



CAM ARC Report Number 1025

Roman Occupation at Hampden House, 21 Temple Close, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire

Archaeological Evaluation

Chris Thatcher

May 2008

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Chris Thatcher BA

With contributions by Alasdair Brooks BA, MA, Dphil, Chris Faine MA, MSc, BBAO

Site Code: HUN HAH 08
CHER Event Number: ECB 2927
Date of works: 6th May 2008 – 9th May 2008
Grid Ref: TL 2435 7173

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PROJECT DETAILS				
Project name	Roman Occupation at Hampden House, 21 Temple Close, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire			
Short description	CAM ARC were commissioned to mechanically excavate two trenches in the development area. A total of 3 trenches were machined in order avoid standing walls on site. The evaluation revealed surviving archaeological deposits throughout the development area. Evidence for activity from the Roman to the Post-Medieval period was recorded, much of it in the form of boundary or possibly drainage features. Towards the east of the site the depth of overburden sealing these deposits was approximately 0.40m, whilst to the west of the development area this rose to up to 0.80m. A concentration of Roman finds was recorded towards the east of the site. These included a possible beamslot and associated posthole, Roman pottery and a segment of rotary quern stone, located immediately adjacent to a ditch that was thought to represent the northern boundary of a settlement. Further to the west, in Trench 1, a gully found to contain Saxon pottery was recorded. These features lay at between 9.68mOD and 9.12mOD. The nature of the finds from this site suggest that it may have been the location of possible Roman industrial activity; given the close proximity of the river and nature of the finds, it is suggested that milling activity may have been taking place on site, or in the immediate vicinity.			
Project dates	Start	06-05-08	End	09-05-08
Previous work	HUN HAH 08 DBA		Future work	Yes
Associated project reference codes	HUN HAH 08 ECB 2927			
Type of project	Evaluation			
Site status	None			
Current land use	Residential			
Planned development	Residential			
Monument types / period	Ditches, pits, postholes			
Significant finds: Artefact type / period	<u>Rotary</u> Quern Stone, Pottery, Nails, Animal bone			
PROJECT LOCATION				
County	Cambridgeshire	Parish	Huntingdon	
HER for region	Cambridgeshire			
Site address (including postcode)	21 Temple Close, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, PE29 3QX			
Study area (sq.m or ha)	0.1ha			
National grid reference	TL 2435 7173			
Height OD	Min OD	9.12mOD	Max OD	9.68mOD
PROJECT ORIGINATORS				
Organisation	CAM ARC			
Project brief originator	CAPCA			
Project design originator	Richard Mortimer			
Director/supervisor	Chris Thatcher			
Project manager	Richard Mortimer			
Sponsor or funding body	Campbell Buchanan			
ARCHIVES				
	Location and accession number		Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone, database, context sheets etc)	
Physical			Bone, Ceramic, worked stone, Fe objects.	
Paper			Primary written and drawn records	
Digital			Site reports, Survey data, Digital photographs	
BIBLIOGRAPHY				
Full title	Roman Occupation at Hampden House, 21 Temple Close, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire			
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Summary

An archaeological evaluation was conducted by CAM ARC between 6th May and 9th May 2008 at Hampden House, 21 Temple Close, Huntingdon (TL 2435 7173) prior to redevelopment of the land for residential properties. The work was commissioned by Campbell Buchanan.

CAM ARC were commissioned to mechanically excavate two trenches in the development area. In the event it was necessary to make some alterations to the original trenching strategy due to the presence of hardstanding and site accommodation in the north-eastern part of the development area and a standing wall on site, which precluded the excavation of a continuous trench across the eastern boundary. A total of 3 trenches were therefore machined in order to fulfil the requirements of the brief.

The evaluation revealed surviving archaeological deposits throughout the development area. Evidence for activity from the Roman to the Post-Medieval period was recorded, much of it in the form of boundary or possibly drainage features. Towards the east of the site the depth of overburden sealing these deposits was approximately 0.40m, whilst to the west of the development area this rose to up to 0.80m.

A concentration of Roman finds was recorded towards the east of the site. These included a possible beamslot and associated posthole, Roman pottery and a segment of rotary quern stone, located immediately adjacent to a ditch that was thought to represent the northern boundary of a settlement. Further to the west, in Trench 1, a gully found to contain Saxon pottery was recorded. These features lay at between 9.68mOD and 9.12mOD.

The nature of the finds from this site suggest that it may have been the location of possible Roman industrial activity; given the close proximity of the river and nature of the finds, it is suggested that milling activity may have been taking place on site, or in the immediate vicinity.

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1 Introduction

This archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a Brief issued by Andy Thomas of the Cambridgeshire Archaeology, Planning and Countryside Advice team (CAPCA; Planning Application 0704198FUL), 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 at a height of approximately 10m OD. The underlying geology of the development area comprises of Pleistocene First and Second Terrace Gravels of the River Great Ouse. The gravels overlie Upper Jurassic Oxford Clays, which are the underlying solid geology across a wide area in this region (British Geological Survey 1975).

3 Archaeological and Historical Background

The content of this section is drawn from the Desk Based Assessment produced for the site prior to the evaluation (Punchard, 2008).

3.1 Prehistoric

The subject site is situated within the Ouse Valley, which is rich in prehistoric remains. During the Late Neolithic and Bronze Age, major ritual complexes sprang up and evolved along the course of the Ouse and, although much of the material culture does not survive, these monuments are highly visible from the air as cropmarks. These ceremonial complexes cover extensive territories and are distributed evenly across the landscape (Malim 2000).

Within the Huntingdon area, an Iron Age presence has been identified. At Godmanchester a series of Early Iron Age farmsteads or hamlets have been located at intervals along the gravel terrace (Green 1977). One such farmstead has been sample excavated just east of the town (Wait 1992) whilst other evidence of Iron Age activity is known beneath

modern Godmanchester in the form of roundhouses and ditched enclosures encountered below Roman occupation (Green *op. cit.*).

Within Huntingdon itself, a number of prehistoric artefacts are reported in the CHER. These are largely of Neolithic and Bronze Age date. The presence of such artefacts is unsurprising given the preference of early prehistoric populations for low-lying gravels and the major Late Neolithic ceremonial complex at Rectory Farm Godmanchester, which lies about 1km to the southeast of the development area. This site consisted of a huge rectilinear 'horned' ditch enclosure approximately 6.3ha in area, with an internal bank and 24 posts arranged regularly along the perimeter of the enclosure. Radiocarbon dates from the site suggest a Late Neolithic date of between 5050 \pm 80BP and \pm 4850 80BP (McAvoy, in Dawson 2000). Excavations by the AFU south of the enclosure indicate that the activities associated with the monument were widespread (Hinman & Kenney 1998).

