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CAM ARC Report Number 1033

Post Medieval Remains along Lickings Drove, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire

Archaeological Evaluation

Glenn Bailey

January 2009

Cambridgeshire County Council
Environment & Community Services

Commissioned by Construct Reason

CAM ARC Report Number 1033

Post-medieval remains along Lickings Drove, Wisbech

Archaeological Evaluation

Glenn Bailey

With contributions by Steve Boreham Bsc PhD, Alasdair Brooks BA, MA, DPhil

Site Code: WISCRD07
CHER Event Number: 2796
Date of works: April 2008
Grid Ref: TF 4531 0856

Editor: James Drummond-Murray BA, MIFA
Illustrator: Caoimhín Ó Coileáin

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PROJECT DETAILS				
Project name	Post-medieval remains along Lickings Drove, Wisbech			
Short description	An Archaeological Evaluation was conducted by CAM ARC during April 2008 at the adjacent to Lickings Drove, Wisbech (TF 4531 0856) prior to the development of the site for residential housing with associated services and access. The work was commissioned by Construct Reason Ltd. CAM ARC were commissioned to mechanically excavate 500m of trenching in the development area. The evaluation revealed two phases of land reclamation and evidence for the canalisation of The River Nene. The first was dated via the ceramic evidence to the mid to late 19th Century. Evidence for further reworking of the area during the post war period was also uncovered. This level of modern intrusion and the evidence for the nature of the palaeoenviroments, indicated by the borehole survey, lead to the conclusion that the area was probably unsuitable for occupation prior to the Post Medieval period. The first indication of occupation does not occur until the 18th century suggesting that the natural environment, up to this time, discouragedg occupation.			
Project dates	Start	08-04-08	End	15-04-08
Previous work	DBA Rep. No. 933		Future work	No
Associated project reference codes	WISCRD07 CHER Event Number: 2796			
Type of project	Evaluation			
Site status	None			
Current land use (list all that apply)	Rural,			
Planned development	Residential			
Monument types / period (list all that apply)				
Significant finds: Artefact type / period (list all that apply)	Post Medieval and Modern pottery, clay pipe			
PROJECT LOCATION				
County	Cambriridgeshire	Parish	Wisbech	
HER for region	Cambridgeshire			
Site address (including postcode)	Cromwell Road, Wisbech, Cambs			
Study area (sq.m or ha)	3.6ha			
National grid reference	TF 4531 0856			
Height OD	Min OD	2.50m	Max OD	3.40m
PROJECT ORIGINATORS				
Organisation	CAM ARC			
Project brief originator	Eliza Gore			
Project design originator	James Drummond Murray			
Director/supervisor	Glenn Bailey			
Project manager	James Drummod Murray			
Sponsor or funding body	Construct Reason			
ARCHIVES	**Location and accession number**		**Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone, database, context sheets etc)**	
Physical	OA East		Post Medieval Pottery and CBM	
Paper	OA East		Primary drawn and written records and indices	
Digital	OA East		Survey data, graphics, reports	
BIBLIOGRAPHY				
Full title	Post-medieval remains along Lickings Drove, Wisbech			
Author(s)	Glenn Bailey			
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Date	January 2009			

Summary

An Archaeological Evaluation was conducted by CAM ARC during April 2008 on land adjacent to Lickings Drove, Wisbech (TF 4531 0856) prior to the development of the site for residential housing with associated services and access. The work was commissioned by Construct Reason Ltd.

CAM ARC were commissioned to mechanically excavate 500m of trenching in the development area. The evaluation revealed two phases of land reclamation and evidence for the canalisation of The River Nene. The first was dated via the ceramic evidence to the mid to late 19th Century. Evidence for further reworking of the area during the post war period was also uncovered. This level of modern intrusion and the evidence for the nature of the palaeoenviroments, indicated by the borehole survey, lead to the conclusion that the area was probably unsuitable for occupation prior to the Post Medieval period.

The first indication of occupation does not occur until the 18th century suggesting that the natural environment, up to this time, discouraged occupation.

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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 F/YR06/0464/O), 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 underlying geology comprises Jurassic Ampthill clay, overlain by tidal flat deposits of peat clay and silt (British Geological Survey 159). These Flandrian sequences are complex and locally variable representing marine transgressions, river channel (or roddon) formation, and reed swamp growth. The site rests upon the band of silt running east to west from the estuary at Kings Lynn to the Lincolnshire border known within the county as the Isle Of Wisbech at between 2.50mOD and 3.40mOD (EUS, Draft 2007).

A borehole survey undertaken in January 2008 (Boreham 2008) indicated five distinct depositional environments. The upper alluvial silt of probable Medieval age is associated with the canalised Nene channel. Beneath this, silty saltmarsh and sandy tidal creek deposits of the Terrington Beds are separated from the underlying saltmarsh and intertidal sediments of the Bronze Age Barroway Drove Beds by a thin ‘leaf’ of freshwater Iron Age Nordelph Peat.

3 Archaeological and Historical Background

Archaeological investigation close to the site has been fairly limited with the majority of material recovered originating from isolated find spots. 880m to the south of the site small scale excavation (ECB 11813) revealed activity related to medieval or post-medieval field drainage. More extensive work has taken place in the historic centre of the town. Excavations at Hill Street approximately 1.5 km to the northeast revealed significant deeply stratified occupation deposits

interspersed with riverine silting episodes dating from the 13th century to post medieval.

Prehistoric remains are virtually absent from not only the assessment area but also the Parish of Wisbech as a whole. A series of stray and generally unprovenanced finds are the only real indicator of Prehistoric activity available. The area was almost entirely submerged during the Iron Age, and dry land only began to emerge during the Roman Period (EUS, 2007). Prehistoric Iron Age activity in the area is confirmed however by the discovery of a fragmentary bronze scabbard containing the remains of an iron blade, a gold stater of the Brigantes and a silver Icenian coin (HER ref. 03906, 03907, 04008).

As with the evidence for Iron Age activity, the Roman presence within the area is indicated through isolated find spots. Pottery sherds and tile fragments have been recorded close to the site (HER ref. 03883, 03884, 03889). Coin finds are recorded at several sites across the town including a 'first brass' of the elder Faustina found on Weasenham Lane near Cromwell road (CHER 03890).

