
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD

**8 MILL ROAD, FEN DRAYTON,
CAMBRIDGESHIRE CB24 4ST**

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Authors: Niomi Edwards (Fieldwork & Report)	
NGR: TL 3295 6825	Report No: 5401
District: South Cambs	Site Code: ECB 5139
Approved:	Project No: 7206
Claire Halpin MCIfA	Date: 21 July 2017

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD

**Unit 6, Brunel Business Court, Eastern Way,
Bury St Edmunds IP32 7AJ
Tel 01284 765210**

**P I House, Rear of 23 Clifton Road, Shefford,
Bedfordshire, SG17 5AF
Tel: 01462 850483**

**e-mail info@ascontracts.co.uk
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OASIS SUMMARY SHEET

Project details			
Project name	8 Mill Road, Fen Drayton, Cambridgeshire CB24 4ST		
<p><i>In July 2017 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological evaluation of land at 8 Mill Road, Fen Drayton, Cambridgeshire CB24 4ST (NGR TL 3295 6825). The evaluation was required by Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team (CCC HET), as advisors to the Local Planning Authority, to provide for the initial requirements of a planning condition attached to planning approval (South Cambs Planning Ref. S/0326/16/FL). It is proposed to construct two new dwellings and an associated driveway.</i></p> <p><i>The site lies within an area that has revealed significant evidence of later prehistoric, Roman, and medieval occupation and agricultural exploitation. A complex of cropmarks lies opposite the site, recorded by aerial photography (CHER 08825). Further cropmark complexes are recorded both to the north and south of the site (CHER 08824, 08829, 08830, 09163). The cropmarks are likely to be indicative of later prehistoric/Roman settlement and field systems, and field systems of medieval date. The site lay in the agricultural hinterland between the medieval settlements at Fenstanton and Fen Drayton.</i></p> <p><i>All the trenches contained features but those within Trench 4 were modern. The features in Trenches 1 – 3 contained no finds and are undated. The larger number of features were contained in Trench 1 towards the front of the site. The features were principally ditches but included a pit (F1009 Trench 1).</i></p>			
<i>Project dates (fieldwork)</i>	July 2017		
<i>Previous work (Y/N/?)</i>	N	<i>Future work (Y/N/?)</i>	TBC
<i>P. number</i>	7206	<i>Site code</i>	ECB 5139
<i>Type of project</i>	An Archaeological Evaluation		
<i>Site status</i>	-		
<i>Current land use</i>			
<i>Planned development</i>	Residential		
<i>Main features (+dates)</i>	Ditches and a pit		
<i>Significant finds (+dates)</i>	None		
Project location			
<i>County/ District/ Parish</i>	Cambridgeshire	South Cambs	Fen Drayton
<i>HER/ SMR for area</i>	Cambridgeshire HER		
<i>Post code (if known)</i>	CB24 4ST		
<i>Area of site</i>	0.48ha		
<i>NGR</i>	TL 3295 6825		
<i>Height AOD (min/max)</i>	c.10m		
Project creators			
<i>Brief issued by</i>	CCC HET		
<i>Project supervisor/s (PO)</i>	Archaeological Solutions Ltd		
<i>Funded by</i>	Partners in Planning and Architecture		
<i>Full title</i>	8 Mill Road, Fen Drayton, Cambridgeshire CB24 4ST. An Archaeological Evaluation		
<i>Authors</i>	Edwards, N.		
<i>Report no.</i>	5401		
<i>Date (of report)</i>	July 2017		

8 MILL ROAD, FEN DRAYTON, CAMBRIDGESHIRE CB24 4ST

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

SUMMARY

In July 2017 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological evaluation of land at 8 Mill Road, Fen Drayton, Cambridgeshire CB24 4ST (NGR TL 3295 6825). The evaluation was required by Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team (CCC HET), as advisors to the Local Planning Authority, to provide for the initial requirements of a planning condition attached to planning approval (South Cambs Planning Ref. S/0326/16/FL). It is proposed to construct two new dwellings and an associated driveway.

The site lies within an area that has revealed significant evidence of later prehistoric, Roman, and medieval occupation and agricultural exploitation. A complex of cropmarks lies opposite the site, recorded by aerial photography (CHER 08825). Further cropmark complexes are recorded both to the north and south of the site (CHER 08824, 08829, 08830, 09163). The cropmarks are likely to be indicative of later prehistoric/Roman settlement and field systems, and field systems of medieval date. The site lay in the agricultural hinterland between the medieval settlements at Fenstanton and Fen Drayton.

