



HERITAGE NETWORK



**MITERDALE FARM
Wimpole, Cambridgeshire**

HN780

Archaeological Evaluation



THE HERITAGE NETWORK LTD

Registered with the Institute of Field Archaeologists as an Archaeological Organisation

Archaeological Director: David Hillelson, BA MIFA

MITERDALE FARM Wimbridge Close, Wimpole, Cambridgeshire

Project no: HN780
Event no: ECB3105
LPA ref: S/1267/08/F

Archaeological Evaluation

Prepared on behalf of Hayley and Damian Hales

by

Geoff Saunders, BA AIFA

Report no. 516

January 2009

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The cover photograph shows outbuildings on the site looking north

Acknowledgements

The fieldwork for this project was carried out by Andy Fawcett and Geoff Saunders, and the report was edited by David Hillelson.

The Heritage Network would like to express its thanks to Hayley and Damien Hales; HE Services, Plant Hire; and Andy Thomas, Cambridgeshire County Council, for their co-operation and assistance in the execution of this project.

Summary

Site name and address:	Miterdale Farm, Wimbridge Close, Wimpole, Cambridgeshire, SG8 5QQ		
County:	Cambridgeshire	District:	South Cambridgeshire
Village/town:	Wimpole	Parish:	Wimpole
Planning reference:	S/1267/08/F	NGR:	TL 3343 4861
Client name and address:	Mr and Mrs D Hales as above.		
Nature of work:	New House and Garage	Former land use:	House and Outbuildings
Site status:	None	Reason for investigation:	Direction of local planning authority (PPG 16)
Position in planning process:	Post Determination (as a condition)	Project brief originator:	Local authority
Size of affected area:	c.450 m ²	Size of area investigated:	c.55m ²
Project no.:	HN780	Event no:	ECB3105
Organisation:	Heritage Network	Site Director:	David Hillelson
Project type, methods etc.:	Evaluation	Archive recipient:	Cambridgeshire Archaeological Store
Start of work	06/01/2009	Finish of work	07/01/2009
Related HMR Nos:	n/a	Periods represented:	Romano-British - Modern
Oasis UID	heritage1-52897	Significant finds:	n/a
Monument types:	None		
Physical archive:	n/a		
Previous summaries/reports:	n/a		

Synopsis:

In order to determine the archaeological risk posed by a proposal to construct a new house with associated garage block and driveway on land at Miterdale Farm, Wimpole, The Heritage Network was commissioned by the owners to undertake a programme of archaeological evaluation in advance of development.

Three trenches were opened across the development area. No archaeological features predating the modern period were observed. Several sherds of redeposited pottery of late Iron Age – Romano-British date were recovered from Trenches 1 and 3, the highest concentration being from Trench 3.

1. Introduction

1.1 This report has been prepared on the instructions of Hayley and Damian Hales, as part of the archaeological evaluation of a development site located at Miterdale Farm, Wimbridge Close, Wimpole, Cambridgeshire.

1.2 The investigation has been a requirement of the planning consent granted by South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) (ref. S/1267/08/F), under the provisions set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note No.16 (PPG16) on Archaeology and Planning (DoE 1990). The extent of the work was defined in a Brief for Archaeological Evaluation (ref. AT 28/11/2008) prepared by the Cambridgeshire Archaeology Planning & Countryside Advice section (CAPCA) of Cambridgeshire County Council acting as archaeological advisers to the SCDC. A full specification for the work was contained in the Heritage Network's approved *Project Design*, dated December 2008.

1.3 The site, centred on NGR TL 3343 4861, lies on the east side of the A14 Ermine Way, and the north side of the River Rhee (or Cam). It is bounded to the north by Wimpole Lodge and nos.3-6 Wimbridge Close, and on the east by farmland. Miterdale Farmhouse was demolished prior to the start of the fieldwork, however a variety of outbuildings are still extant on site; the development proposes the demolition of the remaining outbuildings, and their replacement with a new house and separate garage block, with associated access and landscaping.