Excavations at the former Model Laundry, Ouse walk revealed some pre-historic activity in the form of residual flint and pottery. 25 lithics were identified representing most stages in the reduction process and included five cores in addition to blades and small chips, indicative of on site knapping (Clarke 2005, 35). Alongside this a small group of Iron Age pottery (5th –3rd Century BC) was recovered.

More Iron Age finds have been discovered within Huntingdon at Watersmeet, including Scored Ware pottery dating from the Middle to Late Iron Age (Cooper and Sperry, 2000). Bronze age pottery and a Neolithic ditch were recorded during evaluation and excavation in 2004 and 2005 on the Walden Road/Walden house sites (Clarke 2004 and Rachel Clarke pers. comm.).

3.2 Roman

Roman Huntingdon is often seen as a suburb of Godmanchester, and/or ribbon development northwards along Ermine Street. Evidence for Roman activity has come mostly from chance finds and also from unpublished excavations. They consist of a villa site overlooking Alconbury Brook, and two investigations within the town that revealed metalled Roman road surfaces, one of these was probably a spur road off the Ermine Street that led to the villa mentioned above, and a large roman ditch at the former model laundry site. Chance finds have indicated that roadside burial was taking place during this period alongside Ermine Street. Since this is a common Roman practice, further examples may come to light during future archaeological work in the roadside zone. In 1999 and 2003, evaluations and an excavation at Watersmeet, bordering the Castle, Mill Common and Alconbury Brook, revealed a Roman presence, including a Late Roman cemetery. Excavations at Pathfinder house in 2006 (CHER MCB17284), revealed Roman pits and Ditches of 2nd-4th century date. Further to this, excavations at the former Model Laundry, Ouse Walk (CHER MCB

17084) revealed a substantial Roman ditch that was either part of a significant boundary (Fig. 5), or may have been part of a water-management system (Clarke 2005). Roman pottery from the site indicated a broad span of occupation from the 2nd – 4th century AD, with the majority of the assemblage representing domestic use. This indicates that there was probably domestic Roman activity nearby however any evidence of settlement has yet to be found.

Several authors have made attempts to locate the line of Ermine Street between Godmanchester and the northern edge of Huntingdon. Ermine Street lies several hundred metres to the south of the subject site. The Roman period CHER entries imply that the area to the north, south and west experienced a range of activities, whilst the presence of an excavated villa site to the south-west of the site, on the high riverbank, implies that further, related, remains may be present in the zone between there and the line of Ermine Street. It is possible similar riverside occupation existed during the Roman period along the northern bank of the Great Ouse, and the development site would lie within this zone. The Roman tile mentioned in CHER entry 02733 may provide evidence of this type of occupation.

3.3 Anglo-Saxon

Although the location of the documented Danish and Late Saxon burhs at Huntingdon (the latter being a re-build or extension of the former) is not known, recent work has attempted to re-assess the evidence. New research indicates that the Late Saxon settlement is located in the southern part of the area later enclosed by the medieval town ditch to the north-east and the bar dyke to the south-west (Spoerry 2000). There is, however, much dispute as to the location of the late 9th to early 10th century Danish burh.

The more probable model proposes that the early-defended area consisted of a D-shaped enclosure around the river crossing carrying Ermine Street across the River Ouse. This interpretation suggests that the later castle may reflect the approximate location of the Danish burh with, on topographic grounds, the western burh defences perhaps coinciding with the western part of the Watersmeet site.

The process of Late Saxon urban development eventually resulted in the very substantial town documented by Domesday Book, which also refers to the twenty properties cleared to make way for the castle (Spoerry 2000). Both documentary and archaeological data suggest that the main area of immediately pre-Conquest settlement extended from the later High Street to the east, as far as bar dyke at the end of Mill Common to the west.

The adjacent site at the former model laundry (CHER MCB 17084) revealed little in the way of early Saxon occupation, just a few sherds of pottery, however it did reveal a significant amount of late Saxon

activity (Fig. 5). A series of ditches or channels were identified across the site. The channels appeared to have been partially deliberately in-filled and partly filled through natural processes i.e. flooding and silting. When a channel was in-filled a new channel was cut in a progressively northerly direction. The main channels ran roughly northwest to southeast for at least 40m from the western edge of the site and a probable terminal or entrance was seen at the western edge of the site in trench 9. The eastern trench, trench 2, revealed no continuation of the channels suggesting they may be located further to the southeast beneath the gardens of the adjacent house (Fig. 5).

The channels possibly represent a significant boundary between habitable land on the higher ground to the south and more marginal floodplain to the north. The deliberate infilling and movement northwards of the channels could be to increase the area of dry land in this marginal location, as pressure on the land increased, perhaps due to population growth in the Danish settlement to the south and west (Clarke 2005) (Fig. 5).

In light of the recent excavation (Clarke 2005), if the ditches and channels are interpreted as a boundary then the development site may lie just inside the Saxon settlement. Late Saxon occupation has been found on Orchard Lane (Oakey 1997) and Hartford Road (Connor 1996), which itself is probably earlier in date. As highlighted above, a large amount of Saxon activity was uncovered at the model laundry site.

3.4 Norman & Medieval

The major element in the post-Conquest medieval townscape is the castle, built in 1068 and at least partially destroyed in 1174. The imposition of the castle onto the pre-existing Saxon town necessitated the movement of the river crossing, resulting in the construction of a wooden bridge, and made it necessary to lay out a new High Street and, probably, market place. Both Ladds and Dickinson thought that the original castle curtilage was much larger than that surviving by the post-medieval period, and proposed that the area immediately west of the motte was in fact a second bailey (Ladds Archive; Dickinson 1972). The distinct rise from west to east under the houses on the street of Castle Hill, along with the substantial earthworks present on the Watersmeet site offer strong support for this model. The fact that the earthworks are not shown on the 1886 OS map (or the 1901 revision) but appear by 1926 may mean that this area was substantially remodelled in the early 20th century, perhaps when the house called Watersmeet was built. If this land were not part of the castle then it may still have experienced a range of other activities in the medieval period and could have been occupied by buildings, particularly following the castle's demise as a defensive structure.

