 1960s (*op. cit.*).

In the post-medieval period the proposed development area was used for arable farming. The remnants of ridge and furrow field systems were identified during archaeological works in 1997, 2000, 2003 and 2004. Furthermore, up-standing remnants of the ridge and furrow have been noted as surviving within the bounds of Bob's Wood which is a part of Hinchingsbrooke Country Park.

## **3.2 Previous Investigations in the Immediate Area (Fig. 2)**

### **3.2.1 The 1997 Excavation**

In January 1997 CAM ARC (formerly AFU) undertook an evaluation which involved the cutting of 16 trenches, total length 900m, which identified remains relating to Middle Iron Age settlement to the west of the current development and a marked concentration of features datable to the Late Iron Age immediately adjacent to the northern limit of the study area.

As a result of this evaluation CAM ARC was commissioned to undertake the simultaneous excavation of two open areas (Area 1; 40m x 120m, and Area 2; c.30m x 20m), adjacent to the current development area (see below).

#### **Area 1 (TL 219 / 723)**

The earliest evidence of human activity took the form of a pit alignment running east to west and presumably extending to the west beyond the limit of the excavation. This alignment appeared to delineate an area to the south, upslope, towards the crest of the hill. The date at which this alignment was established remains unknown at present but it may well be associated with an as yet unidentified Bronze Age or Early Iron Age component to the site. The symbolic placement of the upper fore limb of a boar on the northern edge of the base of the largest of these pits appears to reinforce the importance of this boundary. At present it is unclear whether this pit alignment is defining the settlement boundary or performing some other role.

A shallow linear ditch 30m to the north (again undatable) which mirrored the pit alignment may have been contemporary or may represent evidence for another, possibly earlier, phase of boundary definition.

The pit alignment was truncated along its inner (southern) limit by a c.20m long ditch (dateable to the Middle Iron Age) with a defensive 'ankle breaking' profile. A placed deposit of a ritually? defaced quern base was revealed against the northern edge of this ditch at its western terminal end.

The final phase of boundary definition maintained the alignment of the previous phases. It took the form of a shallow unbroken ditch and truncated both of the earlier phases. Two currency bars were found placed against the northern edge of this ditch lying parallel to each other with the socketed ends pointing to the east.

The placement of symbolic deposits in the same location throughout all three phases of boundary definition was likely to have been influenced by the local topography although further work is required to illustrate this point.

The southern and eastern limits of this settlement core have been identified as present within the area of the 2003 Bob's Wood excavations.

Certain additional ditches which were undatable due to a lack of artefactual evidence were located towards the southern limit of the site. The north to south alignment of the largest of these ditches was mirrored by the alignment of later ditches to the north that were securely datable to the Middle Iron Age. The paucity of domestic debris within certain of these ditches could be seen to imply a peripheral position to the settlement core during a particular phase in the development of the site. The considerable quantity and diversity of the ceramic and faunal assemblages within adjacent features is an initial indication that more than one phase of activity was represented within the excavation area and may well be seen as evidence for a shift in the settlement core over time.

### **Area 2 (TL 223 / 723)**

Enclosure ditches associated with a separate Late Iron Age settlement were also revealed at the eastern limit of the area, within 30m of the northern limit of the current development.

Due to the limited area available for excavation there is little that can be said about the nature of the settlement revealed in this area. The large quantities of pottery and other domestic debris recovered during excavation were clearly indicative of habitation in the immediate vicinity. The types of pottery recovered were also of significant interest as they form a uniform Late Iron Age assemblage of pre-conquest date, a period highlighted as a research priority by ceramic specialists (J.D. Hill pers. comm.).

### **3.2.2 The 2000 investigations**

Evaluation took place in April 2000 and involved the cutting of a total of 20 separate trenches of total length 1750.5m covering an area of roughly 8.5ha. This evaluation identified marked concentrations of settlement related features datable to the Early - Middle Iron Age and Roman periods. Trench 1 which is located within the current development area contained two ditches dating to the Early – Middle Iron Age (Hinman 2000).

#### ***New School Site (Cromwell Park Primary School )2001***

Trial trenching revealed a group of pits, one of which contained the poorly preserved remains of a horse's skull placed on a collection of cobbles and covered with Beaker style pottery. The evaluation also identified a continuation of the ridge and furrow system in this area (Hinman and Cooper 2001).