All the trenches contained features but those within Trench 4 were modern. The features in Trenches 1 – 3 contained no finds and are undated. The larger number of features were contained in Trench 1 towards the front of the site. The features were principally ditches but included a pit (F1009 Trench 1).

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In July 2017 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological evaluation of land at 8 Mill Road, Fen Drayton, Cambridgeshire CB24 4ST (NGR TL 3295 6825; Figs. 1 & 2). The evaluation was required by Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team (CCC HET), as advisors to the Local Planning Authority, to provide for the initial requirements of a planning condition attached to planning approval (South Cambs Planning Ref. S/0326/16/FL). It is proposed to construct two new dwellings and an associated driveway.

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 06/06/2017) and approved by CCC 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 on the south eastern side of Mill Road between Fenstanton and Fen Drayton, and is a cleared site (formerly nursery glasshouses). It extends to some 0.48ha.

3 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND SOILS

3.1 The site lies superficial river terrace deposits of the Great Ouse which flows to the north of the site, with Oxford Clay geology below, at c.10m AOD.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 The early prehistoric is represented in the vicinity of the site by Palaeolithic struck flint artefacts found at Fenstanton Road gravel pit (CHER 01694). A Neolithic flint spearhead, now held in the Norris Museum, is recorded as an unstratified find from Fenstanton (CHER 03471) and pits of this date have been recorded in the vicinity of Fen Drayton reservoir (CHER CB15557).

4.2 In a field to the north of Fenstanton Church lies a partially ploughed-out Bronze Age round barrow (CHER 03484). Bronze Age arrowheads are recorded from the Fen Drayton area (CHER 01797) and Bronze Age pits have been recorded at Fenstanton balancing pond (CHER MCB16786). Church Farm, Fenstanton is the location of an extensive prehistoric landscape containing elements ranging in date from middle Neolithic to early Iron Age (CHER CB15559).

4.3 Archaeological work conducted close to the southern edge of Fen Drayton Lakes has revealed structural remains of Roman date, including a hypocaust and an iron working site (CHER 09667). Roman field systems have been recorded at Fen Drayton reservoir; this site also produced evidence for Iron Age activity (CHER CB15343). Evidence for a Roman field system has also been recorded at the Wilderspin Garage site (CHER CB15738; MCB20414) Roman inhumations representing two adults and a child were recorded at Middleton's Farm, Fen Drayton in 1959 (CHER 03330) a single inhumation, with associated pottery, had previously been recorded in 1950 (CHER 03495). A large number of Roman finds including evidence for iron working has been recorded at Conington (CHER 03469). Ditches, dated to the Roman period by pottery recovered from them, were recorded during the construction of the by-pass in the 1960s (CHER 03493). Possible Roman enclosures have been identified as St John's College Farm as cropmarks (CHER 09666). Roman feature have been recorded at Fenstanton balancing pond (CHER MCB16786). In addition a 'hoard' (CHER 00464), coins (CHER 00876 & 03460) and pottery (CHER 03460, 03473 and 03482) of Roman date have been recovered in the surrounding area.

4.4 The medieval period in Fen Drayton is represented by the Church of St Mary the Virgin which retains the remnants of its 12th century nave with substantial 14th century rebuilding (CHER CB14837). Further evidence for activity in this period is represented by two medieval farmyard ponds and other features at the Wilderspin Garage

site (CHER CB15738; MCB20414), a ditch at Manor Farmhouse on Fen Drayton High Street (CHER MCB16295), and features recorded at Fenstanton balancing pond (CHER MCB16786).

4.5 The post-medieval period is represented on the HER for the area by the location of a windmill marked on the 1841 tithe map (CHER 03472), a now demolished pigeon house or dovecote said to have been designed by the son of Lancelot 'Capability' Brown (CHER 10393), an extant 18th century dovecote on the High Street (CHER 10412), a dovecote of 1708 located on Church Street (CHER 10413), the location of a former dovecote at Ivy Cottage, High Street (CHER 10414), the 18th century garden and grounds of Fen Drayton House (CHER 12082), post-medieval cut features at the Wilderspin Garage site (CHER MCB20414), extractive pits west of Cambridge Road (CHER MCB20969), the location of a now demolished 19th century house known as the Rosary (CHER MCB22176), the listed Three Tuns Inn which dates to the 15th century and which was formerly the site of a blacksmith's workshop (CHER MCB22176), the 19th century school at Fen Drayton (CHER MCB22177), the sites of the former Manor and Middleton Farmhouses (CHER MCB22178 & MCB22179), the 17th to 18th century Ridgley Farm (CHER MCB22180), a former gravel pit (CHER MCB22182), and the former Methodist Chapel, now a private residence (CHER MCB22183).

