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**LAND ADJACENT TO PETROL STATION, WISBECH
ROAD, LITTLEPORT, CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

CHER No. 3852

Authors: Samuel Egan (Fieldwork & report) Peter Thompson MA (Desk-based assessment)	
NGR: TL 5552 8750	Report No: 4162
District: East Cambridgeshire	Site Code:
Approved: Claire Halpin	Project No: 4989
Signed:	Date: October 2012

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OASIS SUMMARY SHEET

Project details			
Project name	<i>Land adjacent Petrol Station, Wisbech Road, Littleport</i>		
<p><i>In October 2012 Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out an archaeological evaluation on land adjacent to the Petrol Station, Wisbech Road, Littleport, Cambs (centroid point NGR TL 5720 4680). The evaluation was carried out in advance of the proposed construction of a new business park, and was prepared in support of a planning application by Signet Planning to the East Cambs District Council.</i></p> <p><i>An archaeological evaluation undertaken at 150 Wisbech Road immediately south of the site, revealed a series of shallow, close set parallel ditches, orientated north-east to south-west. They are thought to date to the late Iron Age to Roman periods and may be drainage ditches associated with an arable economy (McCall, Thompson & Davies 2010). Other Roman field systems are known in the area, along with a concentration of saltern sites around the course of the Old Croft River. Prehistoric finds have also been recovered in the vicinity.</i></p> <p><i>The current evaluation revealed a series of close set parallel ditches, a continuation of those recorded to the south. The ditches were parallel and generally orientated NE/SW. Towards the north of the site (Trenches 2 and 5) the ditches were orientated NW/SE. An abraded medieval (early 12th – 13th/14th century) sherd was found in F1009 (Tr.8). Late Iron Age (2g; Tr. 2 F1010 L1011) and Roman pottery (2g; Tr.1 F1026 L1027) was recovered during the evaluation of the Service Station site to the south.</i></p>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	October 2012		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	N	Future work	TBC
P. number	4989	Site code	
Type of project	Archaeological Evaluation		
Site status			
Current land use	Vacant land, formerly agricultural land now laid to grass		
Planned development	Large business park and associated infrastructure		
Main features (dates)	Parallel ditches		
Significant finds (dates)			
Project location			
County/ District/ Parish	Cambridgeshire	East Cambridgeshire	Littleport
HER/ SMR for area	Cambridgeshire HER (CHER)		
Post code (if known)	-		
Area of site	1.6ha		
NGR	TL 5552 8750		
Height AOD (max/ min)	3.7m AOD		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	Dan McConnell (CCC HET)		
Project supervisor/s	Samuel Egan		
Funded by	James Graven		
Full title	Land adjacent Petrol Station, Wisbech Road, Littleport, Cambridgeshire An Archaeological Evaluation		
Authors	Egan, S. & Thompson, P.		
Report no.	4162		
Date (of report)	October 2012		

LAND ADJACENT TO PETROL STATION, WISBECH ROAD, LITTLEPORT, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

SUMMARY

In October 2012, Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out an archaeological evaluation on land adjacent to Petrol Station, Wisbech Road, Littleport, Cambs (centre point NGR TL 5720 4680). The evaluation was carried out in advance of the proposed construction of a new business park ahead of submission of a planning application by Signet Planning to the East Cambs District Council.

An archaeological evaluation undertaken at 150 Wisbech Road immediately south of the site, revealed a series of shallow, close set parallel ditches, orientated north-east to south-west. They are thought to date to the late Iron Age to Roman periods and may be drainage ditches associated with an arable economy (McCall, Thompson & Davies 2010). Other Roman field systems are known in the area, along with a concentration of saltern sites around the course of the Old Croft River. Prehistoric finds have also been recovered in the vicinity.

The evaluation revealed a series of close set parallel ditches, a continuation of those recorded to the south. The latter were parallel and generally orientated NE/SW. Towards the north of the site (Trenches 2 and 5) the ditches were orientated NW/SE. The width of the ditches varied from 0.40 (Tr. 8 F1007) – 0.73m (Tr. 8 F1005), and their depths varied from 0.15m (Tr. 8 F1009) – 0.28m (Tr. 7 F1011). Finds were sparse. An abraded medieval (early 12th – 13th/14th century) sherd was found in F1009 (Tr.8). Late Iron Age (2g; Tr. 2 F1010 L1011) and Roman pottery (2g; Tr.1 F1026 L1027) was recovered during the evaluation of the Service Station site to the south.

Immediately adjacent (the Service Station site) and eastwards, at 98 – 120 Wisbech Road, Littleport, directly comparable ditches have been recorded during evaluations (McCall et al 2010 & Bush 2005), and a Romano-British field system has been recorded at Fen Drayton (1995). The ditches were relatively shallow, aligned in close proximity, and regularly spaced. They were likely drainage ditches associated with an arable economy, and may be associated with the growing of vines, fruit trees or even hops (Taylor 1975, 52; Roberts forthcoming).

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In October 2012, Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out an archaeological evaluation on land adjacent to the Petrol Station, Wisbech Road, Littleport, Cambs (centre point NGR TL 5720 4680). The evaluation was carried

out in advance of the proposed construction of a new business park, and was carried out in support of a planning application by Signet Planning to the East Cambs District Council.

1.2 The evaluation was carried out according to a brief issued by Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team (CCC HET) (Dan McConnell dated 4/09/2012), and a specification by AS (dated 10/09/2012), approved by CCC HET. The project adhered to appropriate sections of Gurney (2003) 'Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England', *East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 14*, and the Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct and Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (revised 2008).

1.3 The main aim of the archaeological evaluation was to determine the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains liable to be threatened by the proposed development. The evaluation is also aimed to identify buried soils and area of previous ground disturbance on the site.

