



CAM ARC Report Number 1011

Land at rear of 77–81 Paddock Street, Soham, Cambridgeshire

An Archaeological Evaluation

Gareth Rees

February 2008

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Gareth Rees BA MA PIFA

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Fosberry (HNC (Cert Ed) AEA)

Site Code: SOH PET 08
CHER Event Number: ECB 2839
Date of works: 13th –15th February 2008
Grid Ref: TL 5959 7311

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OASIS Number:

PROJECT DETAILS				
Project name	Evaluation of land to the rear of 77-81 Paddock Street, Soham, Cambridgeshire			
Short description	The evaluation revealed evidence to show the presence of archaeology on this site. Five trenches, one 20m, one 15m and three 10m, uncovered evidence of Roman occupation and early Medieval pits and drainage channels with slight structural evidence.			
Project dates	Start	13/02/08	End	15/02/08
Previous work	Include HER numbers / report references	Future work		unknown
Associated project reference codes	SOH PET 08 HER event no. ECB 2839			
Type of project	Evaluation			
Site status	None			
Current land use (list all that apply)	Garden			
Planned development	Residential			
Monument types / period (list all that apply)	Industrial - Water management			
Significant finds: Artefact type / period (list all that apply)	Early medieval pottery, Roman pottery, roman cbm, butchered animal bone, pottery.			
PROJECT LOCATION				
County	South Cambridgeshire	Parish	Soham	
HER for region	Cambridgeshire			
Site address (including postcode)	77-81 Paddock Street, Soham, Cambridgeshire, CB7 5JA			
Study area (sq.m or ha)	0.2 ha			
National grid reference	TL 5959 7311			
Height OD	Min OD	3.81m	Max OD	4.69.
PROJECT ORIGINATORS				
Organisation	CAM ARC			
Project brief originator	Kasia Gdaniec			
Project design originator	James Drummond-Murray			
Director/supervisor	Gareth Rees			
Project manager	James Drummond-Murray			
Sponsor or funding body	Murfet Developments			
ARCHIVES				
	Location and accession number		Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone, database, context sheets etc)	
Physical	CAMARC SOHPET08		Animal bone, ceramic, environmental, lithics.	
Paper	CAMARC SOHPET08		Context sheets, correspondence, drawing, maps, photos.	
Digital	CAMARC SOHPET08		Images, digital photos, spread sheets, survey, text.	
BIBLIOGRAPHY				
Full title	Land at rear of 77-81 Paddock Street, Soham, Cambridgeshire: An archaeological evaluation			
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Summary

Between the 13th and 15th February 2008 CAM ARC conducted an archaeological evaluation on the gardens to the rear of 77-81 Paddock Street, Soham in advance of the proposed development of 5 dwellings.

Five trenches were excavated. Three were 10m, one 15m and one 20m. Four contained archaeology dating to the early Medieval period with evidence of previous Roman occupation. These included two large pits possibly for retting as well as gullies and postholes indicating the probable location of a settlement to the north. The evaluation uncovered evidence to suggest that this area has been peripheral to the main activity in Soham until relatively recently.

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1 Introduction

This archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a Brief issued by Kasia Gdaniec of the Cambridgeshire Archaeology, Planning and Countryside Advice team (CAPCA; Planning Application No. E/04/01230/OUT), supplemented by a Specification prepared by CAM ARC, Cambridgeshire County Council (formerly Archaeological Field Unit).

The work was designed to assist in defining the character and extent of 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 results will enable decisions to be made by CAPCA, on behalf of the Local Planning Authority, with regard to the treatment of any archaeological remains found.

The site archive is currently held by CAM ARC and will be deposited with the appropriate county stores in due course.

2 Geology and Topography

The site overlies Lower Chalk and alluvial deposits (British Geological Survey 1981). The Brook Dam section of the Soham Lode runs 100m to the south of the development site before turning north east and running parallel with the eastern boundary at a distance of 35m. Alluvial deposits were encountered in all trenches at a depth of around 0.5m. Lower chalk was only found in trench 2 at a depth of 0.82m.

The site slopes down from 5.19m in the north west to 4.82m in the south east close to the river. The ground varied between the two plots of land under development. The north western plot was covered in short grass except an 18m by 5m area where concrete had been laid. This was not disturbed by the trenches. The south eastern plot was vegetated by a thin covering of undergrowth and several large mature trees.

3 Archaeological and Historical Background

The development site is shown covered in trees from the 1st edition of the Cambridgeshire 25 inch Ordnance Survey map in 1886-1887. Apart from the incursion of a factory into the northern part of the site in the second half of the 20th century this area has maintained a light covering of trees until relatively recently. The Brook Dam is shown as a much larger watercourse running adjacent to the eastern boundary of the current site, 30m west of its current course. This may mark the original course of the river that in general has been heavily managed and channelled around Soham.

3.1 Prehistoric and Roman

The fen-edge around Soham and the Snail Valley has a long history of human activity. Sites and find spots in the immediate vicinity include Mesolithic and Neolithic remains recorded to the northwest of Broad Hill, where a large quantity of worked flints, including axes, knives and scrapers, were recovered (Hall 1996). To the north and northeast of the village the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (CHER) records Neolithic artefacts at MCB8560, 12952, 12953 and 14568 and a Late Bronze Age brooch at MCB12953. An evaluation in the town centre at St Andrew's House produced a single Bronze Age ditch (Casa Hatton 2000) whilst two barrows are recorded to the south of the development site in the Greenhills area.

Evidence of later prehistoric Iron Age activity in and around Soham is relatively scarce. A large evaluation at the Fordham Road allotments produced settlement remains dating to the Late Bronze Age or Early Iron Age (Connor 2001) and the hilltop site at Henney, on the periphery of Stuntney, was also dated to the Iron Age (Hall 1996). Features of this period were also found 300m to the west of the site, on Clay Street and may represent an enclosure (Nichol 2002). Late Iron Age coins from the Greenhills area are indicative of Late Iron Age occupation. Further remains were recorded in Soham itself at St Andrew's House (Atkins 2004).

Roman remains are common in this area although Soham itself does not appear to have been a major Roman centre. Human skeletal remains of Roman date were found off White Hart Lane 200m to the north west of the development area (MCB8413). Several sites appear as crop marks including two high status settlements dating from 3rd to 4th centuries, one 1.2km east and the other 4km west of the current site (Hall 1996). The majority of Roman occupation evidence comes from 2.5km to the north on the fen edge. To the south the evaluation at the Fordham Road allotments produced significant Romano-British settlement remains (Connor 2001).

3.2 Saxon

The modern town of Soham is Early Saxon in origin. The name is derived from the Old English *Soegan Hamm* or 'swampy' settlement referring to its position on a peninsula in Soham Mere (Reaney 1943). Twelfth century documentary sources refer to the foundation in the 7th century AD of a monastery by St Felix, first bishop of the East Angles, who was buried in Soham. The remains of this may lie within 200m to the west of the site.