For the post medieval period there appears to be little evidence for development of the site beyond various land drainage schemes established to counteract the effect of flooding.
The closest known archaeological remains are from an evaluation carried out 880 m to the south (ECB574) where a medieval or post-medieval darland field system was revealed.

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 500m of trenching should be undertaken. A borehole survey of the site had previously been undertaken by Steve Boreham of the Dept. of Geography, University of Cambridge (Boreham 2008).

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

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

All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using CAM ARC's *pro-forma* sheets. Trench locations, plans and sections were

recorded at appropriate scales and colour and monochrome photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits.

No environmental samples were taken from the site as a result of the significant level of modern disturbance recorded within the trenches.

Conditions on site were generally overcast with several periods of rainfall. Ground conditions on site were mainly dry, although ground water was encountered in several of the trenches.

5 Results

The evaluation revealed a high percentage of highly intrusive 18th and 19th century features within the development area.

It was necessary to dig a series of machine excavated sondages sections in Trenches 4 – 9 (Fig. 3) in order to investigate the sequence of alluvial silts that were recorded across the site and also to determine that no archaeological remains were surviving beneath the significant levels of modern make up recorded within the development area.

5.1 Trench 1

Trench 1 measured 50m in length by 1.8m wide (Fig. 2). Machine excavated depths along the trench were generally in the order of 0.90m, increasing to 1.51m in a sondage at the northern end of the trench.

A series of possible features were investigated (**5**, **7**, **9**, **10** & **11**) in the trench. The sections excavated through them revealed them to be the result of post-Medieval disturbance.

Feature **25**, recorded towards the northern end of the trench, was excavated and revealed to be the course of a possible stream or natural drainage channel (Fig. 2).

5.2 Trench 2

Trench 2 measured 53.3m in length by 1.8m wide. Machine excavated depths along the trench were generally in the order of 1m, increasing to 1.51m in a sondage towards the southern end of the trench (Fig. 2).

Feature **25** was recorded as continuing for 1.25m into the northern part of the trench. A dump of modern brick and building material was recorded towards the southern end of the trench.

5.3 Trench 3

Trench 3 measured 46.m in length by 1.8m wide. Machine excavated depths along the trench were between 0.50m to the east, increasing to 0.85m towards the west (Fig. 3).

No archaeological features were recorded in the trench.

5.4 Trench 4

Trench 4 measured 50m in length by 1.8m wide. Machine excavated depths along the trench were between 0.71m to the north and south of the trench and 1.13m in the centre (Fig. 3).

No archaeological features were recorded in the trench.

5.5 Trench 5

Trench 5 measured 50m in length by 1.8m wide. Natural deposits were recorded within the trench at between 1.77mOD and 1.72mOD underlying a build up of modern deposits (Fig. 3).

No archaeological features were recorded in the trench.

5.6 Trench 6

Trench 6 measured 50m in length by 1.8m wide. Machine excavated depths along the trench were between 0.75m to the east, increasing to 1.01m towards the west. The eastern limit of a pond, dating to the Victorian period, was recorded in the trench and this was partially machine excavated before being backfilled as a result of the encroachment of ground water (Fig. 3).

No archaeological features were recorded in the trench.

5.7 Trench 7

Trench 7 measured 50m in length by 1.8m wide. Natural deposits were recorded within the trench at between 0.50m to the east, increasing to 0.85m towards the west (Fig. 3).

No archaeological features were recorded in the trench.

5.8 Trench 8

Trench 8 measured 50m in length by 1.8m wide. Natural deposits were recorded within the trench at between 0.52m to the west, increasing to 0.70m towards the east (Fig. 3).

No archaeological features were recorded in the trench.

5.9 Trench 9

Trench 9 measured 50m in length by 1.8m wide. Natural deposits were recorded within the trench at approximately 0.75m below current ground level (Fig. 3).

No archaeological features were recorded in the trench.

5.10 Trench 10

Trench 10 measured 29m in length by 1.8m wide. Natural deposits were recorded within the trench at between 0.60m to the north, increasing to 0.55m towards the south (Fig. 2).

No archaeological features were recorded in the trench.

5.11 Trench 11

Trench 11 measured 19.80m in length by 1.8m wide. Natural deposits were recorded within the trench at approximately 0.55m below current ground level (Fig. 2).

No archaeological features were recorded in the trench.

6 Discussion

The archaeological evaluation at Cromwell Road revealed two phases of land reclamation and evidence for the canalisation of The River Nene. The first was dated via the ceramic evidence to the mid to late 19th Century (Brooks, App. 2). Evidence for further reworking of the area during the post war period was also uncovered. This level of modern intrusion and the evidence for the nature of the palaeoenviroments, indicated by the borehole survey (Boreham, App. 3), lead to the conclusion that the area was probably unsuitable for occupation prior to the Post Medieval period.

The first indication of occupation does not occur until the 18th century and even this is neither intense nor, apparently, of great significance.

6 Conclusions

The evaluation revealed no archaeological activity until the post-medieval period, the natural environment discouraging occupation before this period (Boreham, App. 3).

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

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank Construct Reason who commissioned and funded the archaeological work. The project was managed by James Drummond-Murray. The fieldwork was conducted by Glenn Bailey with the assistance of Benjamin W Brogan, Jon House and Ross Lilley. The illustrations were produced by Caoimhín Ó Coileáin, the finds analysis was conducted by Alasdair Brooks and the report was edited by James Drummond Murray.

