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80 MILL ROAD, ASHLEY, CAMBRIDGESHIRE AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Authors: Thomas Muir (Fieldwork and report)			
NGR: TL 6971 6217	Report No: 5481		
District: East Cambs	Site Code: ECB 5234		
Approved: Claire Halpin MCIfA	Project No: P7378		
	Date: 7 November 2017		

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OASIS SUMMARY SHEET

Project details	
Project name	80 Mill Road, Ashley, Cambridgeshire

In October 2017 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological evaluation on land at 80 Mill Road, Ashley, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 6971 6217; Figs. 1 - 2). The evaluation was undertaken to provide for the initial requirements of a planning condition attached to planning approval for the construction of a manage and horse walker (East Cambs Council Approval Ref. 17/01316/FUL). The evaluation was required based on the advice of Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team.

The site lies on higher ground north west of the course of the prehistoric Icknield Way. The historic core of the village of Ashley lies to the south. The site had a potential for prehistoric archaeology associated with the Icknield Way, and medieval activity being within the hinterland of the village of Ashley.

The evaluation revealed eight undated ditches which contained no finds. The ditches likely represent field boundaries of variable dates.

Project dates (fieldwork)	October 2	017			
Previous work (Y/N/?)	N Future work TBC				
P. number	P7378	Site c		ECB 5	5234
Type of project	Archaeolo	gical e	valuation		
Site status	_				
Current land use					
Planned development	Horse wal	ker, mé	enage		
Main features (+dates)	Ditches				
Significant finds (+dates)	None				
	Cambridgeshire East Cambs Ashley				
HER/ SMR for area	Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (CHER)				
Post code (if known)	-				
Area of site	1800m2.				
NGR	TL 6971 6217				
Height AOD (min/max)	c.100m AOD				
Project creators					
Brief issued by	Cambridgeshire County Council				
Project supervisor/s (PO)	Archaeological Solutions Ltd				
Funded by	Ms Samantha Kettle				
Full title	80 Mill Road, Ashley, Cambridgeshire. An Archaeological Evaluation				
Authors	Muir, T.				
Report no.	5481				
Date (of report)	November 2017				

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SUMMARY

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In October 2017 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological evaluation on land at 80 Mill Road, Ashley, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 6971 6217; Figs. 1 2). The evaluation was undertaken to provide for the initial requirements of a planning condition attached to planning approval for the construction of a manage and horse walker (East Cambs Council Approval Ref. 17/01316/FUL). The evaluation was required based on the advice of Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team.
- 1.2 The evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a brief issued by Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team (HET, Gemma Stewart; dated 22nd September 2017), and a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by AS (dated 25th September 2017) and approved by CCC HET. It followed the procedures outlined in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluation (2014). It also adhered to the relevant sections of Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England (Gurney 2003).
- 1.3 The objectives of the evaluation were to determine the location, date, extent, character, condition significance and quality of any 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 to the north of the village of Ashley. It comprises land behind 80 Mill Road.

3 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND SOILS

3.1 The site lies at c.100m AOD, and the local solid geology is chalk and Lowestoft Formation.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 The site lies on higher ground north west of the course of the prehistoric lcknield Way. Few archaeological investigations have taken place in the area to characterise the archaeology. Archaeological monitoring at the Cottage and No. 3 The Green, which are at the centre of Ashley recorded a short length of flint wall and a modern pit (CHER ECB16).

- 4.2 An early Neolithic and Bronze Age flint scatter comprising 31 pieces found was found only 80m to the south-east of the site (CHER 11993). Roman and medieval finds (CHER 07680) are also recorded to the south-east of Ashley.
- 4.3 The historic core of the village of Ashley lies to the south. It contains a number of listed buildings including the former Hospitaller chapel (CHER 07481). The Grade II listed Victorian church (CHERs CB14816 & DCB990) was built in 1845 to replace old St Mary's church. The wider landscape includes two Scheduled Ancient Monuments of medieval moated sites to the south (NHLE 101788; CHERs 01186 and DCB259; NHLE 1017885; CHERs 01187 and DCB257) and a further SAM where the remains of St Mary's Church lie (NHLE 1006791; CHER DCB207). Soilmarks of an enclosure or toft are recorded on the Suffolk side of the county boundary (SCC HER MUN 015). Additional prehistoric, Roman and medieval archaeology is known from the chalkands and clays further afield on the Suffolk side.
- 4.4 To the immediate north-west of the site is Mill House (CHER MCB23885), which is depicted on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map, which dates to 1885. To the immediate south of Mill House is the site of a corn windmill illustrated on the 1885 map but no longer standing (CHER MCB23884). Along the course of Mill Road is the Grade II listed school and school house (CHER DCB147) and Dip Cottage, which is a Grade II structure, possibly built as a pair of cottages in the late 17th century (CHER DCB568).

