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**136 LYNN ROAD, ELY, CAMBRIDGESHIRE
AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION**

CHER NO. 3758

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NGR: TL 5438 8110	Report No: 4072
District: East Cambridgeshire	Site Code: AS1486
Approved: Claire Halpin MfA	Project No: P4794
Signed:	Date: May 2012

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OASIS SUMMARY SHEET

Project details			
Project name	136 Lynn Road, Ely, Cambridgeshire.		
<p><i>In May 2012, Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) conducted an archaeological evaluation at 136 Lynn Road, Ely, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 5438 8110). The evaluation was undertaken in advance of the proposed demolition of two bungalows and the construction of seven new dwellings. It was required by Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team, as advisors to the local planning authority, in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning approval (East Cambs DC Ref. 09/00783/FUL).</i></p> <p><i>The site lies in an area of archaeological potential on the eastern side of Lynn Road, and on the northern side of Ely. It lies on the northern part of the former fenland 'island', at a height of c.21m AOD. The Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record records the presence of a rich archaeological landscape, within and surrounding Ely, but this northern edge of the settlement has seen relatively limited past archaeological investigation. Investigations in advance of the construction of the Ely bypass did reveal significant Neolithic/Bronze Age finds scatters and sites identifying occupation in the area west of Lynn Road (HER ECB385). To the north east, interconnected cropmark enclosures believed to be of later prehistoric or Roman date lie some 350m from the site at High Barns (HER NCB8653), with a pagan Saxon inhumation cemetery to the south (HER MCB2641).</i></p> <p><i>In the event no archaeological features or finds were present. All three trenches, and in particular Trenches 2A and 2A, revealed evidence of truncation and modern disturbance. No residual finds were recovered.</i></p>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	8 th -9 th May 2012		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	N	Future work	N
P. number	P4794	Site code	AS1486
Type of project	An archaeological evaluation		
Site status	None		
Current land use	Two bungalows & associated gardens/outbuildings and areas of hard-standing		
Planned development	Demolition of two bungalows & the construction of 7 new dwellings		
Main features (+dates)	None		
Significant finds (+dates)	None		
Project location			
County/ District/ Parish	Cambridgeshire	East Cambs	Ely
HER/ SMR for area	Cambridge Historic Environment Record (CHER)		
Post code (if known)	CB6 1DE		
Area of site	c.1967.2m ²		
NGR	TL 5438 8110		
Height AOD (max/ min)	c.21m AOD		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Team		
Project supervisor/s	Stuart Rathbone		
Funded by	M Rogerson Ltd		
Full title	136 Lynn Road, Ely, Cambridgeshire. An Archaeological Evaluation		
Authors	Stuart Rathbone and Megan Stoakley		
Report no.	4072		
Date (of report)	May 2012		

136 LYNN ROAD, ELY, CAMBRIDGESHIRE AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

SUMMARY

In May 2012, Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) conducted an archaeological evaluation at 136 Lynn Road, Ely, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 5438 8110). The evaluation was undertaken in advance of the proposed demolition of two bungalows and the construction of seven new dwellings. It was required by Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team, as advisors to the local planning authority, in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning approval (East Cambs DC Ref. 09/00783/FUL).

The site lies in an area of archaeological potential on the eastern side of Lynn Road, and on the northern side of Ely. It lies on the northern part of the former fenland 'island', at a height of c.21m AOD. The Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record records the presence of a rich archaeological landscape, within and surrounding Ely, but this northern edge of the settlement has seen relatively limited past archaeological investigation. Investigations in advance of the construction of the Ely bypass did reveal significant Neolithic/Bronze Age finds scatters and sites identifying occupation in the area west of Lynn Road (HER ECB385). To the north east, interconnected cropmark enclosures believed to be of later prehistoric or Roman date lie some 350m from the site at High Barns (HER NCB8653), with a pagan Saxon inhumation cemetery to the south (HER MCB2641).

In the event no archaeological features or finds were present. All three trenches, and in particular Trenches 2A and 2A, revealed evidence of truncation and modern disturbance. No residual finds were recovered.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In May 2012, Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) conducted an archaeological evaluation at 136 Lynn Road, Ely, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 5438 8110). The evaluation was undertaken in advance of the proposed demolition of two bungalows and the construction of seven new dwellings. It was required by Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team, as advisors to the local planning authority, in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning approval (East Cambs DC Ref. 09/00783/FUL). It was commissioned by Mr David Godfrey on behalf of M Rogerson Ltd.