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

Bibliography

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Hinman, M.	2002	Deeply Stratified Medieval and Post-Medieval Remains at Market Mews, Wisbech
Pankhurst, N	2007	Cromwell Road, Wisbech: A Desk Top Assessment

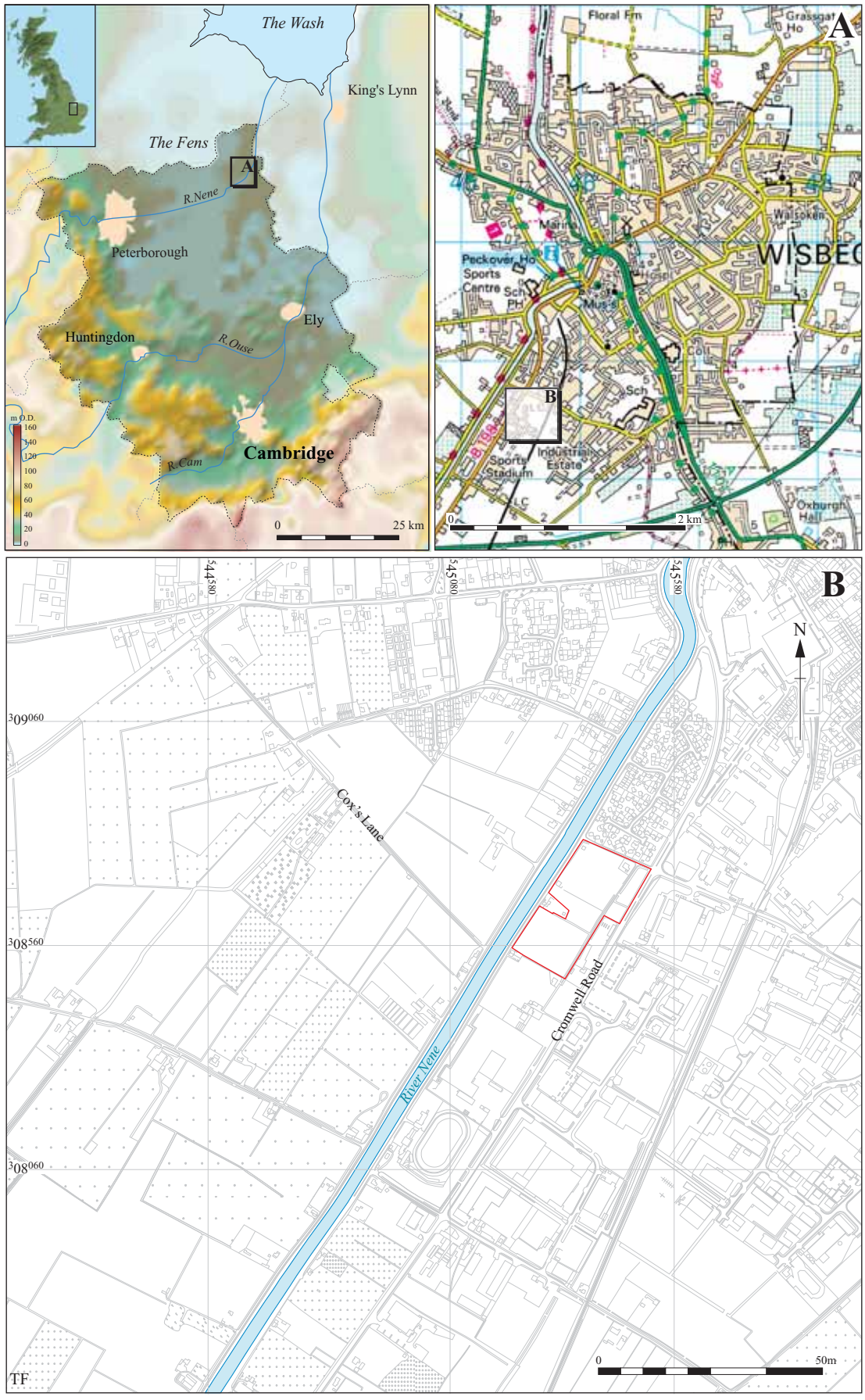

Figure 1: Location of the trenches in black with development area outlined (red)