5 METHODOLOGY

- 5.1 The evaluation provided for a 5% sample of the area to be subject to development to be trial trenched and it focused on the proposed ménage (60m x 30m). The second element of the development, the horse walker, will not entail ground reduction as it will be built up from a concrete base. Two trenches each 25m x 1.80m were excavated within the footprint of the ménage.
- 5.2 The archaeological investigation comprised the inspection of the subsoil and natural deposits for archaeological features, the examination of spoil heaps and the recording of soil profiles. Encountered features and deposits were cleaned by hand and recorded using pro-forma recording sheets, drawn to scale and photographed as appropriate. Excavated spoil was checked for finds.
- 5.3 A one-metre square of topsoil and subsoil were bucket sampled and sorted by hand at each end of the trenches to characterise their artefact content. Soil from this sampling procedure was kept separate from the main spoil heaps. Site records were completed to reflect this exercise and an on-site record was made of the finds recovered. A metal detector was used to enhance finds recovery. The metal detector survey was conducted when the trenches were opened, and the detector was not set to discriminate against iron. The spoil tips were also surveyed. No finds were recovered during the sampling of the topsoil or the metal detecting survey.

6 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS

Individual trench descriptions are presented below:

Trench 1 (Figs. 2 - 3)

Sample section	1A			
0.00 = 100.71 m	0.00 = 100.71 m AOD			
0.00 - 0.24m	L1000	Topsoil. Firm, dark grey brown clayish silt with occasional		
		small rounded flints.		
0.24 - 0.40m	L1001	Subsoil. Firm, mid orange brown silty clay with occasional		
		small sub-angular flints		
0.40m +	L1002	Natural deposits. Firm, pale yellow grey chalky clay with		
		occasional small rounded flints		

Sample section 0.00 = 1003.6m		
0.00 – 0.26m	L1000	Topsoil. As above
0.26 – 0.38m	L1001	Subsoil. As above
0.38m +	L1002	Natural. As above

Description: Trench 1 contained undated Ditches F1008, F1010, F1012, F1014, F1016 and F1018. No finds were present. Ditches F1010, F1012 and F1014 were parallel and orientated NW/SE, and Ditches F1016 and F1018 were parallel and orientated E/W. A modern drain truncated F1008, F1010 and F1012.

Ditch F1008 was linear in plan (1.90+ x 0.80 x 0.25m), orientated NW/SE. The feature was located at the very northern end of Trench 1 and was partially removed by the mechanical excavator. A vestige of the feature survived and was excavated and planned. The vestige had moderately sloping sides and a concave base. Its fill, L1009, was a firm, mid red brown silty clay with occasional small sub-angular flints. It contained no finds.

Ditch F1010 was linear in plan (2.30+ x 0.46 x 0.10m), orientated NW/SE. It had gently sloping sides and a shallow concave base. Its fill, L1011, was a firm, mid red brown silty clay with occasional small sub-angular flints. It contained no finds.

Ditch F1012 was linear in plan ($2.30+ \times 0.55 \times 0.13m$), orientated NW/SE. It had gently sloping, slightly irregular sides and a shallow concave base. Its fill, L1013, was a firm, mid red brown silty clay with occasional small rounded chalk flecks. It contained no finds.

Ditch F1014 was linear in plan (2.30+ x 0.65 x 0.18m), orientated NW/SE. It had moderately sloping sides and a shallow concave base. Its fill, L1015, was a firm, mid red brown silty clay with very occasional small sub-rounded flints. It contained no finds.

Ditch F1016 was linear in plan (1.80+ x 0.43 x 0.08m), orientated E/W. It had moderately sloping sides and a shallow concave base. Its fill, L1017, was a

firm, mid red brown silty clay with occasional small rounded flints. It contained no finds.

Ditch F1018 was linear in plan $(1.80+ x 0.82 \times 0.10m)$, orientated E/W. It had gently sloping sides and a shallow concave base. Its fill, L1019, was a firm, mid red brown silty clay with occasional small sub-angular flints. It contained no finds.