1.2 The evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a brief issued by Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team (CCC HET; Kasia Gdaniec, dated 7th March 2012) and a written scheme of investigation

(specification) prepared by AS (dated 13th March 2012) and approved by HET. The project conformed to the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) *Code of Conduct and Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (revised 2008), as well as the document *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003).

1.3 The evaluation aims to determine the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains liable to be threatened by the proposed development.

Planning policy context

1.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2012) states that those parts of the historic environment that have significance because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest are heritage assets. The NPPF aims to deliver sustainable development by ensuring that policies and decisions that concern the historic environment recognise that heritage assets are a non-renewable resource, take account of the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits of heritage conservation, and recognise that intelligently managed change may sometimes be necessary if heritage assets are to be maintained for the long term. The NPPF requires applications to describe the significance of any heritage asset, including its setting that may be affected in proportion to the asset's importance and the potential impact of the proposal.

1.5 The NPPF aims to conserve England's heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, with substantial harm to designated heritage assets (i.e. listed buildings, scheduled monuments) only permitted in exceptional circumstances when the public benefit of a proposal outweighs the conservation of the asset. The effect of proposals on non-designated heritage assets must be balanced against the scale of loss and significance of the asset, but non-designated heritage assets of demonstrably equivalent significance may be considered subject to the same policies as those that are designated. The NPPF states that opportunities to capture evidence from the historic environment, to record and advance the understanding of heritage assets and to make this publicly available is a requirement of development management. This opportunity should be taken in a manner proportionate to the significance of a heritage asset and to impact of the proposal, particularly where a heritage asset is to be lost.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE (Figs.1 & 2)

2.1 Ely comprises an island surrounded by fenland or marshland in the East Cambridgeshire district of Cambridgeshire. It is a cathedral city located c.23km north-north-east of Cambridge and c.6km to the north-west of Soham. Witchford is located c.2km to the west, Little Thetford c.3km to the south, Prickwillow

c.6.5km to the east and Little Downham c.4.8km to the north. Fenland surrounding the city includes Middle Fen c.3.25km to the south-east, Cawdle Fen c.3km to the south and the Wentworth Sedge Fen c.4km to the west.

2.2 The site is located in an urban residential suburb in the northern part of Ely. Lynn Road is orientated north-south, connecting with the B141 Downham Road from the north-west and the B1382 Prickwillow Road from the north-east c.600m to the south.

2.3 The site consists of a small T – shaped parcel of land currently occupied by two 1980's bungalows set well back from the main road and accessed by a wide driveway. Each bungalow has a detached garage. It comprises an area of c.1967.2m².

3 THE EVIDENCE

3.1 Topography, Geology and Soils

3.1.1 The Isle of Ely is surrounded by low-lying fenland or marshland. Principal rivers in the region, including the river Great Ouse to the east, the Witham, the Nene and the Welland feed into the fens, drawing water from an area of c.16,000km². Since the 17th century the fenland has been artificially drained and protected with drainage banks and pumps. The site lies in the northern part of the fenland basin and is located on relatively level ground at a height of c.21m AOD. To the west the land gradually descends to c.5m AOD, and to the east descends gradually to c.0m AOD.

3.1.2 The site is located on a solid geology of Kimmeridge Clay which is overlain by a drift geology of Lower Greensand capped by Boulder Clay (BGS 1978). A recent archaeological evaluation conducted c.800m to the south of the site revealed Boulder Clay at a depth of c.0.45m (Schofield & Thompson 2011, 9). Soils of the local area comprise the Hanslope Association, which are described as slowly, permeable calcareous clayey soils and some slowly permeable non-calcareous clayey soils, all of which are at slight risk of water erosion (SSEW 1983).

3.2 Archaeological and Historical Background

Prehistoric

3.2.1 By the Neolithic period the fen edge comprised alder and sedge carr with periodic inundations depositing peat and silt, while the higher ground remained partially wooded. Evidence of late Neolithic to early Bronze Age settlement including pits, post holes and ditches was recorded during an archaeological evaluation on Broad Street c.1km to the south of the site (McConnell *et al* 2006).