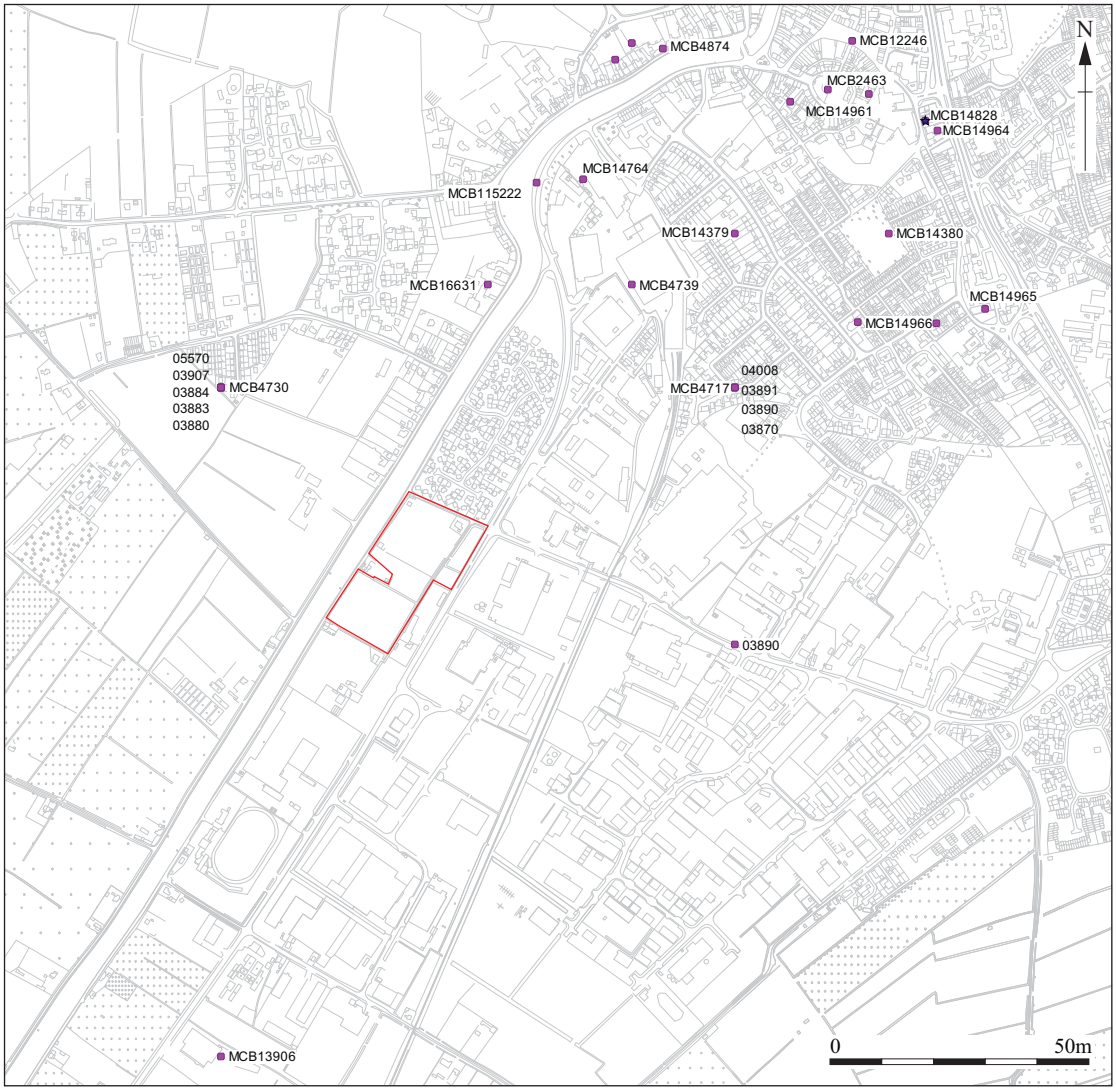

Figure 2: HER records in the vicinity of the site

Figure 3: The Old Series Ordnance Survey Maps of England and Wales: Sheet LXV

Figure 4: Ordnance Survey First Edition 1 inch 1886-7

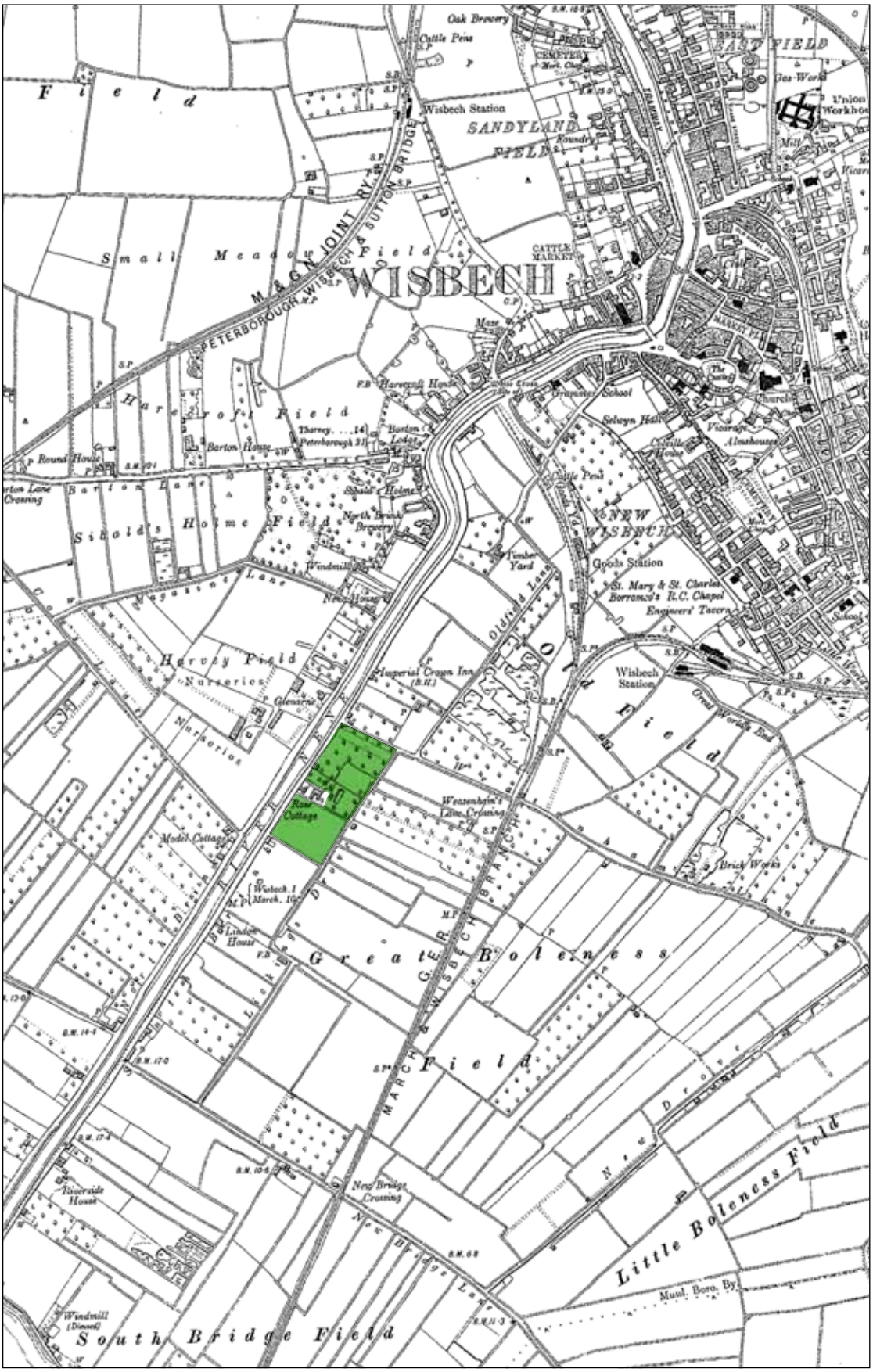

Figure 5: Ordnance Survey 25 inch Revised Edition 1927-8

Appendix 1: Context Summary

Context	Trench Number	Type	Function
1	1-11	Topsoil	Geological deposit
2	1-11	Subsoil	Geological deposit
3	1-11	Natural	Geological deposit
4	1	Channel fill	Fluvial feature
5	1	Channel Cut	Fluvial feature
6	1	Channel fill	Fluvial feature
7	1	Channel Cut	Fluvial feature
8	1	Channel fill	Fluvial feature
9	1	Channel Cut	Fluvial feature
10	1	Channel fill	Fluvial feature
11	1	Channel fill	Fluvial feature
12	1	Channel fill	Fluvial feature
13	1	Channel fill	Fluvial feature
14	1	Channel fill	Fluvial feature
15	1	Channel fill	Fluvial feature
16	1	Channel fill	Fluvial feature
20	7	Redeposited silt natural	Make up layer
21	8	Redeposited silt natural	Make up layer
22	8	Redeposited silt natural	Make up layer
23	1	Redeposited silt natural	Make up layer
24	1	Mixed deposit	Make up layer
25	1	Cut of channel	Make up layer
26	6	Pond fill	Make up layer
27	7	Mixed deposit	Make up layer
28	1	Clay and rubble layer	Make up layer
29	1	Pale grey brown silty clay	Make up layer
30	1	Pale grey brown silty clay	Make up layer
31	1	Blue grey clay	Make up layer
32	1	Blue grey clay	Make up layer
33	1	Mid orange silt	Make up layer
34	1	Mid brown silt clay	Make up layer
35	1	Sand lens	Make up layer
36	1	Dark grey clay silt	Make up layer
37	1	Rubble and ash layer	Make up layer
38	1	Redeposited silt natural	Make up layer
39	1	Redeposited silt natural	Make up layer
40	10-11	Mid brown silty clay	Make up layer
41	10-11	Mid orange brown silty clay	Make up layer
42	10-11	Mid blue clay	Make up layer
43	10-11	Pale grey clay silt	Make up layer
44	10-11	Mid brown cly silt	Make up layer
45	10-11	Mid brown grey clay silt	Make up layer
46	10	Grey brown clay	Make up layer

Appendix 2: Post-Medieval Finds Summary

Alasdair Brooks BA, MA, DPhil

1 Introduction

The excavation at WIS CRD 08 produced a small quantity of diagnostic later post-medieval artefacts, particularly pottery and clay pipe fragments, but also featuring ceramic building material (CBM), bottle glass, plaster, shell and bone.

2 Pottery

2.1 Methodology

The terminology and dating criteria used in this report were taken from the author's own book on the identification of later post-medieval ceramics (Brooks 2005). This report is only an initial guide to context dating, and this section therefore intentionally does not contain minimum vessel counts or other more in-depth analytical techniques. Dates often refer to the traditional most common period of production rather than definitive start and end dates; the transition from creamware and pearlware to whiteware from c.1820-c.1830, for example, is a gradual process rather than a sudden shift from older types to the newer type.

2.2 The Assemblage

The pottery assemblage consists of thirty six fragments across six basic ware types from twelve different contexts. The assemblage consists entirely of British-made materials, and dates from the second half of the 18th century through to the second half of the 19th century. There is a single mend between contexts, with the two creamware chamberpot rims from contexts 16 and 24 mending.

2.3 Dating

Using the pottery as a guide, the contexts may be placed in rough chronological order, from earliest to latest, as follows:

17 (c.1760-c.1800): One sherd of a hollow creamware vessel (c.1760-c.1820), two sherds of painted tinglaze tableware (c.1600-c.1800, though these examples are 18th-century), and three mending sherds from a painted tinglaze jar (c.1600-c.1830, though this example probably late 18th-century).

