
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD

**STABLES OPPOSITE 83 THE BUTTS,
SOHAM, CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

CHER: ECB 5290

| | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Authors: Kerrie Bull (Fieldwork and report) | |
| NGR: TL 5967 7221 | Report No: 5494 |
| District: East Cambs | Site Code: ECB 5290 |
| Approved: Claire Halpin MClfA | Project No: P7329 |
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OASIS SUMMARY SHEET

| Project details | | | |
|---|--|--------------------|-----------------|
| Project name | <i>Stables, Opposite 83 The Butts, Soham, Cambridgeshire</i> | | |
| <i>In November 2017 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological evaluation on land at the stables opposite 83 The Butts, Soham, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 5967 7221; Figs. 1 - 2). The evaluation was undertaken in compliance with the initial requirements of a planning condition attached to planning approval for the proposed construction of two houses, garaging, parking, access and associated site works (East Cambs Council Ref. 16/00510/OUT). It was based on the advice of Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team.</i> | | | |
| <i>The earliest feature was Pit F1009 (Trench 2) which contained Late Neolithic – Early Bronze Age pottery. It also contained burnt flint and burnt bone. A residual Roman sherd was contained in modern Ditch F1011 (Trench 2). Undated ditches may have formed part of former field boundaries.</i> | | | |
| Project dates (fieldwork) | <i>November 2017</i> | | |
| Previous work (Y/N/?) | <i>N</i> | <i>Future work</i> | <i>TBC</i> |
| P. number | <i>P7329</i> | <i>Site code</i> | <i>ECB 5290</i> |
| Type of project | <i>Archaeological evaluation</i> | | |
| Site status | <i>-</i> | | |
| Current land use | <i>Stables</i> | | |
| Planned development | <i>Residential</i> | | |
| Main features (+dates) | <i>Pit, gully, ditches</i> | | |
| Significant finds (+dates) | <i>Late Neolithic – Early Bronze Age pottery, burnt flint and burnt bone. Residual Roman sherd</i> | | |
| Project location | | | |
| County/ District/ Parish | <i>Cambridgeshire</i> | <i>East Cambs</i> | <i>Soham</i> |
| HER/ SMR for area | <i>Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (CHER)</i> | | |
| Post code (if known) | <i>-</i> | | |
| Area of site | <i>0.194ha.</i> | | |
| NGR | <i>TL 5967 7221</i> | | |
| Height AOD (min/max) | <i>c.4.80 AOD</i> | | |
| Project creators | | | |
| Brief issued by | <i>Cambridgeshire County Council</i> | | |
| Project supervisor/s (PO) | <i>Archaeological Solutions Ltd</i> | | |
| Funded by | <i>Trevor and Emma Froud</i> | | |
| Full title | <i>Stables Opposite 83 The Butts, Soham, Cambridgeshire. An Archaeological Evaluation</i> | | |
| Authors | <i>Kerrie Bull</i> | | |
| Report no. | <i>5494</i> | | |
| Date (of report) | <i>November 2017</i> | | |

STABLES OPPOSITE 83 THE BUTTS, SOHAM, CAMBRIDGESHIRE AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

SUMMARY

In November 2017 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological evaluation on land at the stables opposite 83 The Butts, Soham, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 5967 7221; Figs. 1 - 2). The evaluation was undertaken in compliance with the initial requirements of a planning condition attached to planning approval for the proposed construction of two houses, garaging, parking, access and associated site works (East Cambs Council Ref. 16/00510/OUT). It was based on the advice of Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team.

A recent archaeological evaluation (Muir 2017) on land adjacent south of 70 The Butts recorded low quantities of prehistoric artefacts of likely Mesolithic date, comprising flint blades, animal bone including deer, and burnt flint potentially used as pot boilers. Sparse prehistoric struck flint was found during a second recent archaeological evaluation on The Butts (Barlow 2017). Prehistoric occupation has also been recorded to the north of The Butts (CHER MCB17961). An extensive Anglo-Saxon cemetery lies to the north east (CHER 07027) and its southern extent is unknown. Elsewhere along Fordham Road, investigations have revealed extensive evidence of prehistoric, Roman and medieval settlement/occupation and further significant Saxon inhumation burials (CHER ECB4586, ECB455, ECB3613 & ECB4556).

The earliest feature was Pit F1009 (Trench 2) which contained Late Neolithic – Early Bronze Age pottery. It also contained burnt flint and burnt bone. A residual Roman sherd was contained in modern Ditch F1011 (Trench 2). Undated ditches may have formed part of former field boundaries.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In November 2017 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological evaluation on land at the stables opposite 83 The Butts, Soham, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 5967 7221; Figs. 1 - 2). The evaluation was undertaken in compliance with the initial requirements of a planning condition attached to planning approval for the proposed construction of two houses, garaging, parking, access and associated site works (East Cambs Council Ref. 16/00510/OUT). It was 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 12th September 2017), and a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by AS (dated 10th November 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 southern edge of Soham, on the western side of The Butts. It comprises an existing stables and paddock and extends to some 0.194ha.

3 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND SOILS

3.1 The site lies at c.4.8m AOD, on higher ground above the former low-lying fenland. The local solid geology is chalk, with some river terrace deposits locally.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 A recent archaeological evaluation (Muir 2017) on land adjacent south of 70 The Butts recorded low quantities of prehistoric artefacts of likely Mesolithic date, comprising flint blades, animal bone including deer, and burnt flint potentially used as pot boilers. These artefacts were recovered from ditches and pits, but it is unclear if these features are of prehistoric origin, and it is unlikely they are Mesolithic in date. However, the low quantity of finds provides further evidence for Mesolithic activity on the margins of the fen island. Sparse prehistoric struck flint was found during a second recent archaeological evaluation on The Butts (Barlow 2017).