Trench 2 (Figs. 2 - 3)

Sample section 2 0.00 100.28m A		
0.00 - 0.30m	L1000	Topsoil. As above Tr.1
0.30 - 0.34m	L1001	Subsoil. As above Tr.1
0.34m +	L1002	Natural. As above Tr.1

Sample section	Sample section 2B				
0.00 = 100.49m AOD					
0.00 - 0.36m	L1000	Topsoil. As above Tr.1			
0.36 - 0.55m	L1001	Subsoil. As above Tr.1			
0.55m +	L1002	Natural. As above Tr.1			

Description: Trench 2 contained Ditches undated F1004 and F1006. No finds were present in either ditch. The ditches were parallel, and F1004 cut F1006. Two modern land drains traversed the trench.

Ditch F1004 was linear in plan (2.10+ x 0.79 x 0.18m), orientated NW/SE. It had moderately sloping, slightly irregular sides and a concave base. Its fill, L1005, was a firm, mid brown grey silty clay with occasional small sub-angular flints. It contained no finds. It cut Ditch F1006.

Ditch F1006 was linear in plan ($2.10+ \times 0.41+ \times 0.11m$), orientated NW/SE. It had moderately sloping sides and a shallow concave base. Its fill, L1007, was a firm, mid brown grey silty clay with very occasional small sub-rounded flints. It contained no finds. It was cut by Ditch F1004.

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 The site was commonly overlain by Topsoil L1000, a firm, dark grey brown clay silt with occasional small rounded flint (0.24 - 0.36 m thick). L1000 overlay Subsoil L1001, a firm, mid orange brown silty clay with occasional small sub-angular flints (0.04 - 0.19 m thick)

8.2 The natural geology, L1002, was a firm, pale yellow grey chalky clay. It varied and was a firm, dark brown orange silty clay with occasional small chalky flecks and occasional small rounded flints. It was 0.34 - 0.55m below the present day ground surface.

9 DISCUSSION

9.1 The recorded features are tabulated:

Trench	Context	Description	Spot Date
1	F1008	Ditch	Undated
	F1010	Ditch	Undated
	F1012	Ditch	Undated
	F1014	Ditch	Undated
	F1016	Ditch	Undated
	F1018	Ditch	Undated
2	F1004	Ditch	Undated
	F1006	Ditch	Undated

- 9.2 The evaluation revealed eight ditches; six were present in Trench 1 (F1008, F1010, F1012, F1014, F1016 and F1018) and two in Trench 2 (F1004 and F1006). None contained finds and no finds were present in the topsoil or subsoil.
- 9.3 In Trench 1 Ditches F1010, F1012 and F1014 were parallel and orientated NW/SE, and Ditches F1016 and F1018 were parallel and orientated E/W. A modern drain truncated F1008, F1010 and F1012.
- 9.4 In Trench 2, intercutting Ditches F1004 and F1006 were parallel and orientated NW/SE). The alignment of these ditches was slightly different to those present in Trench 1. F1004 cut F1006 may represent the re-cutting of a field ditch.
- 9.5 The site is depicted as relatively open land on the OS map of 1884, and on subsequent editions, for example, 1903 (Fig. 4); the south-western boundary exists from this time. Prior to the 1927 OS edition (Fig. 4) the site is also depicted as the location of a windmill (*ibid.*). The general lack of boundaries depicted on the early cartographic sources makes it difficult to associate the excavated ditches with any form of historical land enclosure. However Ditches F1010, F1012 and F1014 in Trench 1 were at right angles to the alignment of nearby Mill Road (Fig. 2) and may represent parallel boundaries extending south-eastwards from the latter. Their close spacing (between 2.50m and 3.50m) suggests that they bounded a trackway or similar leading away from the road; the occurrence of three ditches may have resulted from the widening or narrowing of this ?trackway.
- 9.6 Ditches F1016 and F1018, located towards the south-eastern end of Trench 1, appear to have run at right angles to the site's easternmost

boundary, some 13m distant (Fig. 2). This boundary is relatively recent and possibly suggests a modern date for F1016 and F1018. The remaining ditches (F1008, F1004 and F1006) cannot be confidently associated with any mapped boundaries post-dating 1884. It is possible therefore that they are associated with an earlier episode of enclosure, perhaps former fields or enclosures to the north of the medieval core of Ashley. The abandonment and / or reordering of medieval landscapes due to the economic impacts of the Black Death and Little Ice Age, amongst other factors, is a commonly occurring theme at a number of medieval rural sites (cf. Mustchin *et al.* 2015, 13; Mustchin *et al.* forthcoming).

