



HERITAGE NETWORK



**Land to r/o 171-173 HIGH BARNES
Ely, Cambs.**

HN803

Archaeological Evaluation Report



THE HERITAGE NETWORK LTD
Registered with the Institute of Field Archaeologists as an Archaeological Organisation
Archaeological Director: David Hillelson, BA MIFA

**REAR OF 171 – 173 HIGH BARNS
Ely, Cambridgeshire**

Project no: HN803
Event no: ECB3178
LPA ref: 08/00899/FUL

Archaeological Evaluation

Prepared on behalf of Sanctuary Group

by

Helen Ashworth, BA AIFA

Report no.563

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**11 FURMSTON COURT, ICKNIELD WAY, LETCHWORTH SG6 1UJ
TEL: (01462) 685991 FAX: (01462) 685998**

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The cover photograph shows the site looking south-east across Trench 3

Acknowledgements

The fieldwork for this project was carried out by Mark Winter and Katie Nicholas, and the report was edited by David Hillelson.

The Heritage Network would like to express its thanks to Mark Osborne, Sanctuary Group; Philip Au, MEPK Architects; Newmarket Plant; and Andy Thomas, Cambridgeshire County Council, for their co-operation and assistance in the execution of this project.

Summary

Site name and address:	Land to the rear of 171-173 High Barns, Ely, Cambs		
County:	Cambridgeshire	District:	East Cambridgeshire
Village/town:	Ely	Parish:	Ely
Planning reference:	08/00899/FUL	NGR:	TL 5462 8111
Client name and address:	Sanctuary Group, St Mary's Lodge, St Mary's Street, Ely, CB7 4EY		
Nature of work:	New housing	Former land use:	Garages
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.1629m ²	Size of area investigated:	c. 73m ²
Project no.:	HN803	Event no:	ECB3178
Organisation:	Heritage Network	Site Director:	David Hillelson
Project type, methods etc.:	Evaluation	Archive recipient:	Cambridgeshire Archaeological Store
Start of work	20/10/2009	Finish of work	22/10/2009
Related HMR Nos:	n/a	Periods represented:	
Oasis UID	heritage1-59003	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 six new houses with associated works, The Heritage Network was commissioned by the developers to undertake a programme of archaeological evaluation in advance of development.

The archaeological evaluation of the present site revealed no evidence for archaeological features, deposits or finds.

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

1. Introduction

1.1 This report has been prepared on the instructions of the Sanctuary Group, as part of the archaeological evaluation of a development site located to the rear of 171 – 173 High Barns, Ely, Cambridgeshire.

1.2 The investigation has been a requirement of the planning consent granted by East Cambridgeshire District Council (ECDC) (ref. 08/00899/FUL), 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 09/12/2008) 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 April 2009.

1.3 The site, centred on NGR TL 5462 8111, lies to the west of High Barns. It is bounded to the north by properties on Lynton Close, to the west by properties on Lynton Drive and to the south by a car park on New Barns Avenue. The study area is presently occupied by 52 lock-up garages; the development proposes the construction of six houses with associated external works.

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 present site is located to the north of the historic centre of the city and forms part of a housing estate built in the 1950s. The ground is flat and lies at approximately 15mAOD.

2.2 Locally the soils are unsurveyed, but those immediately surrounding the city belong to the Hanslope Association (411d), described as *Slowly permeable calcareous clayey soils. Some slowly permeable non-calcareous clayey soils. Slight risk of water erosion* (SSEW 1983).

2.3 The natural geology comprises Kimmeridge Clay with a capping of Lower Greensand (Hall 1996, p.30). It was characterised in the trenches as a firm yellowish brown (10YR 5/6) sandy clay.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.4 The site lies on the northern side of Ely, to the north of the city centre. Evidence of activity from the Neolithic period onwards has been identified in the immediate vicinity of the study area.

2.5 An archaeological evaluation near Prickwillow Road (CHER 11967), approximately 400m to the east, revealed a feature containing late Neolithic flint and pottery and a scatter of Bronze Age pottery. A cropmark of a Bronze Age barrow (CHER 06136) is located in open land on the eastern edge of the town, approximately 500m to the north-east. An associated burial of a child about 9 years old, with accompanying beaker, was excavated in the 1950s. Cropmarks of a rectilinear enclosure, which may mark a prehistoric or Roman settlement (CHER 07177) have been identified approximately 200m to the north. They have now been destroyed by housing development.