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 Littleport is situated 10km north of Ely in the Cambridgeshire Fen. The site lies on the western edge of the town and is immediately adjacent (north-east) of a major roundabout where the A1101 meets the A10 (T). The site is bordered to the east by residential development fronting Meadow Court and to the south by a petrol station fronting Wisbech Road. The western side is bordered by the A10(T) while to the north of the site lies Black Bank Drove byway, beyond which is arable farmland.

3 METHODOLOGY (Desk-based assessment)

3.1 Archaeological databases

The Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (CHER) was consulted in order to identify any local archaeological finds or remains in the area that might be affected by the development. Sites within 1km of the site are listed in Appendix 1 and those of relevance are described below (Section 4.2).

4 THE EVIDENCE

4.1 Topography, geology and soils (Fig. 1)

4.1. The site lies at approximately 3.70m AOD on the north-western edge of the former fen island that is occupied by Littleport. The local soils are prone to periodic waterlogging and the geology comprises Glacial Till overlying Kimmeridge Clay.

4.2 Archaeological and historical background

Prehistoric <500,000 BC – AD 43

4.2.1 The wetland environment of the Fen has been suitable for human occupation from the earliest times with most of the evidence for the Littleport area coming from the Fen 'Island'. Lithic tools such as blades and scrapers, mainly dating to the Neolithic, have been found 250-350m south of the site (CHER 07191, 07192, 07193). Neolithic polished stone axe heads have also been recovered from approximately 600m to the north-west (CHER 07184, 07195). On the Fen Island, Neolithic flints and a quartzite pebble hammer were recovered during an archaeological evaluation at 80 Wisbech Road, some 550m to the east (Greene 2008). An excavation around Highfield Farm to the south of Littleport identified Neolithic ditches, a 'pond' containing Beaker pottery and flints, and an undated cremation burial (Dymond 1999). A Beaker period 'axe hammer' was found approximately 900m to the south-west of the site in a black peat field

(CHER 07219).

4.2.2 At the 80 Wisbech Road excavations in Littleport a dense cluster of pits, post-holes, and a ditch and gully thought to be late Bronze Age to early Iron Age were uncovered. A water lain clay layer was thought to be indicative of a contemporary area of standing water, while other deposits reflected periods of water inundation and peat encroachment. Pottery, daub, and environmental samples of heather and spelt wheat were also identified. A second phase of activity was found comprising Iron Age and undated features including dense clusters of pits. A ditch followed the contemporary edge of the fen, and another cut across it running into the fen, the pair yielding three sherds of late Iron Age pottery. A triangular loom weight was also recovered (Greene 2008, CHER MCB 17425).

Romano-British (AD 43 – 410)

4.2.3 There is a comparatively large amount of evidence for Roman activity in the environs of Littleport, mainly coming from the north side of the modern village. The area around the Old Croft River is of particular archaeological importance for this period because of the abundance of saltern sites which include an area of settlement around Camel Road (CHER 07261, 08425, 11066), and another to the north of the site, beyond the sewage works (CHER 07197). Roman pottery was found near the crop marks of three circular features approximately 300m south of the site, and may be indicative of further settlement (CHER 07196 & 07196A), and more pottery has been found to the north of the sewage works (CHER 07199).

4.2.4 An archaeological evaluation carried out 400m to the east at 98-120 Wisbech Road revealed a series of ditched features which formed two distinct periods of Romano-British field systems, and included an area of possible lazy beds and some undated tree throws (CHER MCB 18585). An archaeological evaluation undertaken at 150 Wisbech Road immediately south of the site, revealed a series of shallow, close set parallel ditches, orientated north-east to south-west. The ditches could not be readily traced from trench to trench but were broadly contemporary and part of the same ditch system. Finds were sparse, but late Iron Age and Roman pottery was recovered and the ditches were directly comparable with those ditches from the evaluation at 98-120 Wisbech Road. It is thought they were drainage ditches associated with an arable economy, possibly for the growing of vines, fruit trees or hops (McCall, Thompson & Davies 2010).

4.2.5 An archaeological evaluation carried out on land at 133-135 Wisbech Road, approximately 150m south-east of the site, encountered residual Roman brick and tile, but no archaeological features earlier than some Victorian drainage gullies, and it is thought that the area had always been marginal land prone to periodic flooding (CB 18585). An archaeological evaluation carried out at

Parson's Lane 1km to the east found no archaeological features, but identified some ditches serving as field or property boundaries that may have dated back to medieval or Roman times (O'Brien & Sutherland 2001; CHER 11920). Other undated boundary or drainage ditches were found in this area along with a small amount of residual prehistoric material (CHER MCB17512)

Anglo-Saxon (AD 411 – 1065)

4.2.6 In contrast to the Roman period there is little evidence of Anglo-Saxon remains and the origins of Littleport are obscure. The Ten Mile River which drains the Ouse at Littleport into Southerly Fen may be of late Saxon date.

Medieval (AD 1066 – 1539)

4.2.7 Littleport is first recorded in the Domesday Survey as a holding of the Abbot of Ely and having a population of 31 workers. The church of St George and St John is a Grade II* listed building dating from the early medieval period, although most of the surviving building is 15th century, and was restored in 1857 (CHER CB14890). Medieval finds from within 1km of the site mainly consist of isolated finds of one or two pottery sherds from further south (CHER 07191A, 07192A, 07193A) along with an area of ridge and furrow (CHER MCB16496).

