
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD

**PEACOCK FARM, 8 STRETHAM ROAD, WICKEN,
CAMBRIDGESHIRE CB7 5XH**

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Authors:	Thomas Muir (Fieldwork and report) Antony RR Mustchin (Editor)	
Illustrations:	Kathren Henry	
NGR: TL 5652 7102	Report No: 5345	
District: East Cambs.	Site Code: ECB 4980	
Approved:	Project No: 7028	
Claire Halpin MCIfA	Date: 20 March 2017 Revised: 24/04/2017	

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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OASIS SUMMARY SHEET

Project details			
Project name	<i>Peacock Farm, 8 Stretham Road, Wicken, Cambridgeshire CB7 5XH</i>		
<p><i>In March 2017 Archaeological Solutions Ltd carried out an archaeological evaluation of land at Peacock Farm, 8 Stretham Road, Wicken, Cambridgeshire CB7 5XH (NGR TL 5652 7102). The evaluation was undertaken in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission for the construction of two detached dwellings with alterations to access (East Cambs. Council Ref. 16/01052/OUT). It was required based on advice from Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team (CCC HET), and it represents the initial requirement.</i></p> <p><i>The site lies within an area of archaeological potential recorded on the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (HER). Multi-period remains may be present particularly in the western part of the historic core of the village, for example, the HER records a D-shaped cropmark adjacent to the site (CHER 09231).</i></p> <p><i>Despite the archaeological potential of the site no archaeological features or finds were present.</i></p>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	<i>March 2017</i>		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>	Future work (Y/N/?)	<i>TBC</i>
P. number	<i>7028</i>	Site code	<i>ECB 4980</i>
Type of project	<i>Archaeological Evaluation</i>		
Site status	<i>-</i>		
Current land use	<i>Garden/ tennis court</i>		
Planned development	<i>Dwellings</i>		
Main features (+dates)	<i>-</i>		
Significant finds (+dates)	<i>-</i>		
Project location			
County/ District/ Parish	<i>Cambridgeshire</i>	<i>East Cambs.</i>	<i>Wicken</i>
HER/ SMR for area	<i>Cambridgeshire HER</i>		
Post code (if known)	<i>CB7 5XH</i>		
Area of site	<i>c.0.2ha</i>		
NGR	<i>TL 5652 7102</i>		
Height AOD (min/max)	<i>c. 6.5m</i>		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	<i>CCC HET</i>		
Project supervisor/s (PO)	<i>Thomas Muir</i>		
Funded by	<i>Mr & Mrs Butcher</i>		
Full title	<i>Peacock Farm, 8 Stretham Road, Wicken, Cambridgeshire CB7 5XH. An Archaeological Evaluation</i>		
Authors	<i>Muir, T.</i>		
Report no.	<i>5345</i>		
Date (of report)	<i>20 March 2017 (Revised 24/04/2017)</i>		

PEACOCK FARM, 8 STRETHAM ROAD, WICKEN, CAMBRIDGESHIRE CB7 5XH

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

SUMMARY

In March 2017 Archaeological Solutions Ltd carried out an archaeological evaluation of land at Peacock Farm, 8 Stretham Road, Wicken, Cambridgeshire CB7 5XH (NGR TL 5652 7102). The evaluation was undertaken in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission for the construction of two detached dwellings with alterations to access (East Cambs. Council Ref. 16/01052/OUT). It was required based on advice from Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team (CCC HET), and it represents the initial requirement.

The site lies within an area of archaeological potential recorded on the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (HER). Multi-period remains may be present particularly in the western part of the historic core of the village, for example, the HER records a D-shaped cropmark adjacent to the site (CHER 09231).

Despite the archaeological potential of the site no archaeological features or finds were present.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In February 2017 Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out an archaeological evaluation of land at Peacock Farm, 8 Stretham Road, Wicken, Cambridgeshire CB7 5XH (NGR TL 5652 7102; Figs. 1 – 2). The evaluation was undertaken in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission for the construction of two detached dwellings with alterations to access (East Cambs. Council Ref. 16/01052/OUT). It was required based on advice from Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team (CCC HET), and it represents the initial requirement.