An archaeological evaluation (ECB385) conducted on land off the A10 Ely Bypass c.500m to the north-west-west of the site revealed two clusters of pits from which two Bronze Age vessels were retrieved (CB15536) (Robinson & Bray 1998). Excavations at Prickwillow Road c.750m to the south of the site revealed evidence of a rural Iron Age settlement site in the north-west corner of the site, with numerous middens, pits, post holes and ditches along with crouched inhumations, a dog burial and a large quantity of pottery and beads (CB14805; Meadows 1999).

Romano-British

3.2.2 During the Roman period there was more intensive occupation of the fenland due to a reduction of flooding episodes. Initially small-scale colonisation took place followed by significant expansion through greater centralised authority. Roman pottery has been discovered within the grounds of Ely Cathedral c.1.25km to the south of the site (CB15021 & 10170B), while an iron spear/sword of Roman date was found in the river Great Ouse (CB15662) c.2km to the south-east of the site. Several high-status objects have been discovered in Ely including bronze figurines and an inscribed lamp (CHERs 07243, 07309 & 07183) although their precise location is not known. An archaeological excavation at Prickwillow Road c.750m to the south-west of the site revealed evidence of a Roman settlement including a field system, a 2nd to 4th century burial cemetery, and an oven along a large quantity of coins, tools and jewellery (Aitkins & Mudd 2003). A Roman pottery sherd was also recovered during an archaeological evaluation (ECB385) c.500m to the north-west-west of the site (Robinson & Bray 1998).

Saxon

3.2.3 Ely became an important focus in the 6th and 7th centuries (Sutcliffe 2009). The surrounding area was likely the territory of a tribe called the *Gwyre* recorded by Bede in the early 8th century AD. The monastery at Ely was founded in 673 AD by Ethelreda, daughter of Anna and king of the Angles, who became the first abbess of a community of c.40-50 monks and nuns. Recent excavations indicate Middle Saxon occupation in the area was extensive and extended c.2km from the West Fen to the river Great Ouse in the east. A large inhumation cemetery (CHER 02074) was discovered at the High Barns housing estate c.300m to the east of the site. Numerous artefacts were recovered with the inhumations including swords, spears and shields as well as square-headed and long brooches (Meaney 1964).

Medieval

3.2.4 The Domesday book records Ely as comprising 40 villagers, 28 cottagers and 20 slaves and the community practiced mixed arable farming, fishing, animal husbandry and viniculture. Ely Abbey and the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity

(CHER 07322, SAM 68) located c.1.5km to the south of the site were constructed between 1083 and 1350 and the abbey received cathedral status in 1109. Evidence of medieval archaeological remains are scarce within the vicinity of the site and include ridge and furrow (CHER 10097) recorded at Chevington Place during an archaeological watching brief and evaluation (ECB1194) c.350m to the south-west of the site (Hunter & Miller 1991). Medieval pottery and tile fragments were also recovered, while a Grimston ware ewer (MCB 16086) was also recorded c.250m to the south-west of the site.

Post-medieval & Modern

3.2.5 A mid-19th century cemetery (CHER 12338) and mortuary chapel (MCB17243) are located c.350m to the south-east of the site. A mill mound (CHER 07176) of unknown post-medieval date is situated within the cemetery c.600m to the south-east of the site. A spigot mortar emplacement (CB15084) situated on Lynn Road c.100m to the north of the site.

Cartographic Sources

3.2.6 Bidwell's 1851 Map of Ely (Fig. 3) depicts the site as open. The 1927 Ordnance Survey map depicts allotment gardens to the south of the site, which remained open. The area of the site is labelled 'Little London'. The 1938 – 1953 Ordnance Survey maps record significant residential development in the area. The site comprises two rectangular buildings to the north and south of a trackway. Further urban residential development is depicted in the vicinity of the site on the 1971 Ordnance Survey map. The site remains unchanged.

4 METHODOLOGY (Trial trenching)

4.1 Two trenches were excavated using a mechanical 180° excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket (Fig. 2). The trench locations were approved by CCC HET. Trench 1 (24 x 1.6m) was located along the side of the driveway and Trench 2 was located in front of the bungalows. The second trench was divided into two sections, A (15 x 1.6m) & B (10 x 1.6m), to maintain access to the southernmost bungalow.