Post-medieval to modern (AD 1540+)

4.2.5. During the 17th century land enclosure began in earnest with 2,500 acres enclosed in the first half of the century, but full enclosure was not carried out until 1840. An archaeological evaluation at 72 Victoria Street in Littleport, found a large ditch containing pottery of c.16th century date which might relate to illegal land enclosure (MCB17878). A number of WWII defences are located in the area with the two closest structures located south-west of the site comprising a spigot mortar base and an unknown structure, now destroyed (CHER MCB 16418, MCB 16480).

5 METHODOLOGY (Trial trenching)

5.1 Ten trenches of 40m x 1.8m were excavated using a tracked mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket (Fig. 2). The trench locations were approved by CCC HET. Trench 2 was divided into two for practical reasons.

5.2 Topsoil and undifferentiated overburden 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.

6 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS

Individual trench descriptions are presented below.

Trench 1 (Fig. 2)

<i>Sample Section 1A North-east end</i> <i>0.00 = 1.98m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.20m	L1001	Made Ground. Mid yellow brown, compact, sandy clay
0.20 – 0.31m	L1002	Subsoil. Mid orange brown, compact, sandy clay.
0.31m+	L1004	Natural. Mid orange, grey brown, compact, sandy clay.

<i>Sample Section 1B South-west end</i> <i>0.00 = 2.04m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.21m	L1001	Made Ground. As above.
0.21 – 0.33m	L1002	Subsoil. As above.
0.33m+	L1004	Natural. As above.

Description: A small discrete modern disturbance was observed in Trench 1.

Trench 2 (Figs. 2 & 4)

<i>Sample Section 2A south-west end</i> <i>0.00 = 1.99m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.22m	L1000	Topsoil. Mid grey brown, compact, sandy clay.
0.22 – 0.38m	L1002	Subsoil. As above Tr.1.
0.38m+	L1004	Natural. As above Tr.1.

<i>Sample Section 2B north-east end</i> <i>0.00 = 1.56m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.20m	L1000	Topsoil. As above.
0.20 – 0.48m	L1002	Subsoil. As above Tr.1.
0.48 – 0.57m	L1003	Alluvium. Mid blue grey clay with sparse flint.
0.57m+	L1004	Natural. As above Tr.1.

Description: Trench 2 contained Ditch F1013 which was orientated E/W. Two land drains were also observed.

Ditch 1013 was linear in plan (2m+ x 1.15m 0.30m), orientated E/W. It had steep sides and a flattish base. Its fill, L1014, was a compact, greyish mid brown sandy clay with sparse flint and chalk. It contained no finds.

Trench 3 (Fig. 2)

<i>Sample Section 3A north-east end</i> <i>0.00 = 2.26m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.28m	L1000	Topsoil. As above Tr.2.
0.28m+	L1004	Natural. As above Tr.1.

<i>Sample Section 3B south-west end</i> <i>0.00 = 2.23m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.37m	L1000	Topsoil. As above.
0.37m+	L1004	Natural. As above Tr.1.

Description: A modern land drain was observed in Trench 3.

Trench 4 (Fig. 2)

<i>Sample Section 4A south-east end</i> <i>0.00 = 2.17m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.30m	L1000	Topsoil. As above Tr.2.
0.30m+	L1004	Natural. As above Tr.1.

<i>Sample Section 4B north-west end</i> <i>0.00 = 2.22m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.42m	L1000	Topsoil. As above Tr.2.
0.42m+	L1004	Natural. As above Tr.1.

Description: Three ditches were recorded in Trench 4, and were a continuation of the ditches recorded elsewhere on site. They were excavated for the recovery of finds.

Trench 5 (Fig. 2)

<i>Sample Section 5A north-east end</i> <i>0.00 = 2.56m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.27m	L1000	Topsoil. As above Tr.2.
0.27m+	L1004	Natural. As above Tr.1.

<i>Sample Section 5B south-west end</i> <i>0.00 = 2.41m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.40m	L1000	Topsoil. As above.
0.40m+	L1004	Natural. As above Tr.1.

Description: Two ditches were recorded in Trench 5, and were a continuation of the ditches recorded elsewhere on site. They were excavated for the recovery of finds.

Trench 6 (Fig. 2)

<i>Sample Section 6A north-west end</i> <i>0.00 = 2.27m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.22m	L1001	Made Ground. As above Tr.1.
0.22 – 0.48m	L1002	Subsoil. As above Tr.1.
0.48m+	L1004	Natural. As above Tr.1.

<i>Sample Section 6B south-east end</i> <i>0.00 = 2.18m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.15m	L1000	Made Ground. As above Tr.1.
0.15 – 0.36m	L1002	Subsoil. As above Tr.1.
0.36m+	L1004	Natural. As above Tr.1.

Description: No archaeological features or finds were present in Trench 6.

Trench 7 (Fig. 2)

<i>Sample Section 7A north-east end</i> <i>0.00 = 2.07m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.31m	L1000	Topsoil. As above Tr.2.
0.31m+	L1004	Natural. As above Tr.1.

<i>Sample Section 7B south-west end</i> <i>0.00 = 2.35m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.12m	L1001	Made Ground. As above Tr.1.
0.12 – 0.32m	L1000	Topsoil. As above Tr.2.
0.32 – 0.49m	L1002	Subsoil. As above Tr.1.
0.49m+	L1004	Natural. As above Tr.1.

Description: Trench 7 contained Ditch F1011 which was orientated E/W.

Ditch 1011 was linear in plan (2m+ x 0.53m 0.28m), orientated E/W. It had steep sides and a concave base. Its fill, L1012, was a compact, bluish mid grey sandy clay with sparse chalk. It contained no finds.