1.2 The evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a brief issued by CCC HET (Gemma Stewart; dated 15/12/2016) and a written scheme of investigation (specification) prepared by AS (dated 28/02/2017) and approved by HET. The project conformed to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Code of Conduct and Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (2014), and the document *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003).

1.3 The evaluation aimed 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

2.1 The site is located in the north western part of the village of Wicken, on the north east side of Stretham Road (Figs. 1 – 2). It currently comprises a garden plot and tennis court to the rear of properties fronting Stretham Road and south of Peacock Farm, 8 Stretham Road.

3 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND SOILS

3.1 The site lies above the low-lying former fen on Gault and Oadby Member geology, at c. 6.5m AOD.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 The site lies within an area of archaeological potential recorded on the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (HER). Multi-period remains may be present particularly in the western part of the historic core of the village. The HER records a D-shaped cropmark adjacent to the site (CHER 09231). Prehistoric activity is shown by the presence of scatters and find spots of numerous prehistoric

flint tools of Neolithic and early Bronze Age date in fields to the south of properties on Back Lane (such as CHER MCB 07056, 07058, 07066, 07073 and 07075). An earlier Mesolithic tranche axe has been found on the village green (CHER 07067). A second artefact of this type has been recovered from elsewhere in the village (CHER 07074).

4.2 Roman settlement and occupation is recorded to the east of the village (CHER 07071-2 & 07076). Wicken Lode is a manmade watercourse first recorded in 1636 but it may have Roman origins (CHER 06817). A Roman bronze pendant has been found as an unstratified find in the village (CHER 07059).

4.3 Medieval occupation has been subject to archaeological investigation to the south of the site (CHER ECB 4031) and extant evidence of medieval fabric is present in a number of buildings standing in the village. A medieval moated site south of Chancel Farm is Scheduled as an Ancient Monument (NHLE 1017845). Wicken's village cross is of medieval date, constructed of stone, and of the 'shaft-on-steps' type but it is probably not *in situ* (CHER 07113). A broken medieval limestone cross was found buried upside down at Cross Green; it was excavated and then reburied in 1973 (CHER MCB22111). Medieval features have been recorded at 11 Cross Green (CHER MCB20067).

4.4 Wicken contains a number of 15th and 16th century listed buildings. No. 7 Pond Green is a 15th century open hall house and is a listed building (CHER MCB17335). Of a similar date is 45 High Street, a jettied house which is also listed (CHER MCB17336). Slightly later in date and also listed is Butts Farmhouse (CHER MCB 17345). 12 High Street, the Maids Head Public House, is a house, possibly an open hall, dating from the 15th century with a late 16th century crosswing (CHER MCB17346).

4.5 Monk's Lode and New River comprise a manmade watercourse constructed in the 18th century (CHER 07112). Other post-medieval activity includes a smock mill (CHER 07057).

4.6 Nineteenth century industrial and agricultural activity is represented by pumping stations and associated windmills (CHER MCB22097-9) and a former brickworks (MCB 22100). The Historic Environment Record also includes several other buildings of 19th century date in the vicinity (CHER MCB17149, MCB22112, MCB22101-9).

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 Two trenches were excavated, each with a proposed length of 31m but due to the presence of high voltage and underground cables, Trench 2 was shortened. It was not possible to cut the proposed short spur (Trench 2) so to make up for the lost length both trenches were increased in width to 2m.

5.2 The trenches were excavated using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. They focused on the footprints of the proposed new

dwellings (Figs. 2 – 3). The natural clay was further machined towards the centre of Trench 2 to ensure that the natural had been exposed.

5.3 The topsoil and 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.

5.4 Open trenches and excavated spoil were manually / visually searched and scanned by metal detector to enhance the recovery of archaeological finds.

5.5 A one-metre square of the topsoil and subsoil was bucket sampled and sorted by hand at each end of the trenches to characterise their artefact content. No artefacts were present.