4.2 Topsoil and subsoil were mechanically excavated under close archaeological supervision. Exposed surfaces were cleaned by hand and examined for archaeological features. Deposits were recorded using *pro forma* recording sheets, drawn to scale, and photographed as appropriate. Excavated spoil was searched for finds and the trenches were scanned by a metal detector.

5 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS

Individual trench descriptions are presented below:

Trench 1 (Fig. 2)

<i>Sample section: west north west end, east south east facing</i> <i>0.00 = 21.35m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.10m	L1000	Topsoil. Brownish grey, loosely compacted, silty clay.
0.10 – 0.62m	L1001	Demolition Rubble. Whole and half bricks in a black, loosely compacted, sandy silt.
0.62 – 0.68m	L1002	Foundation Layer. Greyish white, friable, sandy mortar.
0.68 – 0.85m	L1003	Redeposited Natural. Yellowish brown, firmly compacted, sandy clay with frequent CBM and pockets of brownish grey silty clay with modern pottery and CBM.
0.85 – 0.89m	L1010	Natural. Orange brown, firmly compacted, sandy clay.
0.89m+	L1011	Natural. Greensand.

<i>Sample section: East south east end, north north east facing.</i> <i>0.00 = 21.39m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.04m	L1000	Topsoil. As above.
0.04 – 0.38m	L1004	Redeposited Natural. Yellowish brown, softly compacted, sandy clay.
0.38 – 0.64m	L1005	Buried Garden Soil. Blackish grey, loosely compacted, sandy clay.
0.64m +	L1010	Natural. As above.

Description: Trench 1 contained demolition rubble and levelling deposits in its eastern half, and levelling deposits in its western end. There were no archaeological features. The Greensand was encountered at the extreme west of the trench.

Trench 2A (Fig. 2)

<i>Sample section: middle of trench, eastern side, facing west north west</i> <i>0.00 = 21.42m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.19m	L1000	Topsoil. As above.
0.19m+	L1010	Natural. As above.

Description: Trench 2A contained no archaeological features and the ground level appeared to have been greatly reduced due to previous works on the site. This trench was adjacent to the modern bungalow.

Trench 2B (Fig. 2)

<i>Sample section: middle of trench, eastern side, facing west north west</i> <i>0.00 = 21.37m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.27m	L1000	Topsoil. As above.
0.27m +	L1010	Natural. As above.

Description: Trench 2B contained no archaeological features and the ground level appeared to have been greatly reduced due to previous works on the site. This trench was also adjacent to the modern bungalow.

6 CONFIDENCE RATING

6.1 It is not felt that any factors inhibited the recognition of archaeological features or finds present.

7 DEPOSIT MODEL

7.1 The ground level in Trenches 2A and 2B appeared to have been greatly reduced due to previous works on the site, and these trenches were adjacent to the modern bungalow.

7.2 Trench 1 also revealed modern ground disturbance with demolition rubble (L1001) overlying a foundation layer (L1002), which in turn overlay re-deposited natural with modern pottery and CBM (L1003). The natural sandy clay (L1010) was recorded at a depth of 0.85m at the extreme western end of the trench, and it overlay Greensand (L1011; 0.89m below the present day ground surface)

8 DISCUSSION

8.1 The site lies in an area of archaeological potential on the eastern side of Lynn Road, and on the northern side of Ely. It lies on the northern part of the former fenland 'island', at a height of c.19m AOD. The Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record records the presence of a rich archaeological landscape, within and surrounding Ely, but this northern edge of the settlement has seen relatively limited past archaeological investigation. Investigations in advance of the construction of the Ely bypass did reveal significant Neolithic/Bronze Age finds scatters and sites identifying occupation in the area west of Lynn Road (HER ECB385). To the north east, interconnected cropmark enclosures believed to be of later prehistoric or Roman date lie some 350m from the site at High Barns (HER NCB8653), with a pagan Saxon inhumation cemetery to the south (HER MCB2641).

8.2 In the event no archaeological features or finds were present. All three trenches, and in particular Trenches 2A and 2A, revealed evidence of truncation and modern disturbance. No residual finds were recovered.

9 DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE

Archive records, with an inventory, will be deposited with any donated finds from the site at the Cambridgeshire County Store. The archive will be quantified, ordered, indexed, cross-referenced and checked for internal consistency. In addition to the overall site summary, it will be necessary to produce a summary of the artefactual and ecofactual data.