2.6 The remains of an Iron Age and Roman settlement (CHER CB14805) were revealed during excavations on the north-western side of Prickwillow Road, approximately 350m to the north-east. It appears to have been occupied between the 3rd century BC and the 4th century AD. A series of drainage ditches of late Iron Age and early Roman date (CHER 11967), possibly associated with the fields around the settlement, were encountered during excavations on land off Prickwillow Road in 1997. The drainage system was superseded by a driveway dated to the 1st or 2nd century AD. Further evidence for Iron Age and Roman activity, in the form of pottery sherds, was recorded during an archaeological evaluation ahead of a housing development at High Barns (CHER 10259).

2.7 Saxon remains from this area include a cemetery uncovered on the present housing estate in 1959 (CHER 02074) and a series of Roman or Saxon ditches uncovered during an archaeological evaluation at Larkfield Road/High Barns (CHER 11906). Ely cathedral, 1km to the south-west, has early medieval origins.

METHODOLOGY

2.8 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.

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

2.10 Three trenches were opened using a JCB fitted with a 1.60m 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.

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

RESULTS

2.12 The present site comprised an irregular square, with garages lining the south-western south-eastern and north-eastern sides and a central block of garages extending south-eastwards from the north-western boundary (Figure 2). Access was via the south-eastern corner.

Trench 1

2.13 Trench 1 was located to the north-east of the central block. It measured 15.30m x 1.60m and was aligned north-west to south-east.

2.14 The stratigraphy in the trench comprised a layer of tarmac, 0.06m thick, above a gravel levelling layer, 0.15m thick. Below this were two patchy layers of contaminated natural sandy clay. The upper layer was greenish black (Gley 1 2.5/10Y) and measured 0.10m in depth. The lower level was a dark greyish green (Gley 1 4/10GY) which measured over 0.25m in depth. Below these layers was the clean natural yellowish brown (10YR 5/6) sandy clay. A sondage was excavated at the north-western end of the trench to investigate the contaminated layers further. No original topsoil was observed within the trench.

2.15 No archaeological features, deposits or finds were observed within this trench.

Trench data:

Length (m):	15.30	Width (m):	1.60	Maximum Depth (m):	1.20	Orientation	NW – SE
Level at NW End of Trench (mOD)		Top	21.52	Level at SE End of Trench (mOD)		Top	21.51
		Base	20.68			Base	21.16
Context	Type	Description	Dimensions (m)				
			Length	Width	Depth		
	Layer	Tarmac surface	15.30 +	1.60 +	0.06		
	Layer	Gravel levelling	15.30 +	1.60 +	0.15		
	Layer	Greenish black (Gley 1 2.5/10Y) sandy clay. Contaminated	-	-	0.10		
	Layer	Dark greenish grey (Gley 1 4/10GY) sandy clay. Contaminated	-	-	0.25 +		
	Layer	Yellowish brown (10YR 5/6) sandy clay. Natural geology	-	-	-		

Trench 2

2.16 Trench 2 was located to the south-east of the central block. It measured 15.40m x 1.60m and was aligned approximately north-east to south-west.

2.17 The stratigraphy in the trench was similar to that observed in Trench 1 and comprised a layer of tarmac over a gravel levelling layer. Below this was a layer of dark greenish grey (Gley 1 4/10GY) contaminated clay which overlay the yellowish brown (10YR 5/6) natural sandy clay. No original topsoil was observed within the trench.

2.18 No archaeological features, deposits or finds were observed within this trench.

Trench data:

Length (m):	15.40	Width (m):	1.60	Maximum Depth (m):	0.58	Orientation	NE-SW
Level at NE End of Trench (mOD)		Top	21.45	Level at SW End of Trench (mOD)		Top	21.33
		Base	20.84			Base	20.72
Context	Type	Description	Dimensions (m)				
			Length	Width	Depth		
	Layer	Tarmac	15.40 +	1.60 +	0.06		
	Layer	Gravel levelling layer	15.40 +	1.60 +	0.25		
	Layer	Dark greenish grey (Gley 1 4/10GY) sandy clay. Contaminated	-	-	0.35 +		
	Layer	Yellowish brown (10YR 5/6) sandy clay. Natural geology.	-	-	-		

Trench 3

2.19 Trench 3 was located to the south-west of the central block. It measured 15.20m x 1.60m and was aligned approximately north-west to south-east.

