



**CAM ARC Report Number 1009**

## **Land at Rear of 58 – 60 Newmarket Road, Burwell, Cambridgeshire**

---

**Archaeological Evaluation**

Chris Thatcher

March 2008

**CAM ARC Report Number 1009**

**Land at Rear of 58 – 60  
Newmarket Road, Burwell,  
Cambridgeshire**

---

**Archaeological Evaluation**

Chris Thatcher BA

Site Code: BUR NET 08  
CHER Event Number: ECB 2840  
Date of works: 13<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> February 2008  
Grid Ref: TL 5929 6637

Editor: Elizabeth Popescu BA PhD MIFA  
Illustrator: Lucy Offord BA

PROJECT DETAILS				
Project name	Land at Rear of 58 – 60 Newmarket Road, Burwell, Cambridgeshire			
Short description	<p>An Archaeological Evaluation was conducted on the land to the rear of 58-60 New market Road, Burwell (TL 5929 6637) by CAM ARC between 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> February 2008, prior to the construction of 4 houses with associated garages and an access road. The development comprised a 0.1ha parcel of land. The work was commissioned by Wain ward Homes Ltd.</p> <p>CAM ARC was commissioned to mechanically excavate 3 trenches (total area 66m<sup>2</sup>) in the development area. The evaluation revealed two shallow postholes in Trench 2. Both features contained single fills but no finds were recovered from either deposit. A number of silt patches were investigated but these were found to be the result of root action. At the easternmost end of Trench 1 a modern animal burial was also noted.</p>			
Project dates	Start	13/02/08	End	14/02/08
Previous work	None		Future work	no
Associated project reference codes	BUR NET 08 ECB 2840			
Type of project	Evaluation			
Site status	none			
Current land use (list all that apply)	Garden			
Planned development	4 Residential properties with garages and access road			
Monument types / period (list all that apply)	None			
Significant finds: Artefact type / period (list all that apply)	None			
PROJECT LOCATION				
County	Cambridgeshire	Parish	Burwell	
HER for region	Cambridgeshire			
Site address (including postcode)	58-60 Newmarket Road, Burwell Cambridgeshire			
Study area (sq.m or ha)	0.1 ha			
National grid reference	TL 5929 6637			
Height OD	Min OD	20.00	Max OD	21.00
PROJECT ORIGINATORS				
Organisation	CAM ARC			
Project brief originator	Eliza Gore			
Project design originator	James Drummond Murray			
Director/supervisor	Chris Thatcher			
Project manager	James Drummond Murray			
Sponsor or funding body	Wain ward Homes Ltd			
ARCHIVES	Location and accession number		Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone, database, context sheets etc)	
Physical				
Paper	CAM ARC Bar Hill		Site records, written and drawn, evaluation report	
Digital	CAM ARC Bar Hill		Digital photos, survey data	
BIBLIOGRAPHY				
Full title	Land at Rear of 58 – 60 Newmarket Road, Burwell, Cambridgeshire			
Author(s)	Thatcher, C			
Report number	1009			
Series title and volume				
Page numbers				
Date	March 2008			

## **Summary**

An Archaeological Evaluation was conducted on the land to the rear of 58-60 Newmarket Road, Burwell (TL 5929 6637) by CAM ARC between 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> February 2008, prior to the construction of 4 houses with associated garages and an access road. The development comprised a 0.1ha parcel of land. The work was commissioned by Wainward Homes Ltd.

CAM ARC was commissioned to mechanically excavate 3 trenches (total area 66m<sup>2</sup>) in the development area. The evaluation revealed two shallow postholes in Trench 2. Both features contained single fills but no finds were recovered from either deposit. A number of silt patches were investigated but these were found to be the result of root action. At the easternmost end of Trench 1 a modern animal burial was also noted.