Funerary remains from three cemeteries attest Early Saxon occupation at Soham. Burials were discovered in the church graveyard (TL 5998 7239) where grave goods and stray finds included brooches, several beads and spearheads (Fox 1923). Another cemetery was located at

the Soham/Fordham Waterworks 2km southeast of the present site. Here 23 furnished inhumations and 2 cremations were identified and assigned to the 6th-7th century (Lethbridge 1933). Further Anglo-Saxon human skeletal remains were uncovered in the rear garden of a house located on White Hart Lane (MCB 13882) 200 north west of the development area. These may not have been *in situ* but may have originally belonged to the cemetery found in the church graveyard (Robinson 1995).

As yet there has been no definite archaeological evidence for Middle Saxon activity in Soham, though a single sherd of Ipswich ware was recovered during excavations at St Andrew's House (Atkins 2004). An evaluation on the corner of Clay Street and the High Street provided evidence of the late Saxon expansion of the settlement although no structures were found (Slatcher 2000).

3.3 Medieval

The expansion of Soham in both size and wealth continued into the early medieval period. Remains from the Infant's School (Bray 1991) and from High Street/Clay Street represent this growth that is attested by the construction of St Andrew's Church in the late 12th century (Hatton & Last 1997). Soham is also thought to have held an unchartered market before the 12th century (Ridout 2000).

The manor of Soham was given to Ely Abbey shortly after the re-foundation of the latter in the 10th century (Conybeare 1887). The sub circular pattern of roads around the centre of the village may suggest a religious precinct (Oosthuizen 2000).

Evidence for occupation during the Saxo-Norman period has emerged through recent excavations. To the north west of the current development area, at Pratt Street and at Station Road, 10th to 12th century Thetford ware pottery was uncovered in archaeological evaluations (Hatton and Last 1994; Heawood 1997). A small evaluation at Ten Bell Lane, also to the north west, produced one late medieval quarry pit and some undated ditches (Atkins 2004a). Several evaluations within 250m of the current site at St Andrew's House (Casa Hatton 2000), Market Street (Cooper 2004) and Clay Street (Atkins 2004) produced medieval (12th to 16th century) pits, ditches and posthole structures and another at Brook Dam Lane recorded a single medieval pit and a post-medieval ditch (Cooper 2004).

4 Methodology

The objective of this evaluation 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.

The Brief required that 5% of the development area should be subject to trial trenching. Five trenches were excavated by machine. Three were 10m, one 15m and one 20m in length (figure 2).

Machine excavation was carried out under constant archaeological supervision with a wheeled JCB-type excavator using a 1.5m 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.

Environmental samples of 10 and 20 litres were taken from 16 features to investigate the possibility and quality of preservation of charred remains.

Site conditions were mild and generally overcast. The ground provided no obstacles to excavation by machine although modern deposits relating to a recent factory meant that full excavation of trench 5 was not possible. The ground water level in trenches 1 to 4 hindered hand excavation and a pump was required at all times. Bioturbation, particularly by tree roots, made feature identification more difficult particularly in trenches 1 and 2.

5 Results

Archaeological deposits were encountered in four of the five trenches excavated. These were found below topsoil and subsoil that in many places had been disturbed by root action. Most features were identified at a depth of around 0.5m cut into an alluvial clay whilst others were only visible once this layer was removed at a depth of 1m. Feature concentration increased towards the higher ground. The alluvium (**9, 14, 45**) was present in all trenches but became thicker further from the old river course. It was a mid grey brown silty clay that contained finds of bone and Iron. A sample from this layer produced cereals, weeds and amphibian bones.

5.1 Trench 1

This trench (figure 3) was located to the south east of the site in the southern development plot. It was aligned north west – south east and was 9m in length. The southern end of the trench was just over 5m from the modern stream that runs along the old course of the river. The topsoil was 0.34m and the subsoil was 0.44m in depth. The alluvium was identified in this trench up to a depth of 0.2m

Two features were identified in this trench. To the south was an irregular pit most likely the result of tree rooting. To the north a larger pit 3.25m long and 0.75m wide (to baulk) was excavated. This contained a dense peaty fill with partially decomposed organic matter. No finds were present. This feature also had irregular edges and so appears to have been a natural pond cut below the alluvium.

5.2 Trench 2

The second trench was also located in the southern development plot and was aligned south west – north east. It was 17m in length. Topsoil was 0.34m and the subsoil was 0.2m in depth. The alluvial layer in this trench was between 0.1m and 0.4m thick. Four features were identified.

5.2.1 Pits

Feature **5** was a pit with irregular edges. It was filled with a thick peaty deposit. No finds were present. An environmental sample was taken to help characterise the nature of the fill.

At the far south west of the trench feature **13** was partially exposed so an area of 1.5m by 0.6m was visible (figure 4, section 11). This feature contained early medieval 12th century pottery as well as residual Roman pottery dating to the 1st to 4th century AD. The gradual slope of the side suggests that water may have stood in or run through this feature. It is tentatively interpreted as a pit although it may equally have been the corner of a ditch. An environmental sample revealed the presence of weed seeds in this pit.

A modern pit (**11**) cut the topsoil and subsoil 6m from the north east end of the trench.

5.2.2 Ditch

Pit **11** was cut directly above post-Medieval land drain **8**. Ditch **8** was 5.5m wide and 0.6m deep and was filled with several post-Medieval bricks. Other finds included a single piece of residual Roman tile and animal bone. This feature may have been related to a windmill that stood just to the north of the site sometime between 1887 and 1927. This is recorded on the second edition 6 inch Ordnance Survey map of Cambridgeshire in 1904 (figure 5).

5.3 Trench 3

Trench 3 was located at the south western side of the northern development plot and was aligned north west – south east. It was 8.2m in length. The topsoil was 0.3m, the subsoil was 0.4m and the alluvium was 0.24m in depth (figure 4, section 3; plate 1). The alluvial layer was present throughout this trench. A single large pit, later cut by a ditch, was cut into the alluvium. No features were identified under the alluvial layer.

5.3.1 Pit

Feature **61** was 1.6m wide and greater than 1.3m in depth below the machined level (figure 4, section 12). Due to the high water table, high baulks and collapsible sides it was not possible to establish an exact depth for this feature. It was cut on a north - south alignment and had near vertical sides suggesting that it may once have been lined. A pit such as this may have been used for large scale retting. The lowest identified fill was very peaty and contained large pieces of un-worked wood or root. An environmental sample revealed large woody fragments but no other remains. Finds from the backfill of this pit included butchered animal bone, flint and a single piece of Roman tile. This tile is interpreted as residual and may have come in from the surrounding soil when this feature was back filled.

5.3.2 Ditch

This feature (**64**) was cut into the top fill of pit **61**. It was 2.2m wide, 0.45m deep and had a wide shallow profile. A concreted chalky deposit appeared to line the cut. Pottery dating to the 11th to 12th centuries as well as butchered cattle bone and flint were found in this feature. The western edge of this ditch had a very dark burnt organic fill. Environmental samples of this revealed evidence of charred cereals, weed seed and legumes as well as fired clay indicating that this may have been a hearth waste deposit. The main fill of the ditch (**65**) was also sampled and produced similar material although it was not so concentrated. If the course of this feature continued to the north it may have intersected at right angles to ditch **41** in trench 4.