10 CONCLUSION

- 10.1 The site lies on higher ground north west of the course of the prehistoric lcknield Way. The historic core of the village of Ashley lies to the south. The site had a potential for prehistoric archaeology associated with the lcknield Way, and medieval activity being within the hinterland of the village of Ashley.
- 10.2 The evaluation revealed eight undated ditches which contained no finds. The ditches likely represent *field boundaries of variable dates*.

DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE

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 Ms Samantha Kettle for funding the project and for her assistance on site.

AS would like to acknowledge the input and advice of Ms Gemma Stewart, Archaeological Officer, Cambridgeshire County Council.

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Website

http://www.old-maps.co.uk (accessed 06/11/2017)

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OASIS ID: archaeol7-302552

Project details

80 Mill Road, Ashley, Cambridgeshire Project name

Short description of the project

In October 2017 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological evaluation on land at 80 Mill Road, Ashley, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 6971 6217; Figs. 1 - 2). The evaluation was undertaken to provide for the initial requirements of a planning condition attached to planning approval for the construction of a manage and horse walker (East Cambs Council Approval Ref. 17/01316/FUL). The evaluation was required based on the advice of Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team. The site lies on higher ground north west of the course of the prehistoric Icknield Way. The historic core of the village of Ashley lies to the south. The site had a potential for prehistoric archaeology associated with the Icknield Way, and medieval activity being within the hinterland of the village of Ashley. The evaluation revealed eight undated ditches which contained no finds. The ditches likely represent field

boundaries of variable dates.

Start: 01-10-2017 End: 31-10-2017 Project dates

Previous/future

work

codes

No / Not known

Any associated project reference

P7378 - Contracting Unit No.

Any associated project reference

codes

ECB5234 - Sitecode

Type of project Field evaluation

Site status None

Current Land use Other 15 - Other

DICTHES Uncertain Monument type

Significant Finds **NONE None**

Methods & techniques "Sample Trenches", "Targeted Trenches"

Farm infrastructure (e.g. barns, grain stores, equipment stores, etc.) Development type

Prompt Planning condition Position in the

planning process

Pre-application

Project location

Country **England**

1 of 3 30/11/2017, 11:28 Site location CAMBRIDGESHIRE EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE ASHLEY 80 Mill Road, Ashley,

Cambridgeshire

Study area 1800 Square metres

Site coordinates TL 6971 6217 52.231089652893 0.485337761083 52 13 51 N 000 29 07 E Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 100m Max: 100m

Project creators

Name of Archaeological Solutions Ltd

Organisation

Project brief Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team

originator

Project design Jon Murray

originator

Project Jon Murray

director/manager

Project supervisor Archaeological Solutions Ltd

Project archives

Physical Archive No

Exists?

Cambridgeshire County Archaeological Store

Cambridgeshire County Archaeological Store

Digital Archive recipient

Digital Contents "Survey"

Digital Media available

"Images raster / digital photography", "Survey", "Text"

Paper Archive recipient

Paper Contents "Survey"

Paper Media

available

"Drawing", "Photograph", "Plan", "Report", "Survey"

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OASIS:

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PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