6 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS

6.1 Individual trench descriptions are presented below:

Trench 1 (Figs. 2 – 3)

Sample section 1A 0.00 = 5.79m AOD		
0.00 – 0.06m	L1007	Tennis court surface. Dark brown grey Tarmac.
0.06 – 0.13m	L1008	Levelling layer. Friable, pale brownish grey silty sand with frequent sub-angular flints.
0.13 - 0.40m	L1009	Possible natural clay layer. Firm, dark grey brown silty clay with occasional small sub-rounded flints.
0.40 - 0.63m +	L1003	Natural deposits. Firm, mid grey brown silty clay with occasional small sub-rounded flints.

Sample section 1B 0.00 = 5.54m AOD		
0.00 – 0.05m	L1007	Tennis court surface. As above.
0.05 – 0.17m	L1008	Levelling layer. As above.
0.17 - 0.47m	L1009	Possible natural clay layer. As above.
0.47 - 0.57m +	L1003	Natural deposits. As above.

Description: Trench 1 contained no archaeological features or finds.

Trench 2 (Figs. 2 – 3)

Sample section 2A 0.00 = 6.37m AOD		
0.00 – 0.12m	L1000	Topsoil. Friable, dark brown grey sandy silt with occasional small sub-rounded flints.
0.12 – 0.21m	L1001	Subsoil. Friable, mid brown orange silt with moderate small sub-rounded flints.
0.21 - 0.47m	L1004	Former farm track. Firm, mid orange brown clay with moderate small sub-rounded flints.
0.47m+	L1003	Natural deposits. As above.

Sample section 2B 0.00 = 6.12m AOD		
0.00 – 0.12m	L1000	Topsoil. As above.
0.12 – 0.21m	L1001	Subsoil. As above.
0.21 - 0.34m	L1002	Subsoil. Friable, mid orange brown clay silt with moderate small sub-rounded flints.
0.34m+	L1003	Natural deposits. As above.

Sample section 2C 0.00 = 6.46m AOD		
0.00 – 0.06m	L1000	Topsoil. As above.
0.06 – 0.20m	L1001	Subsoil. As above.
0.20 - 0.45m	L1004	Former farm track. As above.
0.45m+	L1003	Natural deposits. As above.

Description: Trench 2 contained no archaeological features or finds. A modern cable (F1005) traversed the trench.

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 On the north-western side of the site the tennis court surface (L1007) was a 0.06m thick layer of dark brown grey Tarmac. The latter overlay a 0.07 - 0.12m thick levelling layer (L1008) of friable, pale brownish grey silty sand with frequent sub-angular flints. Below L1008 was a 0.37m thick layer (L1009) of firm, dark grey brown silty clay with occasional small sub-rounded flints. This may be a layer of natural clay that had been darkened by being capped by the tennis court. The natural deposits (L1003), comprising a firm, mid grey brown silty clay with occasional small sub-rounded flints, were encountered at a depth of 0.40 - 0.47m below the current ground surface.

8.2 On the south-eastern side of the site Topsoil L1000 was a 0.12m thick layer of friable, dark brown grey sandy silt with occasional small sub-rounded flints. It overlay a 0.09m thick subsoil layer (L1001) of friable, mid brown orange silty gravel with moderate small sub-rounded flints. Below L1001 was a 0.13m thick layer (L1002) of friable, mid orange brown clay silt with moderate small sub-rounded flints. The natural deposits (L1003) were encountered at a depth of 0.34 - 0.47m below the current ground surface.

8.3 At the southern end of Trench 2 the remnants of a former farm track (L1004) lay below Subsoil L1001 and overlay the natural deposits (L1003). It comprised a 0.26m thick layer of firm, mid orange brown clay with moderate small sub-rounded flints.

9 DISCUSSION

with Dr John Summers

9.1 The site lies within an area of archaeological potential recorded on the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (HER). Multi-period remains may be present particularly in the western part of the historic core of the village, for example, the HER records a D-shaped cropmark adjacent to the site (CHER 09231).