5.4 Trench 4

This trench was located to the north east of the northern development plot. It was 8.2m in length and aligned north west – south east. The topsoil was 0.3m, the subsoil was 0.24m and the alluvium was 0.38m in depth. There were two features in this trench; both were cut into the alluvial layer.

5.4.1 Pit

Pit **46** was 1.9m wide and 0.72m deep (figure 4, section 7). It was present primarily in the north eastern baulk of the trench and did not

appear in the south western baulk. Only 0.30m of its length was visible in plan below the alluvium (plate 2). This may indicate that it had a very steep side and that the majority of pit lies under the baulk. Pottery from the 11th to 12th centuries was recovered along with a residual 1st to 4th century sherd. Environmental samples taken from the primary and secondary fills contained the charred remains of cereals and weeds seeds indicating that domestic activity was taking place near by. The relatively steep sides of this pit may indicate that it had a similar industrial retting function to pit **61**.

5.4.2 Ditch

The only other feature in this trench was an east – west aligned ditch (**41**). This lay to the south of the pit and was 0.9m wide and 1.2m deep. The ditch had a 'V' shaped profile. Wet conditions meant that its total depth was established by auguring rather than full excavation. Finds from this feature included Roman 3rd to 4th century pottery and butchered animal bone. An environmental sample was taken from secondary fill **43**. This produced charred cereals and a hazelnut. This ditch may have marked a boundary or may have been used to let water into and out of the retting pits. This ditch was perpendicular to ditch **64** in trench 3.

5.5 Trench 5

At the north west of the northern development area trench 5 ran for 14.70m on a north east – south west alignment. The topsoil was 0.4m and the subsoil was 0.36m in depth. The most intensive activity on the site was present in this trench. All features were cut into the alluvium, the depth of which was not established. Two large pits backfilled with modern industrial waste were present at the northern end of this trench. These related to a factory that stood on this part of the site prior to the current development. These pits truncated all other features.

5.5.1 Post holes

Two postholes were present in this trench. **27** was 3.5m from the south western end of the trench. It was 0.39m wide and 0.4m deep. This feature cut ditch **34**. Its depth is indicative of a structural function. Post hole **40** was 0.2m wide and 0.06m deep. Feature **27** contained 16th to 18th century pottery and an environmental sample revealed cereal and mussel shell.

5.5.2 Ditches

Four ditches were identified in this trench. Ditches **38** and **30** were the earliest. **38** was a linear ditch 2m wide and 0.68m deep cut on an east – west orientation (plate 3). This ditch is on the same alignment as, and may be closely related to, ditch **41** in trench 4. Animal bone was

recovered from this feature. Ditch **30** was 0.4m wide and 0.34m in depth. It was orientated north west – south east. 11th to 12th century pottery was recovered from this ditch. Environmental samples from both features revealed charred cereals and mussel shells.

A segmented linear ditch ran along the length of trench 5. Three segments were identified **25**, **34** and **74** (figure 4, section 8). These were orientated north east – south west and cut ditches **38** and **30** (plate 4). These were upto 0.5m wide and 0.18m deep. Pottery from this ditch indicates that it was filled in around the late 12th century. Animal bone was also recovered from this ditch and two environmental samples were taken from along its course. These samples revealed background domestic waste of cereals, weeds, mussel shell and fired clay.

Ditch **36** ran north west – south east and was 0.4m wide and 0.14m deep. The ditch ran across the width of the trench. Animal bone was recovered from this ditch and an environmental sample revealed cereals, weeds and fish bone.

5.5.3 Other features

The only other feature identified in this trench was a small gully or beam slot (**72**) 0.24m wide and 0.06m deep. It contained animal bone but its function was unclear. An environmental sample from this feature also contained cereals.

6 Discussion

This evaluation has identified evidence for occupation within the area of the proposed development. This occupation began in the late Roman period and continued to the post-Medieval period. Activity was concentrated in the northern development plot where the alluvium was thickest and the ground level was higher.

A total of 22 sherds of pottery were recovered of nine different fabrics. All the sherds were quite abraded. Two pieces of Roman ceramic building material were also found. This mix of pottery implies that this area may have had a long history of agricultural use up until and after its occupation in the medieval period. The range of pottery may be a symptom of midden spreading and ploughing in this area rather than direct evidence for Roman occupation on the site. Further investigations would be required to confirm this.

The earliest activity may be represented by ditch **41**. This contained two Roman sherds and no medieval; however its orientation perpendicular to ditch **64** may mean that it was part of the later layout of the area. Pit **61** and pit **46** may indicate the presence of early medieval retting on this site. Evidence of hemp retting has been

uncovered at the nearby site at Thorn Street in 14th to 15th century contexts (Mortimer 2006). However, here at Paddock Street they appear to date from the early medieval period or before. Retting involved submerging bundles of stalks in water for 4 to 10 days. The sheaves of hemp or flax or nettle were packed into the pit and weighted down by stones until it was possible to extract the long bast fibres without damage. These pits were generally 1.5m deep, 4.5m long and 2.5m wide (Nelson 2000). It is possible that a series of large retting pits existed here close to the river in order to flush clean water through the pits thus enabling large scale retting (Mortimer pers. comm.). Ditch **30** appears to be associated with this phase of activity also.

Ditches **13**, **41** and **64** may have formed part of an enclosure in the centre of the development area. 12th century pottery was recovered from both **13** and **64** and 41 runs perpendicular to **64** Ditch **38** runs parallel to **46** and may have formed a drove way into a small animal enclosure. Ditch **34** and the associated postholes indicate a possible boundary indicative of a settlement or working area on the higher ground to the north. The date of the late 12th century for this feature is consistent with that proposed for the expansion of Soham. An increased population may have required the expansion on to more marginal land.

No evidence of domestic settlement was found on the site but the environmental and faunal assemblage indicates that it was nearby. This area may always have been on the periphery of activity in Soham due to its close proximity to the river. Retting, corralling and butchering may have taken place here sporadically and seasonally when the river was less likely to flood. The presence of a windmill and post-Medieval drainage channel attest to semi-permanent alluvial liminality of this area.

7 Conclusions

The five evaluation trenches have revealed evidence of occupation from the 3rd to the 19th centuries. It was not possible to identify the full extent of all of the features located. At least 4 phases of activity have been identified with in this period. The nature of the findings from this area suggest that there was some agricultural activity in the Roman period followed by more permanent occupation in the early Medieval period. These features were on the periphery of more dense domestic and industrial activity to the north and west and it is only the relatively recent re-coursing of the river that has allowed construction in this area.

Recommendations for any future work based upon this report will be made by the County Archaeology Office.

Acknowledgements

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The brief for archaeological works was written by Kasia Gdaniec, who visited the site and monitored the evaluation.