## **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>
<b>4</b>	<b>Methodology</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Results</b>	<b>3</b>
	5.1 Deposit Summary	3
	5.2 Trench 2	3
<b>6</b>	<b>Discussion and Conclusions</b>	<b>3</b>
	<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>4</b>
	<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>4</b>
	<b>List of Figures</b>	
	Figure 1: Site location map	7
	Figure 2: Trench plans	8
	<b>List of Appendices</b>	
	Appendix 1: Context Summary	5

## **1 Introduction**

This archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a Brief issued by Eliza Gore of the Cambridgeshire Archaeology, Planning and Countryside Advice team (CAPCA; Planning Application 07/00274/FUL), 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 lies on the Upper Beds of the Lower Chalk, described as Chalk Marl. To the west is an outcrop of Totternhoe Stone (called locally Burwell Stone, a form of clunch), upon which Burwell partially stands. The Lower Beds of the Lower Chalk extend 3km to the west, beyond the village of Reach, to the peat fen deposits (British Geological Survey 1981).

Located on the edge of a low escarpment, the site overlooks the village of Burwell to the west. To the south and east chalk grassland rises gently for over 8km towards Newmarket in Suffolk. Burwell nestles against the west-facing slope of the escarpment, which at this point is steep, dropping from 21m OD on site to 4m OD half a kilometre to the east.

## **3 Archaeological and Historical Background**

The site lies outside the historic core of the village, where the medieval settlement lies over earlier Roman remains. Further evidence of Roman occupation has also been found in the form of an artefact scatter (HER 10953) and from an excavation at Low Road (ECB 1434 – Kenney 1996) as well as southwest of Burwell castle (HER04663).

There is also evidence for Anglo-Saxon occupation in the form of a cemetery (ECB615), located 300m to the northwest of the site, which was excavated in the 1920's.

An Iron Age settlement was recorded at 36-42 Newmarket Road (ECB 1944 – Bailey 2006), just over 100m to the northwest, during an archaeological evaluation, which recorded roundhouses and numerous pits, some of which contained evidence for the ritual deposition of material.

To the south west of the development area an evaluation at Mill Lane (ECB 112 - Garrow 2000) produced no archaeological features. There has also been extensive quarrying took place to the south-west in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (ECB 950 – Countryside Planning and Management 1994)

Chance prehistoric finds include a Palaeolithic axe (HER 01775b) and a Bronze Age hoard in St Mary's churchyard (HER 06769a) 400m to the east.

Archaeological evidence from most periods has been discovered in and around Burwell. Whilst the site lay on the fringes of the settlement, the close proximity of Iron Age remains suggested that there was reasonable potential for a continuation of the settlement onto the site.

## **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 be subject to trial trenching. This entailed the excavation of three trenches, two of which were 9m long by 2m wide, with the remaining trench 15m by 2m wide.

Machine excavation was carried out under constant archaeological supervision with a tracked 2.5 tonne 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 that 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.

No environmental samples were taken during the evaluation.

Conditions on site were favourable, with dry weather and ground conditions.

## 5 Results

The evaluation revealed two archaeological features in Trench 2. A number of silty patches observed in the trenches were tested but were found to be the result of root action. At the easternmost end of Trench 1 a modern animal burial, possibly that of a rabbit, was also noted.

### 5.1 Deposit Summary

Dark grey brown topsoil composed of chalky silt with very occasional gravel inclusions sealed the whole site in a layer recorded as between 0.27m & 0.24m thick (001).

This overlay a subsoil (002), which varied more markedly in thickness, between 0.06m & 0.20m across the development area. This was composed of mid grey chalky silt with occasional chalk flecking.

The natural geological deposits (003) comprised solid chalk.