The stone-built bridge carrying Ermine Street over the River Ouse was constructed in AD 1332. It is believed that the present bridge, with six arches, replaced an earlier timber bridge (Page *et al*, 1932). The surviving structure is considered to be one of the finest of its kind in England and was constructed simultaneously at both ends by two different authorities, without much regard to direction, resulting in the notable bend in the bridge visible to this day. Records describe a chapel on the east side that has not survived, unlike the chapel at St Ives.

The post-conquest period was, in general, a period of population growth and increased prosperity over much of England. Huntingdon was a very successful town during this time. It gained prosperity by being the Shire town and by providing a bridged crossing on Ermine Street, which still formed the basis of the route later to become the Great North Road and A1. In addition Huntingdon collected tolls for all those going to St Ives fair, one of the largest gatherings in the country. By the early 14th century Huntingdon had sixteen churches, two priories, a friary and three hospitals; all the hallmarks of a thriving centre. The castle was partially demolished in the late 12th century and, except for the gaol, ceased to be used. It is not certain whether Huntingdon's lower political profile after this time had any economic effect on the town itself. One might expect this to be the case, although the continued growth of the town's key institutions may suggest otherwise.

The 14th century was the period during which fortunes changed for Huntingdon, an extreme example of a trend seen all over the country. Huntingdon had always gained much of its prosperity from its position as a meeting point for goods passing up the Ouse from the Fenland and the Wash and goods travelling along Ermine Street. During the late 13th and 14th centuries there are many references to disputes between the borough and landowners restricting river flow and riverine access further downstream. In addition, the construction of a bridge downstream at St Ives and the demise of St Ives' fair all weakened the local economy. These unfortunate circumstances were compounded by countrywide overpopulation and several years of failed harvests, followed by several waves of plague. It seems that there was a particularly severe visitation of the Black Death to Huntingdon itself, and the shortage of people and parlous state of local finances is regularly attested in documents in the 14th and 15th centuries. Six of the churches are not mentioned in documents after the mid-14th century and by the 16th century only four were still functioning: St Mary's, All Saints, St Benedict's and St John's. Archaeological investigations within the town suggest that occupation inside the town ditch may have been rather piecemeal after the 13th century.

Huntingdon had a small Jewry in the 12th and 13th centuries and the name Temple Close may refer to the original location of a Jewish religious foundation, rather than to any Templar activity in the area, for

which there is no evidence. Although Temple Close or Lane has been used as a street name since at least 1572, it appears that name migrated over the centuries. It once applied to what is now St Clement's Passage, and is currently in use to the southwest of that lane, close to the development area.

There was a significant amount of domestic medieval activity on the former model laundry site (Clarke 2005). A number of layers, pits and ditches were investigated, with an apparent concentration of features in the south west corner of the site, close to Ouse Walk. A flood deposit was recorded which sealed the late Saxon channels, and in turn was cut by the medieval features. Artefacts from the site give a date from c1150 – 1400. One large pit may have been used for tanning and two cattle horn cores were recovered from its backfill, the process of horn working was often undertaken nearby to tanning. The ditches may have been dug to serve a similar purpose as the Saxon ditches, for drainage away into the river to the East, and possible to also demarcate boundaries or properties (Clarke 2005).

Medieval pottery was found at the same location as the Roman tile mentioned above (CHER 02733a), and this may indicate nearby occupation utilising the area for rubbish dumping. A moated site lay to the east, close to the riverbank (CHER 01055), but was filled in during the construction of the ring road. This may have been the source of the medieval pottery found less than 100m to the west.

3.5 Post-Medieval

Huntingdon suffered during the 15th-century War of the Roses and in the Civil War of the 17th century, when the castle defences were remodelled. Throughout this period documents still speak of 'the poor decayed town'. It was only with the rise of the coaching trade in the 18th century that the town found another role and prosperity returned.

It is at this point in the evolution of the town that the earliest surviving maps depict. Although a map does not accompany the 1572 survey, it is possible for entries to be transcribed onto Jeffries' 1768 map of Huntingdon, or the 1752 plan of the Hospital Lands. These and John Speed's map of 1610, all show the development area as a blank. Such maps would not have recorded temporary structures or quarrying for instance, and cannot therefore be taken as an indicator that the area was completely unused at this time.

The 1826 map of the Earl of Sandwich's estates indicate trackways crossing this area, leading to the river, but no buildings (HRO no ref.). Again, this is not an absolute indicator of a lack of activity.

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 at least 5% (c.40m) of the total area of the site be subject to trial trenching. This equated to the excavation of two trenches: Trench 1, 8.00m in length and aligned northeast to southwest, at the western frontage of the site and Trench 2 towards the eastern boundary on two alignments – 8.00m west to east and 24.00m southwest to northeast.

Machine excavation was carried out under constant archaeological supervision with a wheeled JCB-type excavator using a toothless ditching bucket.

At the event it was necessary to make some alterations to the original trenching strategy. It was not possible to excavate the full length of Trench 2 due to the presence of hardstanding and site accommodation in the northeastern part of the development area. Furthermore Trench 2 had to be split because of the presence of a standing wall on site, which precluded the excavation of a continuous trench across the eastern boundary. Trench 2 was therefore machined on its original line to a length of 11m. A third trench, Trench 3, was then excavated on the other side of the wall, in the southern part of the site, to a length of 10.50m.

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.

Four environmental samples were taken from features in Trenches 2 and 3.

Site conditions throughout the course of the evaluation were favourable with bright and dry weather and generally dry ground conditions. Ground water was recorded in several of the features in Trench 3 and this precluded the full excavation of some of the sections.

5 Results

5.1 Depth of Deposits

The development area lay on a slope, which dropped away towards the River Ouse. Current ground level was recorded at between 10.56mOD at the west of the development area, and 9.69mOD at the eastern limit of the site. Dark black brown topsoil composed of friable silty sand; with occasional flint and gravel inclusions sealed the whole site in a layer recorded as between 0.40m and 0.15m thick.

This overlay subsoil that was recorded as up to 0.80m deep towards the west of the site and was composed of a dark grey brown sandy silt with occasional flint and gravel inclusions.

The archaeological features recorded during the evaluation were cut into natural geological deposits comprised of mid orange yellow sands and gravel. Table 1 provides the depths of deposits down to the top of this layer. The natural was recorded at between 9.68mOD and 9.12mOD.