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29	30	5	Fill	Ditch	Drainage	Occ. Stone	
30	30	5	Cut	Ditch	Drainage		Linear
31	34	5	Fill	Ditch	Boundary	Occ. Grit	
32	34	5	Fill	Ditch	Boundary	Occ. Stone	
33	34	5	Fill	Ditch	Boundary	Occ. Grit	
34	34	5	Cut	Ditch	Boundary		Linear
35	36	5	Fill	Ditch	Drainage	Occ. Pea gravel	
36	36	5	Cut	Ditch	Drainage		Linear
37	38	5	Fill	Ditch	Drainage	Occ. Grit	
38	38	5	Cut	Ditch	Drainage		Linear
39	40	5	Fill	Post hole	Structural	Occ. Pea gravel	
40	40	5	Cut	Post hole	Structural		Round
41	41	4	Cut	Ditch	Boundary		Linear
42	41	4	Fill	Ditch	Boundary	Occ. Gravel, pea gravel and charcoal	
43	41	4	Fill	Ditch	Boundary	Occ. Gravel, pea gravel, charcoal, organic matter	
44	41	4	Fill	Ditch	Boundary	Occ. Pea gravel and organic material	
45	-	4, 3	Layer	Natural	Alluvium	Occ. Grit and gravel	
46	46	4	Cut	Pit	Retting		Ovoid
47	46	4	Fill	Pit	Retting?	Occ. Pea gravel and charcoal	
48	46	4	Fill	Pit	Disuse	Occ. Grit and gravel	
49	46	4	Fill	Pit	Disuse	Occ. Sand lenses	
50	46	4	Fill	Pit	Disuse	Occ. Grit	
51	46	4	Fill	Pit	Disuse		
61	61	3	Cut	Pit	Retting?		Linear
62	61	3	Fill	Pit	Retting	Organic matter	
63	61	3	Fill	Pit	Disuse		

64	64	3	Cut	Ditch	Boundary		Linear
65	64	3	Fill	Ditch	Boundary	Occ. Grit	
66	64	3	Fill	Ditch	Boundary	Occ. Grit	
71	72	5	Fill	Ditch		Occ. Grit	
72	72	5	Cut	Ditch			Linear
73	74	5	Fill	Ditch	Boundary		
74	74	5	Cut	Ditch	Boundary		

Appendix 2: Pottery and Ceramic Building Material

by Carole Fletcher

2.1 Summary

Fieldwork at Paddock Street, Soham, Cambridgeshire produced a small pottery assemblage of 22 sherds, weighing 0.122kg and two fragments of Roman brick or tile (0.271kg) from 13 contexts representing nine features of three types, ditches, from which the majority of the assemblage was recovered and two pits and a single post hole. In addition the excavator identified modern brick in context 7 as infill in a culvert. This material was not retained and as a result has not been detailed in the ceramic building material (CBM) and pottery quantification table at the end of this report.

The pottery recovered includes five Roman sherds identified by Stephen Wadson, also late Saxon and medieval material. All appear to be domestic in origin with several sherds heavily sooted. However the scarcity of pottery and the wide date range suggest this material does not represent domestic occupation.

The condition of the whole assemblage is moderately abraded to abraded with a small average pottery sherd weight of approximately 5.5g. The average size of CBM fragments from individual contexts is also small at 0.135kg.

2.2 Methodology

The basic guidance in the Management of Archaeological Projects (MAP2) has been adhered to (English Heritage 1991). In addition the Medieval Pottery Research Group (MPRG) documents Guidance for the processing and publication of medieval pottery from excavations (Blake and Davey, 1983), A guide to the classification of medieval ceramic forms (MPRG, 1998) and Minimum Standards for the Processing, Recording, Analysis and Publication of Post-Roman Ceramics (MPRG, 2001) act as a standard.

Dating was carried out using CAM ARC's in-house system based on that previously used at the Museum of London. Fabric classification has been carried out for all previously described types. All sherds have been counted, classified and weighed. All the pottery has been spot dated on a context-by-context basis.

The CBM was counted, weighed and classified by form. Levels of abrasion, any evidence of re-use or burning were also recorded following the guidelines laid down by Archaeological Ceramic Building Materials Group (ACBMG 2002).

The pottery, CBM and archive are curated by CAM ARC until formal deposition.

No preservation bias has been recognised and no long-term storage problems are likely.

2.3 Functional assemblage

Ceramic fabric abbreviations used in the following text and dating table are:

EMEMS	Early Medieval Essex Micaceous Sandy ware
HAD	Hadham ware
MELT	Medieval Ely type ware
NEOT/NEOTT	St Neots ware or St Neots Type ware
PMR	Post medieval redware
SGW	Sandy Grey ware
STW	Shell Tempered ware
SW	Sandy ware
THETT	Thetford type ware

The earliest material present is a sherd of STW tempered pottery of Late Iron Age or Roman date, recovered from context 29 (Trench 5) A sherd of HAD (3rd to 4th century) was recovered from context 43 (Trench 4) and the processed sample from this context produced an abraded sherd of SGW (1st to 4th century), a second SGW sherd was also recovered from context 49 during sample processing. In addition a single sherd of SGW was recovered as a residual element in a mid 12th-13th-century context (Trench 2 context 12).

No ceramic material was recovered from Trench 1 and Trench 2 produced residual Roman CBM from a 19th century feature. A shallow ditch **64**, in Trench 3 produced two NEOTT body sherds and a single rim sherd of THETT, the heavily sooted relatively unabraded sherd from a small jar dates from the 10th to mid 12th century. The ditch truncates an earlier pit **61**, from which a single fragment of Roman CBM was recovered.

Trench 5 produced 12 sherds from five contexts; a single residual sherd of STW recovered alongside two NEOTT sherds from a ditch, which is truncated by a segmented boundary ditch running along the length of the trench. Three sections were excavated through this ditch, each produced a single sherd of pottery, and these date from as early as the mid 9th century or as late as the mid 14th century. The overall date range for the pottery from this ditch is probably mid 12th century. One segment of this feature is in turn truncated by a posthole 27 which contained some small residual, undiagnostic sherds of SW and EMEMS alongside a sherd of PMR.

The assemblage is too small to draw clear conclusions about fabric provenance other than to say they appear to follow the common pattern for this region.

2.4 Conclusion

The assemblage is small, few features have more than one context containing pottery and the majority of features produced no pottery. This has made the assemblage difficult to assess beyond providing basic dating information. The presence of this material indicates sporadic activity on the site from the late Iron Age or early Roman period to the mid 14th century and again in the 19th century. This activity is almost certainly agricultural in nature resulting in the pottery and CBM present being reworked and redeposited, it may not therefore accurately date the features from which it was recovered.