1.4 On the basis of the known archaeology in the vicinity of the present site, CAPCA advised that archaeological evaluation of the development site should be undertaken before the development could proceed. The aim of the evaluation has been to consider the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any remains that are liable to be threatened by the development, and to provide a local and regional, archaeological and historical context for them, in accordance with the current published regional research agenda (Brown and Glazebrook 2000), should they be discovered.

1.5 The present report is intended to provide the planning authority with sufficient data to allow it to consider the archaeological implications of the proposed development, and to determine what further mitigation measures, if any, may be required to allow the development to proceed.

2. Fieldwork

SITE TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

2.1 The solid geology of the area consists of river terrace and chalky drift. Locally the soils are derived from the EVESHAM 3 Association (411C) described as *Slowly permeable calcareous clayey, and fine loamy over clayey soils. Some slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged non-calcareous clayey soils* (SSEW 1983). The natural geology was characterised in the trenches as a firm, light grey (10YR 7/1) clay.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.2 The site lies within an extensive but little defined area of Romano-British settlement activity, focused on the crossing of the River Rhee by Ermine Street at Arrington Bridge. This includes a Scheduled Ancient Monument (CB86) on the south side of the river, and the foundations of Roman buildings at Wimpole Lodge (CHER03334). The Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (CHER) lists 18 archaeological sites and find-spots within a 500m radius of the study area, the majority of which are Roman in date, but which also include evidence of late Iron Age and Anglo-Saxon activity.

2.3 The CHER entry for the settlement (CHER03157) refers to the discovery of ‘many Roman vessels and a cobbled surface...when the new farmhouse was built’ which may refer to the study area.

METHODOLOGY

2.4 All fieldwork was carried out in accordance with the approved Project Design, current health and safety legislation, and the appropriate IFA and ALGAO guidance documents.

2.5 The trenches were located by survey using a total station theodolite, and have been related to the Ordnance Survey national grid.

2.6 Three trenches were opened using a 360⁰ excavator fitted with a 1.80m wide toothless ditching bucket, and reduced to the first significant archaeological horizon. Spoil from the machining was inspected for archaeological artefacts. The trenches were cleaned by hand, and all potential archaeological features and deposits were sampled to ascertain their nature, depth, date, and quality of preservation.

2.7 All identified contexts were photographed and recorded using the appropriate proforma. Scaled sections were drawn on drafting film at a scale of 1:50.

RESULTS

Trench 1

2.8 Trench 1 was located to the west of the former farmhouse so as to try and avoid any ground disturbance associated with it. The trench measured 1.85 x 9.8m and was aligned approximately north – south.

2.9 The stratigraphy in the trench comprised a firm, very dark grey (10YR, 3/1), slightly silty clay topsoil, over a firm, greyish brown (10YR 5/2), clay subsoil. Beneath this lay the natural geology.

2.10 A modern geotechnical test pit associated with the present development was observed in the southern half of the trench. Modern disturbance was also observed in the southern half of the trench; although the disturbance had no clearly defined edge, it was located within the subsoil of the trench. The disturbance contained fragments of modern brick and chip-board. A single very small and abraded sherd of late Iron Age – early Romano-British pottery was also recovered from the disturbed ground.

2.11 No further archaeological features or deposits were observed within this trench.

Trench data:

Length (m):	9.80	Width (m):	1.85	Maximum Depth (m):	1.57	Orientation	N – S
Level at N End of Trench (mOD)		Top	19.80	Level at SE End of Trench (mOD)		Top	19.69
		Base	18.90			Base	18.12
Context	Type	Description	Dimensions (m)				
			Length	Width	Depth		
101	Feature	Geotechnical test pit. Modern feature associated with current development	1.30 +	0.35	c.4.00		
102	Feature	Area of modern disturbance within the subsoil at the southern half of the trench.	3.60 +	1.85 +	0.50		
	Layer	Firm, very dark grey (10YR, 3/1), slightly silty clay. Topsoil.	-	-	0.25		
	Layer	Firm, greyish brown (10YR 5/2), clay. Subsoil.	-	-	0.50		
	Layer	Firm, light grey (10YR 7/1) clay. Natural geology.	-	-	-		

Trench 2

2.12 Trench 2 was located to the south of the northernmost outbuildings, to the south also of the proposed new garage block. The trench measured 1.85 x 14.50m and was aligned approximately northeast-southwest.