Following the evaluation of the new school site a second phase of investigation was undertaken by the Hertfordshire Archaeological Trust (Crank 2001). The features identified during the excavation matched those of the evaluation. No additional features were found.

### **3.2.3 Bob's Wood Excavations (2000 and 2003)**

CAM ARC was commissioned by Twigden Homes to conduct the archaeological excavation of c.8.5 hectares of land adjacent to Bob's Wood, Hinchbrooke in advance residential development on the land.

#### ***Iron Age Settlement***

Between 200 and 50BC, in the Middle to Late Iron Age, boundary ditches were established on the hilltop and a settlement was placed in the north-western corner of the site. Many of the ditches were used to define irregular fields linked by drove ways and tracks, all of which were laid out to enable the control of livestock. Cattle were the predominant species although sheep were present in significant numbers too. Dog, horse and pig bones were also found.

During the Late Iron Age large enclosures were incorporated into the existing field pattern. These enclosures were initially small and rounded but became more regular and rectangular with time. Their layout suggested that they were originally intended to provide more effective control of livestock but, as time went by, segregation for controlled breeding (probably of cattle) was introduced. This specialisation seems to have reached its peak at around the time of

the Claudian invasion. The site looks down on Ermine Street which was built by the invading Roman forces between AD42-43. The availability of a surplus of meat 'on the hoof' combined with a ready market of hungry soldiers may have been the result of careful planning and negotiation before the invasion rather than a happy coincidence. The local inhabitants seem to have been able to maintain their previously high living standards, using their wealth to purchase luxuries such as olive oil from Spain, wine from Italy and the latest tableware in the distinctive gallo-belgic style, often referred to as the Aylesford-Swarling group.

Nine roundhouses which were built at intervals throughout this period were excavated, although only the drainage gullies which collected water from the eaves survived. One large pit contained a complete dog skeleton and what appears to be the burnt remains of a meal.

#### ***The early Romano-British Period***

By the late 1st century AD the ditches of the large enclosures had silted up but was still maintained for drainage purposes. The big enclosures gave way to smaller paddocks, while fences and an aisled building were built, the house being supplied by cisterns dug to store water. The occupants moved out of the roundhouses and into the new rectangular building, near which a selection of well-used cooking pots and kitchenware was found.

In the later 1st century AD a more formalised settlement was integrated into the stock enclosures and the inhabitants moved out of their roundhouses and into a new aisled building. Cremation became the dominant form of mortuary practice in the Late Iron Age in this part of Britain, a Romanised tradition that persisted into the 2nd century AD. A small cemetery, possibly used by a single family, was laid out within the main enclosure opposite the aisled building at this time.

Animal bones suggest that many horses were kept in the paddocks. At around the time the small fields went out of use, a horse was buried with a quern made from puddingstone.

#### ***The later Romano-British Period***

The late 2nd to 3rd centuries AD saw the return to the practice of digging large ditched enclosures, while a substantial pond and other features designed to aid drainage and water management were incorporated into the enclosure system. Another new house was built within the centre of the settlement during the 2nd century AD. This would have been a timber-framed building and appears to have had a stone-built front porch. It was centrally heated and its rooms were decorated with plastered panels painted in red, white and green. The cemetery continued in use although there was a change in burial practice from cremation to inhumation.

### **3.2.4 Parkway Evaluation (2004)**

The evaluation, involved the cutting of eleven trenches totalling 435m (Fletcher and Hinman 2004). A small, artefactually sterile pit was located within the north-eastern corner of the site. Previous evaluation within the same area identified three other pits with similar fills, one of which contained the poorly preserved remains of a horse skull which had been covered by sherds of Early Bronze Age Beaker style pottery.

Evidence of activity from the Middle Iron Age was identified by a pit located in the south-west corner of the site. This pit contained one small piece of a human tibia, one small lump of fired clay with flint inclusions, likely to be a fragment of oven lining, and a single broken sherd of pottery. The pottery dates the feature to the Middle to Late Iron Age, making this the only datable feature found in this evaluation.

As a result of this evaluation CAM ARC were commissioned to undertake the simultaneous excavation of two open areas.

### **3.2.5 Parkway Excavation (2004)**

Area 1 provided evidence of activity from the Iron Age by the presence a pit and two ditches. The two ditches were on different alignments, north-west to south-east and north-east to south-west, the north-westerly ditch was securely dated to the Later Iron Age, however the north-easterly ditch provided no dating evidence. Despite the lack of dating evidence the ditch was noted to be on the same alignment as some of the earliest Iron Age field boundaries on the Bob's Wood 2003 excavation which led to its date.