24 (c.1760-c.1820): Eight sherds of creamware (c.1760-c.1820), all undecorated, from a plate, a serving bowl, a cup, and a chamberpot.

16 (c.1760-c.1820): A single creamware (c.1760-c.1820) chamberpot fragment, which mends to its counterpart in context 24.

13 (c.1790-c.1810): A handpainted pearlware saucer base. While pearlware can date from c.1780-c.1830, this 'early palette' example is traditionally considered more typical of the period c.1790-c.1810 (Andrews et al 1996).

12 (c.1760-first half of 19th century): Two creamware (c.1760-c.1820) plate fragments – not necessarily from the same plate – and a single small fragment of black-glazed redware. The latter is impossible to date conclusively, though the unmottled fabric with only very light inclusions is more typical of the 19th century than the 18th.

10 (c.1810): A canary-yellow body refined white earthenware hollow vessel with platinum lustre decoration. A child's mug with matching platinum lustre band and circle is shown in Riley, catalogue number 21 (1991: cover, 24-25). The latter vessel is dated to c.1810 (ibid: 4). The WIS CRD sherd is clearly not a child's mug (it is more likely to be a bowl), but the decorative principle is the same. The platinum lustre circle would have surrounded a further decoration; in the Riley example this is a transfer print, but the precise WIS CRD decoration is unidentifiable.

26 (mid- to late-19th century): The ten sherds in this context feature the greatest variety of types from the site, and represent:

- a brown saltglazed grey-bodied stoneware ink bottle (19th-century).
- a brown saltglazed grey-bodied bottle (19th-century).
- a willow pattern blue transfer-printed whiteware plate (post-1820).
- a willow pattern blue transfer-printed whiteware polygonal serving vessel (post-1820).
- a plate and a serving bowl (the latter with a maker's and pattern name mark) in the 'Key Border' pattern made by Samuel Moore & Co. of Sunderland; while the firm was active 1803-1874 (Godden 1991: 447), this particular pattern is stylistically indicative of the second half of the 19th-century.
- A blue-painted highly-fired whiteware handle, most probably from a chamberpot (probably second half of the 19th century).
- A hollow whiteware serving vessel base, possibly an undecorated portion of the 'Key Border' serving bowl.
- This small assemblage is, as a whole, indicative of post-1840 deposition.

20 (post-1835): A single fragment of a flow blue-decorated whiteware vessel; while developed as early as 1835, flow blue is most common after 1845.

21 (post-1835): Two flow blue whiteware fragments, one a moulded floral plate rim, the other from a vessel of unidentified form (but almost certainly from a different vessel than the plate rim). The same dates apply as for context 20.

19 (second half of 19th century): Highly vitrified undecorated whiteware 'ironstone' (see Brooks 2005: 30-31) cup base, probably later 19th-century, possibly early 20th-century.

Two further contexts are more difficult to date with any precision. These are context **22**, which features a single fragment of brown saltglazed grey stoneware (which is most probably 19th-century) and context **18**, which features a large fragment of a Westerwald-type grey saltglazed stoneware which might date from the 18th or 19th centuries. What little of the decoration survives suggests that the latter is a debased later, 19th-century, Westerwald-type stoneware, but conclusive proof would require more of the decoration to be visible.

2.4 Discussion

Ceramic deposition seems have occurred in two distinct phases. The first is a late 18th- to early 19th-century phase represented by contexts 10, 12, 13, 16, 17, and 24. The second is a mid- to late- 19th-century phase represented by contexts 19, 20, 21, and 26. Contexts 22 and 18 are harder to date (though they are more likely to be associated with the second phase).