4.2 Mesolithic and Neolithic settlement and activity appears to be focused to the north of Soham in the Broad Hill area, and is represented by extensive flint scatters. Flint artefacts of this date in the vicinity of Fordham Road are limited to sparsely distributed or isolated finds including a hammer stone, axe and blades to the north (HER 02097 and 07498) and scrapers and a whetstone to the south-east (HER04456). The bulk of Bronze Age activity that has been recorded in the Soham area comprises funerary activity that appears to have been situated away from the peninsula on which the historic town was situated and on the land overlooking the fen. This evidence comprises funerary mounds at Wicken and Fordham, and a burial has been recorded at Clipsall Field to the south-east (HER 07518). A spearhead (HER 07605a) and Beaker pottery (HER 07493) have also been recorded in the Clipsall Field and Down Field areas to the east and west, and a thumbnail scraper has also been identified as an unstratified find (HER 07107A). Archaeological investigations closer to the current site have indicated the presence of Bronze Age settlement on the peninsula. Late Bronze Age to early Iron Age enclosures and settlement activity have been recorded at the former Fordham Road allotments site (HER CB14631). Struck flint of Bronze Age date has been recovered at The Butts (HER MCB17961)

4.3 The Iron Age landscape around Soham is dominated by the hilltop settlement at Henney. However, part of an early Iron Age settlement, represented by pits, ditches and a few possible postholes, has been investigated during two phases of evaluation and small-scale excavation work at Clay Street/St Andrew's House (HER CB15776). Late Bronze Age to later Iron Age and Roman pottery, a preserved Iron Age soil horizon, and features have been recorded at 8 Market Street, and Cyril Fox records the discovery in Soham of an early Iron Age male warrior burial accompanied by a spear and two dogs (HER 07086), although its precise location is not known and an Anglo-Saxon date may be more likely.

4.4 During the Roman period, Soham formed part of a complex and intensively settled landscape on the edge of the postulated Imperial estate of the fens. A significant component of this local landscape was a villa at East Fen Drove (HER 07688 and 07578) to the north-east as well as a settlement at Fordey Farm to the north-west of Soham. A substantial building has also been recorded to the south of the town (HER 02087). Archaeological investigations in the vicinity of Fordham Road (e.g. HER CB14630, CB14632) have recorded significant evidence for Roman activity and settlement, while the Clipsall Field and Down Field areas to the east and north have produced high quantities of Roman finds. Some evidence

for Roman occupation has also been found in the vicinity of the modern town centre but the character and status of this activity is not yet well understood. Pottery, including castor ware and a cordoned jar of 1st - to 2nd-century date, has been found in association with a human skull at Weatheralls Close. A Roman burial ground in the vicinity of White Hart Lane, just north of the High Street, may be indicated by seven skeletons found in building trenches (HER 06971), and an additional inhumation uncovered nearby during other construction work (HER MCB17746). However, in both cases only one or two sherds of Roman pottery were present to date the graves and the sherds may have been residual in later burials. A late Iron Age to early Roman (c. 50 BC – AD 70/80) ditched enclosure with associated pits, possible structural features and evidence of high-status occupation including imported Gallo-Belgic pottery has been recorded at the former Church Hall site on the High Street (HER MCB18184). Evidence for late Roman settlement (4th to possibly early 5th centuries) was also present. An archaeological investigation further north west along Fordham Road (HER CB14630) recorded a continuation of enclosure ditches with associated pits, containing low to moderate quantities of finds including 2nd century AD pottery and a spindle whorl. Roman features have also been recorded at Paddock Street (HER MCB18200). In addition, several finds of unstratified artefacts have been recovered from the surrounding area, including pottery, coins and other items (HER 07104, 07107, 07119, 07120, 07121, 07603a, 11518, MCB16684, MCB18080).

4.5 Excavations by AS in 2012-13 further NW on Fordham Road revealed dense archaeological activity; two phases of prehistoric (late Bronze Age to Iron Age) settlement followed by three phases of Romano-British activity (HER MCB19583). The prehistoric activity comprised a series of enclosures which appear to have been appended to a settlement. No domestic buildings were present but the character of the artefact assemblages suggested settlement in the immediate vicinity. The enclosures appear to have been multi-functional, possibly having some agricultural purpose but also possibly used for other activities. The Roman site comprised a series of enclosures, very similar in layout to the prehistoric site despite a possibly very long hiatus in activity, that were used for agricultural processing. Within the enclosures were a well, corn-drying ovens, a kiln, and ovens constructed from re-used storage jars. A pair of Romano-British graves was also identified. As in the prehistoric phases, there were no domestic structures and it is suggested that the site formed part of a larger farming estate. Certain aspects of the artefact assemblage suggest that the site formed part of a villa estate which would correlate with the presence of villas and other high status sites in the Soham area. Significant prehistoric and Roman activity has recently been recorded at Fordham Road and Cherrytree Lane (HER MCB20523)

4.6 The first evidence for Anglo-Saxon period settlement and associated activity within Soham includes four pagan cemeteries. One of these cemeteries is located to the north east of the site on Newmarket Road (HER 07027). Saxon and medieval settlement features have been recorded at the former Church Hall site on the High Street (HER MCB18185). A Saxon spearhead has been recovered from a location in Down Field (HER 07585). Other finds of Saxon date include a pin and girdle hanger (HER 07121a), a strap fitting (HER 07603), and a brooch (HER 07604).