2.20 The stratigraphy in the trench was similar to that observed in Trenches 1 and 2 and comprised a layer of tarmac above a gravel levelling layer. Below this was a layer of dark greenish grey (Gley 1 4/10GY) contaminated clay which overlay the yellowish brown (10YR 5/6) natural sandy clay. No original topsoil was observed within the trench.

2.21 No archaeological features, deposits or finds were observed within this trench.

Trench data:

Length (m):	15.20	Width (m):	1.60	Maximum Depth (m):	0.58	Orientation	NW-SE
Level at NW End of Trench (mOD)		Top	21.39	Level at SE End of Trench (mOD)		Top	21.44
		Base	20.96			Base	20.95
Context	Type	Description	Dimensions (m)				
			Length	Width	Depth		
	Layer	Tarmac	15.20 +	1.60 +	0.06		
	Layer	Gravel levelling layer	15.20 +	1.60 +	0.35		
	Layer	Dark greenish grey (Gley 1 4/10GY) sandy clay. Contaminated	-	-	0.10 +		

Length (m):	15.20	Width (m):	1.60	Maximum Depth (m):	0.58	Orientation	NW-SE		
Level at NW End of Trench (mOD)			Top	21.39	Level at SE End of Trench (mOD)			Top	21.44
			Base	20.96				Base	20.95
Context	Type	Description	Dimensions (m)						
			Length	Width	Depth				
	Layer	Yellowish brown (10YR 5/6) sandy clay. Natural geology.	-	-	-				

3. Discussion

3.1 The site lies within a significant archaeological landscape, with evidence from the Neolithic period onwards within 500m. Three trenches were excavated in order to investigate the archaeological potential of the present site. No archaeological features, deposits or finds were observed within the trenches.

3.2 The trench sections demonstrated that the natural topsoil had been removed, probably during the construction of the High Barns housing estate in the 1950s. The stratigraphy in all three trenches was similar and comprised tarmac and gravel levelling above the natural clay. Contamination, probably the result of the site's present use as garages, was present below the gravel levelling layer in all three trenches.

Conclusion

3.3 The archaeological evaluation of the present site revealed no evidence for archaeological features, deposits or finds.

3.4 The fieldwork has demonstrated that the original stratigraphy has been removed, with modern tarmac and a levelling layer lying directly on the natural geology.

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

Confidence Rating

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

3.7 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

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Winter, M. 2009, *Rear of 171-173 High Barns, Ely, Cambs. Project Design: Archaeological Evaluation*. Heritage Network