The undecorated creamwares and later tinglazed wares from the first phase are the least expensive mass-produced wares available during this period; the single handpainted pearlware fragment would have been somewhat more expensive, but as a whole the first phase is characterised by being relatively cheap and inexpensive. The same observation cannot be made of the second phase, as it dates from a period where transfer prints had become much less expensive, and were available to most socio-economic groups.

3 Clay Pipes

3.1 Clay Pipe Methodology

The terminology used in this report was taken from Bradley (2000). The pipe bowls, considered the most diagnostic part of this small assemblage, were identified and dated using the standard typology for English pipe bowls, as featured in this case in Orser and Fagan (1995:104). This is a broad international typology, rather than a local

Cambridgeshire-based one, but the basics of date and type usually hold across regions.

3.2 The Assemblage

All of the pipe fragments are made from white ball clay (sometimes inaccurately referred to as 'kaolin' clay), and are most likely English in manufacture.

3.3 Dating and Discussion

The undecorated pipe bowl from context 24 is most typical of the late 17th century. This bowl therefore appears to be a full century older than the pottery from the same context, and is the oldest conclusively dated artefact from the site. The pipe bowl from context 26, which features a floral moulded decoration, is typical of the 19th century, and is therefore compatible with the pottery from the same context. Context 26 also features an unusual stem with a moulded corkscrew design; further research may provide a date for this item should this be considered necessary.

4 Other Materials

A variety of other materials were recovered from WIS CRD 08, including CBM, plaster, glass, and single examples of oyster shell and bone (a cow tooth). Most of these do not provide further diagnostic data, or would require further research in order to provide any such data, and are therefore not a matter of discussion here. The only exceptions are a fragment of 19th-century bottle glass (context 27), and two 18th-century tinglazed wall tiles (contexts 24 and 12). Of the latter, the context 24 example features a painted decoration, while the context 12 example is undecorated; both examples are fully in keeping with the dates provided by the pottery from the same contexts.

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Appendix 3: The Geology at Cromwell Road

Steve Boreham BSc. PhD.

1 Introduction

Location maps of the area around Cromwell Road, Wisbech (TF 455 087) are shown in Figures 1 & 2. The British Geological Survey (BGS) geology map of the Wisbech area (Sheet 159) shows that much of the area surrounding Wisbech and the Cromwell Road Site is directly underlain by saltmarsh, and tidal creek deposits attributed to the Terrington Beds, dating from a late Iron Age marine inundation of Fenland at c.2500 years BP. Even in Roman times, it is known that Wisbech had a direct connection to the sea (Figure 1). It should be noted that all dates given here are approximate due to the diachronous (time transgressive) nature of the deposits. The Terrington Beds in this area are 1-2m thick and overlie marine sands of the Barroway Drove Beds. The Barroway Drove Beds have been dated at between c.6000 and 3000 years BP in this area, and are up to 12m thick. The Barroway Drove Beds have two distinct facies. The upper part of the Barroway Drove Beds are represented by silty saltmarsh deposits, which in the field can only be separated from the overlying Terrington Beds by the presence of a thin 'leaf' of Nordelph Peat, representing freshwater conditions between c.3000 and 2500 years BP. The deeper part of the Barroway Drove Beds are represented by inter-tidal and sub-tidal interbedded sands and silts indicating more open marine conditions. These overlie the Crowland Bed (cold-stage soliflucted material), various glacial sands and gravels and Jurassic Oxford Clay bedrock at depth.

For much of the Holocene, human occupation of this area seems to have been restricted to better-drained gravel terrace sites at the edge of Fenland. It appears that during the late Iron Age marine regression (c.2500 years BP) there was human occupation of sites on the slightly more elevated silt roddons of the Barroway Drove Beds. The marine transgression of the Terrington Beds flooded some of these sites, but by late Roman times the retreating marine influence allowed renewed occupation of better-drained areas. The present course of the River Nene probably represents a Late Medieval canalisation.

The aim of this borehole survey was to investigate the upper part of the sediment sequence, which could contain evidence of occupation on raised roddons or human activity not related to the River Nene canalisation. Four boreholes (BH 1-4) were sunk across the site to record the lithology and stratigraphy of the sediments encountered (see Appendix 1) in an attempt to identify any buried soils or land surfaces.

2 Interpretation of the Cromwell Road sequence

The lithology and stratigraphy of the sediments encountered in boreholes BH 1-4 are shown in Figure 3 and Section 3 below. In each case, the boreholes were not bottomed because saturated 'running' sand was contacted at depths greater than 4m, making further hand augering impossible. These sediments probably continued to 10-12m depth beneath the site. A layer of made ground of variable thickness was encountered in each borehole. In BH2 & BH3 closer to the River Nene, brick fragments continued to occur in the silty alluvial sediments down to c.2m below the surface. In both cases the alluvium was underlain by silty clay with pods of organic and fine sandy material. In BH3 a thin organic band was detected at 300-303cm. Both BH2 & BH3 were based on sandy intertidal sediments. Away from the River Nene BH1 & BH4 showed subtly different stratigraphy. BH4 encountered a sandy roddon-fill down to 110cm underlain by shelly silt. BH1 also encountered shelly silt, and both boreholes recorded a thin peat deposit within the silty clay sequence. The shells in the peat from BH4 included *Bithynia tentaculata* indicating deposition in a freshwater environment. Both boreholes encountered alternating beds of intertidal sand and silt at depth.

The deposits seen in the boreholes indicate five distinct depositional environments. The upper alluvial silt of probable Medieval age (BH2 & BH3) is associated with the canalised Nene channel. Beneath this, silty saltmarsh and sandy tidal creek deposits (BH4) of the Terrington Beds are separated from the underlying saltmarsh and intertidal sediments of the Bronze Age Barroway Drove Beds by a thin 'leaf' of freshwater Iron Age Nordelph Peat.

The apparent absence of archaeology at the Cromwell Road site probably relates to the indicated palaeoenviroments. Mudflat and saltmarsh environments do not usually yield a high density of finds, and so it is unsurprising that the Terrington Beds and Barroway Drove Beds have no apparent associated archaeology. Unfortunately, the freshwater Nordelph Peat that succeeded the Barroway Drove Beds is also an unpromising environment for the discovery of archaeological finds. The sandy roddon-fill seen in BH4 might offer the best chance of archaeology, although it appeared to be a minor feature both in depth and lateral extent.