4.6 Several sets of undated cropmarks have been recorded in the area (CHER 08825, 08826, 08829, 09663, 09664, 09665). Rectilinear enclosures have been identified at St John's College Farm (CHER 09163) and other field boundaries and enclosures have been suggested elsewhere (CHER MCB20968, MCB22166). Undated linears (CHER 08824) and ditches (CHER MCB16785) have also been recorded.

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 The evaluation provided for a c.5% sample of the area to be subject to development to be trial trenched. Four trenches each 30m x 1.8m were excavated by mechanical excavator under close archaeological supervision.

5.2 One-metre square of topsoil and subsoil was excavated by hand at each end of the trenches to characterise their artefact content. A metal detector was used to enhance finds recovery. The detector survey was conducted when the trenches were opened and the spoil tips will also be surveyed. A clay pipe stem fragment was recovered from the topsoil, and no archaeological finds were present in the subsoil.

6 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS

6.1 The individual trenches are described below

Trench 1 (Figs. 2 - 3)

<i>Sample section 1A: north-east end, north-west facing</i>		
0.00 = 10.04m AOD		
0.00 – 0.24m	L1000	Topsoil. Friable, dark greyish brown silty sand.
0.24 – 0.45m	L1001	Subsoil. Friable, mid reddish brown silty sand with frequent small to medium angular and sub-angular gravel.
0.45 +	L1002	Natural. Firm, mid red gravel with a mid brownish red silty sand

<i>Sample section 1B: south-west end, south-east facing</i>		
0.00 = 10.11m AOD		
0.00 – 0.27m	L1000	Topsoil. As Above.
0.27 – 0.42m	L1001	Subsoil. As Above
0.42m+	L1002	Natural. As Above

Description: Trench 1 contained Ditches F1007 and F1011, and Pit F1009. None contained finds.

Ditch F1007 was linear in plan (1.90+ x 0.74 x 0.12m). It had moderately sloping sides and a flat base. It had a north-west to south-east orientation. Its fill, L1008, was a firm, mid reddish brown silty sand with occasional small to medium angular and sub-angular gravel. It contained no finds.

Pit F1009 was sub-circular in plan (0.85+ x 0.60 x 0.13m). It had moderately sloping sides and a slightly concave base. Its fill, L1010, was a loose, mid reddish brown silty sand. It contained no finds.

Ditch F1011 was curvilinear in plan (1.0+ x 0.40 x 0.10m). It had moderately sloping sides and a concave base. It had a west to east orientation curving towards north. Its fill, L1012, was a friable, mid grey brown silty sand. It contained no finds.

Trench 2 (Figs. 2 & 3)

<i>Sample section 2A: north-west end, north-east facing</i>		
0.00m = 10.22m AOD		
0.00 – 0.29m	L1000	Topsoil. As Above Tr. 1.
0.29 – 0.50m	L1001	Subsoil. As Above Tr. 1.
0.50m+	L1002	Natural. As Above Tr. 1.

<i>Sample section 2B: South-east end, south-west facing.</i>		
0.00 = 10.20m AOD		
0.00 – 0.21m	L1000	Topsoil. As Above Tr. 1
0.21 – 0.43m	L1001	Subsoil. As Above Tr. 1.
0.43m+	L1002	Natural. As Above Tr. 1.

Description: Trench 2 contained undated Ditch F1003.

Ditch F1003 was linear in plan (1.90+ x 0.68 x 0.25m). It had steep sides and a narrow concave base. It had a north-east to south-west orientation. Its fill, L1004, was a loose, mid reddish brown silty sand with occasional small to medium angular and sub-angular gravel. It contained no finds.