4.7 A component of the medieval agricultural landscape would have been windmills, one of which was situated on the other side of Fordham Road on Mill Croft (HER 07497). Others are also known from later cartographic sources (HER 07105). During this period, or possibly the Saxon period, it is likely the river Snail was canalized and the Soham Lode created but there is no dating evidence to confirm this. Saxon and medieval settlement features have been recorded at the former Church Hall site on the High Street (HER MCB18185). The Cambridgeshire HER records a medieval moated site near Soham Mills (HER 01068). Medieval activity has been recorded at Brook Dam Lane (HER MCB16314). A retting pit and other medieval features have been recorded at Paddock Street (HER MCB18201). Medieval features have been recorded at land north of 10 and 23 The Oaks (HER MCB19936). Evidence of medieval settlement and quarrying has been recorded at Brook Street (HER MCB21804). Netherall Manor (HER MCB19369) originated in the medieval period.

4.8 "The Moat" is recorded on the Cambridgeshire HER as a post-medieval garden (HER 12188). Post-medieval features have been recorded at Brook Dam Lane (HER CB15264, MCB16314). Post-medieval quarrying activity has been identified at Soham High Street (HER MCB17349). Post-medieval features have been recorded at land north of 10 and 23 The Oaks (HER MCB19936). Post-medieval pits have been recorded at The Butts (HER MCB17961). Finds of post-medieval metalwork and similar items have been recorded from a number of locations in Soham (HER 07119b, 071212b, 07603b, 11518B).

4.9 The early modern period is represented on the Cambridgeshire HER in the vicinity of the site in the form of the 19th to 20th century cemetery (HER 12186), the 19th century (with an earlier precursor) Baptist Church north of Clay Lane (HER MCB17131), a 19th century Anglican burial chapel (HER MCB17213) and a non-conformist cemetery chapel (HER MCB17233) which are both listed buildings, the dismantled route of the Ely and Newmarket railway (HER MCB19610), a clunch pit (HER MCB21390), schools (HER MCB21386 & MCB21387) and 19th century almshouses (HER MCB21388) and by the locations of several former buildings known from documentary evidence (HER MCB21758-MCB21765, MCB21771, MCB21773, MCB22993-MCB22995) including several blacksmiths workshops (HER MCB21768-MCB21770). 18th to 19th century features have been recorded at Alfreda Court, Red Lion Square (HER MCB20642).

4.10 The walled garden associated with Netherall Manor is recorded as being of 20th century date (HER MCB19370).

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 The evaluation provided for a sample of the area to be subject to development to be trial trenched (overall site area c.0.194ha). The brief required a c.5% sample of the site to be investigated by trenching, with a contingency for further judgemental trench use. Two trenches each 30m x 2m were excavated (Fig. 3), and Trench 2 was L-shaped. The trenches were widened from the

proposed 1.80m due to the loose condition of the soil and instances of standing water causing the trench sides to be unstable and collapse.

5.2 The archaeological evaluation 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.

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

5.4 A one-metre square of the topsoil and subsoil was sampled and sorted by hand at each end of the trenches to characterise their artefact content. No finds were present in Subsoil L1001. Modern (19th – 20th century) pottery and CBM were present in Topsoil L1000 and Made Ground L1014.

6 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS

6.1 The individual trench descriptions are presented below:

Trench 1 Figs. 3 & 4

| Sample section 1A 0.00 = 4.44m AOD | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------|---|
| 0.00-0.25m | L1014 | Made Ground. Compact, pale grey brown silty sand with frequent moderate small sub-angular gravel and moderate small rounded chalk pebbles |
| 0.25-0.46m | L1000 | Topsoil. Firm, dark grey brown clayey silt with occasional small sub rounded flints and occasional CBM flecks |
| 0.46-0.68m | L1001 | Subsoil. Firm, pale - mid yellow/grey brown clayey silt with sparse small sub-rounded flints |
| 0.68m + | L1002 | Natural. Firm, pale brown orange/ pale grey yellow silty sandy clay with occasional small sub-rounded flints and manganese flecks |

| Sample section 1B 0.00 = 4.78m AOD | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------|--------------------|
| 0.00-0.38m | L1000 | Topsoil. As above |
| 0.38-0.74m | L1001 | Subsoil. As above. |
| 0.74m+ | L1002 | Natural. As above. |

Description: Trench 1 contained modern (19th – 20th century) Ditch F1011B which was also recorded in Trench 2, and a large tree hollow. The latter was not excavated.

Ditch F1011B was linear in plan (2.30+ x 2.45 x 0.35+m), orientated E/W. It had moderately sloping sides and a concave base. Its fill, L1012, was a firm, dark

grey brown clayey silt with occasional small sub-angular flints. It contained modern (19th – 20th century) pottery (1; 28g); CBM (631g); glass and clay pipe stem fragments. F1011B cut Subsoil L1001.