Trench	No.	Topsoil	No.	Subsoil	Total Trench depth
1	001	0.25m – 0.28m	002	0.08m – 0.20m	0.45m – 0.46m
2	001	0.24m	002	0.20m	0.44m
3	001	0.21 – 0.23m	002	0.06m	0.27m – 0.29m

Table 1: Depths of deposits across the development area

### 5.2 Trench 2

Two archaeological features (**005** & **007**) were recorded in the centre of Trench 2 during the evaluation. These comprised two shallow postholes. **005** was 0.30m in diameter and 0.08m deep, **007** was 0.15m in diameter and 0.08m deep. Both features contained single fills (004 & 006 respectively) composed of light brown grey chalky silt with frequent small stone inclusions, no finds were recovered from either deposit.

## 6 Discussion and Conclusions

The evaluation revealed a very low density of undated archaeological deposits. These were certainly not comparable with the Iron Age remains recorded 100m to the north-west on Newmarket road and it would appear, in the light of this piece of work, that the settlement observed there did not extend southwards into the development area. Likewise the Roman remains situated to the north and west did not encroach onto the site.

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



---

## Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank Wainward Homes Ltd. who commissioned and funded the archaeological work. The project was managed by James Drummond Murray. Chris Thatcher carried out the evaluation with the assistance of Ross Lilley. The illustrations were produced by Lucy Offord. Liz Popescu edited the report.

Eliza Gore wrote the brief for archaeological works, and the evaluation was visited and monitored by Kasia Gdaniec.

## Bibliography

- |  |       |  |
|--|-------|--|
| Bailey, G.D. with Shepherd Popescu, E. | 2006  | <i>Iron Age 'Ritual' Pits at Newmarket Road, Burwell, Cambridgeshire. An Archaeological Excavation. Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Field Unit Report 850</i>   |
| British Geological Survey              | 1981  | <i>Cambridge, England and Wales Sheet 188</i>  |
| Drummond Murray, J,                    | 2008  | <i>Specification for Archaeological Evaluation at Land at 58-60 Newmarket Road, Burwell</i>  |
| Garrow, D.                             | 2000  | <i>A Trench based Archaeological Evaluation at Mill Lane, Burwell, Cambridgeshire, Cambridge Archaeological Unit Report 383</i>  |
| Gore, E.                               | 2007  | <i>Brief for Archaeological Evaluation, Land to Rear of 58-60, Newmarket Road, Burwell</i>   |
| Kenney, S.                             | 1996. | <i>Roman and Later Trackways and Boundaries at 95/97 Low Road, Burwell: An Archaeological Excavation. Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Field Unit Report 116</i> |