9.2 Despite the archaeological potential of the site no archaeological features or finds were present.

9.3 The soils at the site directly overlie natural clay deposits of the Oadby Member (BGS online), which date to the Anglian Stage glaciation. This was identified on site as a stiff clay (L1003), which showed light brown with patches of pale grey above the water table. In Trench 1, the upper portion (c.20-30cm) of the clay was coloured pale grey, indicative of anoxic conditions. This is likely to have been influenced by the overlying impermeable layer of modern tarmac forming the present tennis court area; trapping soil moisture and preventing gaseous transfer with the atmosphere. Hand augering of the L1003 in the north-eastern end of Trench 2, to a depth of c. 0.60m below the excavated horizon, revealed pale grey material and confirmed that the natural clay was ubiquitous across the site.

9.4 The absence of overlying peat deposits is of interest and may be the result of historic peat cutting in the area. Such activity could have led to the removal of contemporaneous evidence for Holocene human activity (i.e. Mesolithic onwards).

10 CONCLUSION

10.1 Despite the archaeological potential of the site, suggested by local multi-period remains, no archaeological features or finds were encountered by the trial trench evaluation.

11 DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE

11.1 Archive records, with an inventory, will be deposited at Cambridge County Archaeological Store. The archive will be quantified, ordered, indexed, cross-referenced and checked for internal consistency.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) would like to thank Mr and Mrs Butcher for funding the evaluation and for their assistance.

AS would also like to acknowledge the input and advice of Ms Gemma Stewart of Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team.

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OASIS ID: archaeol7-284130

Project details

Project name	Peacock Farm, 8 Stretham Road, Wicken, Cambridgeshire CB7 5XH
Short description of the project	In March 2017 Archaeological Solutions Ltd carried out an archaeological evaluation of land at Peacock Farm, 8 Stretham Road, Wicken, Cambridgeshire CB7 5XH (NGR TL 5652 7102). The evaluation was undertaken in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission for the construction of two detached dwellings with alterations to access (East Cambs. Council Ref. 16/01052/OUT). It was required based on advice from Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team (CCC HET), and it represents the initial requirement. The site lies within an area of archaeological potential recorded on the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (HER). Multi-period remains may be present particularly in the western part of the historic core of the village, for example, the HER records a D-shaped cropmark adjacent to the site (CHER 09231). Despite the archaeological potential of the site no archaeological features or finds were present.
Project dates	Start: 01-03-2017 End: 31-03-2017
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	P7028 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	ECB4980 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	"Sample Trenches","Targeted Trenches"
Development type	Rural residential
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	Pre-application

Project location

Country England

Site location CAMBRIDGESHIRE EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE WICKEN Peacock Farm, 8 Stretham Road, Wicken, Cambridgeshire CB7 5XH

Postcode CB7 5XH

Study area 0.2 Hectares

Site coordinates TL 5652 7102 52.3145191346 0.296457394442 52 18 52 N 000 17 47 E Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 6.5m Max: 6.5m

Project creators

Name of Organisation Archaeological Solutions Ltd

Project brief originator CCC HET

Project design originator Jon Murray

Project director/manager Jon Murray

Project supervisor Thomas Muir

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No

Digital Archive recipient Cambridgeshire County Archaeological Store

Digital Contents "Survey"

Digital Media available "Images raster / digital photography","Survey","Text"

Paper Archive recipient Cambridgeshire County Archaeological Store

Paper Contents "Survey"

Paper Media available "Drawing","Photograph","Plan","Report","Survey "

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

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PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