Trench 2 Figs. 3 & 5

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------|--------------------|
| Sample section 2A 0.00 = 4.59m AOD | | |
| 0.00-0.44m | L1000 | Topsoil. As above |
| 0.44-0.99m | L1001 | Subsoil. As above. |
| 0.99m+ | L1002 | Natural. As above. |

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------|-------------------|
| Sample section 2B 0.00 = 4.51m AOD | | |
| 0.00-0.4m | L1000 | Topsoil. As above |
| 0.4-0.76m | L1001 | Subsoil. As above |
| 0.76m+ | L1002 | Natural. As above |

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------|-------------------|
| Sample section 2C 0.00 = 4.37m AOD | | |
| 0.00-0.36m | L1000 | Topsoil. As above |
| 0.36-0.66m | L1001 | Subsoil. As above |
| 0.66m+ | L1002 | Natural. As above |

Description: Trench 2 contained Ditches F1003, F1005 and F1011A; Gully F1007; and Pits F1009 and F1015. Pit F1009 contained Late Neolithic – Early Bronze Age pottery. Ditch F1011A and Pit F1015 were modern (19th – 20th century), and the other features were undated.

Ditch F1003 was linear in plan (7.50+ x 1.05 x 0.45m), orientated N/S. It had moderately sloping sides and a concave base. Its fill, L1004, was a firm, pale grey brown silty clay with very occasional small sub-angular flints. It contained no finds, and was cut by Ditch F1005.

Ditch F1005 was linear in plan (3.00+ x 1.02 x 0.45m), orientated E/W. It had steep sides and a concave base. Its fill, L1006, was a firm, pale grey brown (transitioning to a mid grey brown towards its base) silty clay with very occasional small sub-angular flints. It contained no finds, and cut Ditch F1003.

Gully F1007 was linear in plan (3.00+ x 0.40 x 0.28m), orientated N/S. It had moderately sloping sides and a slightly narrow concave base. Its fill, L1008, was a firm, pale grey silty/sandy clay. It contained no finds, and cut Pit F1009.

Pit F1009 was sub-circular in plan (0.6+ x 0.85+ x 0.34m). It had moderately sloping sides and a concave base. Its fill, L1010, was a firm, mid – dark blue grey silty clay. It contained late Neolithic – Early Bronze Age pottery (7; 77g); burnt flint (12g) and burnt bone (1g). Pit F1009 was cut by Gully F1007 and Ditch F1011A.

Ditch F1011A was linear in plan (2.50+ x 2.05 x 0.90m), orientated E/W. It had moderately sloping sides and a slightly narrow concave base. Its basal fill, L1012, was a firm, dark grey brown clayey silt with occasional small sub-angular flints. It contained a residual Roman sherd (1; 20g) and glass. The upper fill, L1013, was a mid grey brown silty clay with occasional patches of mid yellow clay, and moderate small angular flints. It contained no finds. F1011A was a continuation of Ditch F1011B (Trench 1). It cut Subsoil L1001 and Pit F1009.

Pit F1015 was sub-circular in plan (4.7+ x 2.0+ x ?m). The feature was modern date and not excavated. Its fill, L1016, was a firm, mid – dark grey brown silty clay with frequent small rounded chalk rubble and small sub-angular flints. Surface finds comprise modern (19th – 20th century pottery (1; 3g) and CBM (4658g). Pit F1015 cut Subsoil L1001.

7 CONFIDENCE RATING

7.1 It is not felt that any factors restricted the identification of archaeological features or finds.

8 DEPOSIT MODEL

8.1 Topsoil L1000 commonly overlay the site with the exception of the area to the north-west, where the present ground surface comprised Made Ground L1014 which overlay L1000. L1014 was a compact, pale grey brown silty sand with frequent moderate small sub-angular gravel and moderate small rounded chalk pebbles (0.25m thick). Topsoil L1000 comprised a firm, dark grey brown clayey silt with occasional small sub-rounded flints and occasional CBM flecks (0.35 – 0.50m in thickness). It overlay Subsoil, L1001, a firm, pale to mid yellow/grey brown clayey silt with very occasional small sub-rounded flints (between 0.20- 0.52m in thickness).

8.3 At the base of the sequence the natural, L1002, varied between a firm, pale brown orange and pale grey yellow silty sandy clay with occasional small sub-rounded flints and occasional manganese flecks. It was present 0.66 – 0.99m below the present day ground surface.

9 DISCUSSION

9.1 The recorded features are tabulated:

| Trench | Context | Description | Spot Date |
|--------|---------|-------------|--|
| 2 | F1003 | Ditch | - |
| 2 | F1005 | Ditch | - |
| 2 | F1007 | Gully | - |
| 2 | F1009 | Pit | Late Neolithic – Early Bronze Age |
| 1 & 2 | F1011 | Ditch | Modern (19 th – 20 th century) |
| 2 | F1015 | Pit | Modern (19 th – 20 th century) |

9.2 Features were present in both trenches. The majority were present in Trench 2 which contained six features, and the trench was located in the north-eastern sector of the site. The features were of a broad range and comprised pits, a gully and ditches.

9.3 The earliest feature was Pit F1009 (Trench 2) which contained Late Neolithic – Early Bronze Age pottery. It also contained burnt flint and burnt bone. The landscape to the south-east of the Soham peninsular has produced significant evidence for early Bronze Age funerary activity, including Beaker pottery, notably in the Clipsall and Down Field areas. This pit appears to be consistent with related activity in the landscape to the south-east of the former Soham Mere.

9.4 A residual Roman sherd was contained in modern Ditch F1011 (Trench 2). Significant settlement and agro-industrial activity has been recorded at Soham, including on the former allotments on Fordham Road where activity spanned the Roman period. Therefore the presence of residual Roman pottery in the local area is not unexpected.