---




## Appendix 1: Context List

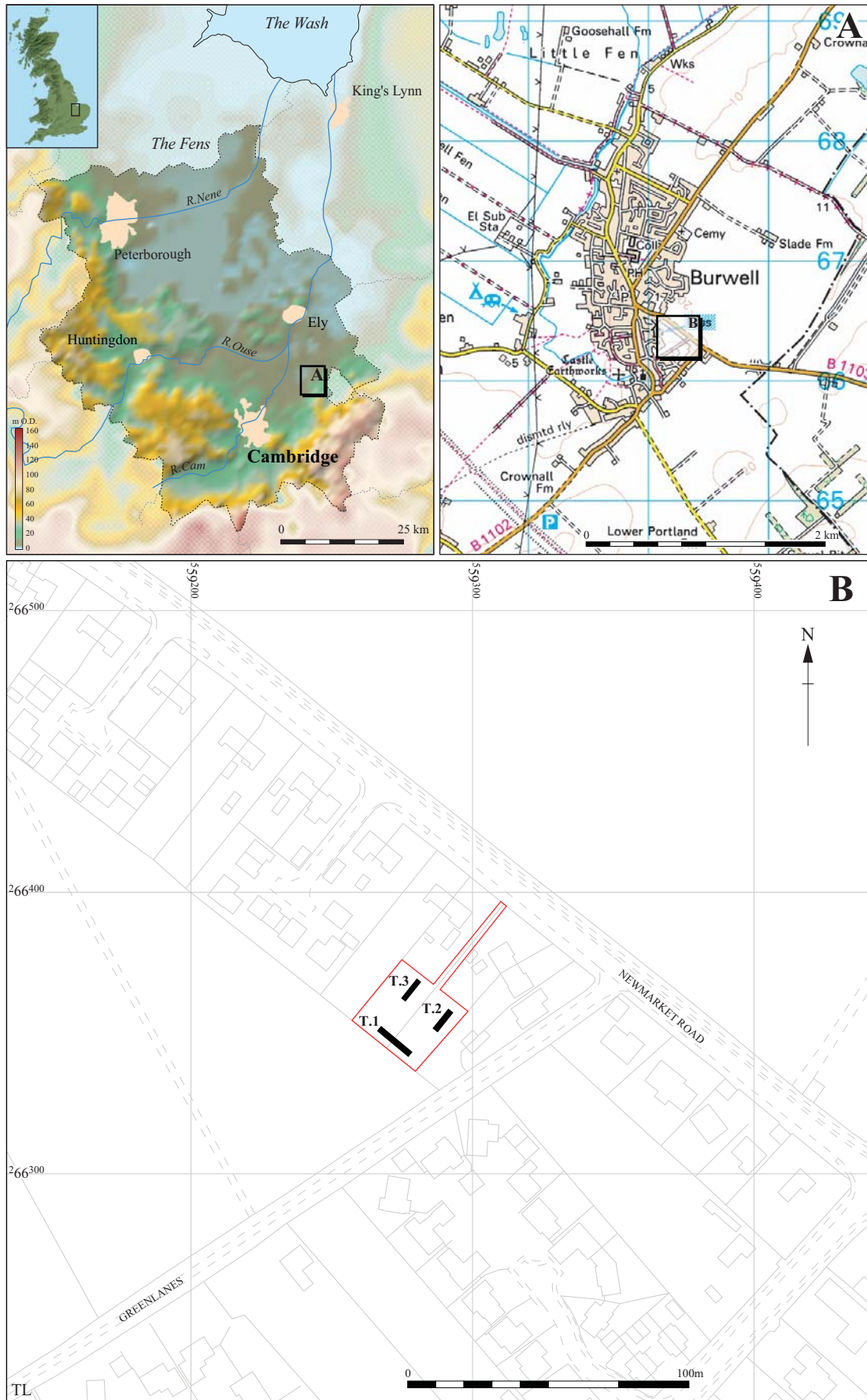
Context Number	Trench	Type	Function
001	1,2,3	Topsoil	Layer
002	1,2,3	Subsoil	Layer
003	1,2,3	Natural Chalk	Geological Deposit
004	2	Fill of Posthole	Disuse
<b>005</b>	2	Cut of Posthole	Structural
006	2	Fill of Posthole	Disuse
<b>007</b>	2	Cut of Posthole	Structural

---

## Drawing Conventions

### Plans

Limit of Excavation	—————
Deposit - Conjectured	-----
Natural Features	—————
Sondages/Machine Strip	- - - - -
Intrusion/Truncation	- · - · - ·
Illustrated Section	<u>          S.14          </u>
Archaeological Deposit	
Excavated Slot	
Modern Deposit	
Cut Number	<b>118</b>



© Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Cambridgeshire County Council 100023205 2008