1
View of site. Looking northeast.



2
Trench 1, looking northeast.



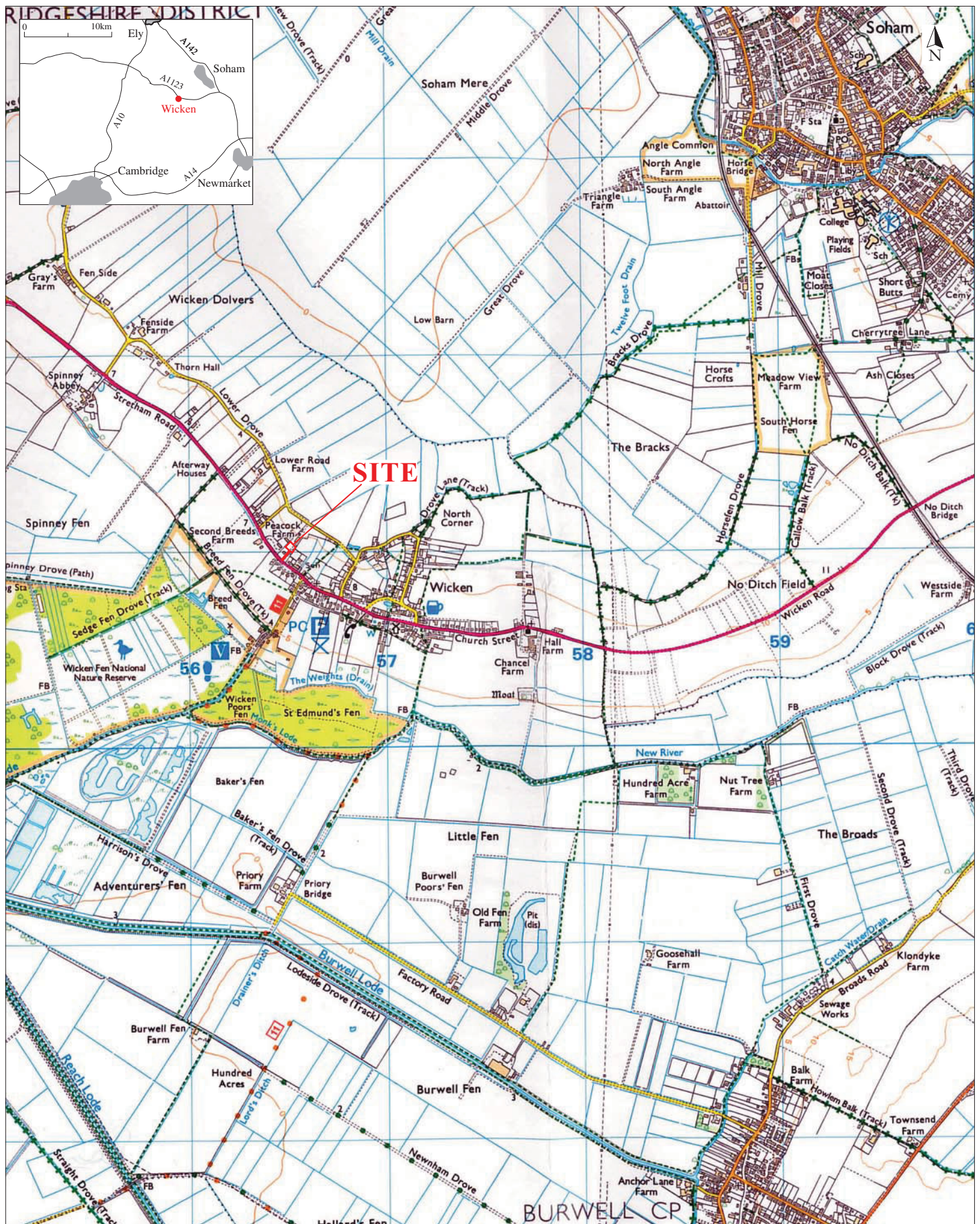
3
Sample Section 1A. Looking northwest.