9.4 The size and form of Ditches F1003 and F1005 suggest they formed part of former field boundaries. Gully F1007 was broadly parallel with Ditch F1003 and they may have been broadly contemporary. Ditch F1005 cut F1003 and was therefore later. None of the features contained finds, however excavations on the former allotments at Fordham Road demonstrated that field systems were established in the area from the late Bronze Age. Thus these boundaries could potentially be attributed to a prehistoric, Roman or medieval date.

9.5 Ditch F1011A & B traversed Trenches 1 and 2, and was likely a modern drainage ditch.

10 CONCLUSION

10.1 A recent archaeological evaluation (Muir 2017) on land adjacent south of 70 The Butts recorded low quantities of prehistoric artefacts of likely Mesolithic date, comprising flint blades, animal bone including deer, and burnt flint potentially used as pot boilers. Sparse prehistoric struck flint was found during a second recent archaeological evaluation on The Butts (Barlow 2017). Prehistoric occupation has also been recorded to the north of The Butts (CHER MCB17961). An extensive Anglo-Saxon cemetery lies to the north east (CHER 07027) and its southern extent is unknown. Elsewhere along Fordham Road, investigations have revealed extensive evidence of prehistoric, Roman and medieval settlement/occupation and further significant Saxon inhumation burials (CHER ECB4586, ECB455, ECB3613 & ECB4556).

10.2 The earliest feature was Pit F1009 (Trench 2) which contained Late Neolithic – Early Bronze Age pottery. It also contained burnt flint and burnt bone. A residual Roman sherd was contained in modern Ditch F1011 (Trench 2). Undated ditches may have formed part of former field boundaries. These

features and artefacts comprise a very limited group of evidence but are consistent with the presence of prehistoric, Roman and potentially later activity and enclosures in the area to the south-east of the former Soham Mere and peninsular.

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 Trevor and Emma Froud for funding the works and for their assistance.

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SSEW 1983 *Soil Survey of England and Wales: Legend for the 1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales* Harpenden, Rothamsted Experimental Station/Lawes Agricultural Trust

APPENDIX 1 CONCORDANCE OF FINDS

| Feature | Context | Segment | Trench | Description | Spot Date (Pot Only) | Pot Qty | Pottery (g) | CBM (g) | Other Material | Other Qty | Other (g) |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|-------------------|------------------------------------|---------|-------------|---------|-----------------------------|-----------|---------------|
| | 1000 | | 1 | Topsoil | 20th C | 3 | 39 | 342 | | | |
| | | | 2 | | Late 19th-20th C | 6 | 154 | 1168 | | | |
| 1009 | 1010 | | 2 | Fill of Pit | Late Neolithic to Early Bronze Age | 7 | 77 | | B. Bone B. Flint | | 1 12 |
| 1011 | 1012 | B | 1 | Fill of Ditch | 19th-20th C | 1 | 28 | 631 | Glass Clay Pipe Glass | | 25 2 36 |
| | | A | 2 | | Residual Roman | 1 | 20 | | | | |
| | 1014 | | 1 | Made Ground Layer | Late 19th-20th C | 5 | 114 | | Glass | 1 | 9 |
| 1015 | 1016 | | | Fill of Pit | 19th-20th C | 1 | 3 | 4658 | | | |

APPENDIX 2 SPECIALIST REPORTS

The Pottery Report

Peter Thompson

The archaeological evaluation recovered 24 x 435g from three features, made ground and the topsoil (Table 1).

Methodology

The sherds were analysed and recorded according to the Medieval Pottery Research Group Guidelines (Slowikowski et al 2001). Fabric codes are those used by the Museum of London or else are mnemonics, appropriate to the pottery and for Cambridgeshire.

The Pottery

The sherds of most interest were from Pit F1009 (L1010) which contained 7 fragments (77g) of heavily grog tempered prehistoric pottery. The sherds, some of which contained small patches of charcoal residue on the interior surface, probably all came from the same thick walled vessel. There is some difference in colouration, particularly on the inner surfaces, but this is probably due either to mottling through low firing of the pot, or else differential 'weathering' over the period of deposition. There is no decoration, but the vessel is probably Late Neolithic to Early Bronze Age in date, and is probably in a primary deposit, as only flint and a fragment of bone were also present in the feature.

The other sherd of interest (20g) is Roman which was residual in Ditch F1011 (1012 A). It is a body sherd from a jar and is unsourced, but is in a very fine pale grey fabric, with oxidised outer surface, and it may be a product of the Nene Valley buff ware industry. The remaining sherds were modern and included sewage pipe and bathroom tile.

Key:

PROG: Prehistoric grog tempered ware. Dark grey/black core, pale brown/buff outer surface, inner surface mottled dark grey or buff. Late Neolithic – Early Bronze Age

UNROM: Unsourced Roman ware. Very fine sandy fabric with few other inclusions, pale grey core, orange outer surface, inner surface abraded fabric possibly related to buff wares from the Nene Valley mid 1st-4th centuries