Trench 8 (Figs. 2 & 4)

<i>Sample Section 8A south-east end</i> <i>0.00 = 2.42m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.51m	L1000	Topsoil. As above Tr.2.
0.51m+	L1004	Natural. As above Tr.1.

<i>Sample Section 8B north-west end</i>		
<i>0.00 = 2.92m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.32m	L1000	Topsoil. As above Tr.2.
0.32 – 0.43m	L1002	Subsoil. As above Tr.1.
0.43m+	L1004	Natural. As above Tr.1.

Description: Trench 8 contained eight ditches. The ditches were parallel and orientated NE/SW. All of them were excavated for finds, and three (F1005, F1007 and F1009) were formally recorded.

Ditch 1005 was linear in plan (2m+ x 0.73m 0.18m), orientated NE/SW. It had irregular sides and a narrow base. Its fill, L1006, was a compact, bluish mid grey sandy clay with sparse small flint and chalk. It contained no finds.

Ditch 1007 was linear in plan (2m+ x 0.40m 0.20m), orientated NE/SW. It had irregular sides and a concave base. Its fill, L1008, was a compact, bluish mid grey sandy clay with sparse small flint and chalk. It contained no finds.

Ditch 1009 was linear in plan (2m+ x 0.65m 0.15m), orientated NE/SW. It had steep sides and a narrow base. Its fill, L1010, was a compact, bluish mid grey sandy clay with sparse small flint. It contained an abraded medieval (early 12th-13th/14th century) pottery sherd.

Trench 9 (Fig. 2)

<i>Sample Section 9A north-east end</i>		
<i>0.00 = 3.15m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.12m	L1000	Topsoil. As above Tr.2
0.12 – 0.16m	L1001	Made Ground. As above Tr.1
0.16 – 0.37m	L1002	Subsoil. As above Tr.1.
0.37m+	L1004	Natural. As above Tr.1.

<i>Sample Section 9B south-west end</i>		
<i>0.00 = 3.11m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.15m	L1000	Topsoil. As above.
0.15 – 0.37m	L1002	Subsoil. As above Tr.1.
0.37m+	L1004	Natural. As above Tr.1.

Description: Three ditches were recorded in Trench 9, and were a continuation of the ditches recorded elsewhere on site. They were excavated for the recovery of finds. A land drain was also present.

Trench 10 (Figs. 2)

<i>Sample Section 10A south-east end</i>		
<i>0.00 = 3.08 m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.17m	L1000	Topsoil. As above Tr.2.
0.17 – 0.38m	L1002	Subsoil. As above Tr.1.
0.38m+	L1004	Natural. As above Tr.1.

<i>Sample Section 10B north-west end</i>		
<i>0.00 = 3.02 m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.21m	L1000	Topsoil. As above Tr.2.
0.21 – 0.40m	L1002	Subsoil. As above Tr.1.
0.40m+	L1004	Natural. As above Tr.1.

Description: A ditch was recorded in Trench 10, and was a continuation of the ditches recorded elsewhere on site. It was excavated for the recovery of finds.

7 CONFIDENCE RATING

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

8 DEPOSIT MODEL

8.1 Shallow (0.12 – 0.22) made ground deposits were present in Trenches 6 and 7. Generally Topsoil L1000 was uppermost. It comprised a mid grey brown, compact, sandy clay (0.20 – 0.51m thick). L1000 overlay Subsoil L1002, a mid orange brown, compact, sandy clay. In Trench 3 alluvium, L1003, was recorded below L1002. It comprised a mid blue grey clay with sparse flint (0.09m thick).

8.2 The natural, L1004, was a compact, mid orange/grey brown, sand clay.

9 DISCUSSION

9.1 The site is located away from the main area of prehistoric, Roman and medieval settlement on the fen island, which is focused in and around the core of the village. It is located on the fen edge, and much of it may lie closer to the former fen, as indicated by other excavation work including that at 80 Wisbech Road (TL 5608 8732; Greene 2008). Scattered prehistoric finds however, have been found in the area, and it is possible that human occupation/activity may have extended this far during periods of more favourable conditions.

9.2 The evaluation revealed a series of close set parallel ditches, directly

comparable to those recorded to the south (Fig.2). The ditches were parallel and generally orientated NE/SW. Towards the north of the site (Trenches 2 and 5) the ditches were orientated NW/SE. The width of the ditches varied from 0.40 (Tr. 8 F1007) – 0.73m (Tr. 8 F1005), and their depths varied from 0.15m (Tr. 8 F1009) – 0.28m (Tr. 7 F1011). The fills of the ditches were directly comparable comprising a compact, mid brownish grey sandy clay. Trench 8 was perpendicular to the ditches. Here the ditches were between 2m – 5m apart. The ditches could not be readily traced from trench to trench, however, they were broadly contemporary and part of the same ditch system. Finds were sparse especially given that lengths of the field system were excavated specifically to enhance the finds recovery. An abraded medieval (early 12th – 13th/14th century) sherd was found in F1009 (Tr.8). Late Iron Age (2g; Tr. 2 F1010 L1011) and Roman pottery (2g; Tr.1 F1026 L1027) was recovered during the evaluation of the Service Station site to the south.

9.3 Immediately adjacent (the Service Station site) and eastwards, at 98 – 120 Wisbech Road, Littleport, directly comparable ditches have been recorded during evaluations (McCall *et al* 2010 & Bush 2005), and a Romano-British field system has been recorded at Fen Drayton (1995).

9.4 The ditches were relatively shallow, aligned in close proximity, and regularly spaced. They were likely drainage ditches associated with an arable economy, and may be associated with the growing of vines, fruit trees or even hops (Taylor 1975, 52; Roberts forthcoming).