Area 1 also had two medieval plough furrows on a north-south alignment.

Area 2 contained evidence of earlier Prehistoric and Later Iron Age activity. Three pits were dated to the Bronze Age by association to the pit containing Beaker pottery found in the 2000 evaluation. Residual worked flints characteristic of the Neolithic period were also found during the excavation demonstrating that there was activity on the hillside.

Later Iron Age activity was demonstrated by the presence of a partially revealed roundhouse and contemporary ditch (Fletcher 2004).

## 4 Methodology

The objective of this excavation was to determine as far as reasonably possible the presence/absence, location, nature, extent, date, quality, condition and significance of any surviving archaeological deposits within the development area. And consider the results of this work in relation to the broader Bob's Wood project.

The Brief required that an open area excavation was to be carried out.

Machine excavation was carried out under constant archaeological supervision with a tracked 360° excavator using a toothless ditching bucket.

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

All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using CAM ARC's *pro-forma* sheets. Trench locations, plans and sections were recorded at appropriate scales and colour and monochrome photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits. The numbering system for contexts, sections, small finds and environmental samples was continued from the Parkway excavations (2004), which in itself was also linked to the 2003 excavations to enable integration into the Bob's Wood project Bob's wood.

A single environmental sample was taken for analysis (see Appendix 3).

A significant quantity of soil had been spread across the area which made patches of the site very soft and enabled the area hold a lot of water. This made machining and running a dumper truck quite problematic. It was decided to machine the site in two separate areas and leave the hard core that provided the base for the haul road that was constructed in 2003 in place (see fig.2). As this area had already been excavated it meant that no archaeology would be lost. The plant was then able to use this as a means of removing spoil from the site.

In order to ensure accurate surveying on-site, a Leica GPS1200 dual-frequency RTK system was used in the first instance to establish fixed station points in the areas to be investigated. Data collected by the base receiver over a 3 hour period was post-processed using Leica Geo Office and RINEX data downloaded from the Ordnance Survey Active Station Network, allowing the location of the fixed station points to be accurately located to within +/- 15mm.

During the Bob's Wood excavations (2003) and the 2000 evaluation on-site surveying, including the establishment of the site grid, aligned



to the OS grid was undertaken using a Leica TCR705 TST. Although adequate for the needs of the project, the system was not as accurate as the GPS utilised for this phase of fieldwork, hence there is a discrepancy between the grids established during the two fieldwork phases.

## **5 Results**

### **5.1 Overburden**

The excavation covered an area of 3923m<sup>2</sup>. The land within the area of investigation had been heavily disturbed by a number of different episodes of activity on the site. As previously mentioned, the area had already been subject to an evaluation phase and the construction of a haul road. Part of a temporary builders compound was also located here and a temporary storage building both constructed in 2003 has been removed. As well as this a substantial quantity of spoil has been dumped and levelled across the site.

Due to the above conditions the overburden on site was quite variable, however the total depth did not exceed approximately 0.7m. Towards the south of the site where disturbance was at a minimum, the topsoil (1638) was 0.25m thick and the subsoil (1639) was 0.2m thick. The topsoil was a dark brown silty clay with occasional small to medium stones. The subsoil was a slightly greyish brown clay with no inclusions.

### **5.2 Archaeology**

The excavation revealed a series of Later Iron Age ditches on a north-west to south-east and a north-east to south-west alignment. They were contemporary in date however evidence of reworked terminals demonstrates a continued usage of the ditches over an extended period of time.

A Later Iron Age curvilinear ditch and a pit were also discovered. Two post holes, an uncertain feature and a tree bowl remain undated. Relevant results from the 2000 evaluation and 2003 excavation within the development area will also be discussed below.

### **5.2.1 2000 Evaluation**

The results of the 2000 evaluation showed two ditches and one pit in the current area of investigation.

Ditch **1001** was aligned roughly north-south and contained several sherds of hand made shell tempered pottery.

Ditch **1005** was aligned northwest to southeast and remained undated.

Feature **1003** also remained undated.

### **5.2.2 2003 Excavation**

The results from the 2003 excavation showed a ditch, a curvilinear ditch and a pit.