PMBL: Post-medieval black glazed red earthenware mid 18th+

GRE: Glazed red earthenware late 16th+

RWE: Refined white earthenware late 18th+

SW: Sanitary ware mid 19th+

SP: Sewage pipe mid 19th+

| Feature | Context | Quantity | Date | Comment |
|---------|------------------|--|---|--------------------------------|
| Topsoil | 1000 Trench 1 | 1x37g ENGS 1x1g SP 1x1g RWE | 20 th | |
| Topsoil | 1000 Trench 2 | 3x95g GRE 1x14g ENGS 1x4g SW 1x41g SP | Late 19 th -20 th | ENGS: fragment of preserve jar |

| | | | | |
|-------------|--------|-----------------------------------|---|---|
| Pit 1009 | 1010 | 7x77g PGROG | Late Neolithic to Early Bronze Age | PGROG: Undecorated body sherds probably all from the same heavily grog tempered thick walled vessel, possibly a beaker or collared urn. Contains small patched charcoal residue on interior surface |
| Ditch 1011 | 1012 | 1x28g PMBL | 19 th -20 th | |
| | 1012 A | 1x20g UNROM | Roman | UNROM: Jar body sherd, |
| Made ground | 1014 | 3x20g RWE 1x84g SP 1x10g SW | Late 19 th -20 th | |
| Pit 1015 | 1016 | 1x3g RWE | 19 th -20 th | RWE: cup rim |

Table 1: Quantification of finds by context

Bibliography

Slowikowski, A., Nenk, B. and Pearce, J. 2001 *Minimum Standards for the Processing, Recording, Analysis and Publication of Post-Roman Ceramics*, Medieval Pottery Research Group Occasional Paper 2

The Ceramic Building Materials

Andrew Peachey

The evaluation recovered a total of 34 fragments (6842g) of modern (20th century) CBM in a highly fragmented condition. Pit F1015 contained fragmented of Fletton brick (stamped FLETTONS LIMITED), extruded gault brick and red pantile; while Ditches F1011, F1013 and Topsoil L1000 contained further fragments of Fletton brick, glazed bathroom/kitchen tile and fragments of ceramic sink, probably a Belfast sink or related type. It is possible that these fragments date to the inter-war period, but they are most likely to be post-Second World War, between the 1950s to 1970s.

The Animal bone

Julia E M Cussans

A single animal bone fragment was recovered from trial trench excavations at The Butts, Soham. This was recovered from L1010 (Pit F1009), spot dated to the Late Neolithic/ Early Bronze Age period. The piece of bone was a medium (sheep or pig sized) mammal long bone shaft fragment that had been calcined (burnt white). As this was the only piece of bone recovered from the site it seems likely that soil conditions were not suitable for bone preservation and that this piece has only been preserved due to its calcined state. No butchery marks or pathological modifications were noted on the fragment.

The Environmental Samples

Dr John Summers

Introduction

During the trial trench evaluation at the Stables, opposite 83 The Butts, Soham, two bulk soil samples for environmental archaeological assessment were taken and processed. The samples were from Neolithic/ early Bronze Age pit fill L1010 (F1009) and undated ditch fill L1006 (F1005). This report presents the results from the assessment of the bulk sample light fractions, and discusses the significance and potential of any remains recovered.

Methods

Samples were processed at the Archaeological Solutions Ltd facilities in Bury St. Edmunds using standard flotation methods. The light fractions were washed onto a mesh of 500µm (microns), while the heavy fractions were sieved to 1mm. The dried light fractions were scanned under a low power stereomicroscope (x10-x30 magnification). Botanical and molluscan remains were identified and recorded using a semi-quantitative scale (X = present; XX = common; XXX = abundant). Reference literature (Cappers *et al.* 2006; Jacomet 2006; Kerney and Cameron 1979; Kerney 1999) and a reference collection of modern seeds was consulted where necessary. Potential contaminants, such as modern roots, seeds and invertebrate fauna were also recorded in order to gain an insight into possible disturbance of the deposits.

Results

The assessment data from the bulk sample light fractions are presented in Table 2.

No carbonised macrofossils were recorded in either sample. A small amount of charcoal was present but the concentration was low and the material, at best, is likely to represent scattered charcoal debris. It could equally be intrusive due to later activity or biological action (earthworms and rooting). Mollusc shells included a small range of grassland and ground litter taxa.

Modern contaminants included modern rootlets, seeds, burrowing molluscs (*Cecilioides acicula*) and earthworm egg capsules. The majority of these were only present in low concentrations, with the exception of roots in Sample 2 of 1010. Although every effort was made to disaggregate the root mass, some small carbonised remains of archaeobotanical interest could have been concealed within it.

Conclusions

The bulk sample light fractions from the Stables site provided little evidence of plant use or the deposition of carbonised plant remains. The evidence of two

samples is not necessarily representative of past activity on the site but does indicate, at least, that the two sampled deposits did not receive concentrations of carbonised plant material or hearth ash, and may have been peripheral to main areas of domestic and crop processing activity.

References

Cappers, R.T.J., Bekker R.M. and Jans J.E.A. 2006, *Digital Seed Atlas of the Netherlands. Groningen Archaeological Studies Volume 4*, Barkhuis Publishing, Eelde

Jacomet, S. 2006, *Identification of Cereal Remains from Archaeological Sites* (2nd edn), Laboratory of Palinology and Palaeoecology, Basel University

Kerney, M.P. 1999, *Atlas of the Land and Freshwater Molluscs of Britain and Ireland*, Harley Books, Colchester

Kerney, M.P. and Cameron, R.A.D. 1979, *A Field Guide to Land Snails of Britain and North-West Europe*, Collins, London

| Site code | Sample number | Context | Feature | Description | Trench | Spot date | Volume (litres) | Cereals | | Non-cereal taxa | | Charcoal | Molluscs | | Contaminants | | | Other remains | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------|---------------|---------|---------|---------------|--------|------------|-----------------|---------|--------------|-----------------|-------|----------|----------|--------------|--------------|-------|-------|---------------|----------|--------------|---------|--------------------|--|--|---|--|--|--|
| | | | | | | | | Notes | Cereal chaff | Notes | Seeds | | Notes | Charcoal>2mm | Molluscs | Notes | Roots | | Molluscs | Modern seeds | Insects | Earthworm capsules | | | | | | |
| ECB5290 | 1 | 1006 | 1005 | Fill of Ditch | 2 | - | 10 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ECB5290 | 2 | 1010 | 1009 | Fill of Pit | 2 | LN- EBA | 20 | | | | | | X | | XX | | | X | X | X | | | | | X | | | |

Table 2: Results from the assessment of bulk sample light fractions from the Stables, opposite 83 The Butts, Soham.