10 DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE

10.1 Archive records, with an inventory, will be deposited with any donated finds from the site at the Cambridgeshire County Archaeology Store. The archive will be quantified, ordered, indexed, cross-referenced and checked for internal consistency.

11 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions would like to thank Mr Jonathan James of James Graven for funding the project, and Signet Planning for their assistance (in particular Ms Cathy Wallace).

AS is pleased to acknowledge the input and advice of Mr Dan McConnell of Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team, and the assistance of the Historic Environment Record.

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13 WEB SITES

Heritage Gateway
Soilsworldwide.net

APPENDIX 1: HER Information

The following sites are those that lie within a c. 1 km radius of the assessment site. The table has been compiled from data held by the Cambridge Historic Environment Record (CHER). The locations of the sites are shown in Fig. 3. Their significance, where relevant, is discussed in Section 4.2

CHER Number	National Grid Reference (TL)	Description
<i>Prehistoric (700,000 BC – AD 42)</i>		
07191	553 872	Lithic implements: 3 backed scrapers, 3 retouched blades, 2 cores, 9 tri-faced knaps found field walking on route of Ely Bypass
07192	555 870	Lithic implement: Fragment of flint blade found field walking on route of Ely Bypass
07193B	553 870	Lithic implement: Worked flint found in Field 39 during found field walking on route of Ely Bypass
<i>Neolithic (4,000 BC – 2,200 BC)</i>		
07184	5497 8791	Stone axe: Polished flint axe head ploughed up in 1951 at Mare Fen Farm
07193	553 870	Flint tools: 'spearhead' and Late Neolithic leaf shaped arrowhead found in Field 39 during field walking on route of Ely Bypass
07195	5502 8796	Stone axe: polished flint axe broken and reground in antiquity, surface find at 'Olave Fen Farm'
<i>Bronze Age (2200 BC – 700 BC)</i>		
07181	546 874	Stone implement: A Beaker period 'axe hammer' found in a black peat field
07219	5597 8672	Bronze Age flints: several rough cores and a long blade with concrete on it. Perhaps an area of modern hard ore overlying a prehistoric flint knapping site
MCB 17425	5610 8729	Prehistoric settlement: An evaluation found a dense cluster of pits, ditches and gullies of probable late Bronze Age to early Iron Age date. An area excavation found Iron Age features on higher ground including 2 ditches and a cluster of pits and post-holes
<i>Roman (AD 43 – 410)</i>		
07196A	5523 8713	Pottery: sherd of probable Roman pottery found near crop marks (CHER 07196)
07197	5575 8832	Roman salt working site: Roman saltern and

		occupation site. Pottery and briquetage recovered; 2 nd -3 rd century pottery previously reported from here
07199	5595 8835	Roman pot found: samian, grey ware, castor ware; the shelly wares resembled Iron Age pottery
07261	5651 8757	Roman settlement along Camel Road: Density of saltern sites along the rodden of the Old Croft river. Also a cropmark enclosure
08425	565 874	Cropmarks and Roman finds: about 10 bins full of Roman pot including colour coat, Newton black coarseware, Hornsea shelly ware
11066	5615 8770	Large quantities of modern rubbish removed during construction of a conservation area. Also c.20 sherds of Roman pot thought to have been dredged up from the Old Croft River in 1991
11920	5602 8683	Roman-Medieval field boundaries, Parson's Lane
MCB18585	5597 8731	An evaluation and excavation, Wisbech Road: Identified Roman ditched features representing two phases of field system
CB15679	55635 87284	Ceramic building material: Residual Roman brick and tile found during an excavation at 133-135 Wisbech Road on 2001, in an area otherwise devoid of archaeological remains
<i>Medieval (1066 AD – 1539 AD)</i>		
07191A	553 872	Pottery: one small pink sherd found field walking on route of Ely Bypass
07192A	555 870	Pottery: 15 th century rim sherd, pink fabric with internal glaze found field walking on route of Ely Bypass
07193A	553 870	Pottery: 2 pink sherds found in Field 39 during field walking on route of Ely Bypass
07261A	565 870	Medieval pot found among Roman pot during the Fenland Survey
MCB16496	55718 86863	Ridge and Furrow: A geophysical survey and excavation at Littleport Primary School found medieval ridge and furrow and possible areas for recreational use. Two post-medieval boundary ditches were cut into the ploughed areas
<i>Modern 1900+</i>		

MCB16418	553 873	Military structure: WWII Spigot mortar base on the A1101 to Littleport
MCB16480	553 873	Military structure: destroyed unknown WWII site along the A1101
MCB19176	5645 8770	WWII pill box, now no trace
MCB19177	5633 8773	WWII pill box, now no trace
MCB19178	5634 8773	WWII pill box, now destroyed
<i>Undated</i>		
07191B	553 872	Bronze object: unidentified small strip of bronze found field walking on route of Ely Bypass
07196	552 871	Cropmarks: crop and soil marks indicate three circular features 8.5m across
07221	564 873	Cropmarks of field system: Part of possible rectangular enclosure with one curved corner
11670	563 877	A watching brief identified a small rodden
12154	561 871	Cemetery, Littleport: no other information
MCB16923	5545 8650	Gullies: An evaluation in 2005 at Highfields Farm found two undated linear gullies, possibly early drainage systems. A small number of unstratified finds were found deposited by hillwash or manuring, including a small amount of Iron Age and 19 th century pottery, a Bronze Age flint flake and an animal bone
MCB17512	5493 8769	Ditches: An evaluation at land off Wisbech Road in 2006 found a series of undated drainage or boundary ditches. A degree of prehistoric activity occurred across the site shown by small quantities of residual Late Mesolithic/Early Neolithic worked flint, and a sherd of Late Iron Age pottery. A large 18 th -19 th century ditch was also recorded crossing the site