Ditch **4247** was 0.75m wide and 0.18m deep. It was filled by 4246 a yellowish brown almost orangey clay with rare stone inclusions. It was aligned northeast to southwest. It contained later Iron Age pottery.

Ditch **4253** was 0.9m wide by 0.25m deep. It was filled by 4253 a yellowish brown clay with no inclusions.

Pit **4245** was 1.1m wide and 1m deep. It was filled by 4244 a greyish orange clay with charcoal and flint inclusions. It contained later Iron Age pottery.

### **5.2.3 2007 Excavation**

#### ***Ditches***

The ditches will be discussed from west to east. The most westerly cut number will be used to describe the ditch as a whole and subsequent cut numbers will be discussed in turn.

Terminal **1641** marked to start of ditch on a north-west to south-east alignment. It extended for approximately 15m before going into the baulk.

Terminal **1641** was 0.7m wide, 0.17m deep and filled by 1640, a mid brownish grey clay containing a small quantity of charcoal. It contained Iron Age pottery and animal bone fragments including a horse tibia.

Terminal **1667** was also part of the same ditch alignment and provided evidence for reworking of **1641**. Terminal **1667** was of similar width

(0.6m) and depth (0.18m) to **1641** and the fill (1666) was equivalent to 1640. It also contained Iron Age pottery.

Cut **1669** was investigated to try and establish the relationship between the two features, however it was not possible identify any difference in the fill. Fill 1668 was equivalent to 1640.

Ditch **1665** was also on a north-east to south-west alignment. It extended for approximately 10m before merging with terminal **1663**. Ditch **1665** was 0.55m wide and 0.08m deep. Fill 1664 was considerably paler than the fills of the terminals. It was a light brown compact clay.

Terminal **1663** marked the start of another section of the contemporary ditches. The terminal was on a north north-east to south south-west alignment before the ditch turned sharply to run north-west to south-east and then curved again south south-east before heading in to the baulk. This section of ditch contained no dating evidence but was of the same character as the previous ditches.

Terminal **1663** was 0.4m wide and 0.41m deep. Fill 1662 was the same as 1664. Ditches **1657** and **1655** were equivalent to 1663.

Ditch **1663** had an opposing terminal **1661**, approximately 2.5m away which continued to the north on the same alignment. It was the same width but shallower (0.14m) and the fill, 1662, was the same. It was in close proximity to a furrow therefore was possibly slightly truncated

Curvilinear ditch **1653** was approximately 2.2m wide and 0.65m deep and filled by 1652 a brown clay fill. A piece of degraded Iron Age pottery was recovered from the fill. The ditch was truncated by the foundations of a demolished modern building. It was not possible to identify the ditch to the north beyond the 2000 evaluation trench as it headed beneath the haul road. The eastern side was also truncated by modern material.

### ***Postholes***

Posthole **1647** was 0.3m in diameter and 0.12m deep. It was filled by a dark grey clay and it contained no dating evidence. It appeared to be an isolated feature, however it was only 1.5m away from the baulk therefore any other associated postholes may not be visible.

Posthole **1651** was located 1.5m inside the curvilinear ditch. The posthole was oval, measuring 0.38m long, 0.28m wide and 0.12m deep. Fill 1650 was a hard brown clay and contained no dating evidence.

### *Pits*

Pit **4245** was identified in the 2003 excavation of the haul road. It was re-planned but no further excavation was carried out.

### *Natural Features*

Tree bowl **1673** was oval in shape, 0.7m wide by 1.3m long and filled 1672 by a sterile mid brownish grey silty clay with no inclusions. There was evidence of root disturbance in the base.

### *Uncertain*

Feature **1659** was mainly concealed by the baulk meaning only a 1m portion was visible. It was located at the bend of ditch **1655** which may suggest that it was associated with the series of ditches. It contained a similar brown clay fill (1658) but was considerably deeper than the other ditches (0.5m).

### *Ridge and Furrow*

Medieval ridge and furrow extended across the site on a NNE – SSW alignment perpendicular to the ridge of the hill on the Bob's Wood site. The excavation in 2004 (Fletcher 2004) also found ridge and furrow on the same alignment but on the northern side of the ridge.

## **6 Discussion**

The excavations on the site of the proposed new childcare facility on Christie Drive represent a significant addition to a continuing programme of archaeological investigation on the Bob's Wood Site that have taken place in advance of development since 1997

The archaeological investigations in 2007 revealed elements of a series of Later Iron Age field systems and enclosures and a heavily truncated pit. The presence of East Midlands Scored Ware pottery within the terminals of the ditches would suggest that settlement was relatively close by and broadly dateable to the period 300 – 100 BC. Taken as a whole these features appear to form field system.