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OASIS ID: archaeol7-307312

Project details

| | |
|--|---|
| Project name | Stables, Opposite 83 The Butts, Soham, Cambridgeshire |
| Short description of the project | In November 2017 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological evaluation on land at the stables opposite 83 The Butts, Soham, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 5967 7221; Figs. 1 - 2). The evaluation was undertaken in compliance with the initial requirements of a planning condition attached to planning approval for the proposed construction of two houses, garaging, parking, access and associated site works (East Cambs Council Ref. 16/00510/OUT). It was based on the advice of Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team. The earliest feature was Pit F1009 (Trench 2) which contained Late Neolithic - Early Bronze Age pottery. It also contained burnt flint and burnt bone. A residual Roman sherd was contained in modern Ditch F1011 (Trench 2). Undated ditches may have formed part of former field boundaries. |
| Project dates | Start: 01-11-2017 End: 30-11-2017 |
| Previous/future work | No / Not known |
| Any associated project reference codes | P7329 - Contracting Unit No. |
| Any associated project reference codes | ECB5290 - Sitecode |
| Type of project | Field evaluation |
| Site status | None |
| Current Land use | Other 3 - Built over |
| Monument type | PIT Late Neolithic |
| Monument type | DITCH Modern |
| Monument type | PIT Modern |
| Monument type | GULLY Late Neolithic |
| Significant Finds | POTTERY Late Neolithic |
| Significant Finds | SHERD Roman |
| Significant Finds | POTTERY Modern |
| 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 SOHAM Stables, Opposite 83 The Butts, Soham, Cambridgeshire
 Study area 0.19 Hectares
 Site coordinates TL 5967 7221 52.324299795205 0.34319756608 52 19 27 N 000 20 35 E Point
 Height OD / Depth Min: 4.8m Max: 4.8m

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 Archaeological Solutions Ltd

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient Cambridgeshire County Archaeological Store
 Physical Contents "Ceramics","Glass","Worked stone/lithics"
 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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 Author(s)/Editor(s) Bull, K
 Other bibliographic details Archaeological Solutions Report No. 5494
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 Issuer or publisher Archaeological Solutions Ltd

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PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



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Ditch 1003A in Trench 2



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Ditches 1003B and 1005 in Trench 2



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Sample section 1A in Trench 1



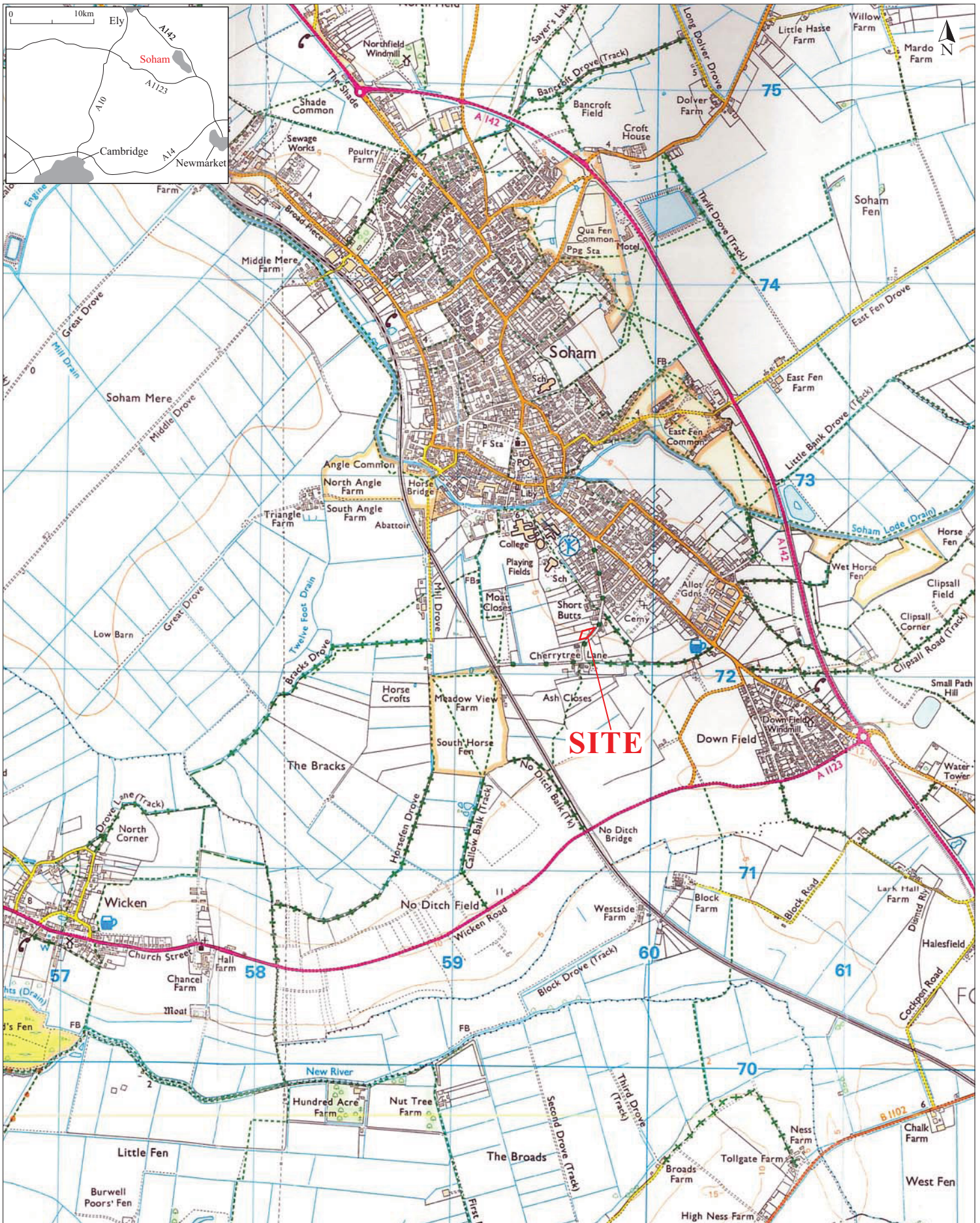
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Sample section 1B in Trench 1