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

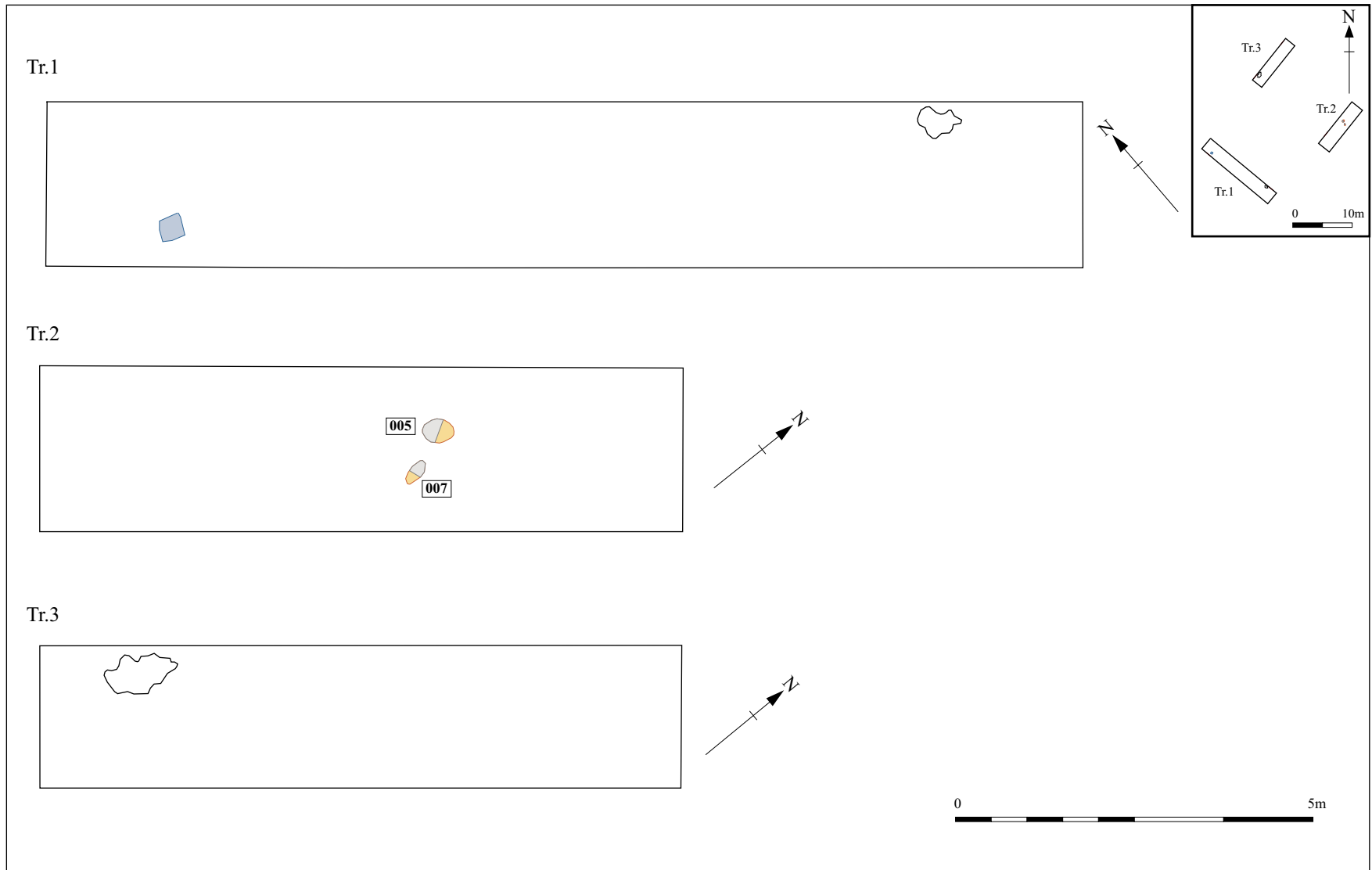
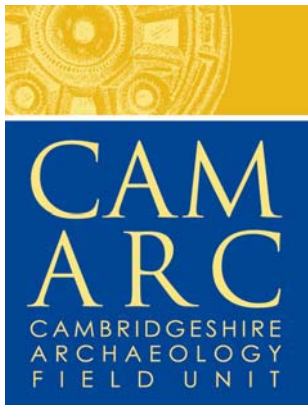


Figure 2: Trench Plans



CAM ARC,  
Cambridgeshire County Council,  
15 Trafalgar Way,  
Bar Hill,  
Cambridgeshire,  
CB3 8SQ

General Enquiries: 01954-204191  
Fax: 01954-273376

<http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/archaeology>