10 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions Limited would like to thank Mr David Godfrey for commissioning the project on behalf of his client, M Rogerson Ltd, and for his assistance.

AS is pleased to acknowledge the advice and input of Ms Kasia Gdaniec of Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team, and the staff of the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record

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www.british-history.ac.uk

www.heritage-gateway.org.uk

<http://wtp2.appspot.com/wheresthepath.htm>

www.historicaldirectories.org

PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



1
Trench 1. Looking ESE.



2
Trench 1. Sample Section 1A, looking WNW.



3
Trench 1B. Sample Section 1B, looking SSW.



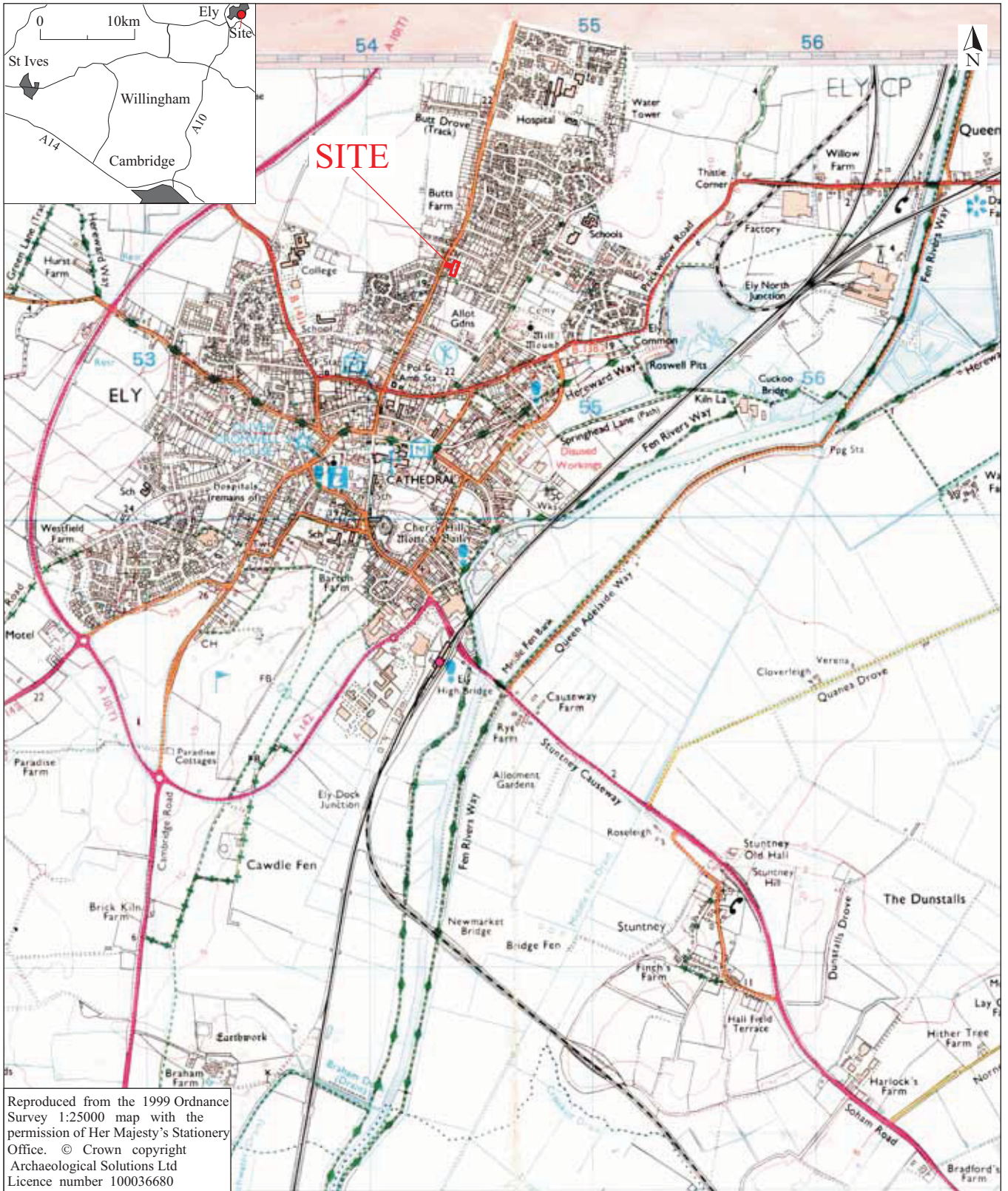
4
Trench 2A. Looking NNE.