2.13 The stratigraphy in the trench comprised a layer of loose, very dark grey (10YR 3/1), slightly clayey sandy silt topsoil over the natural clay geology. The topsoil contained frequent modern inclusions including, glass, brick, pottery, and metalwork. No original topsoil was observed within the trench.

2.14 No archaeological features or deposits were observed within this trench.

Trench data:

Length (m):	14.50	Width (m):	1.85	Maximum Depth (m):	0.61	Orientation	NE-SW
Level at NE End of Trench (mOD)		Top	20.48	Level at SW End of Trench (mOD)		Top	20.39
		Base	19.87			Base	19.91
Context	Type	Description	Dimensions (m)				
			Length	Width	Depth		

Length (m):	14.50	Width (m):	1.85	Maximum Depth (m):	0.61	Orientation	NE-SW
Level at NE End of Trench (mOD)		Top	20.48	Level at SW End of Trench (mOD)		Top	20.39
		Base	19.87			Base	19.91
Context	Type	Description	Dimensions (m)				
			Length	Width	Depth		
	Layer	Loose, very dark grey (10YR 3/1), slightly clayey sandy silt. Modern topsoil.	-	-	0.50		
	Layer	Firm, light grey (10YR 7/1) clay. Natural geology.	-	-	-		

Trench 3

2.15 Trench 3 was located to the west of the proposed new house across the intended driveway. The trench measured 1.85 x 6m and was aligned approximately northwest-southeast.

2.16 The stratigraphy in the trench comprised a firm, very dark grey (10YR, 3/1), slightly silty clay topsoil, over a firm, greyish brown (10YR 5/2), clay subsoil. Under the subsoil a layer of redeposited firm, brown (10YR5/3), slightly silty clay was observed. This layer yielded three sherds of highly abraded Romano-British pottery, and within this same layer modern artefacts including part of a plastic carrier bag were also observed. Beneath this lay the natural geology.

2.17 No further archaeological features or deposits were observed within this trench.

Trench data:

Length (m):	6.00	Width (m):	1.85	Maximum Depth (m):	1.16	Orientation	NW-SE
Level at NW End of Trench (mOD)		Top	20.20	Level at SE End of Trench (mOD)		Top	20.15
		Base	19.18			Base	18.99
Context	Type	Description	Dimensions (m)				
			Length	Width	Depth		
	Layer	Firm, very dark grey (10YR, 3/1), slightly silty clay. Topsoil.	-	-	0.28		
	Layer	Firm, greyish brown (10YR 5/2), clay. Subsoil.	-	-	0.46		
	Layer	Firm, brown (10YR 5/3), slightly silty clay. Redeposited natural.	-	-	0.22		
	Layer	Firm, light grey (10YR 7/1) clay. Natural geology.	-	-	-		

FINDS ASSESSMENT

Concordance

	Pottery		CBM	
	No	Wt	No	Wt
Tr 1 U/S	4	<5	1	<5
General U/S	1	10		
Tr 3 U/S	3	15	4	195
Total	8	20	5	200

Pottery

2.18 A total of 8 sherds of pottery weighing a total of 20g was recovered from 3 unstratified contexts. A single piece of pottery from Trench 1 was recorded as Late Iron Age/Romano-British in date while a further 2 fragments appeared to be unfired clay. The pottery recovered from Trench 3 was Romano-British in date while the general unstratified pottery was modern

Recommendations

2.19 Due to the fragmentary and unstratified nature of the assemblage no further work is proposed.

Ceramic Building Material (CBM)

2.20 A total of 5 pieces of CBM weighing 200g were recovered from 2 unstratified contexts.

Recommendations

2.21 Due to the fragmentary and unstratified nature of the assemblage no further work is proposed.

3. Discussion

3.1 The site lies within an extensive area of Romano-British settlement activity, focused on the crossing of the River Rhee by Ermine Street at Arrington Bridge. Three trenches were excavated in order to investigate the archaeological potential of the present site. No significant archaeological features were observed within the trenches.