Dating Table

Trench	Context	Fabric	Form/sherd type	Number of sherds	Weight in kg	Date Range for context
2	7	Roman	Brick or Tile	1	0.176	19th century
2	12	MELT	Jar Body sherd	1	0.012	Mid 12th to mid 14th century
		SGW	Body sherd	1	0.005	
5	24	SW	Body sherd	1	0.003	Mid 12th to mid 14th century
5	28	PMR	Bowl Body sherd	1	0.005	16th to 18th century
		EMEMS	Body sherd	3	0.004	
		SW	Body sherd	2	0.001	
5	29	STW	Body sherd	1	0.004	11th to mid 12th century
		NEOTT	Small Rim Fragment and Body sherd	2	0.007	
5	32	EMEMS	Jar Base sherd	1	0.006	Mid 11th to mid 12th

Trench	Context	Fabric	Form/sherd type	Number of sherds	Weight in kg	Date Range for context
4	43	HAD	Body sherd	1	0.005	3rd-4th century
		SGW	Body sherd	1	0.004	century
4	47	SGW	Body sherd	1	0.005	1st to 4th century
4	49	NEOTT	Body sherd	2	0.008	11th to mid 12th century
3	63	Roman	Brick or Tile	1	0.095	1st-4th century
3	65	THET	Jar Rim	1	0.012	10th to mid 12th century
3	66	NEOTT	Body sherd	2	0.004	11th to mid 12th century
5	73	NEOT	Body sherd	1	0.002	Mid 9th to mid 12th century

49 sample 9 * sample 8 47 pit in section of trench 4

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Blake, H and Davey, P. English Heritage	1983 1991	Directorate of Ancient Monuments and Historic Buildings_Occasional_Paper 5 MAP2 A Guide to the Classification of Medieval Ceramic Forms.
Medieval Pottery Research Group	1998	Medieval Pottery Research Group Occasional Paper I

Appendix 3: Faunal Remains

By Chris Faine

3.1 Introduction

A total of 16 “countable” bones were recovered from the Paddock Street, Soham evaluation, with a further 18 fragments not identifiable to species, (53% of the total sample). All bones were collected by hand apart from those recovered from environmental samples; hence a bias towards smaller fragments is to be expected. Residuality appears not be an issue and there is no evidence of later contamination of any context. Faunal remains were recovered from a variety of contexts including pits and ditches dating from the Roman and Medieval periods. Material from sieved samples is not included in this report.

3.2 Methodology

All data was initially recorded using a specially written MS Access database. Bones were recorded using a version of the criteria described in Davis (1992) and Albarella & Davis (1997). Initially all elements were assessed in terms of siding (where appropriate), completeness, tooth wear stages (also where applicable) and epiphyseal fusion. Completeness was assessed in terms of percentage and zones present (after Dobney & Reilly, 1988). Initially the whole identifiable assemblage was quantified in terms of number of individual fragments (NISP) and minimum numbers of individuals MNI (see table 1). The ageing of the population was largely achieved by examining the wear stages of cheek teeth of cattle, sheep/goat and pig (after Grant, 1982). The states of epiphyseal fusion for all relevant bones were recorded to give a broad age range for the major domesticates (after Getty, 1975). All measurements were carried out according to the conventions of von den Driesch (1976). Dog withers heights were calculated using Harcourt (1974). Measurements were either carried out using a 150mm sliding calliper or an osteometric board in the case of larger bones.

3.3 The Assemblage

Table 1 shows the species distribution for the entire assemblage. In terms of individual fragments (NISP) sheep/goat remains dominate, along with smaller numbers of cattle and pig remains. In terms of numbers of individuals (MNI) however, the proportions of the domestic mammal species are relatively equal.

All faunal material of possible Roman origin was recovered from context **43**, a fill of ditch **<41>**. These consisted of a number of butchered post-cranial elements from adult cattle, sheep/goat and pig. Two intact mandibles were recovered, one from a sheep/goat aged around 4-6 years at death and one from a cow of similar age. A single butchered domestic fowl sternum was also recovered from this context.

Similar types of faunal remains are also seen in the medieval contexts, with fragments of sheep/goat and pig crania being recovered from pit fill **63**. Fragments of butchered cattle remains were also recovered from ditch fills **24** and **65**.

Material from undated contexts consisted of butchered sheep/goat and pig lower limb elements from ditch fills **37** and **71**.

3.4 Conclusions

Unfortunately the faunal assemblage is extremely small and so can provide little information about the site as a whole. However, with respect to the domestic mammals the assemblage appears to suggest general domestic/settlement waste.

	NISP	NISP%	MNI	MNI%
Sheep/Goat (<i>Ovis/Capra</i>)	8	50	3	30
Cattle (<i>Bos</i>)	4	25	3	30
Pig (<i>Sus scrofa</i>)	3	18.7	3	30
Domestic fowl (<i>Gallus gallus</i>)	1	6.3	1	10
Total:	16	100	10	100

Table 1: Species distribution for the entire assemblage

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Appendix 4: Environmental Remains

By Rachel Fosberry

4.1 Introduction and Methods

Sixteen bulk samples were taken from features within the evaluated areas of the site in order to assess the quality of preservation of plant remains and their potential to provide useful data as part of further archaeological investigations. Features sampled include ditches, pits and posts holes and were Roman and Medieval in date.

Ten litres of each sample were processed by tank flotation for the recovery of charred plant remains, dating evidence and any other artefactual evidence that might be present. The flot was collected in a 0.5mm nylon mesh and the residue was washed through a 1mm sieve. The flot was examined under a binocular microscope at x16 magnification and the presence of any plant remains or other artefacts are noted on Table 2. The residue was scanned by eye for any artefacts.

4.2 Results

The results are recorded on Table 2.

Sample Number	Context Number	Cut Number	Flot contents	Residue Contents
1	24	25	Cereals, weed seeds	Animal bone, fired clay
2	26	27	Cereals	Animal bone, pottery, mussel shell
3	29	30	High organic content, cereals	Animal bone, mussel shell
4	43	41	Cereals	Hazelnut
5	45		Cereals, weed seeds	Animal bone, amphibian bone
6	32	34	Cereals, weed seeds	Animal bone, mussel shell
7	35	36	Cereals, weed seeds, small bones, fish bone	Animal bone
8	47	46	Cereals, weed seeds	No finds
9	49	48	Cereals, weed	Rodent bone

			seeds, legumes	
10	4	5	High organic content, Weed seeds	Woody fragments
11	12	13	High organic content, Weed seeds	Woody fragments
12	66	64	Cereals, weed seeds, legumes	Fired clay, amphibian bone
13	65	64	High organic content, cereals, weed seeds	Animal bone, amphibian bone
14	63	61	High organic content	Large wood fragments
15	71	72	Cereals	Animal bone
16	37	38	Cereals	Animal bone, mussel shell

Table 2: Bulk samples from SOH PET 08

Preservation is by both charring and waterlogging with most samples having a mixture of both. Charred cereal grains are common in most of the samples. Wheat (*Triticum* sp.) and barley (*Hordeum* sp.) predominate along with occasional grains of oats (*Avena* sp.) and possibly rye (*Secale cereale*).

Charred weed seeds are rare although several charred seeds of corncockle (*Agrostemma githago*) occur in sample 12, context 66.

Waterlogged seeds are far more common and occur in many of the samples. They include wetland species such as spike-rush (*Eleocharis* sp.), saw-sedge (*Cladium mariscus*) and sedges (*Carex* sp.) and also grassland plants such as nettle (*Urtica* sp.), dead-nettle (*Lamium* sp.), gromwell (*Lithospermum* sp.) elderberry (*Sambucus* sp) and bramble (*Rubus* sp.).