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Sample section 2A in Trench 2

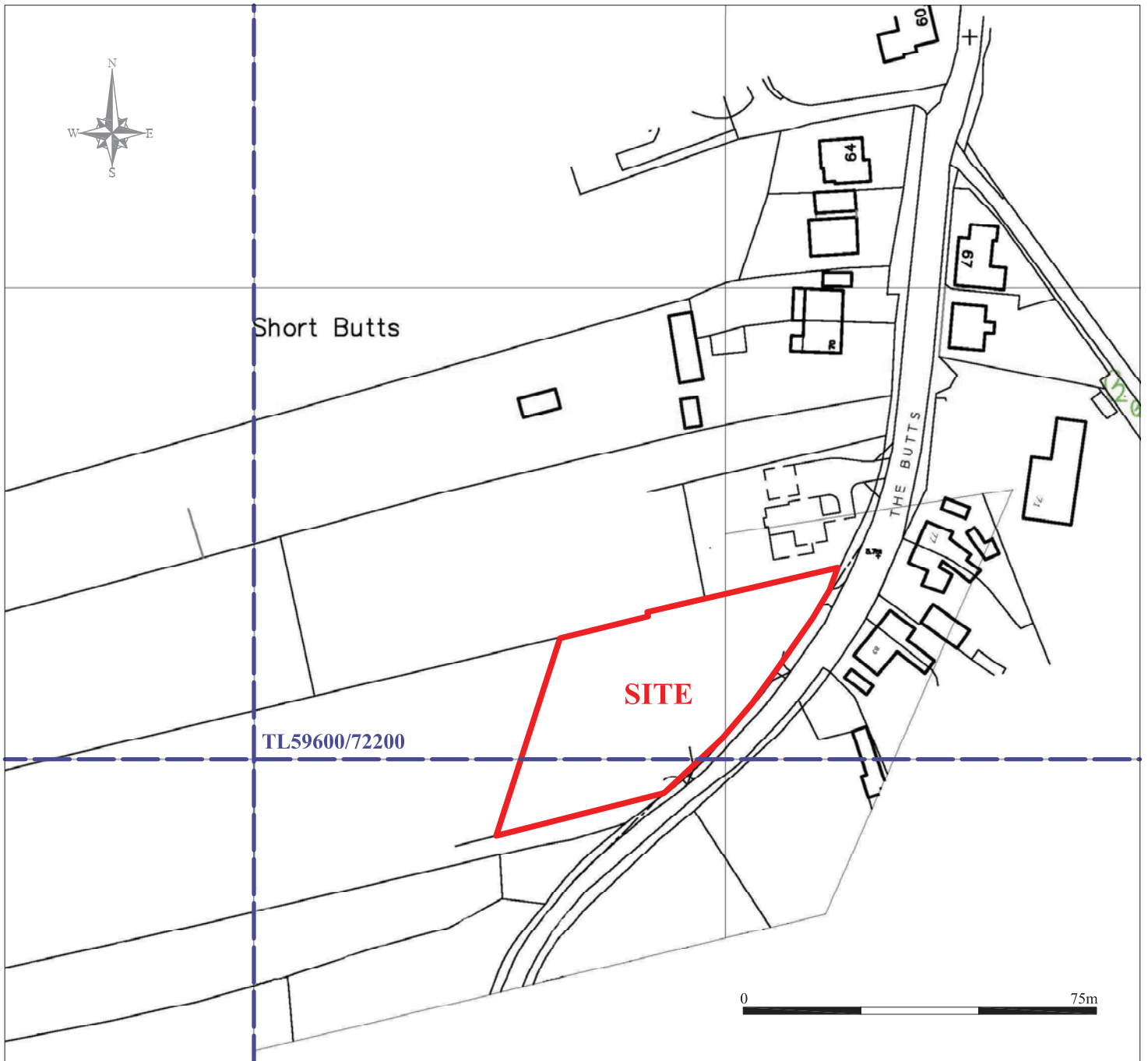


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Sample section 2B in Trench 2



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Fig. 1 Site location plan
 Scale 1:25,000 at A4
 83 The Butts, Soham, Cambridgeshire (P7329)



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Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan
Scale 1:1250 at A4
83 The Butts, Soham, Cambridgeshire (P7329)