3.2 A total of four sherds of redeposited pottery was recovered ranging in date from the late pre Roman Iron Age to the Romano-British period. The sherds were heavily abraded and were recovered from layers that also yielded modern artefacts. The sherds may be indicative of activity of this period in the vicinity of the site, however the small quantity and poor condition of the material gives no indication as to where the focus of this activity might lie.

3.3 A noticeable change in the ground level was observed on the site, with the area surrounding the former farmhouse being significantly lower than the area surrounding the proposed new garage. Trenches 1 and 3 were excavated at the lower level, and natural geology within these trenches was encountered at a depth of approximately 19.01mOD and 19.29mOD. Trench 2 was excavated at the higher level, and natural geology here was encountered at approximately 20.00mOD. The difference in levels is likely to be the result of truncation at some point during or after the construction of Miterdale Farm in the mid 20th century.

3.4 It is likely that this truncation will have removed the majority of any significant archaeological remains in the footprint of the proposed new house. The proposed garage block to the north is located on ground which appears to be less truncated. Nevertheless, Trench 2, located within this area, revealed no archaeological features, deposits, or artefacts. Furthermore, no original topsoil was observed in the trench, with modern loose soil and debris sitting directly over the natural geology.

Conclusion

3.5 The archaeological evaluation of the present site revealed four sherds of redeposited pottery of late Iron Age – Romano-British date. The sherds may be indicative of activity of this date in the vicinity of the site.

3.6 The fieldwork has demonstrated that the stratigraphy on the site has been subject to significant disturbance in the modern period; in particular the area surrounding the former farmhouse has been truncated by up to approximately 1m. This truncation is likely to have severely affected the archaeological potential of the area surrounding the proposed new house.

3.7 The area around the proposed garage block, whilst less truncated, yielded no significant archaeological material; the original stratigraphy had also been removed, with modern debris lying directly on the natural geology.

3.8 On the basis of these findings, the risk that significant archaeological features or deposits might be disturbed by the construction of the proposed house, is considered to be Low.

3.9 The risk that significant archaeological features, deposits, or artefacts might be disturbed by the construction of the proposed garage block, is considered to be Low-Moderate.

Confidence Rating

3.10 During the course of the fieldwork, the conditions were generally acceptable for the identification of potential features and deposits, and for their investigation.

3.11 There are no circumstances which would lead to a confidence rating for the work which was less than High.

4. Bibliography

Archaeology Data Service : <http://www.ads.ahds.ac.uk/catalogue>

Brown, N. & Glazebrook, J. 2000, *Research and Archaeology: a framework for the eastern counties, 2. Research agenda and strategy*. East Anglian Archaeology

Institute of Field Archaeologists, 1999, *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation*.

Pastscape : <http://www.pastscape.org.uk/>

Hillelson, D. 2008, *Miterdale Farm, Wimpole, Cambs. Project Design: Archaeological Evaluation*. Heritage Network.