Legumes were represented by peas (*Pisum* sp.) and a fragment of bean (*Vicia* sp).

Fish scales are common in the majority of the samples and fish bones also occur. Other small bones of rodents and amphibians are also common as are larger animal bones. Mussel shell fragments occur in three of the samples.

4.3 Discussion

The flots of the samples from ditches are quite uniform in content of organic matter. These features have remained waterlogged so a bias towards the survival of woody material and more robust seeds such as bramble and elderberry would be expected. Saw sedge was one of the major vegetation types of the Fen and was commonly used as fuel.

The charred plant remains recovered from this assemblage are dominated by cereals. Cereal grains are present in more than half of the samples and represent both discrete deposits and general scattering of grain preserved by accidental burning. Chaff elements are extremely rare. Lack of evidence of crop processing usually implies that clean grain has been imported onto the site although it would seem that some later stages of processing was being carried out on site. Corncockle seeds are toxic and are of a similar size to cereal

grains. They probably would have been picked out by hand and discarded onto the hearth. The grains may have been accidentally burnt during cooking over open fires prior to being deliberately deposited in the pits or naturally accumulating in the post holes. The sample containing the most abundant quantities of cereals is sample 12, context 66 which was taken from the top fill of a medieval ditch which was presumably also used for the disposal of rubbish/hearth waste.

Barley was often used for animal fodder but may have been used for human consumption in the form of bread, soup and was also used for the brewing of beer. No germinated grains were recovered to suggest brewing activities.

Peas and beans are rare but this is probably because pulses are less likely to be burnt accidentally than grain as they do not need to be exposed to heat as cereals do.

The other dietary remains of fragments of animal bone and fish scale along with the charred grain and the occasional pea/bean are probably derived from the deposition of small quantities of burnt domestic refuse.

Presence of amphibians and rodents probably represent creatures that have hopped/crawled into the feature.

4.4 Conclusions and Recommendations

In conclusion, the plant remains recovered from this site are dominated by crop plants, both cereals and legumes, along with other dietary refuse in the form of fish scale, animal bones and mussel shells. The waterlogged plant remains suggest a typical fen-edge environment of wetland plants.






If any further excavations are planned for this site, extensive sampling would enable further investigation on the nature of cereal and weed assemblages, which would provide an insight into to utilisation of local plant resources, agricultural activity and economic evidence from this period.

Appendix 1: Context Summary

Context	Cut	Trench	Category	Feature type	Function	Coarse component	Shape in Plan
1	-	1, 2	Layer	Natural			
2	-	1, 2	Layer	Natural	Topsoil		
3	-	1, 2	Layer	Natural	Sub soil		
4	5	2	Fill	Pit	Disuse	1% pea gravel	
5	5	2	Cut	Pit	Natural		Linear
6	8	2	Fill	Ditch	Drainage	10% stones	
7	8	2	Fill	Ditch	Drainage	20% small stones	
8	8	2	Cut	Ditch	Drainage		Linear
9	-	2	Layer	Natural	Alluvium		
10	11	2	Fill	Pit	Refuse	1% small stone	
11	11	2	Cut	Pit	Refuse		Linear
12	13	2	Fill	Ditch	Boundary		
13	13	2	Cut	Ditch	Boundary		Linear
14	-	2	Layer	Natural	Alluvium	10% grit, chalk	
15	16	1	Fill	Pit	Natural	>60% organic matter	
16	16	1	Cut	Pit	Natural		Irregular
17	13	2	Fill	Ditch	Disuse	Occ. Grit	
21	-	5	Layer	Natural	Topsoil	Occ. Grit	
22	-	5	Layer	Natural	Sub soil	Occ. Pea gravel	
23	-	5	Layer	Natural	Alluvium	Occ. Grit	
24	25	5	Fill	Ditch	Drainage	Occ. Grit and pea gravel	
25	25	5	Cut	Ditch	Drainage		Linear
26	27	5	Fill	Post hole	Structural	Occ. Grit	
27	27	5	Cut	Post hole	Structural		Round
28	27	5	Fill	Post hole	Structural	Occ. Grit	

Drawing Conventions

Plans

Limit of Excavation	—————
Deposit - Conjectured	-----
Natural Features	—————
Illustrated Section	<u>S.14</u>
Archaeological Deposit	
Excavated Slot	
Modern Deposit	
Natural Deposit	
Sub Soil	
Cut Number	118
Deposit Number	117

Sections




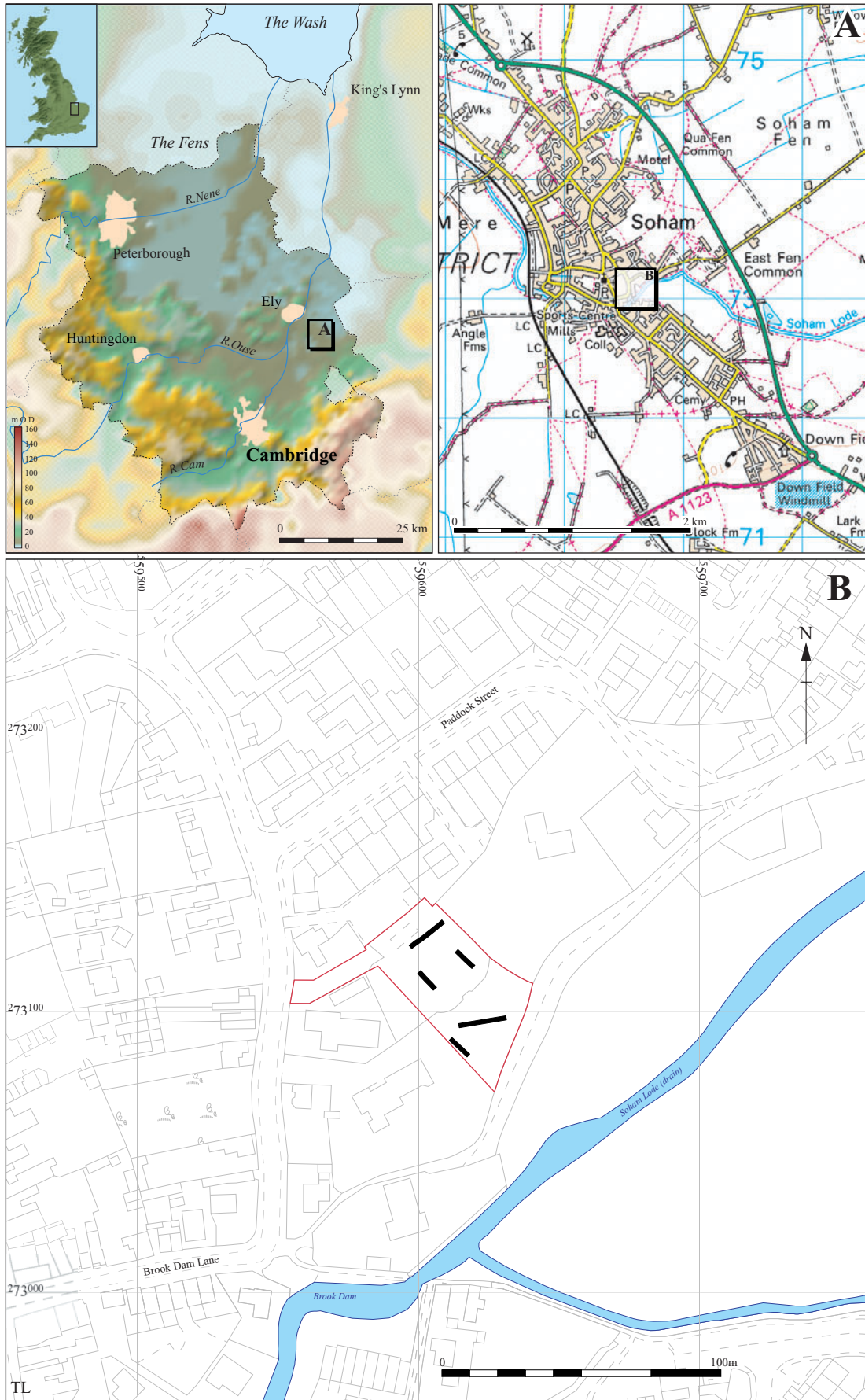
Limit of Excavation	-----
Cut	—————
Deposit Horizon	—————
Sand Lense	-----
Top Surface/Top of Natural	—————
Limit of Section Drawing	-----
Cut Number	118
Deposit Number	117
Ordnance Datum	18.45m OD 
Wood	 