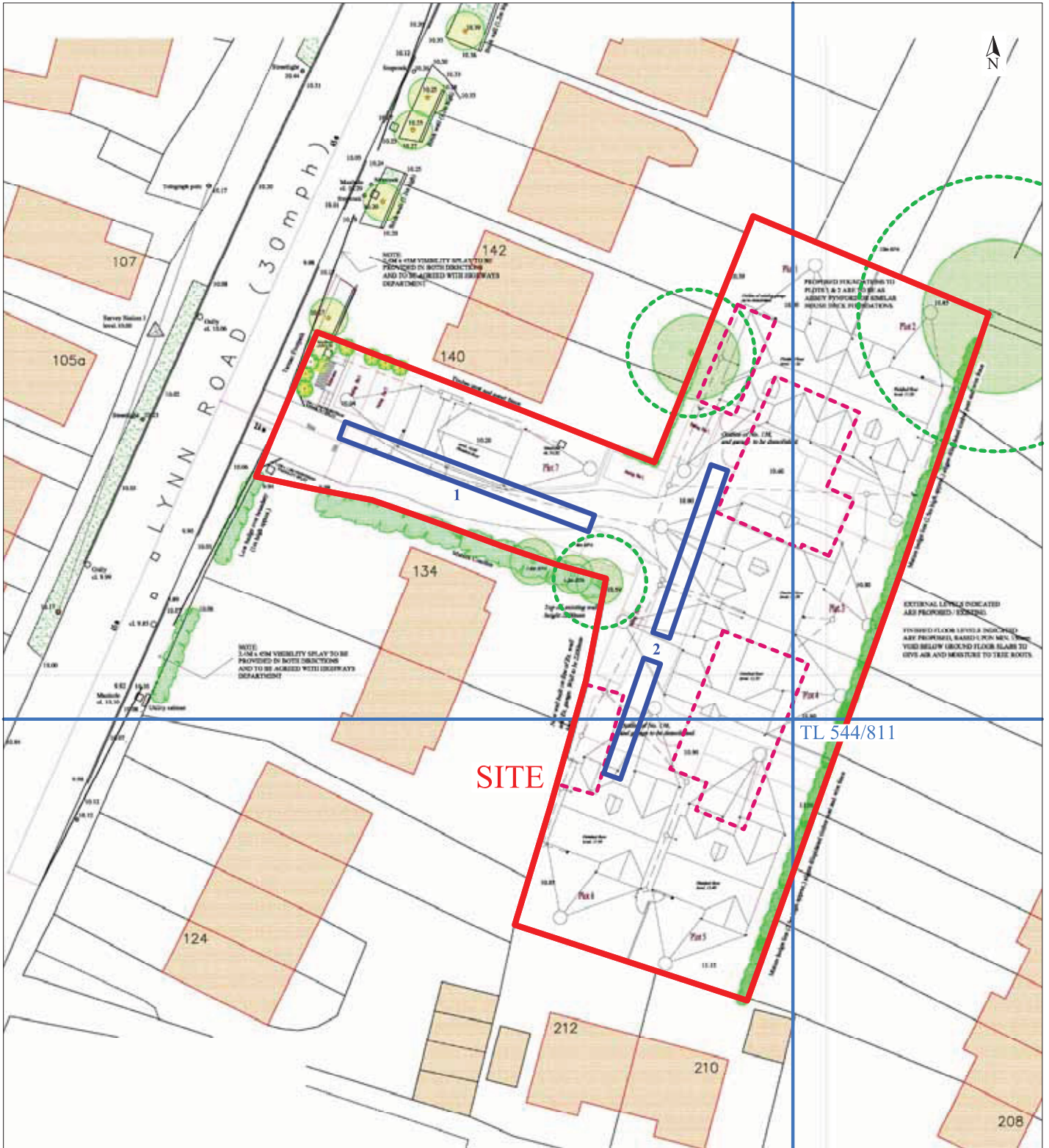
5
Trench 2A. Sample Section 2A, looking ESE.