5. Illustrations

Figure 1 Site location

Figure 2 Site layout

Plate 1 Trench 1 looking north-west

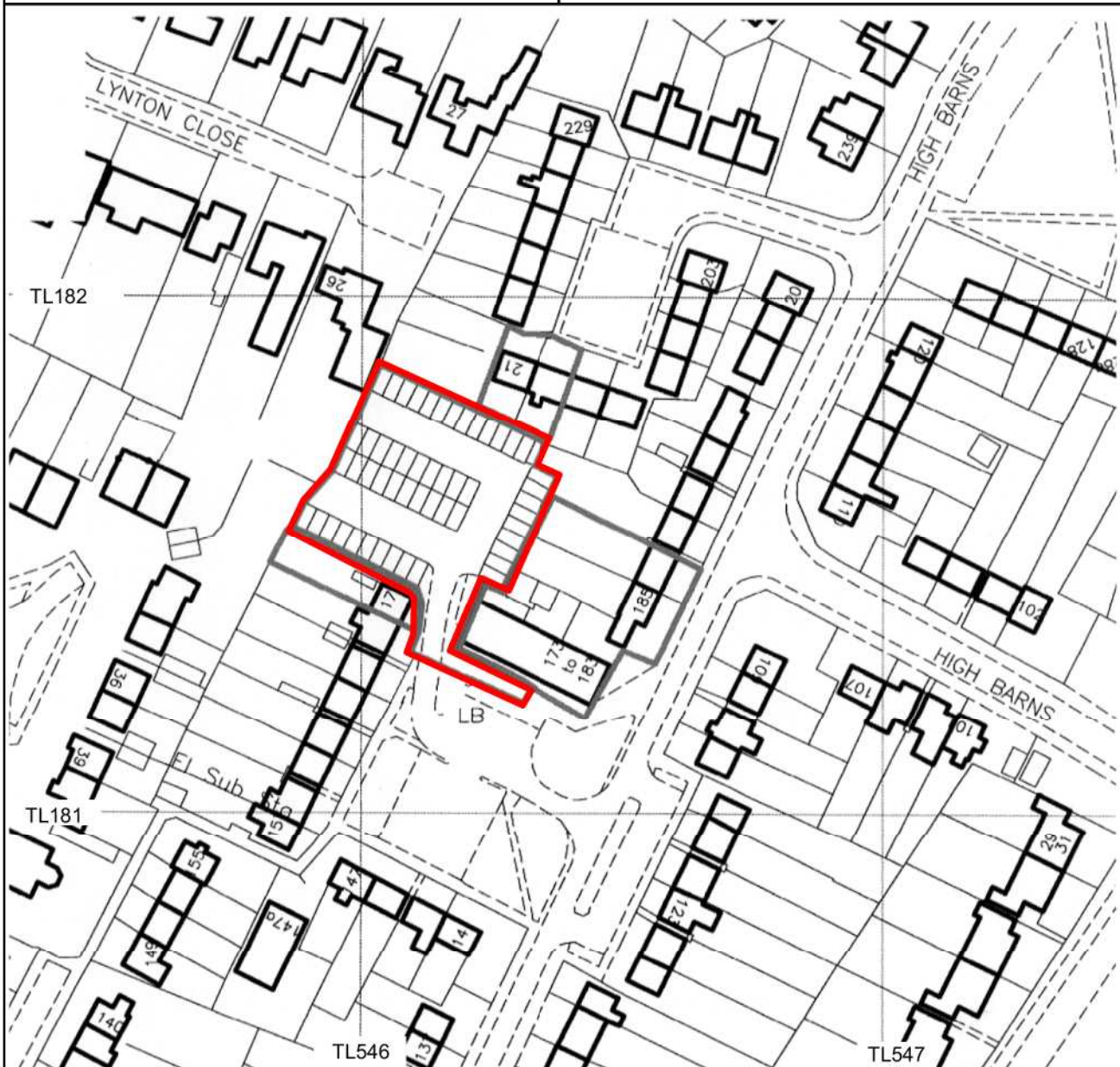
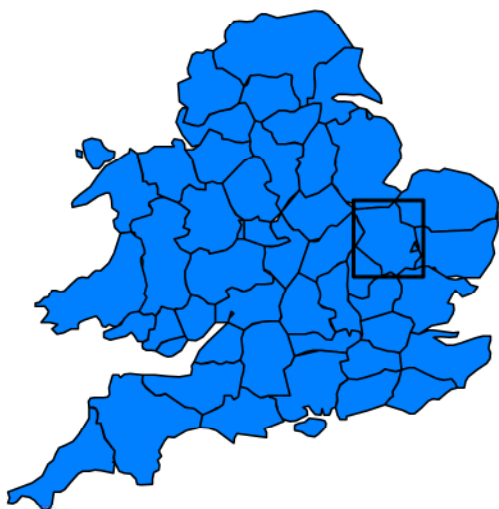
Plate 2 Trench 2 looking south-west