Figure 1: Drawing Conventions



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Figure 2: Location of trenches

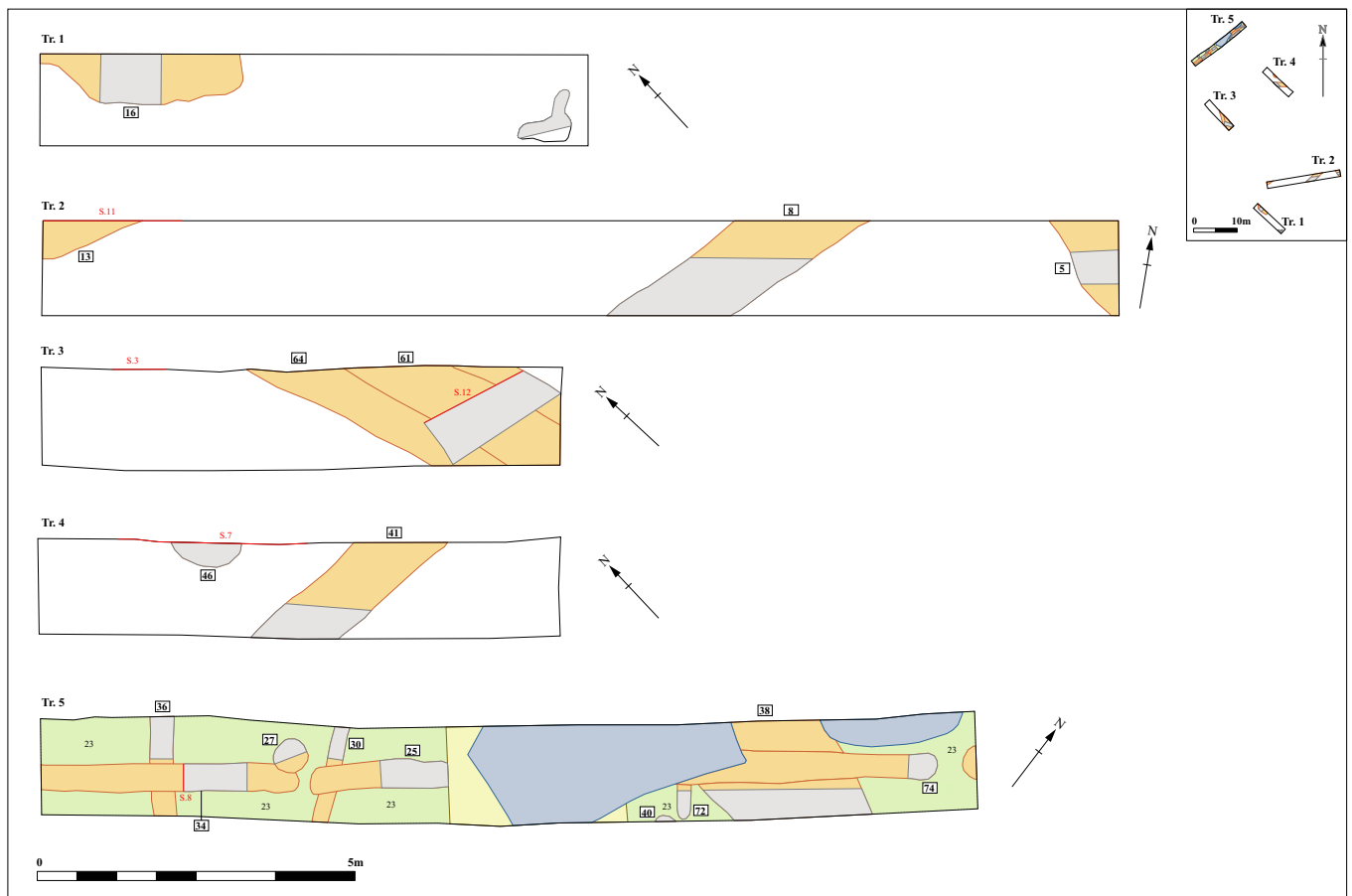


Figure 3: Trench Plan

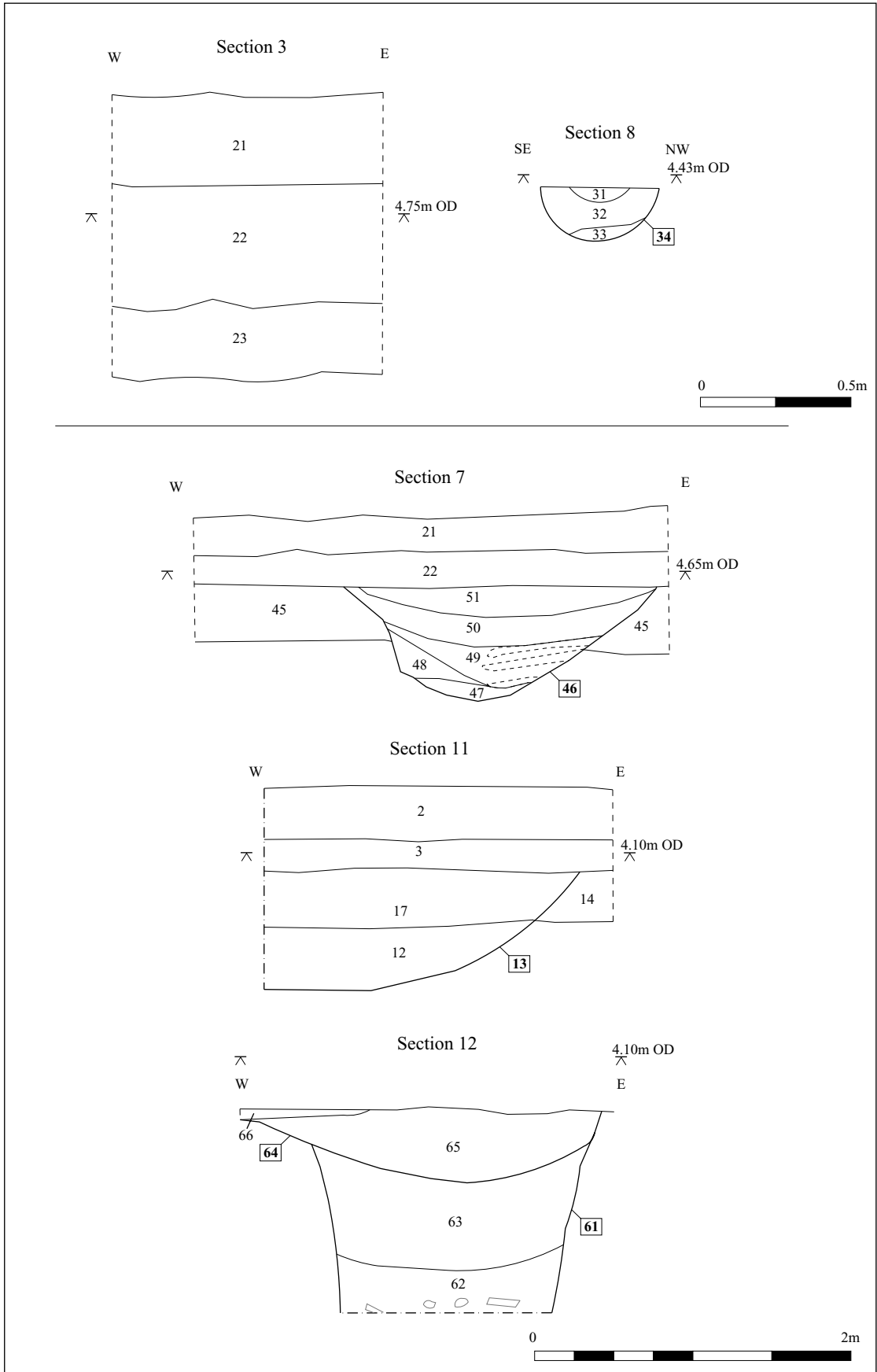


Figure 4: Section drawings

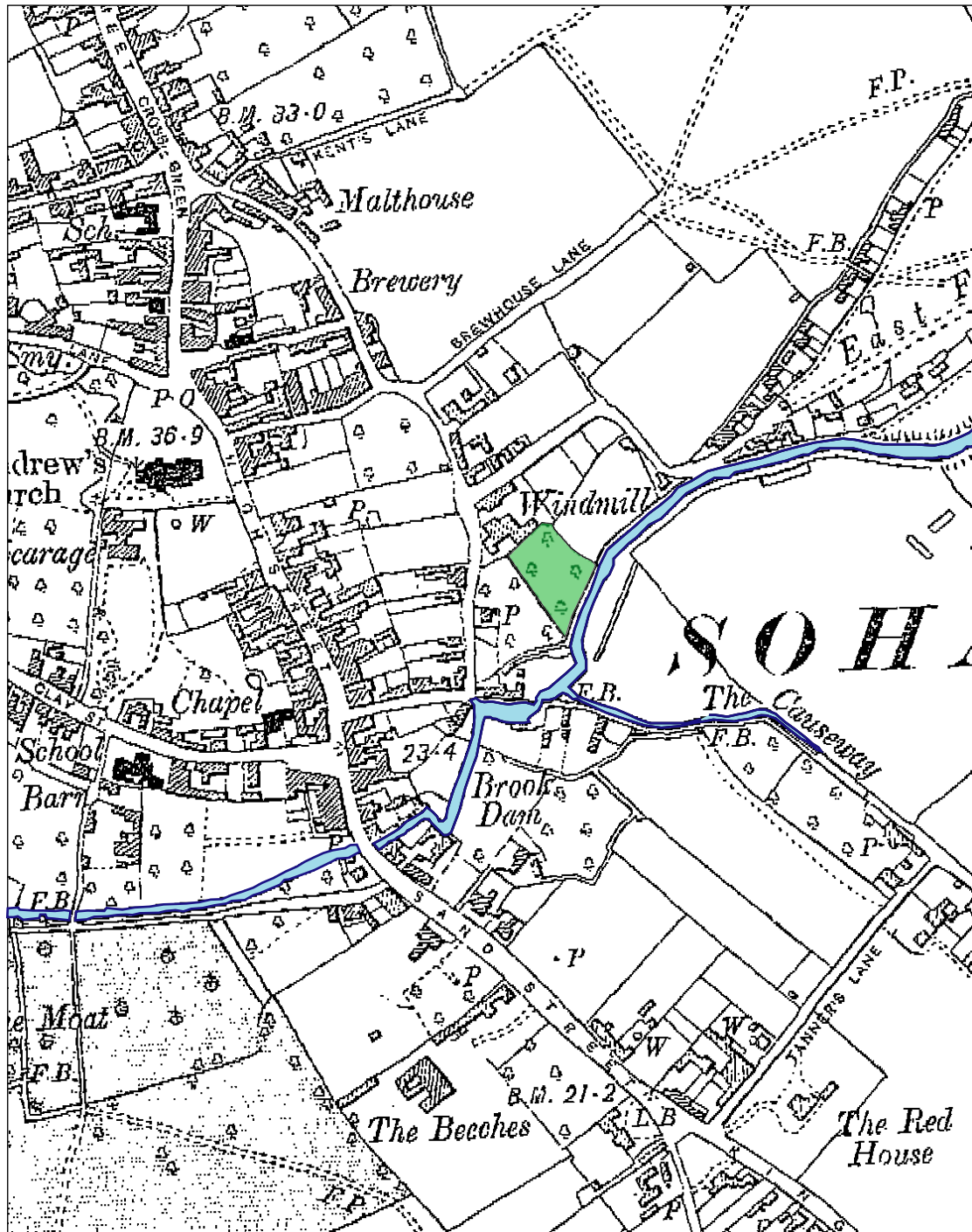


Figure 5: Extract from O.S. 6" map of Cambridgeshire 1903-1904



Plate 1: Baulk section , facing South West (trench 3)



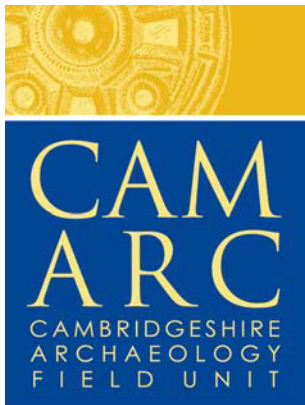
Plate 2: Possible retting pit, facing North East (trench 4)



Plate 3: Section through ditch, facing South East (trench 5)



Plate 4: Section through boundary ditch, facing North East (trench 5)



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