4
Trench 2, looking northeast.

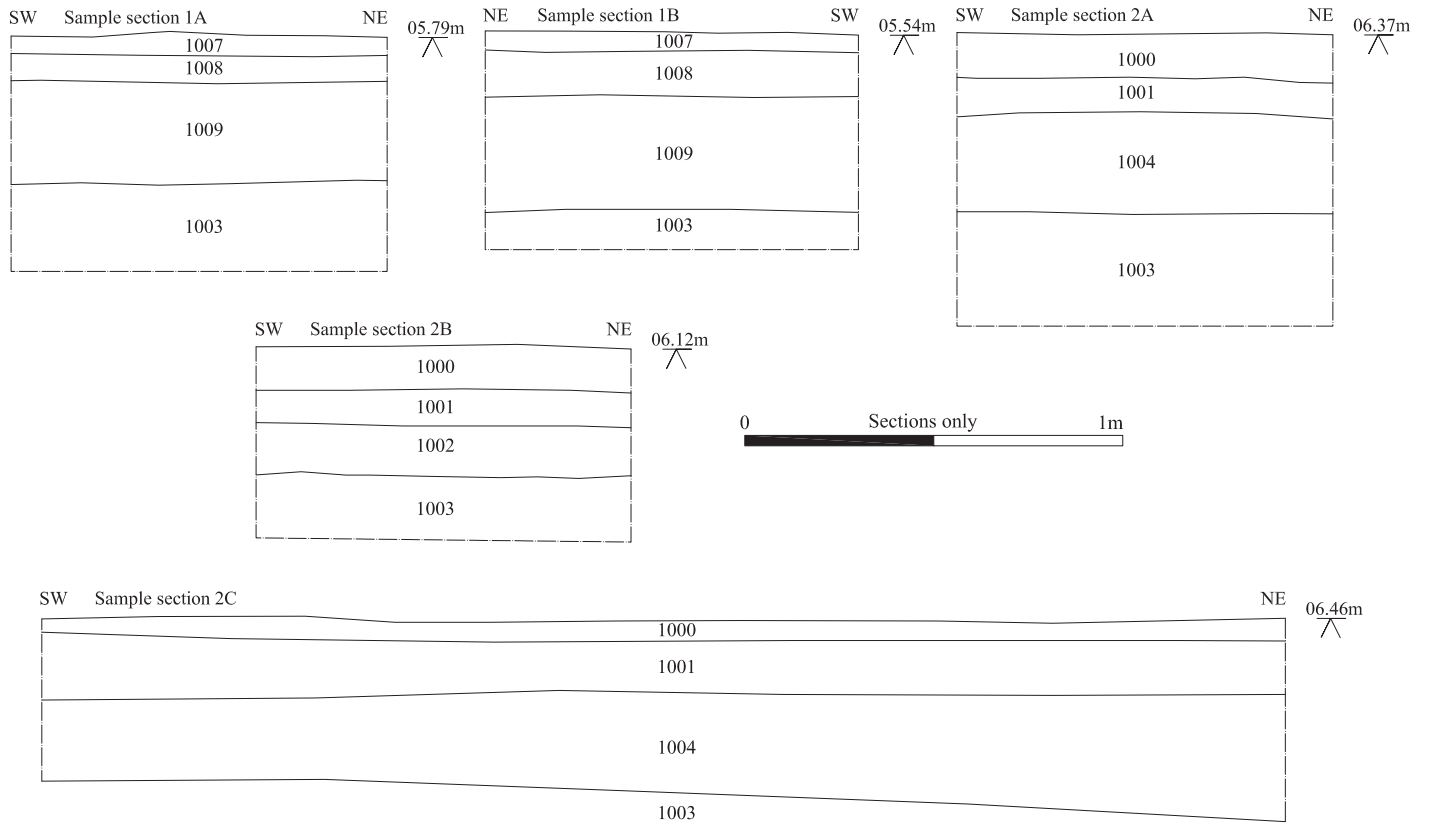


5
Sample Section 2A. Looking northwest.



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Fig. 1 Site location plan
 Scale 1:25,000 at A4
 Peacock Farm, Wicken, Cambs (P7028)



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Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan
 Scale 1:1000 and 1:20 at A4
 Peacock Farm, Wicken, Cambs (P7028)



0 25m

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Fig. 3 Proposed development plan
 Scale 1:500 at A4
 Peacock Farm, Wicken, Cambs (P7028)