The north-east to south-west ditch terminals **1641** and **1667** were dated to the Later Iron Age. The pottery was a mixture of shelly and sandy ware of a domestic form. The presence of a notable quantity of pottery (including decorated forms), within these terminals in relation to the rest of the new childcare facility site is of interest as the Bob's Wood excavations highlighted a concentration of finds in key locations including ditch junctions and terminals. This concentration would suggest that the pottery was a placed deposit rather than a simple

case of accidental inclusion into features. The largest assemblage of pottery from the 2007 excavation was recovered from ditch **1641**. If the relative frequency of pottery can be taken as an indicator of proximity to human habitation then it is possible to suggest that people were living within the area (as yet unexcavated) to the south west of the current development. The presence of a large watering hole (**1014**) 40m to the north west of 1641 identified during evaluation of the adjacent area in 2000 may support this view.

The 1997 pottery assemblage was identified as an early East Midlands Scored Ware assemblage despite the relatively infrequent occurrence of scoring (Hill and Braddock, 1997). The bulk of that pottery was recovered from a series of large deposits where parts of a range of vessels of different sizes had been placed in the main boundary ditch. The relative absence of scoring was again highlighted during the assessment of the 2003 material. The material from the 2007 investigations is again comprised of localised variants of the South Midlands/East Anglian tradition and was probably locally produced.

The Later Iron Age ditches (**1641,1667**) were truncated at the edge of the haul road, however in the 2003 excavations two ditches **4253 et al** and **4247** were identified. These ditches had similar fills as the LIA ditch and however fill 4246 contained Late Iron Age greyware. Even though the pottery suggests a slightly later date it is likely that these ditches were sporadically reworked over an extended period of time which would produce a broader date range. The process of intermittent reworking was also identified in the 2003 excavations.

Ditch **1001**, identified in the 2000 evaluation, also contained Iron Age pottery suggesting that this feature was possibly part of the same system. Unfortunately due to the modern disturbance it was not possible to identify this feature in the excavation.

Ditches **1005, 1665, 1661** and **1663 et al** and features **1003, 1659** were also interpreted as being associated with the above ditches. Even though no dating evidence was recovered from these features, the similarity in fills, character and alignment are comparable; therefore they have been dated by association.

Ditch **1653** appears to form part of an enclosure dating to the later Iron Age. Pit **4245** originally found in the excavation was also dated to this period.

Postholes **1673** and **1647** remain undated, however their fills are again similar to the rest of the archaeology in the area. Earlier work had identified a concentration of contemporary Later Iron Age remains 400m to the north-west of the current development area (see fig.2).

The 2007 findings are located in a sheltered low visibility area on a warm southward slope which has comparisons with the earliest settlement identified in 1997 and 2003. The activity in these cases was found to be located along the northern rim of a shallow glacially formed depression.

There was no evidence of Roman activity in the current development area which is again consistent with previous findings. The Late pre Roman Iron Age and Romano-British inhabitants of the site moved to occupy the higher ground on the hilltop at Bob's Wood marking a change in preference for settlement location.

## **7 Conclusions**

The results of this excavation combined with the preliminary results of the previous work nearby will present the opportunity to make significant advances in the current understanding and interpretation of the development of the local landscape.

The archaeological investigations in 2007 revealed elements of a series of Later Iron Age field systems and enclosures and a heavily truncated pit. The presence of East Midlands Scored Ware pottery with domestic forms was broadly dateable to the period 300 – 100 BC.

Findings from this work would appear to reinforce several aspects of Later Iron Age behaviour relating to settlement that have been previously noted at Bob's Wood and other sites on the western claylands of Cambridgeshire such as Love's Farm (Hinman forthcoming). These include the preference for relatively sheltered sites as the location for dwellings and a bias for deposition of pottery within ditch terminals, a preference that may have held a degree of symbolism and required ritualised acts from the previous inhabitants of this site.

The findings of this excavation will be incorporated into forthcoming publications of the Bob's Wood Site (Hinman forthcoming).

## Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank CCC department of Property and Asset Management who commissioned and funded the archaeological work. The project was managed and edited by Mark Hinman. Work on site was assisted by Steve Graham and Tom Lyons. Survey support was supplied by Taleyna Fletcher

The brief for archaeological works was written by Kasia Gdaniec, who monitored the excavation.

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## Appendix 1: Context Summary

Site Code	Context	Cut	Category	Type	Function	Length	Width/Dia	Depth	Colour	Fine component	Shape in Plan
STUJIN07	1638		Layer	Topsoil		0	0	0	Dark brown	silty clay	
STUJIN07	1639		Layer	Subsoil		0	0	0	Greyish brown	clay	
STUJIN07	1640	1641	fill	ditch	disuse	0	0	0	Mid brownish grey	clay	
STUJIN07	1641	1641	cut	ditch	enclosure/ boundary		0.9	0.17			Linear
STUJIN07	1642	1643	fill	furrow	disuse	0	0	0	Pale brownish grey	clay	
STUJIN07	1643	1643	cut	furrow	agriculture		1.7	0.23			Linear
STUJIN07	1644	1645	fill	furrow	disuse	0	0	0	Pale brownish grey	clay	
STUJIN07	1645	1645	cut	furrow	agriculture	0	0.2	0.22			Linear
STUJIN07	1646	1647	fill	post hole	disuse	0	0	0	Dark grey	Clay	
STUJIN07	1647	1647	cut	post hole		0	0.3	0.12			Circular
STUJIN07	1648	1649	fill	ditch	disuse	0	0	0	Light brownish grey	Clay	
STUJIN07	1649	0	cancelled	cancelled		0	0	0			
STUJIN07	1650	1651	fill	post hole	disuse	0	0	0	Brown	Clay	
STUJIN07	1651	1651	cut	post hole	enclosure/ boundary	0.38	0.28	0.12			Subcircular
STUJIN07	1652	1653	fill	ditch	disuse	0	0	0	Brown	Clay	
STUJIN07	1653	1653	cut	ditch	Enclosure/	0	2.2	0.65			Linear

Site Code	Context	Cut	Category	Type	Function	Length	Width/Dia	Depth	Colour	Fine component	Shape in Plan
					boundary						
STUHHIN07	1654	1655 fill		ditch	disuse	0	0	0	Brown	Clay	
STUHHIN07	1655	1655 cut		ditch	enclosure/ boundary	0	0.5	1.1			Linear
STUHHIN07	1656	1657 fill		ditch	disuse	0	0	0	Brown	Clay	
STUHHIN07	1657	1657 cut		ditch	enclosure/ boundary		0.65	0.17			Linear
STUHHIN07	1658	1659 fill		ditch	disuse	0	0	0	Brown	Clay	
STUHHIN07	1659	1659 cut		ditch	enclosure/ boundary	0	1	0.5			?
STUHHIN07	1660	1661 fill		ditch	disuse	0	0	0	Light brown	Clay	
STUHHIN07	1661	1661 cut		ditch	enclosure/ boundary	0	0.4	0.14			Linear
STUHHIN07	1662	1663 fill		ditch	disuse	0	0	0	Light brown	Clay	
STUHHIN07	1663	1663 cut		ditch	enclosure/ boundary	0	0.4	0.41			Linear
STUHHIN07	1664	1665 fill		ditch	disuse	0	0	0	Light brown	Clay	
STUHHIN07	1665	1665 cut		ditch	enclosure/ boundary	0	0.55	0.08			Linear
STUHHIN07	1666	1667 fill		ditch	disuse	0	0	0	Light brown	Clay	
STUHHIN07	1667	1667 cut		ditch	enclosure/ boundary		0.6	0.8			Linear
STUHHIN07	1668	1668 fill		ditch	disuse	0	0	0	Brown	Clay	
STUHHIN07	1669	1668 cut		ditch	Enclosure/ boundary	0	0	0			
STUHHIN07	1670		Layer		modern make up	0	0	0			

Site Code	Context	Cut	Category	Type	Function	Length	Width/Dia	Depth	Colour	Fine component	Shape in Plan
STUJIN07	1671		Natural			0	0	0			
STUJIN07	1672	1673	Fill	Natural	Disuse	0	0	0	mid brownish grey	Silty clay	
STUJIN07	1673	1673	Cut	Natural	Tree bowl	0	0	0			suboval