Thomas, A. 2008, *Brief for Archaeological Evaluation : Miterdale Farm, Wimpole*. CAPCA

5. Illustrations

Figure 1 Site location

Figure 2 Site layout

Figure 3 Sample trench sections

Plate 1 Trench 1 looking South

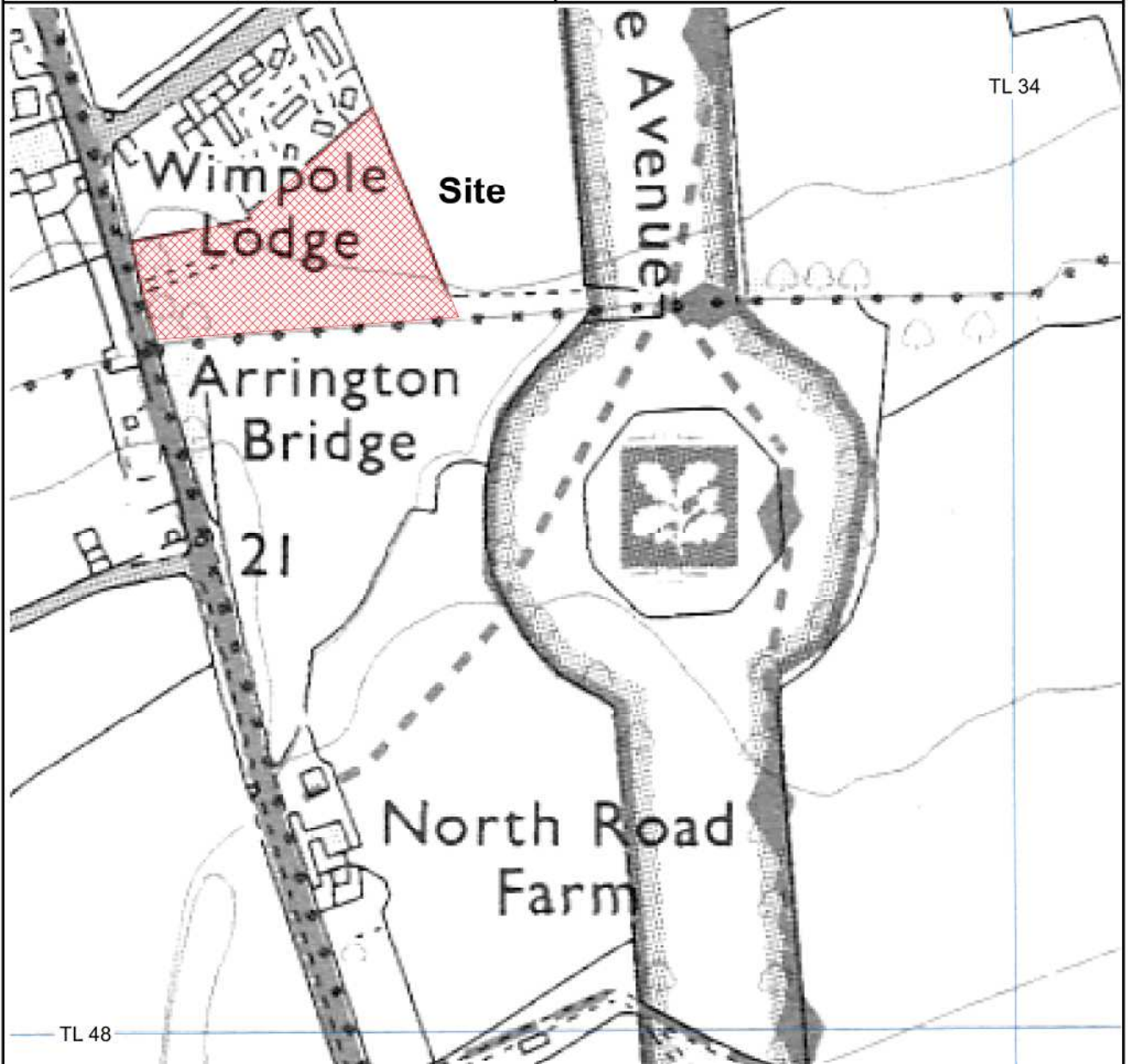
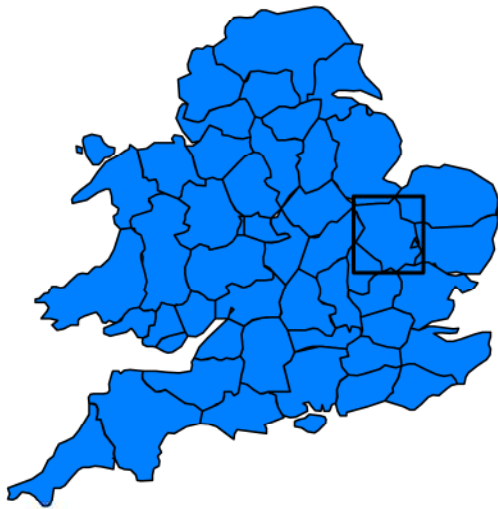
Plate 2 Trench 2 looking Northeast