Trench	Context No.	Topsoil	Context No.	Subsoil	Total depth to features
1	1000	0.15m	1019	0.80m	0.95m
2	2000	0.40m	N/A	N/A	0.40m
3	3001	0.41m	N/A	N/A	0.41m

Table 1: Depth of topsoil and subsoil across the site

5.2 Trench 1

Trench 1 was 8.0m long and aligned northeast to southwest parallel to the western boundary of the site. A number of archaeological features were recorded throughout the trench (Fig.2).

5.2.1 Post-Medieval Ditch

A substantial ditch (**1010**) was recorded in the centre of the ditch on a northwest to southeast alignment. This feature was 1.75m in width 0.75m deep. The primary fill of the feature (1009), a mid orange brown, sandy gravel, was in all likelihood derived from natural silting and weathering during the life of the ditch. Its secondary fill (1008) also probably represented the gradual silting of the feature over an extended period of time. A number of finds, including pottery, CBM and a fragment of clay pipe stem dated the feature to the Post-Medieval period.

5.2.2 Saxon gully

Immediately to the northeast of this feature a shallow gully (**1012**) was excavated that was tentatively dated to the Saxon period from the

single sherd of pottery recovered from its fill (1011). This feature was aligned northwest to southeast on a course that would have converged with that of **1010** just beyond the eastern limit of the trench. **1012** was 0.74m in width and 0.20m deep. The fill comprised a soft mid orange brown sandy silt, markedly different from the other fills recorded within the trench (Fig. 2).

5.2.3 Pits and postholes

Five postholes (**1005**, **1007**, **1014**, **1016** & **1018**) and the corner of a large pit (**1003**) were also recorded in the trench.

Three of the postholes (**1014**, **1016** & **1018**) lay to the north of ditch **1010** arranged in a line that ran parallel to it. No finds were recovered from these features, which were uniformly 0.30m in width by up to 0.15m deep, and so their provenance remains uncertain.

The remaining postholes lay to the south of **1010** and these too were aligned roughly parallel with the ditch. They were of comparable proportions to those described above and again, no finds were recovered from them.

In the southwest corner of the trench a large pit (**1003**) was excavated that extended beyond its limit (Fig. 2). This feature had a flat base and was 0.60m deep. Two fills (1001 & 1002) were recorded in the feature. The primary fill was a dark orange brown deposit composed largely of gravel, and was attributed to natural weathering, this was found to contain two sherds of Roman pottery. The upper fill of the pit comprised homogeneous grey, brown, sandy silt with some charcoal flecking apparent and a single sherd of medieval sandy ware dated to AD1200-1400 (Brooks, App. 2).

5.3 Trench 2

Trench 2 was 11.20m long and aligned northeast to southwest parallel to the eastern boundary of the site, within the footprint of the proposed new build. A number of archaeological features were recorded throughout the trench (Fig. 3).

5.3.1 Post-Medieval Ditch

A continuation of the boundary ditch excavated in Trench 1 (**1010**) was recorded in the southernmost part of Trench 2. The full extent of this feature was not uncovered within the limits of the trench but it was apparent, from the section excavated into it that the cut (**2018**) and fills (2016 & 2017) of this feature were very similar to those recorded further to the west.

5.3.2 Boundary Ditch

A particularly large boundary ditch (**2002**) was recorded extending 4m into the northern part of the trench (Fig. 3). The base of the feature lay below the level of the ground water but was recorded at approximately 1.50m below ground level. Its northern edge extended beyond the limit of Trench 2 but the southern edge was excavated by hand and revealed a fairly steep sided profile. A single fill (2001) was recorded for this part of the feature, from which a large fragment of quern stone and a single sherd of Roman sandy grey ware, dated to the Later Roman period, were recovered (Brooks, App. 2).

5.3.3 Possible Structural Remains

Less than a metre to the south of **2002** lay a possible beamslot, aligned parallel with the boundary ditch. In profile, the cut (**2005**) was flat based with almost vertical sides up to 0.50m in width by 0.32m deep (Fig. 3). Two deposits were recorded filling this feature (2003 & 2004), both of which contained Late Roman pottery (Brooks, App. 2). Charcoal flecking was observed in both fills, although this was more prevalent in 2003 and a 20L sample was subsequently taken from this deposit in order to check for the presence of charred plant remains.

Approximately 0.50m to the south of **2005**, a large posthole was recorded (**2009**). This feature was 100% excavated and although no finds were recovered from it, it was tentatively dated to the Roman period as a result of its proximity to the beamslot and the nature of its fill (2008), which was composed of much the same material as the beam slot fills (Fig. 3).

5.3.4 Pits

Two further archaeological features were recorded within Trench 2. The first of these was a fairly shallow pit (**2015**), 0.80m in width by 0.18m deep, that was truncated by boundary ditch **2018**. A single fill (2016) was recorded, from which a sherd of 13-14th century pottery was recovered (Brooks, App. 2).

Immediately to the northwest of this pit a second shallow feature (**2013**) was recorded that continued beyond the western limit of the trench. This may have represented a pit or even the terminus of a boundary/enclosure ditch and the finds recovered from its single fill (2012) suggested a Medieval date for its origins.

5.4 Trench 3

Trench 3 was 10.50m long and aligned east to west. The alignment of the trench had to be altered slightly as a result of the dense vegetation in this part of the site that precluded excavation along the original line.

A number of archaeological features were recorded throughout the trench (Fig. 4).

5.4.1 Boundary Ditch

Entering the trench on a roughly east to west alignment was a large ditch (**3011**). The full profile of this feature was not exposed but a section was excavated that revealed it to be at least 0.80m deep with a steep, straight northwest facing side. Approximately 5m from the western boundary of the trench the ditch turned onto a north to south alignment (Fig. 4). Where the ditch turned the base of the opposite, southwest-facing slope of the ditch was observed and it was possible to estimate the width of the **3011** as up to 2.00m. Two sherds of Late Saxon – Early Medieval pottery were recovered from the fill of the ditch (**3010**).

To the east of this ditch there was a significant level of truncation of the natural deposits. At least some of this may be attributable to a further ditch (**3013**) observed in the trench section and partially in the base of the trench (Fig. 4). A single sherd of Late Medieval sandy ware was recovered from **3012**, the fill of this feature. Natural deposits and further possible features were observed in plan along the remainder of the trench, but it proved impossible to further investigate these as a result of ground water seeping into the trench up to a depth of 0.20m above its base, which was recorded at 8.48mOD.