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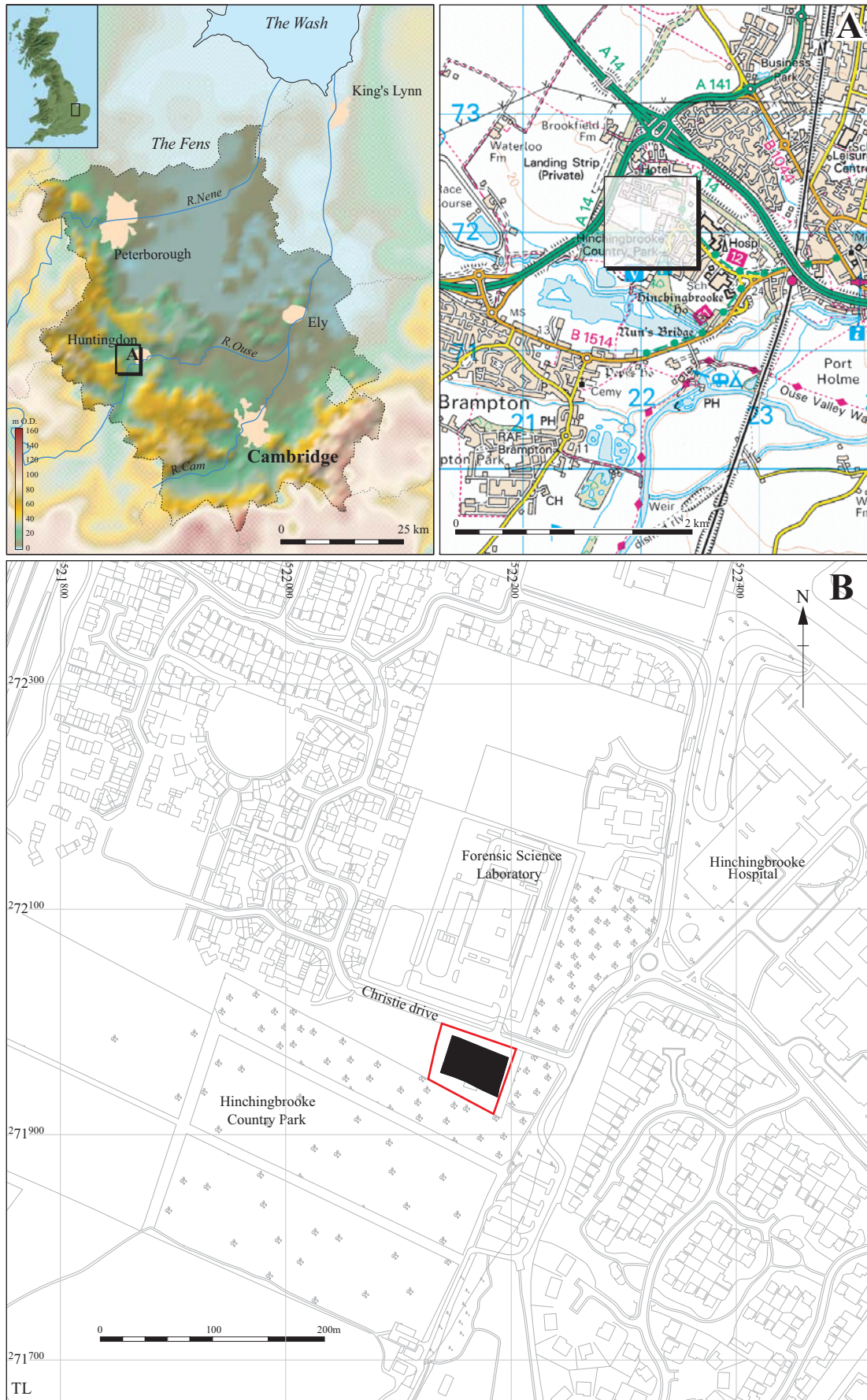
## Appendix 2: Animal Bone

Fifty indeterminate fragments were recovered from the features.

Specimen	Context	Toxon	Anatomy	No of Specimens
109393	1641	Horse	Tibia	1
10394	1658	Cattle	Lower M1-2	1

## Appendix 3: Environmental Remains

A single environmental sample (sample 659) was taken from ditch **1653**. This sample contained only unidentifiable bone fragments and a very small quantity of charcoal.