Plate 3 Trench 3 looking Southeast

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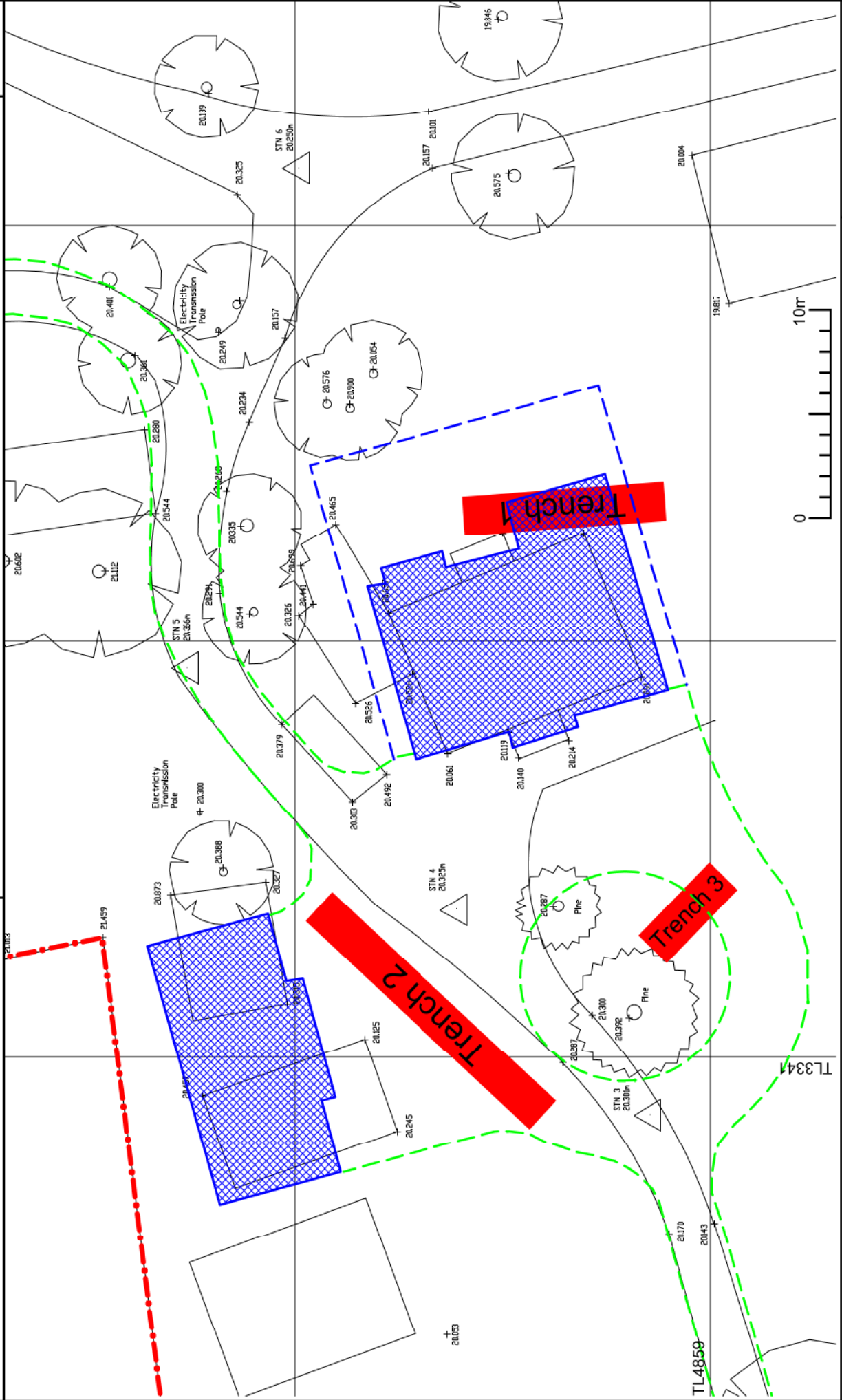