5.4.2 Pitting and gullies

Immediately to the west of **3011** the level of the natural gravels was recorded at 9.13mOD, significantly higher than it was to the east of the trench, and two intercutting pits and a gully were recorded here (Fig. 4). The earliest feature, stratigraphically, was **3007**, a flat based feature approximately 0.54m deep that was filled by a single dark grey brown silty sand deposit (**3006**) that contained Early Medieval pottery (Brooks, App. 2). This in turn was truncated by pit **3005**, which in section appeared to have more irregular edges but was roughly circular in plan. A dark grey brown, silt sand deposit (**3004**) filled the pit.

Truncating the western edge of **3007** was a steep sided gully (**3003**), 0.68m in width by 0.45m deep that appeared to be aligned northeast to southwest (Fig. 4). This too was filled by a single deposit, very similar in composition to **3006**, and differentiated only by a higher frequency of gravel within it make up. This was found to contain medieval or late medieval sandy ware (Brooks, App. 2).

In the far north-western corner of Trench 3 a shallow pit (**3009**) was recorded. Its form and function were impossible to ascertain due to only a small portion of it being visible within the confines of the trench.

6 Discussion

The evaluation revealed surviving archaeological deposits throughout the development area. Evidence for activity from the Roman to the Post-Medieval period was recorded, much of it in the form of boundary or possibly drainage features. Towards the east of the site the depth of overburden sealing these deposits was approximately 0.40m, whilst to the west of the development area this rose to up to 0.80m.

The concentration of Roman finds towards the east of the site is of particular significance for a number of reasons. Boundary ditch **2002** was observed during excavations to the west in 2005, however on that site the edges, and particularly the southern edge, of the feature were not located (Fig. 5). It became apparent during the previous excavation that the feature had its origins in the Roman period but was subsequently recut, and in-filled throughout the Saxon and into the Medieval period, possibly to facilitate alternating phases of land reclamation towards the north and drainage/water management.

The fill recorded for **2002** within the development area was more similar to those recorded to the west as evidence for Saxon and Medieval activity rather than those known of Roman origins (Fig. 5). However, the development area lay down slope and closer to the river, into which it is possible that these features drained, and it must therefore be borne in mind that the nature of deposition at this point (within **2002**) may have been quite different, resulting in an entirely different sequence of fills.

The Roman ditch was thought to represent the boundary of a settlement to the south but this was not located on the other site, however within the development area for this site the edge of the ditch was recorded along with archaeological remains associated with occupation at between 9.68mOD and 9.12mOD. Furthermore, these finds, which included a Saxon gully in Trench 1 and a possible beamslot and associated posthole, Roman pottery and a segment of rotary quern stone from Trench 2, suggest that the site may have been the location of possible industrial activity; given the close proximity of the river and extensive putative drainage system it might even be that milling activity was taking place on site or in the immediate vicinity.

7 Conclusions

The archaeological evidence recorded within the development area indicated the presence of the northern part of a settlement dating to the Roman period with evidence for continuing occupation into the Saxon and Medieval period.

The site has good potential for finding evidence for Roman settlement and industrial activity and may be of considerable importance to our

understanding of the development of the area bordering the river Great Ouse.

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 Andy Thomas, and the evaluation was monitored by Eliza Gore.

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Appendix 1: Context Summary

Context	Trench	Type	Function
1000	1	Topsoil	Natural deposit
1001	1	Fill	Tertiary Ditch fill
1002	1	Fill	Primary Ditch fill
1003	1	Cut	Cut of Ditch terminal
1004	1	Fill	Single fill of posthole
1005	1	Cut	Posthole cut
1006	1	Fill	Single fill of posthole
1007	1	Cut	Posthole cut
1008	1	Fill	Tertiary Ditch fill
1009	1	Fill	Primary Ditch fill
1010	1	Cut	Cut of Ditch
1011	1	Fill	Primary Ditch fill
1012	1	Cut	Cut of Ditch
1013	1	Fill	Single fill of posthole
1014	1	Cut	Posthole cut
1015	1	Fill	Single fill of posthole
1016	1	Cut	Posthole cut
1017	1	Fill	Single fill of posthole
1018	1	Cut	Posthole cut
1019	1	Subsoil	Natural Deposit
1020	1	Modern deposit	Modern disturbance
2000	2	Topsoil	Natural deposit
2001	2	Fill	Primary Ditch fill
2002	2	Cut	Cut of Ditch
2003	2	Fill	Fill of possible beamslot
2004	2	Fill	Fill of possible beamslot
2005	2	Cut	Cut of possible beamslot
2006	2	Fill	Fill of pit
2007	2	Cut	Cut of pit
2008	2	Fill	Single fill of posthole
2009	2	Cut	Posthole cut
2010	2	Fill	Single fill of posthole
2011	2	Cut	Posthole cut
2012	2	Fill	Ditch fill
2013	2	Cut	Cut of Ditch terminal
2014	2	Fill	Fill of pit
2015	2	Cut	Cut of pit
2016	2	Fill	Fill of pit
2017	2	Fill	Fill of pit
2018	2	Cut	Cut of pit
3001	3	Topsoil	Natural deposit
3002	3	Fill	Fill of gully
3003	3	Cut	Cut of gully
3004	3	Fill	Fill of pit
3005	3	Cut	Cut of pit
3006	3	Fill	Fill of pit
3007	3	Cut	Cut of pit
3008	3	Fill	Fill of pit
3009	3	Cut	Cut of pit
3010	3	Fill	Ditch fill
3011	3	Cut	Cut of Ditch
3012	3	Fill	Ditch fill
3013	3	Cut	Cut of Ditch
3014	3	Natural	Geological deposit

Appendix 2: Pottery Summary

by Alasdair Brooks, BA, MA, DPhil

1 Introduction

The following is a brief summary of the pottery recovered from the HUN HAH 08 evaluation, organised by context, and then in chronological order within each context. Where dates are not supplied, more specific dating proved impossible for a brief summary.

The pottery is almost exclusively Roman and medieval, with two possible late Iron Age sherds in context 2003. Most contexts are reasonably discreet in period, though with the caveat they usually only include a small amount of pottery. The exceptions are context 1008, which features both Roman and medieval pottery, and context 2003, which possibly features a mixture of Iron Age and 2nd-century and later Roman pottery.