2 Trench 1 Ditch 1008

Trench 1 looking south





4 Trench 1 Ditch 1012



5 Trench 1 Ditch 1014



Trench 1 Ditch 1018



6 Trench 1 Ditch 1016

6



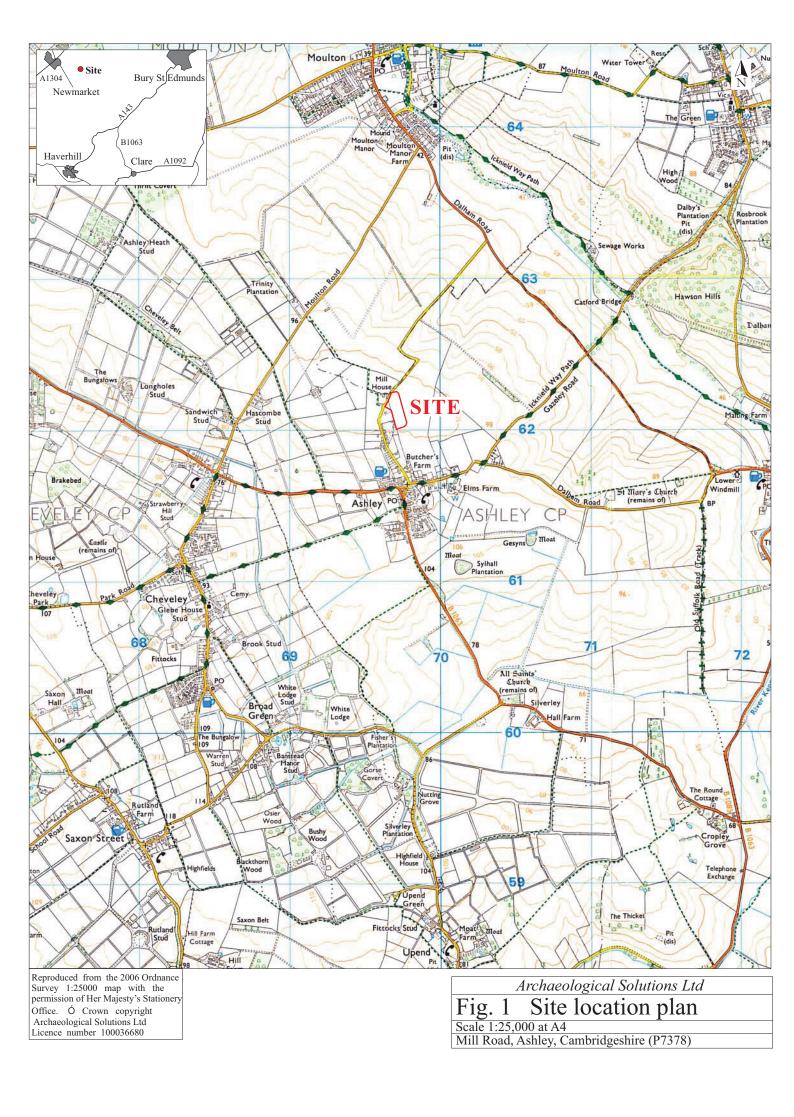
8 Trench 2 looking east



Trench 2 Ditches 1004 and 1006



10 Sample section 2B



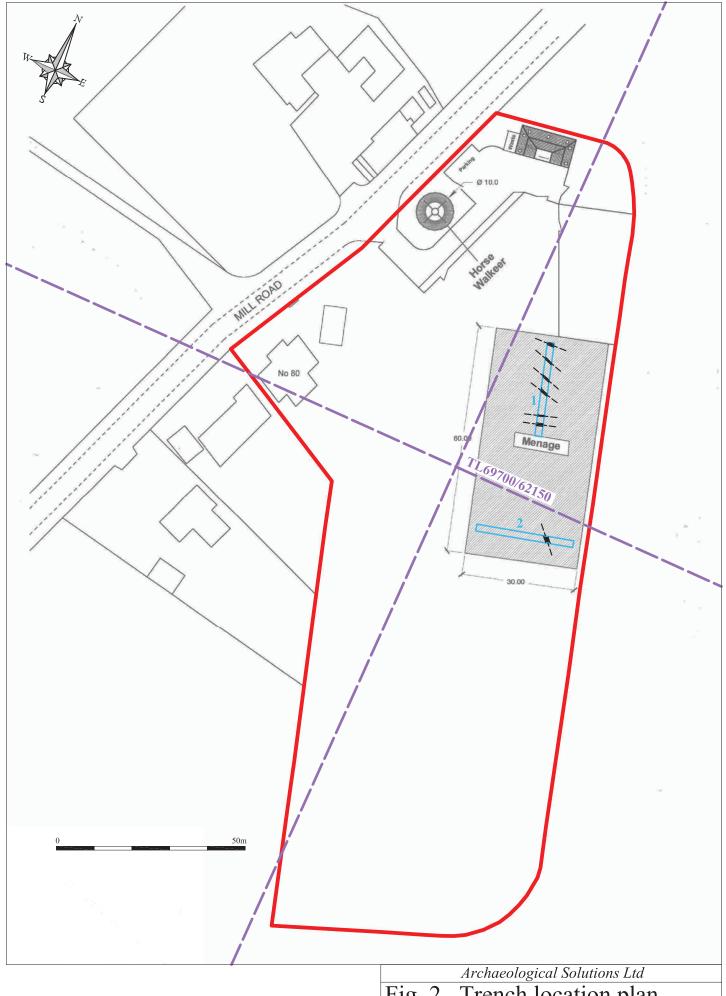


Fig. 2 Trench location plan
Scale 1:1000 at A4
Mill Road, Ashley, Cambridgeshire (P7378)