Trench 3 (Figs. 2 - 3)

<i>Sample section 3A: south-east end, south-west facing</i>		
0.00 = 10.20m AOD		
0.00 – 0.25m	L1000	Topsoil. As Above Tr. 1.
0.25 – 0.38m	L1001	Subsoil. As Above Tr. 1.
0.38m+	L1002	Natural. As Above Tr. 1.

<i>Sample section 3B: north-west end, north-east facing</i>		
0.00 = 10.17m AOD		
0.00 – 0.22m	L1000	Topsoil. As Above Tr. 1
0.22 – 0.43m	L1001	Subsoil. As Above Tr. 1.
0.43m+	L1002	Natural. As Above Tr. 1.

Description: Trench 3 contained undated Ditch F1005.

Ditch F1005 was linear in plan (1.90+ x 0.63 x 0.22m). It had steep sides and a narrow base. It had an east-north-east to west-south-west orientation. Its fill, L1006, was a friable, mid reddish brown silty sand with occasional small to medium angular and sub-angular gravel. It contained no finds.

Trench 4 (Fig. 2)

<i>Sample section 4A: south-west end, south-east facing</i>		
0.00 = 10.23m AOD		
0.00 – 0.36m	L1000	Topsoil. As Above Tr. 1.
0.36 – 0.50m	L1001	Subsoil. As Above Tr. 1.
0.50m+	L1002	Natural. As Above Tr. 1.

<i>Sample section 4B: north-east end, north-west facing</i>		
0.00 = 10.21m AOD		
0.00 – 0.28m	L1000	Topsoil. As Above Tr. 1
0.28 – 0.46m	L1001	Subsoil. As Above Tr. 1.
0.46m+	L1002	Natural. As Above Tr. 1.

Description: Trench 4 contained two modern pits and a modern drain. These were not excavated.

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 Topsoil L1000 comprised a friable, dark greyish brown silty sand ranging in depth from 0.21 – 0.36m. Below L1000 was Subsoil L1001, a mid reddish brown silty sand with frequent small to medium angular and sub-angular gravel. Below L1001 was the natural L1002, a firm, mid red gravel with a mid brownish red silty sand, 0.38 – 0.50m below the present day ground surface

9 DISCUSSION

9.1 The recorded features are tabulated:

Trench	Context	Description	Date
1	F1007	Ditch	-
	F1009	Pit	-
	F1011	Ditch	-
2	F1003	Ditch	-
3	F1005	Ditch	-

9.2 The site lies within an area that has revealed significant evidence of later prehistoric, Roman, and medieval occupation and agricultural exploitation. A complex of cropmarks lies opposite the site, recorded by aerial photography (CHER 08825). Further cropmark complexes are recorded both to the north and south of the site (CHER 08824, 08829, 08830, 09163). The cropmarks are likely to be indicative of later prehistoric/Roman settlement and field systems, and field systems of medieval date. The site lay in the agricultural hinterland between the medieval settlements at Fenstanton and Fen Drayton.

9.3 All the trenches contained features but those within Trench 4 were modern. The features in Trenches 1 – 3 contained no finds and

are undated. The larger number of features were contained in Trench 1 towards the front of the site. The features were principally ditches but included a pit (F1009 Trench 1).

10 CONCLUSION

10.1 The site had an archaeological potential as it lies within an area that has revealed significant evidence of later prehistoric, Roman, and medieval occupation and agricultural exploitation. Undated features, principally ditches, were found and the features were most numerous towards the front of the site.

11 DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE

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

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions would like to thank partners in Planning and Architecture for their assistance and for funding the work on behalf of their client (in particular Mr David Mead for 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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Gurney, D., 2003, *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*, East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14/ALGAO

Soil Survey of England and Wales (SSEW), 1983, *Legend for the 1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales*. SSEW, Harpenden

PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



1
F1007 in Trench 1 looking north-west



2
F1009 in Trench 1 looking south-east



3
F1011 in Trench 1 looking west



4
Sample Section 1B in Trench 1 looking north-west



5
View of Trench 1 looking north-east



6
F1003 in Trench 2 looking north-east



7
Sample Section 2A in Trench 2 looking south-west



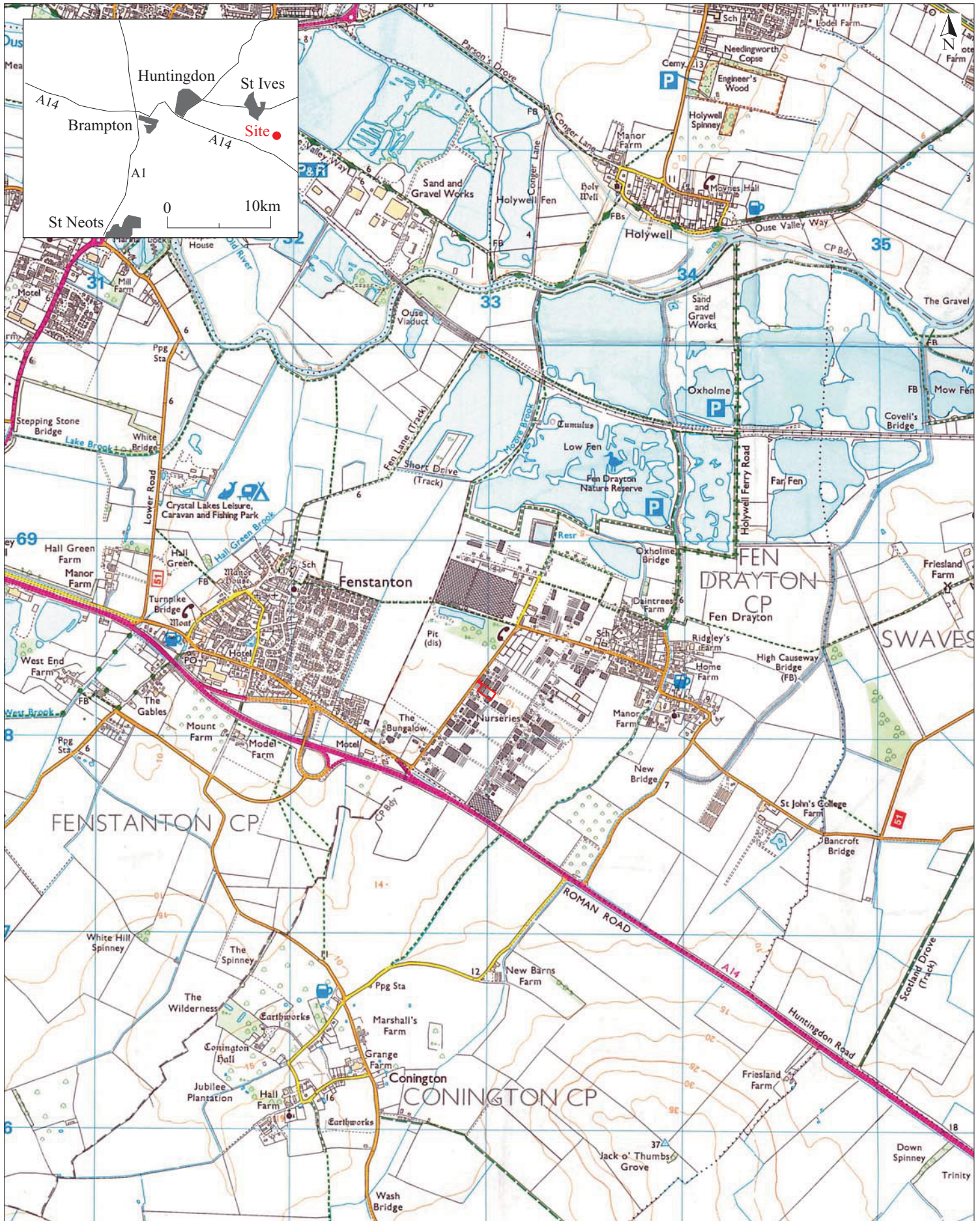
8
View of Trench 2 looking south-east



9
Sample Section 3B looking south-west

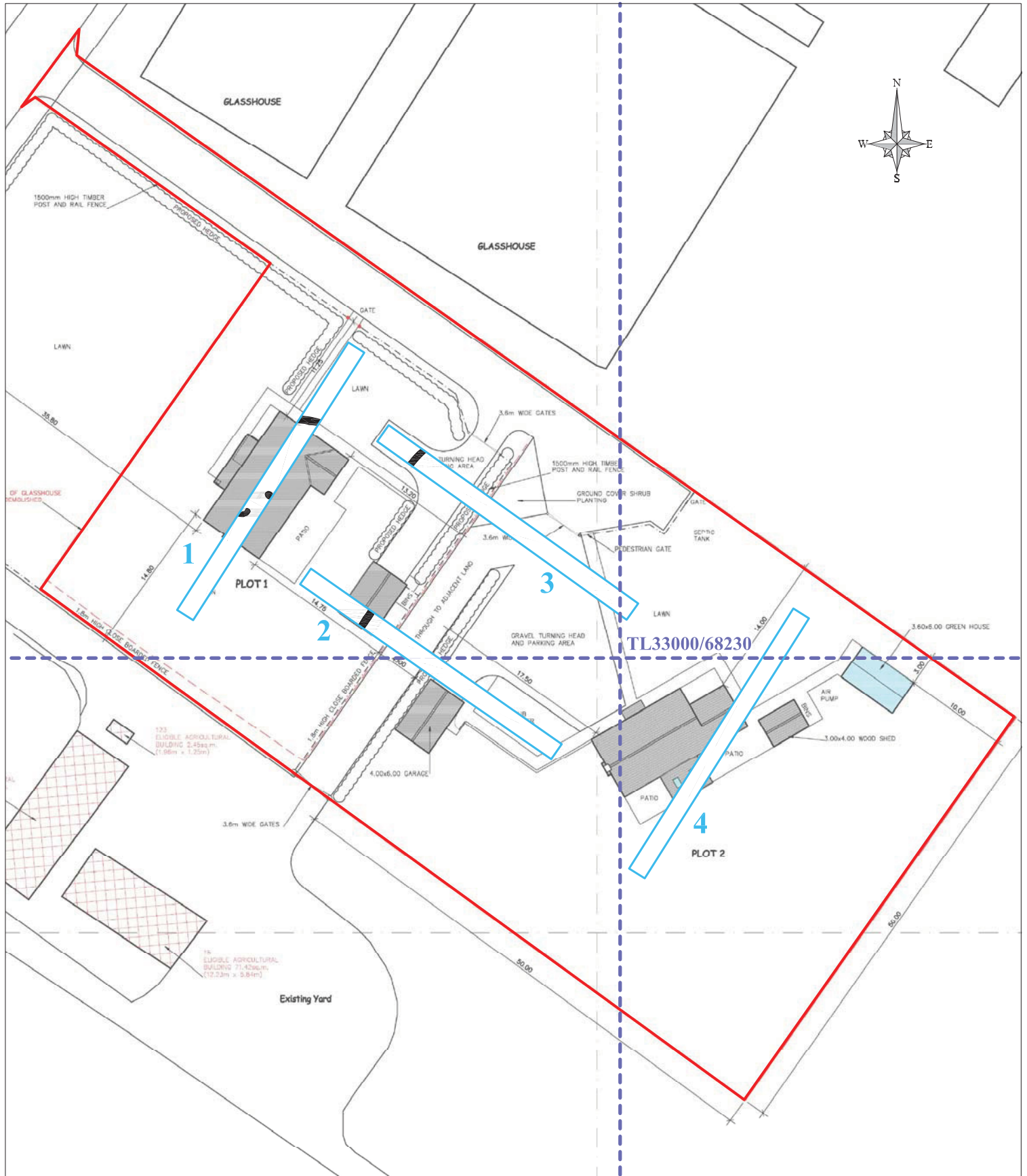


10
View of Trench 3 looking north-west



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Fig. 1 Site location plan
 Scale 1:25,000 at A4
 8 Mill Road, Fen Drayton, Cambridgeshire (P7206)