APPENDIX 1 CONCORDANCE OF FINDS

AS1535, Littleport, TT

Concordance of finds by feature

Feature	Context	Segment	Trench	Description	Spot Date	Pottery
1009	1010		8	Fill of Ditch	early 12th-13th/14th	(1) 4g

APPENDIX 2 SPECIALIST REPORT

The Pottery

by Peter Thompson

The evaluation recovered one small abraded sherd (5g) of Ely-type ware from Ditch F1009 (L1010). The sherd which has a rough texture has a pale grey core and oxidised surfaces. It contains medium sub-rounded quartz, and occasional rounded black iron mineral and sparse white calcareous inclusions. A similar sherd from Isleham was associated with a late 12th century coin, and the Littleport sherd would fit an early 12th-13th/14th century date range.

PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



1
F1005 in Trench 8 taken from the north-east



2
F1007 in Trench 8 taken from the north-east



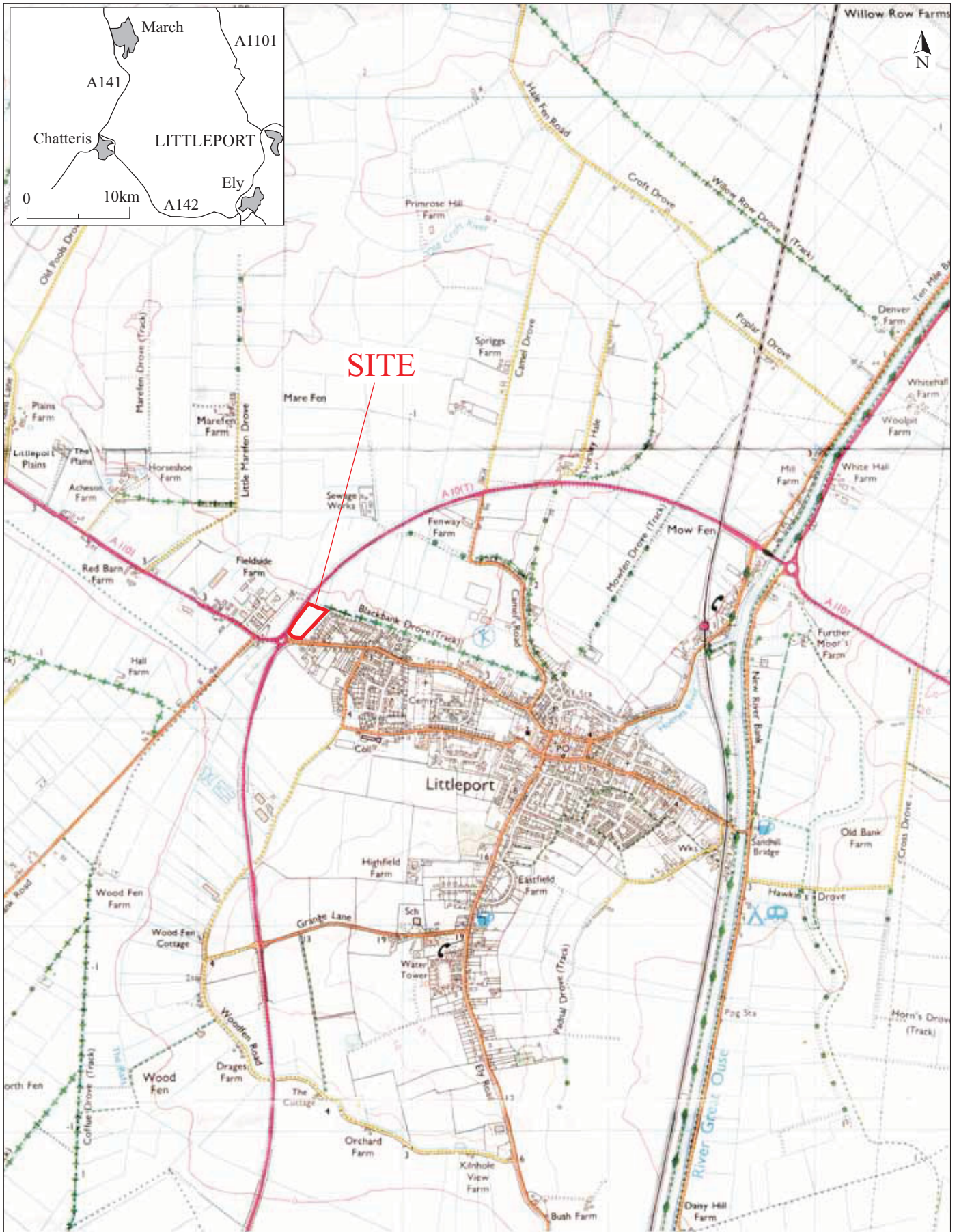
3
F1009 in trench 8 taken from the south-west