Site Location

Scale 1:5000

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Figure 1

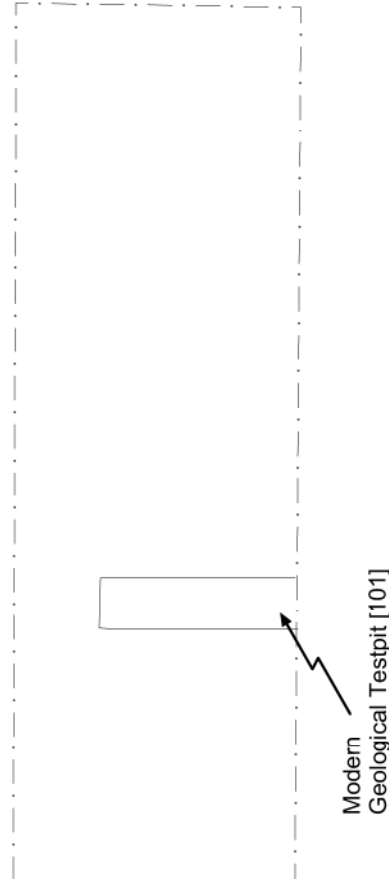


Site Layout

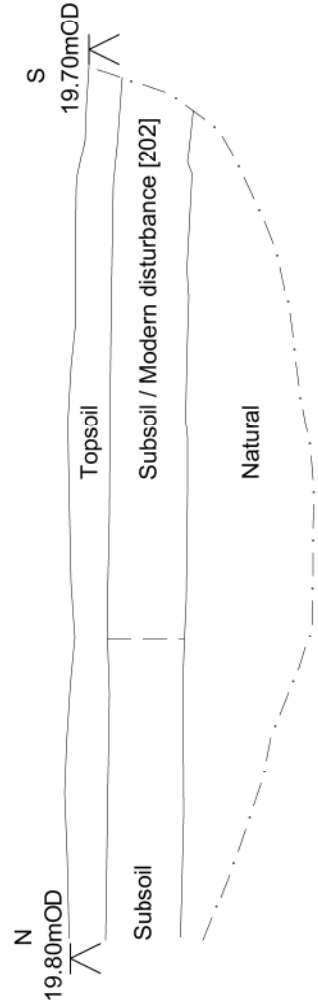
Scale 1:250

Figure 2

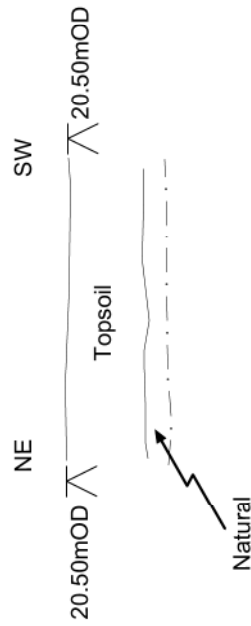
Plan of Trench 1



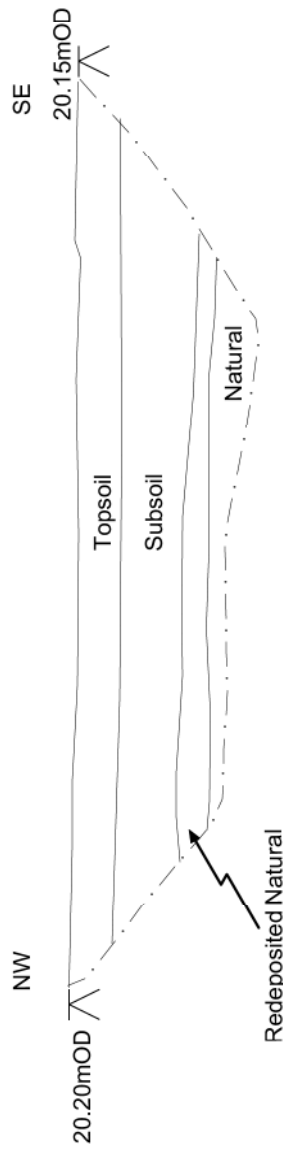
West facing sample section Trench 1



Northwest facing sample section Trench 2



Southwest facing section Trench 3



Trench Sections and Plans



Plate 1: Trench 1, looking south



Plate 2: Trench 2, looking northeast



Plate 3: Trench 3, looking southeast

Appendix

OASIS Data Entry Form: heritage1-52897

Project details

Project name	Miterdale Farm, Wimbridge Close, Wimpole, Cambs.: Archaeological Evaluation
Short description of the project	In order to determine the archaeological risk posed by a proposal to construct a new house with associated garage block and driveway on land at Miterdale Farm, Wimpole, The Heritage Network was commissioned by the owners to undertake a programme of archaeological evaluation in advance of development. Three trenches were opened across the development area. No archaeological features predating the modern period were observed. Several sherds of redeposited pottery of late Iron Age - Romano-British date were recovered from Trenches 1 and 3, the highest concentration being from Trench 3.
Project dates	Start: 06-01-2009 End: 07-01-2009
Previous/future work	No / No
Associated project reference codes	HN780 - Contracting Unit No.
Associated project reference codes	ECB3105 - Museum accession ID
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Residential 1 - General Residential
Monument type	n/a
Significant Finds	POTTERY Late Iron Age
Significant Finds	POTTERY Roman
Significant Finds	POTTERY Modern
Significant Finds	CBM Uncertain