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Figure 1 Location of excavation with the development area outlined (red)



Figure 2: Areas of previous archaeological investigations

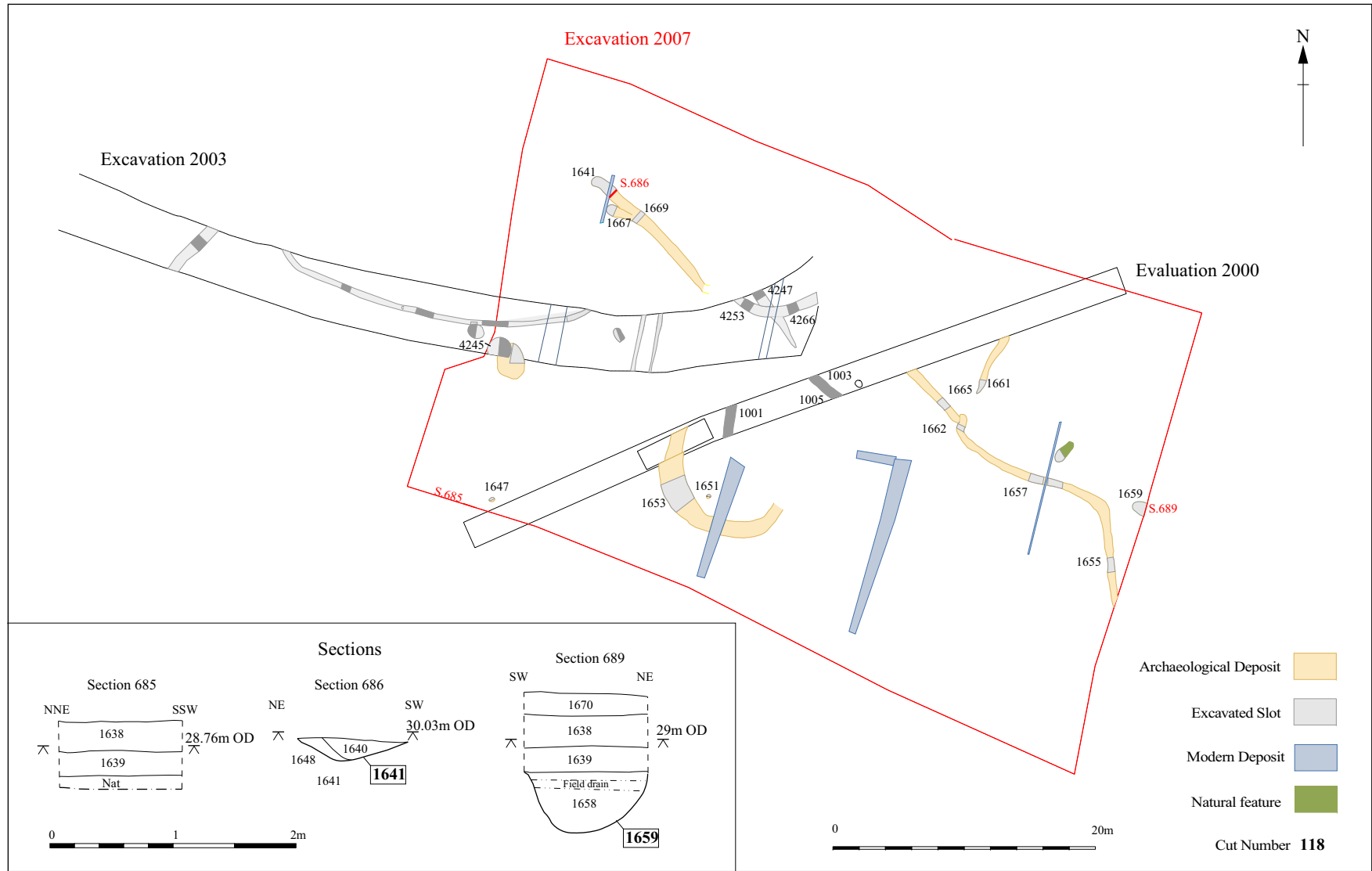
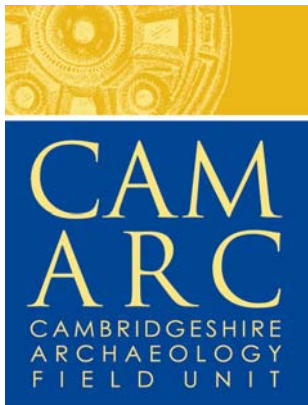


Figure 3: Excavation Plan and Sections





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