4
F1011 in Trench 7 taken from the south-east

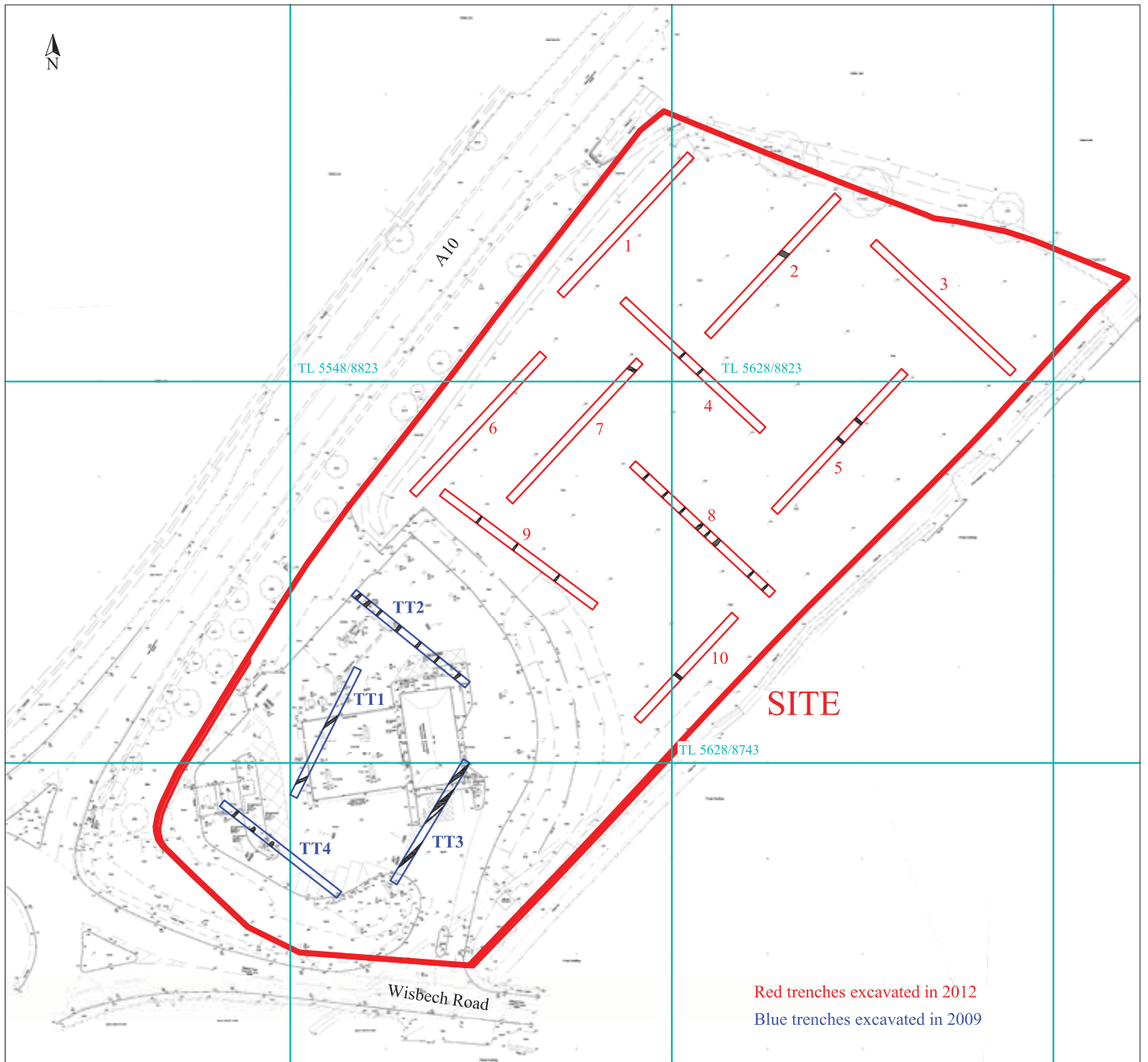


5
F1013 in Trench 2 taken from the south-east

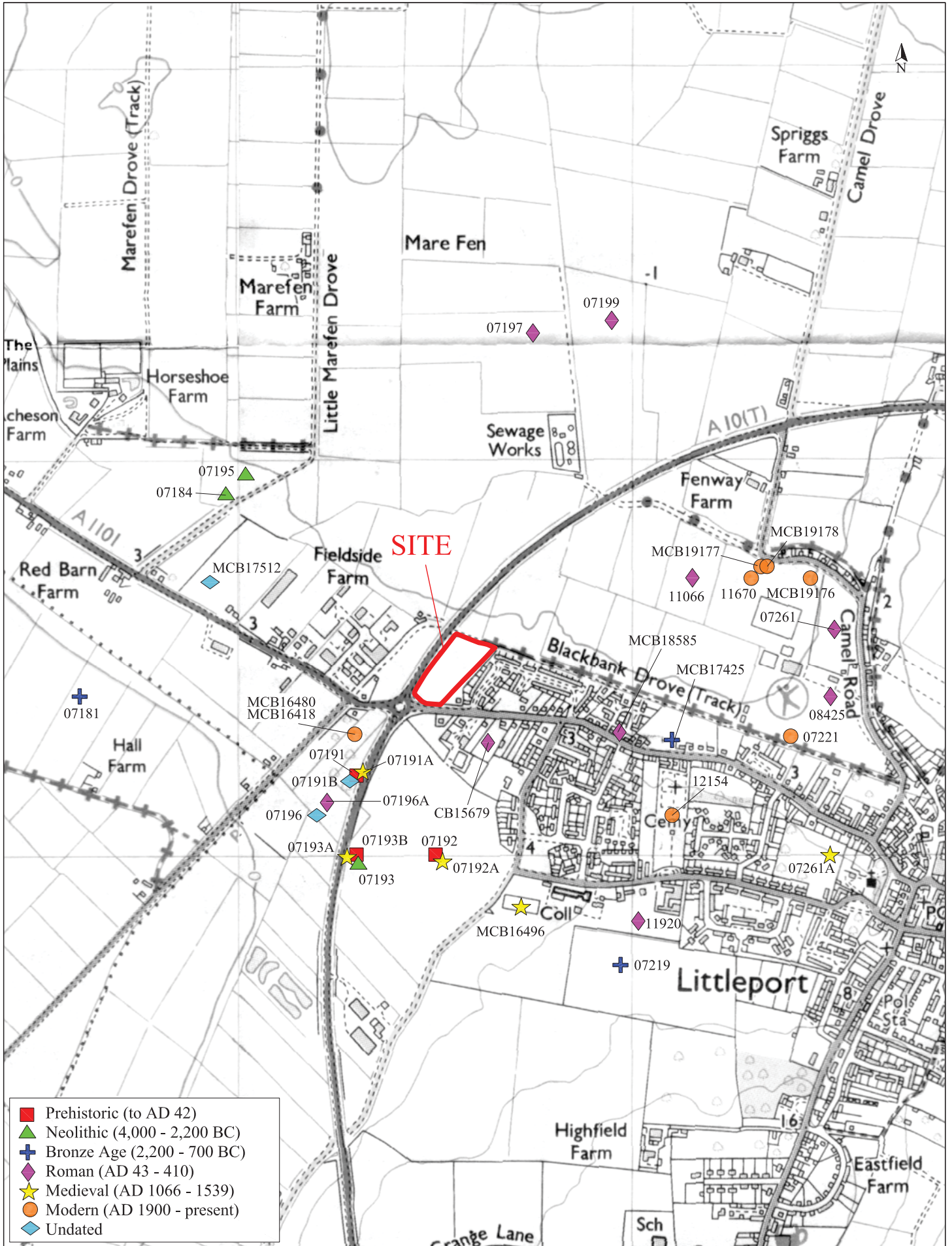


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Fig. 1 Site location plan
 Scale 1:25,000 at A4



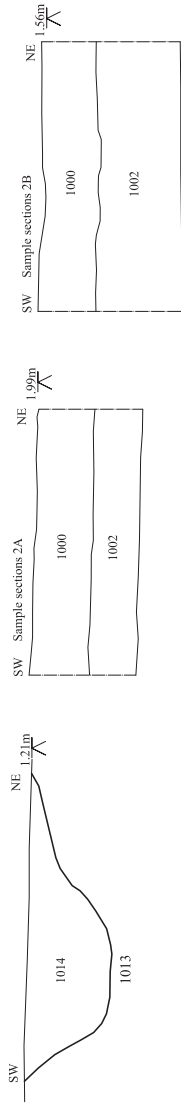
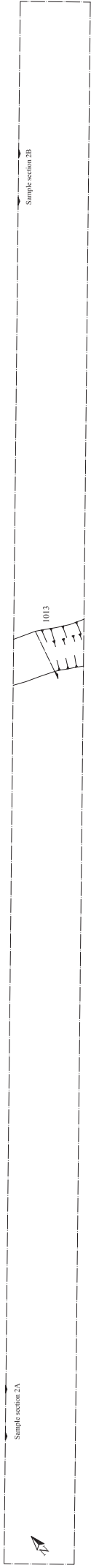
Archaeological Solutions Ltd
Fig. 2 Trench location plan
 Scale 1:1250 at A4