2 Spot dates

Context 1001

1 sherd of medieval sandy ware (1200-1400)

Context 1002

1 sherd Roman shell-tempered ware

1 sherd Roman sandy-grey ware (mid 1st – 4th century)

Context 1008

4 sherds Roman shell-tempered ware

1 sherd Roman sandy oxidised ware

1 sherd Roman sandy grey ware (mid 1st – 4th century)

1 sherd unidentified medieval ware

1 medieval shelly ware (1150-1350)

1 sherd Essex micaceous sandy ware (1150-1350)

1 sherd Ely ware jug (1200-1350)

Context 1011

1 sherd of no certain date

Context 2001

1 sherd Roman sandy grey ware with black slip (2nd – 4th century)

Context 2003

2 sherds possible late Iron Age shell-tempered ware

1 sherd large Samian ware vessel (2nd century)

11 sherds miscellaneous Roman wares (2nd-4th century)

Context 2004

1 sherd Roman sandy grey ware dish (2nd-4th century)

Context 2012

2 sherds medieval shelly ware jar bases, possibly St.Neots-type (1000-1150)

1 sherd medieval sandy ware (1150-1350)

Context 2014

1 unidentified 'battered' sherd

1 sherd 'battered' Thetford ware (900-1200)

1 large sherd Lyvedon-Stanion ware (Northants, 1200-1350)

1 sherd glazed Ely ware (1200-1350)

Context 2016

1 sherd Lyvedon-Stanion ware (Northants, 1200-1350)

Context 3002

1 sherd medieval or late medieval sandy ware

Context 3006

1 sherd early medieval-type (1050-1200)

Context 3010

1 sherd St. Neots-type (850-1150)

1 sherd Thetford ware (900-1200)

Context 3012

1 large sherd late medieval sandy ware (1350+)

Appendix 3: Faunal Remains

By Chris Faine MA, MSc, BABAO

1 Summary

Very few identifiable remains were recovered from the Temple Street, Huntingdon excavations, with identifiable material being recovered from 4 contexts. An intact horse humerus was recovered from context **2016**. Metrical analysis suggests an individual around 1.45m (around 13 ½ hands) high at the shoulder. A butchered cattle proximal humerus and axis were recovered from context **3010**. Context **1008** contained butchered portions of sheep/goat radius and humerus, along with a humerus from a large anuran amphibian, most likely a common toad (*Bufo bufo*). Context **1001** contained a butchered pig 1st phalange. Due to the very small size of the assemblage few conclusions can be drawn. The faunal remains most likely represent general settlement debris, with the amphibian remains being the result of accidental deposition.

2 References


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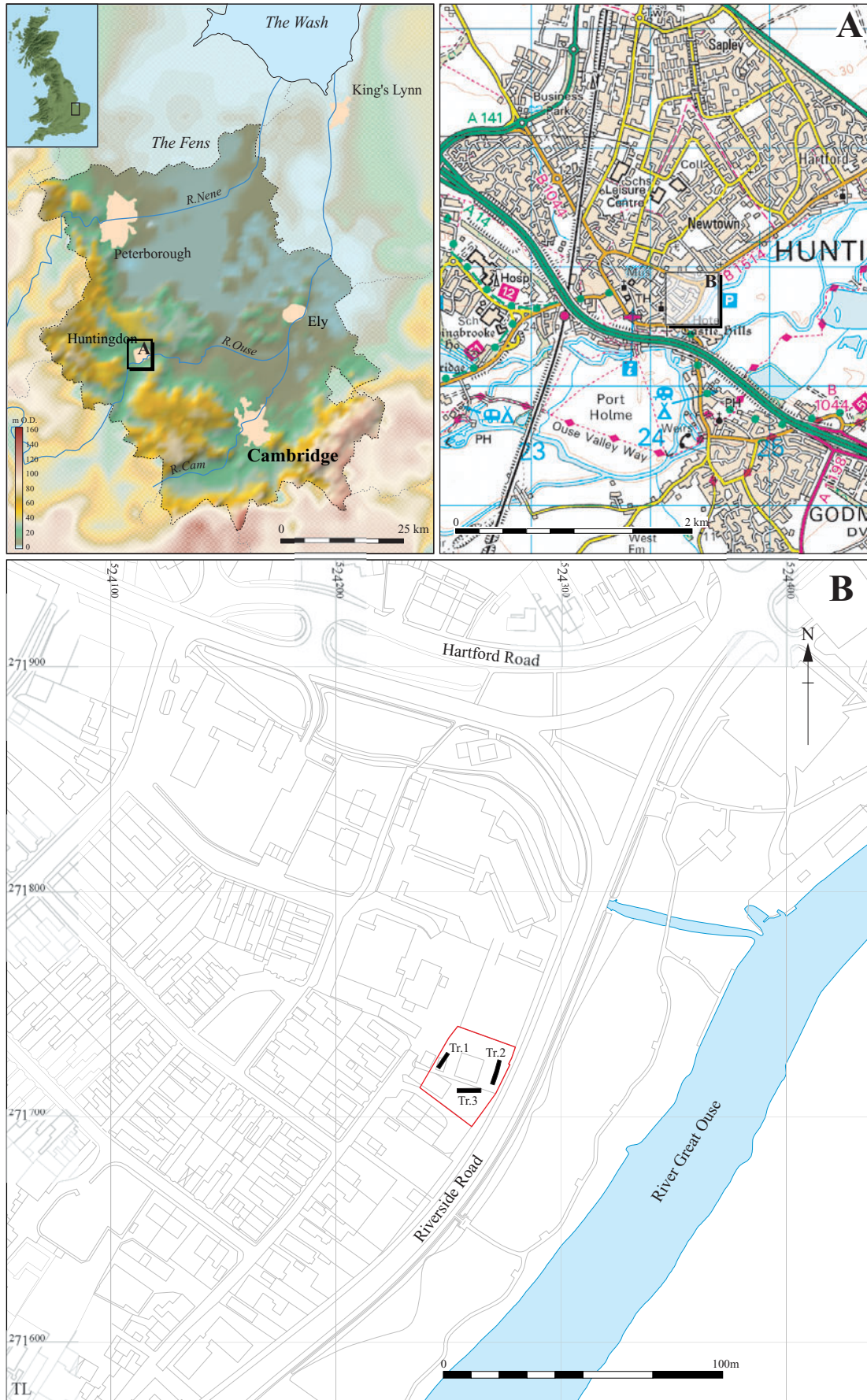
Drawing Conventions

Plans

Limit of Excavation	—————
Deposit - Conjectured	-----
Natural Features	—————
Sondages/Machine Strip	- - - - -
Intrusion/Truncation
Illustrated Section	<u style="color: red;">S.14</u>
Archaeological Deposit	
Excavated Slot	
Modern Deposit	
Cut Number	118