Given the borehole data, it is hard to focus a trench-based evaluation at the site. There is undoubtedly the potential for Medieval finds (down to c.2m) within the made ground and silt with brick fragments close to the river, but the possibilities for Roman or earlier finds seem slim on this evidence. Samples of organic material were taken from organic (peaty) deposits in BH1, BH3 & BH4 for possible pollen analysis and radiocarbon dating. An environmental assessment of these samples would provide a tie-point for correlation across the site.

3 Borehole Data

All boreholes are described top down.

3.1 BH1 –TF 45449 08715

Depth	Description
0-25 cm	Topsoil with brick, tile and charcoal (made ground)
25-85cm	Buff/brown silty clay with brick and slate (made ground)
85-95 cm	Grey silty clay with shells
95-125 cm	Orange/grey mottled silty clay with organic traces and shells
125-190 cm	Soft grey silty clay with shells
190-195 cm	Brown/black organic material (peat)
195-240 cm	Soft grey silty clay with shells
240-270 cm	Brown slightly organic silt
270-285 cm	Grey silty sand
285-323 cm	Grey silty clay with organic traces
323-325 cm	Grey fine sand
325-344 cm	Grey silty clay
344-385 cm	Grey fine sand
385-405 cm	Grey silty clay
405-415 cm	Grey fine sand
415-425 cm	Grey silty clay
425-440 cm	Grey sand
440cm	**Hole stopped on sand and pebbles**

Bulk sample taken (pollen and C14 dating) 190-195 cm

3.2 BH2 –TF 45378 08769

Depth	Description
0-90 cm	Light brown silty clay with brick (made ground)
90-100cm	Grey silty clay
100-110 cm	Soft brown silty clay with brick, tile and slate (made ground)
110-120 cm	layer of brick rubble (made ground)
120-195 cm	Brown silty clay with shells and occasional brick fragments
195-200 cm	Brown/grey mottled silty clay
200-220 cm	Soft grey silty clay with laminations
220-360 cm	Soft grey silty clay with laminations and pods of sand and organic
360-420 cm	Grey fine sand
420cm	**Hole stopped on sand and pebbles**

3.3 BH3 –TF 45257 08581

Depth	Description
0-55 cm	Brown silty clay with brick and charcoal (made ground)
55-65cm	Soft brown silt
65-85 cm	Orange/brown mottled silt
85-190 cm	Brown silt with brick fragments and laminations
190-210 cm	Grey silty clay
210-225 cm	Laminated brown silt
225-325 cm	Brown silty clay with pods of sand and organic
325-330 cm	Grey silty clay
330-333 cm	Thin band of brown peat
333-400 cm	Grey silty clay
400-455 cm	Grey/brown silty clay
455-480 cm	Grey fine sand
480cm	**Hole stopped on sand and pebbles**

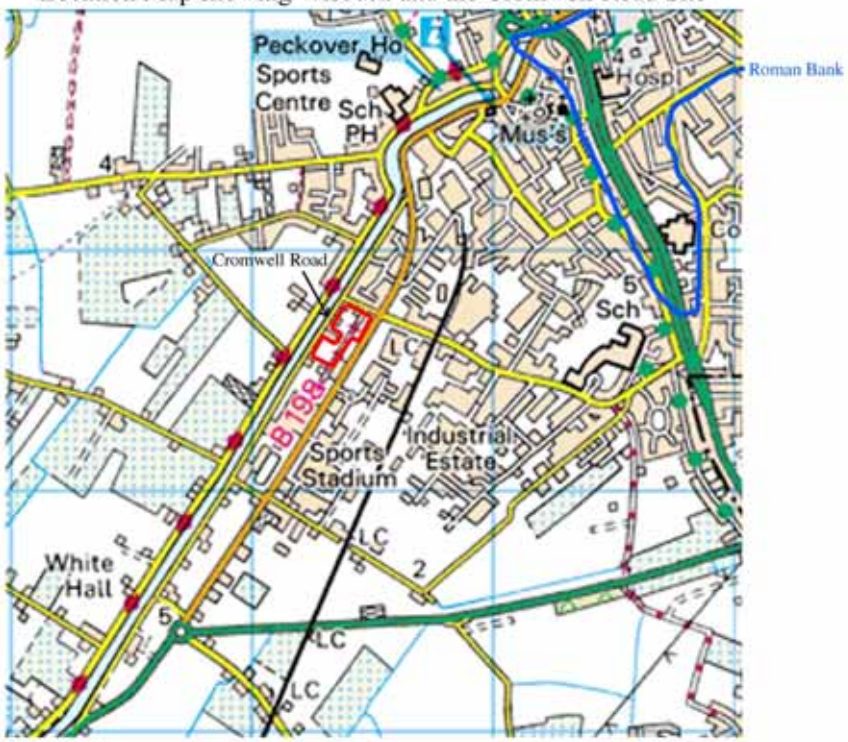
3.4 BH4 –TF 45361 08574

Depth	Description
0-35 cm	Topsoil with brick (made ground)
35-80cm	Brown fine sand
80-110 cm	Brown silt-sand
110-140 cm	Soft grey silty clay with shells
140-155 cm	Brown organic silty clay with *Bithynia* shells
155-195 cm	Brown silty clay with pods of sand and organic
195-325 cm	Soft grey silty clay with rootlets (organic traces 280-290 cm)
325-350 cm	Grey fine sand
350-385 cm	Grey silty clay
385-395 cm	Grey fine sand
395-425 cm	Grey silty clay
425-445 cm	Grey fine sand
445cm	**Hole stopped on sand and pebbles**