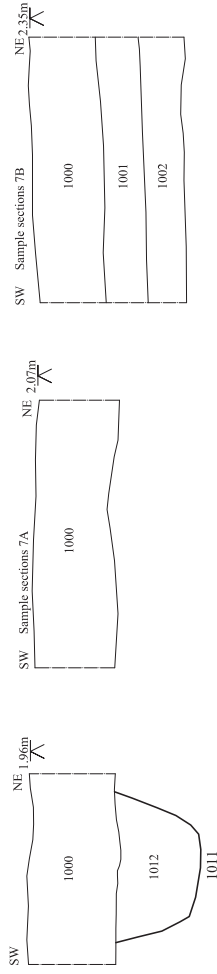
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Fig. 3 HER Data
 Scale 1:12,500 at A4

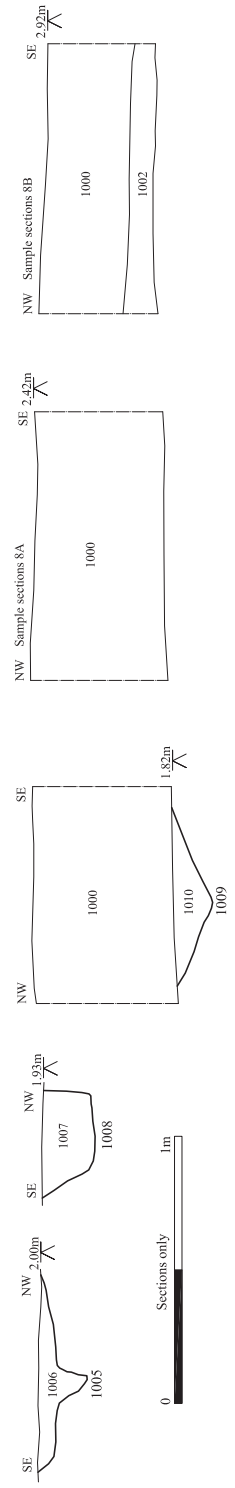
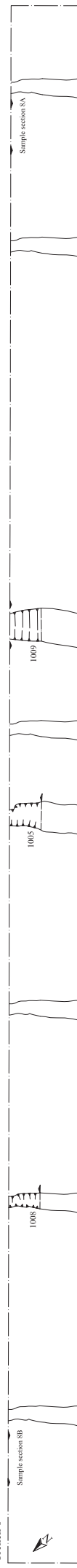
Trench 2



Trench 7



Trench 8

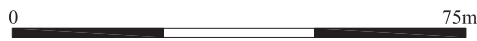


0 1m

Sections only

0 5m

Plans only



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Fig. 5 Proposed development plan
 Scale 1:1250 at A4