Sections

Limit of Excavation	-----
Cut	—————
Cut-Conjectured	-----
Deposit Horizon	—————
Deposit Horizon - Conjectured	-----
Intrusion/Truncation
Top Surface/Top of Natural	—————
Break in Section/ Limit of Section Drawing	- - - - -
Cut Number	118
Deposit Number	117
Ordnance Datum	$\overline{18.45\text{m OD}}$
Inclusions	



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

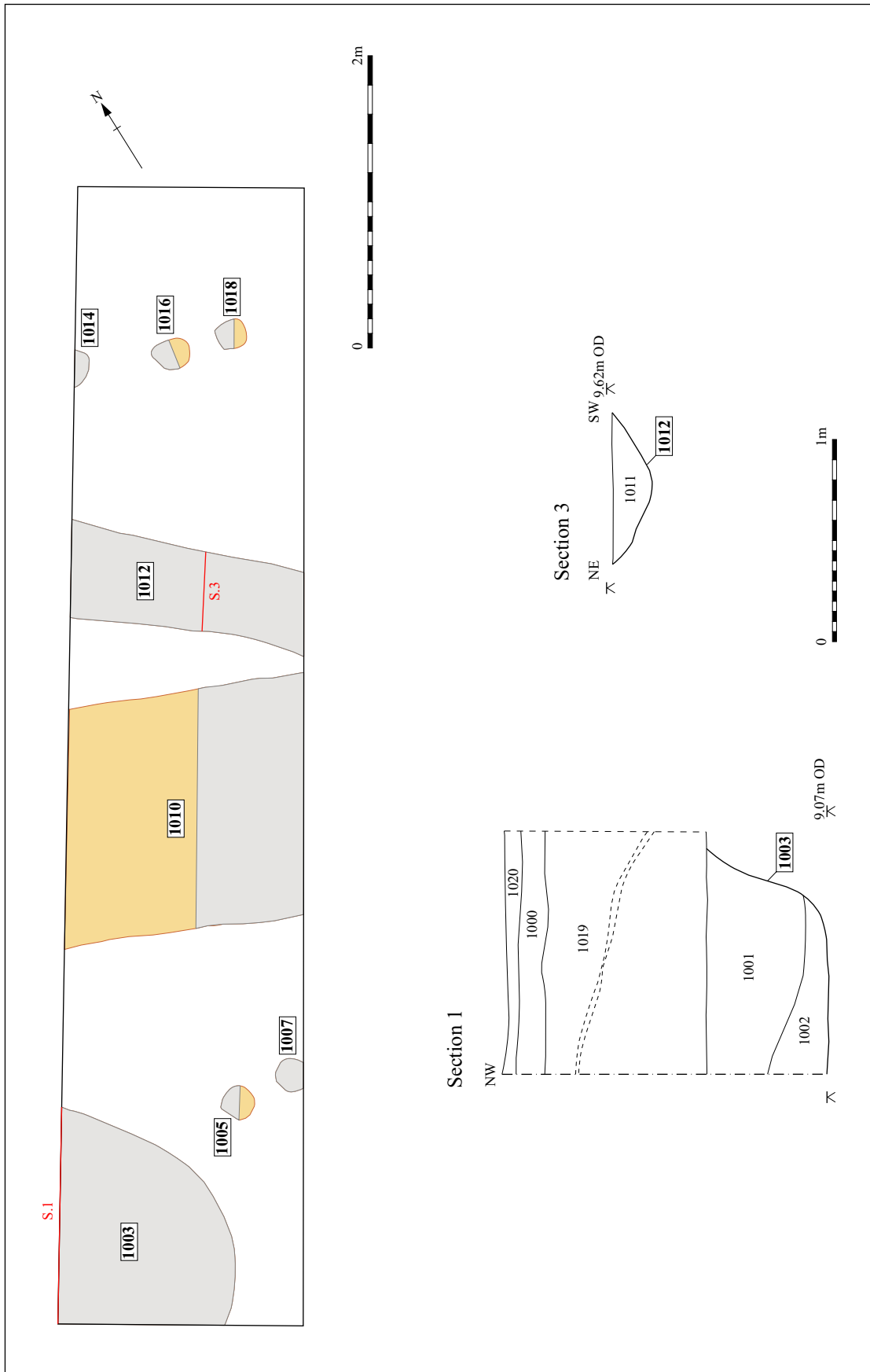