6
Trench 2B. Looking NNE.



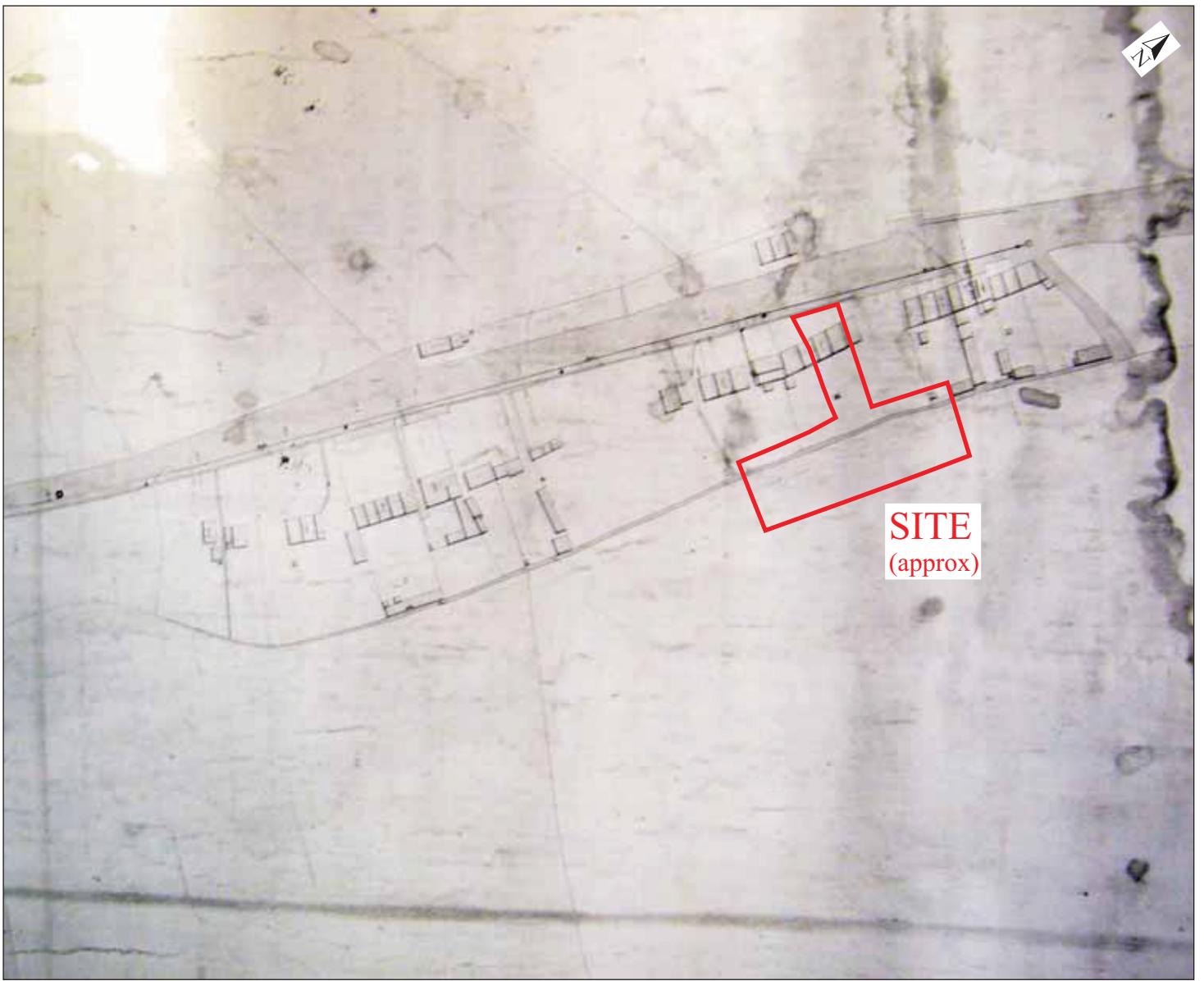
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Fig. 1 Site location plan
 Scale 1:25,000 at A4



- - - - Existing buildings
- - - - RPAs

0 25m

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Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan
 Scale 1:500 at A4



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Fig. 3 Charles Bidwell's map of Ely, 1851
Not to scale