Plate 3 Trench 3 looking north-west

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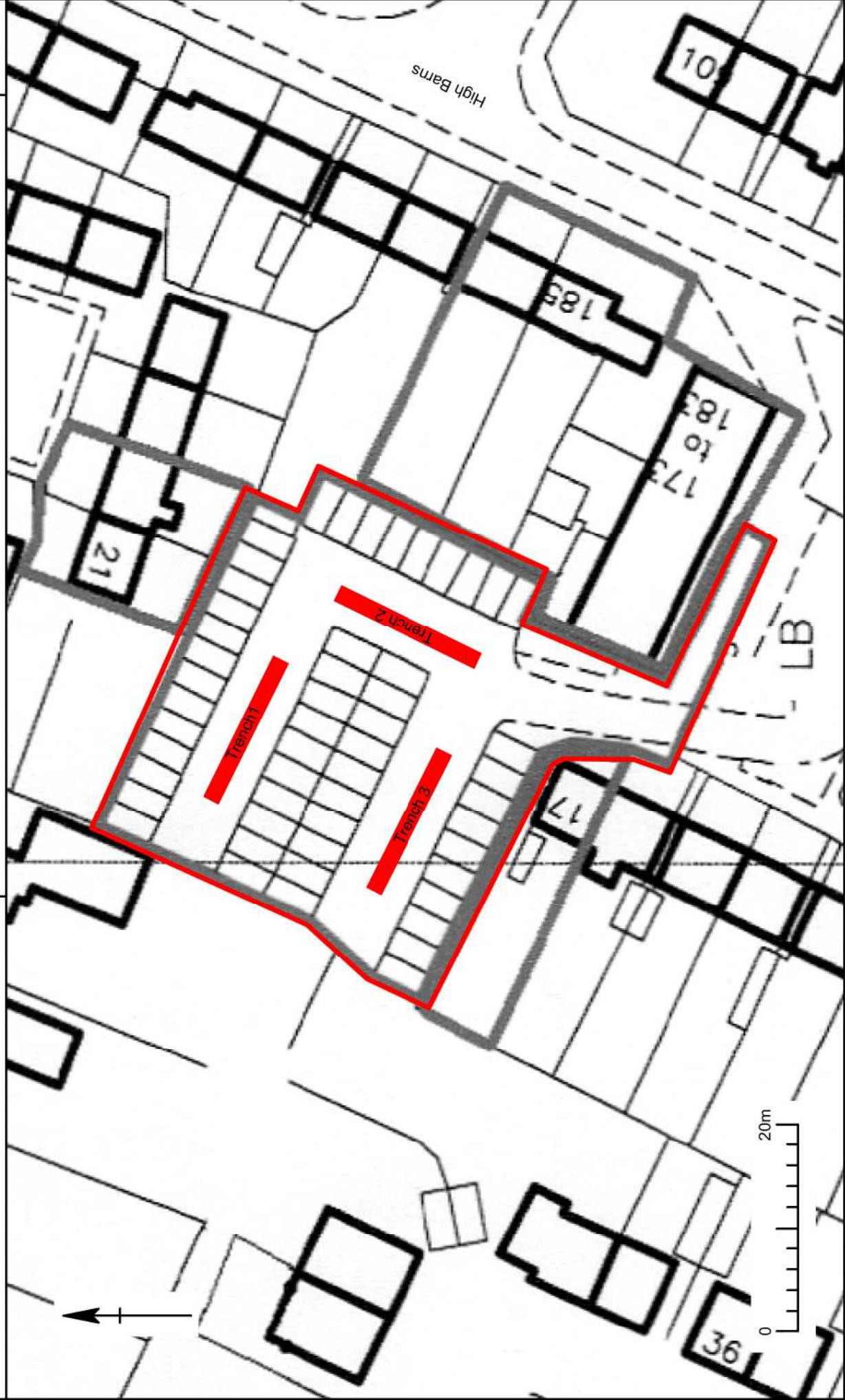


Site Location

Scale 1:1250

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Figure 1



Site Layout



Plate 1: Trench 1, looking north-west



Plate 2: Trench 2, looking south-west



Plate 3: Trench 3, looking north-west

Appendix

OASIS Data Entry Form

OASIS ID: heritage1-59003

Project details

Project name	Land to the rear of 171 - 173 High Barns, Ely Cambs
Short description of the project	In order to determine the archaeological risk posed by a proposal to construct six new houses with associated works, The Heritage Network was commissioned by the developers to undertake a programme of archaeological evaluation in advance of development. The archaeological evaluation of the present site revealed no evidence for archaeological features, deposits or finds.
Project dates	Start: 20-10-2009 End: 22-10-2009
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	HN803 - Contracting Unit No.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 3 - Built over
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	'Sample Trenches'
Development type	Urban residential (e.g. flats, houses, 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 EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE ELY Land to the rear of 171-173 High Barns
Study area	1629.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TL 5462 8111 52.4057086582 0.273254117474 52 24 20 N 000 16 23 E Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Heritage Network
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	Heritage Network
Project director/manager	David Hillelson
Project supervisor	Mark Winter
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Sanctuary Group

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Cambridgeshire Archaeological Store
Digital Archive ID	ECB3178
Digital Media available	'Images vector','Text'

Paper Archive recipient Cambridgeshire County Archaeological Store
Paper Archive ID ECB3178
Paper Media available 'Miscellaneous Material','Photograph','Plan','Report','Section'

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title Rear of 171-173 High Barns, Ely: Archaeological Evaluation
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Other bibliographic details Report Number 563
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Description A4 comb bound booklet; 8 pages of text; 2 figures; 3 photographic plates