Figure 2: Trench 1 plan and selected sections

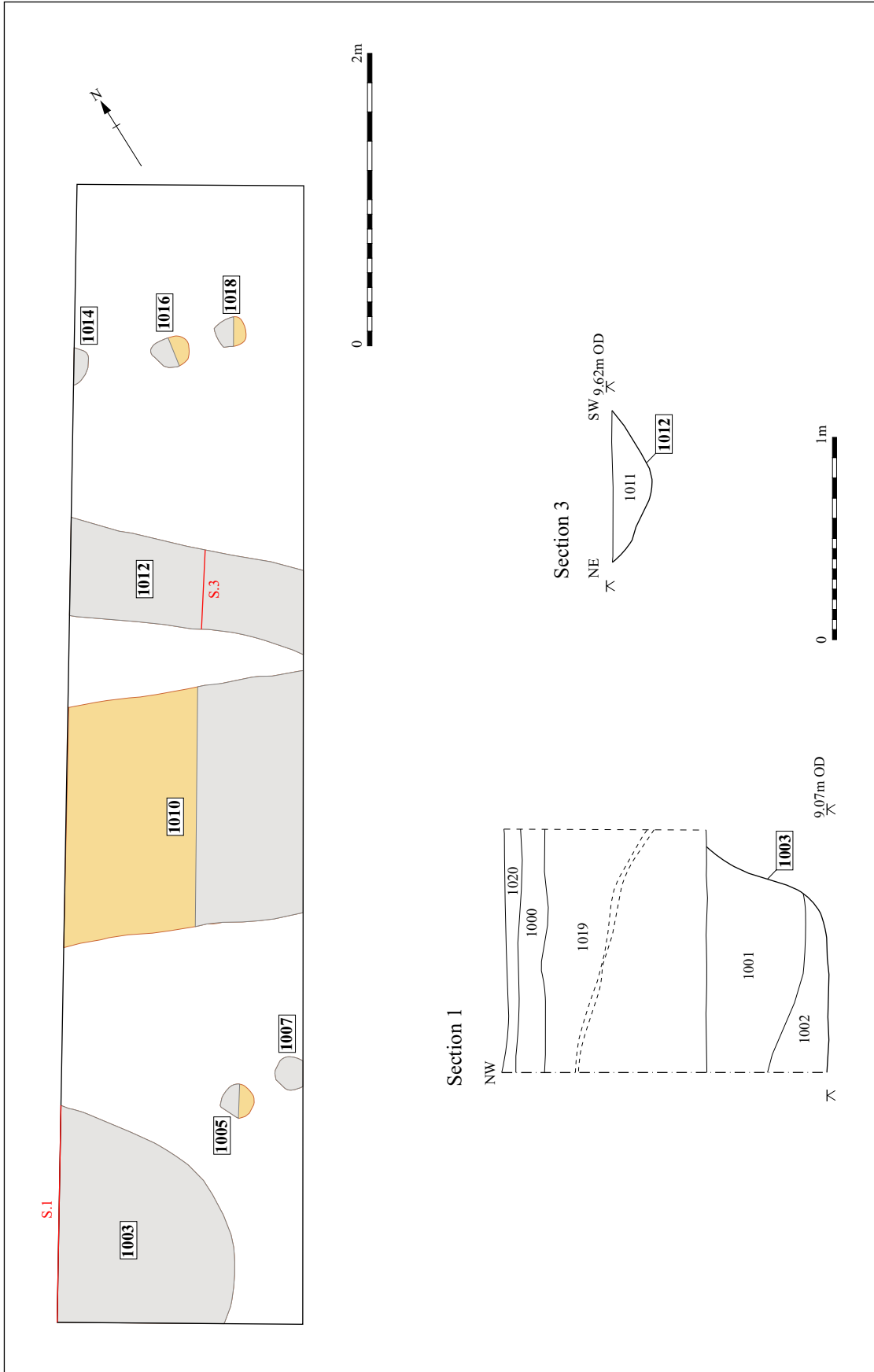


Figure 2: Trench 1 plan and selected sections

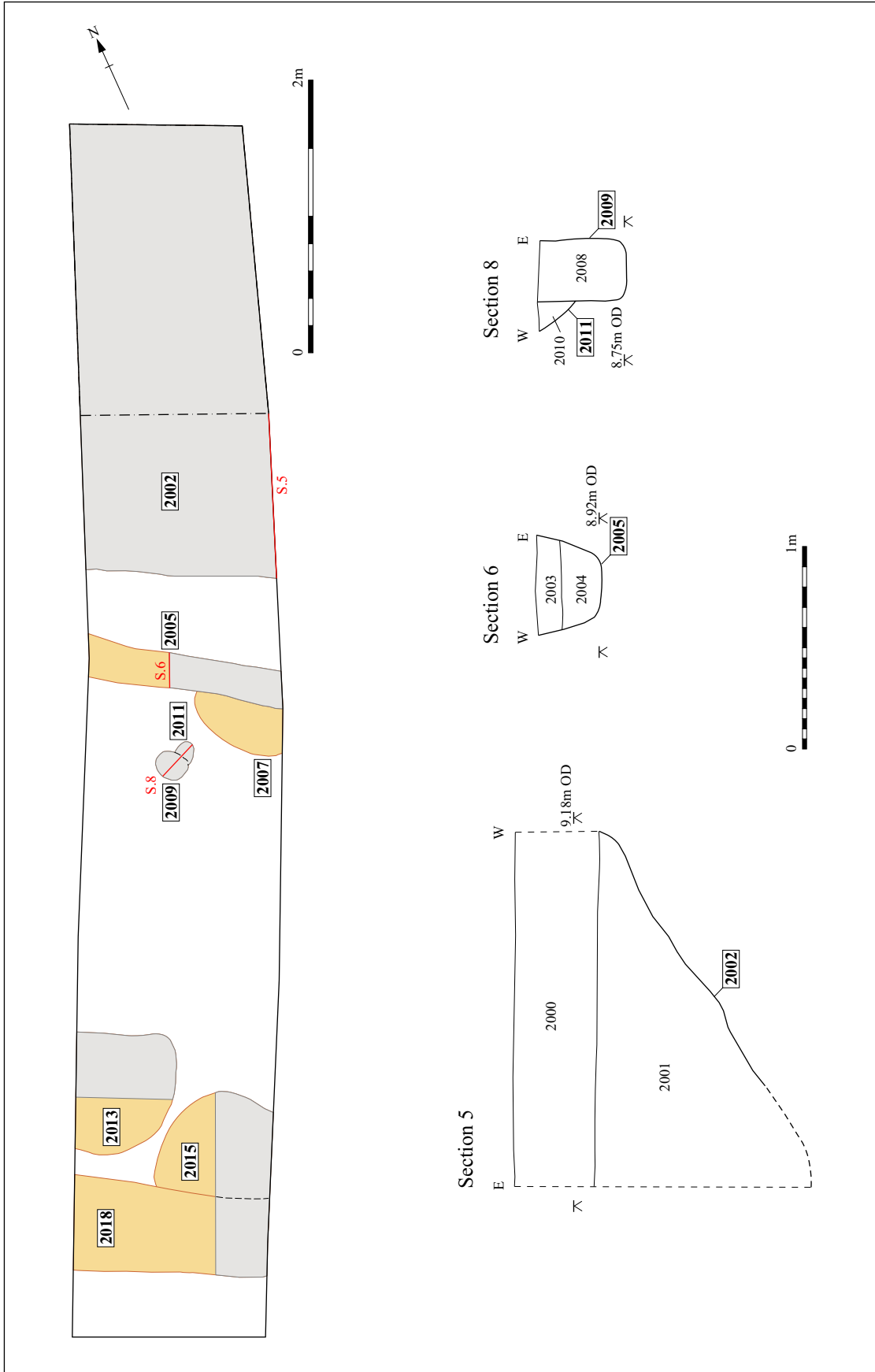
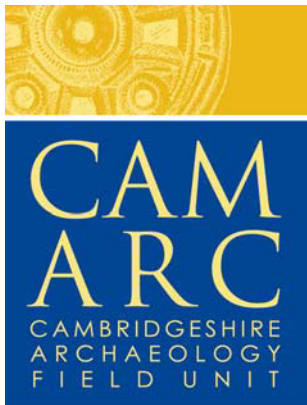


Figure 3: Trench 2 plan and selected sections



Figure 5: Excavation at HUNMOL05, showing line of Roman boundary ditch and Anglo-Saxon channel



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