Methods & techniques	'Targeted Trenches'
Development type	Small-scale (e.g. single house, etc.)
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country	England
Site location	CAMBRIDGESHIRE SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE WIMPOLE Miterdale Farm
Postcode	SG8 5QQ
Study area	c. 940.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	NGR - TL 3343 4861 LL - 52.1192538742 -0.05092479398840 (decimal) LL - 52 07 09 N 000 03 03 W (degrees) Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 19.80m Max: 20.50m

Project creators

Organisation	Heritage Network
Project brief originator	Local Planning Authority (with/without advice from County/District Archaeologist)
Project design originator	Heritage Network

Project director/manager David Hillelson
Project supervisor Geoff Saunders
Type of funding body Developer
Name of funding body Hayley and Damian Hales

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient Cambridge Archaeological Store
Physical Archive ID ECB3105
Physical Contents 'Ceramics'
Digital Archive recipient Cambridge Archaeological Store
Digital Archive ID ECB3105
Digital Contents 'none'
Digital Media available 'Images raster / digital photography','Text'
Paper Archive recipient Cambridge Archaeological Store
Paper Archive ID ECB3105
Paper Contents 'none'
Paper Media available 'Diary','Drawing','Photograph','Plan','Report','Section','Survey '

Project bibliography

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title Miterdale Farm, Wimbridge Close, Wimpole, Cambridgeshire : Archaeological Evaluation Report
Author(s)/Editor(s) Saunders, G.
Other bibliographic details Heritage Network Report 516
Date 2009
Issuer or publisher The Heritage Network Ltd
Place of issue or publication Letchworth
Description A4 Comb bound report; 12 pages text; 3 figures; 3 plates