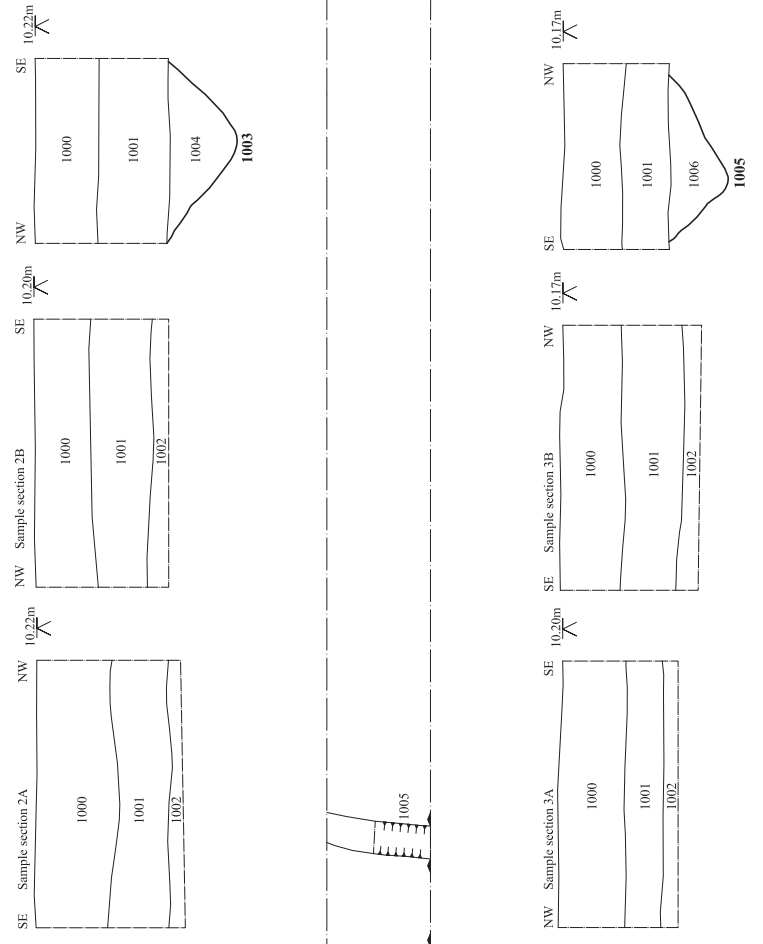
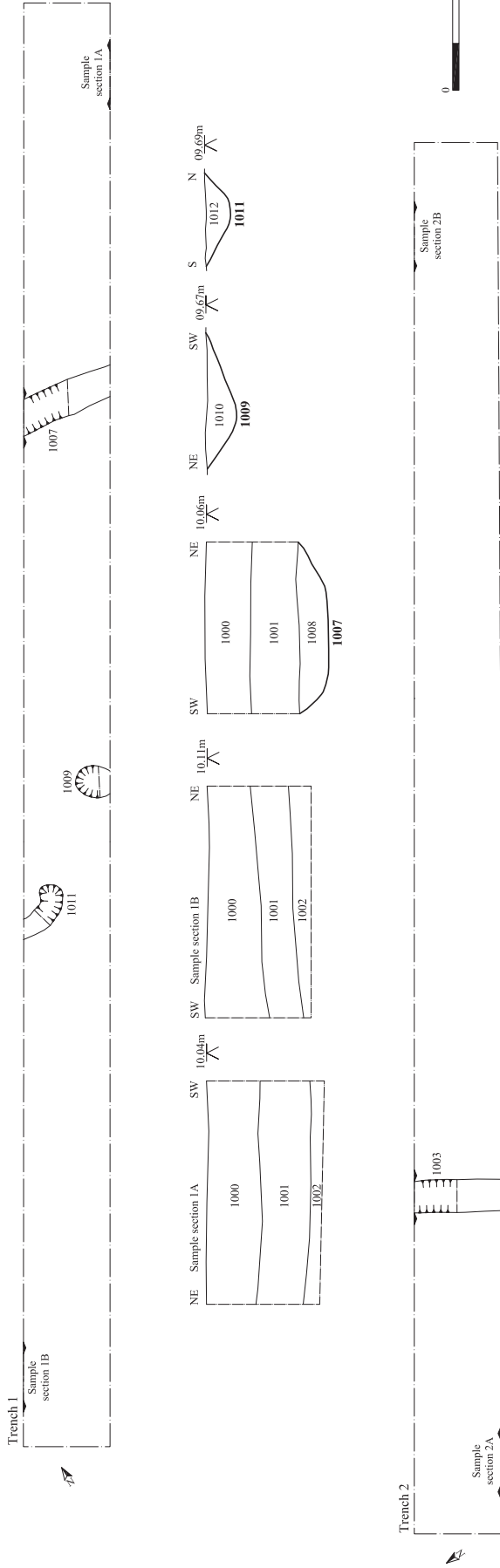


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Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan

Scale 1:500 at A4

8 Mill Road, Fen Drayton, Cambridgeshire (P7206)



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Fig. 3 Trench plans and sections
 Scale 1:100 and 1:20 at A3
 8 Mill Road, Fen Drayton, Cambridgeshire (P7206)