Bulk sample taken (pollen, molluscs and C14 dating) 145-155 cm

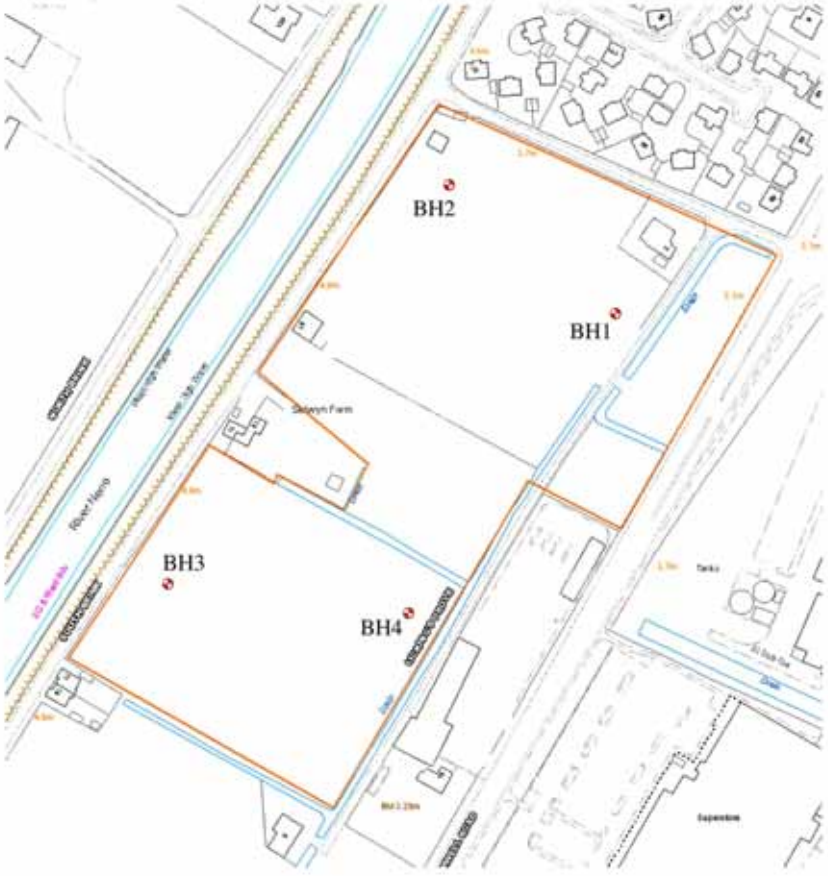
Location Map showing Wisbech and the Cromwell Road Site

Figure 1



Map of the Cromwell Road Site showing the locations of BH1-4

Figure 2



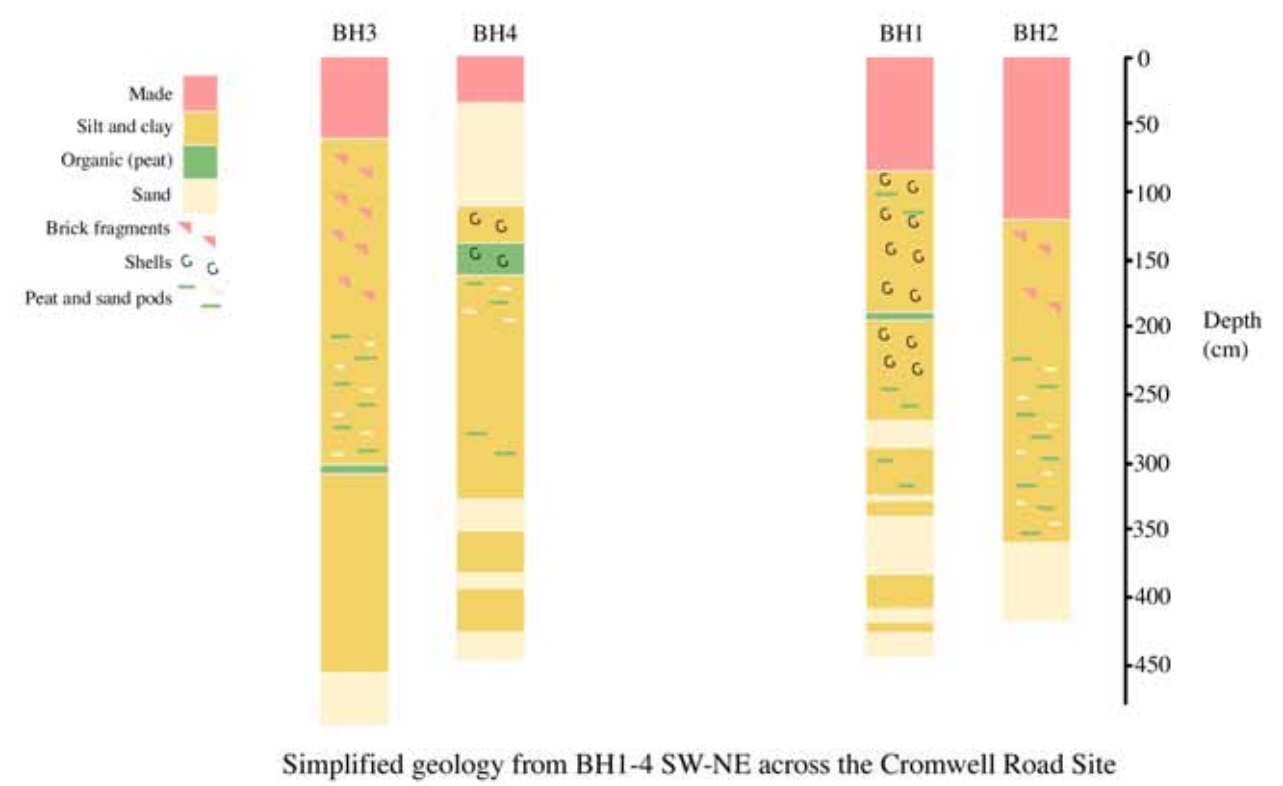
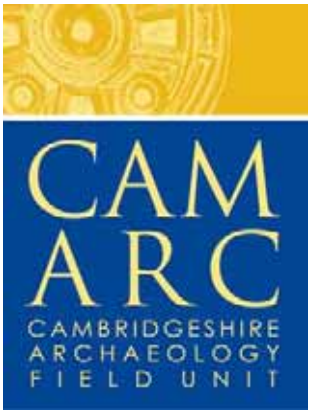

BH3
BH4
BH1
BH2
Made
Silt and clay
Organic (peat)
Sand
Brick fragments
Shells
Peat and sand pods
0
50
100
150
200
250
300
350
400
450
Depth (cm)
Simplified geology from BH1-4 SW-NE across the Cromwell Road Site

Fig. 3



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