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**WESTERN PLOT,
BUILDERS YARD REAR OF 3-7 RIVER LANE,
FORDHAM, CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

CHER ECB 5795

Authors: John Haygreen (Fieldwork and report)	
NGR: TL 6314 7025	Report No: 5767
District: East Cambs	Site Code: ECB 5795
Approved: Claire Halpin MCIfA	Project No: P7881
	Date: 22 February 2019 Revised 12 March 2019

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Project details			
Project name	<i>Western Plot, Builders Yard Rear of 3 – 7 River Lane, Fordham</i>		
<p><i>In February 2019 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological evaluation on land at the Western Plot, Builders Yard to the rear of 3-7 River Lane, Fordham, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 6314 7025; 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 2no four bed detached dwellings with car ports and associated works (phased as 2 self-build properties) (East Cambs Council Approval Ref. 16/01436/FUL), based on the advice of Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team.</i></p> <p><i>The site had a potential for remains of medieval and post-medieval occupation associated with a former inn and Fordham Abbey which are close by. The medieval church lies to the north and archaeological investigations in this area have found Saxon settlement and other occupation evidence. An evaluation on land adjacent to the east recorded medieval ditches and pits, containing a sparse artefactual assemblage, consistent with land divisions and the scattering/dispersal of domestic debris into peripheral areas located between the core areas of the historic village nucleus to the north and the abbey to the south</i></p> <p><i>The current evaluation revealed a large quarry pit with multiple fills that contained sparse medieval pottery, animal bone, iron nails and carbonised cereal grains. The composition of the assemblage is consistent with that associated with the medieval features recorded to the east, and supports a pattern of dispersal of domestic detritus into peripheral areas, and the likely exploitation of a quarry pit. A possible ditch may be aligned perpendicular to the previously recorded ditches.</i></p>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	5 – 7 February 2019		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	N	Future work	TBC
P. number	P7881	Site code	ECB 5795
Type of project	Archaeological evaluation		
Site status	-		
Current land use	Builder's Yard		
Planned development	Residential		
Main features (+dates)	Quarry Pit (medieval)		
Significant finds (+dates)	Pottery, animal bone (medieval)		
Project location	Cambridgeshire	East Cambs	Fordham
HER/ SMR for area	Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (CHER)		
Post code (if known)	-		
Area of site	938m ²		
NGR	TL 6314 7025		
Height AOD (min/max)	c.11m AOD		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	Cambridgeshire County Council		
Project supervisor/s (PO)	Archaeological Solutions Ltd		
Funded by	Mr Steve Edgley		
Full title	Western Plot, Builders Yard, Rear of 3 - 7 River Lane, Fordham, Cambridgeshire. An Archaeological Evaluation		
Authors	Haygreen, J.		
Report no.	5767		
Date (of report)	February 2019; revised March 2019		

**WESTERN PLOT,
BUILDERS YARD REAR OF 3-7 RIVER LANE,
FORDHAM, CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

SUMMARY

In February 2019 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological evaluation on land at the Western Plot, Builders Yard to the rear of 3-7 River Lane, Fordham, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 6314 7025; 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 2no four bed detached dwellings with car ports and associated works (phased as 2 self-build properties) (East Cambs Council Approval Ref. 16/01436/FUL), based on the advice of Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team.

The site had a potential for remains of medieval and post-medieval occupation associated with a former inn and Fordham Abbey which are close by. The medieval church lies to the north and archaeological investigations in this area have found Saxon settlement and other occupation evidence. An evaluation on land adjacent to the east recorded medieval ditches and pits, containing a sparse artefactual assemblage, consistent with land divisions and the scattering/dispersal of domestic debris into peripheral areas located between the core areas of the historic village nucleus to the north and the abbey to the south

The current evaluation revealed a large quarry pit with multiple fills that contained sparse medieval pottery, animal bone, iron nails and carbonised cereal grains. The composition of the assemblage is consistent with that associated with the medieval features recorded to the east, and supports a pattern of dispersal of domestic detritus into peripheral areas, and the likely exploitation of a quarry pit. A possible ditch may be aligned perpendicular to the previously recorded ditches.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In February 2019 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological evaluation on land at the Western Plot, Builders Yard to the rear of 3-7 River Lane, Fordham, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 6314 7025; 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 2no four bed detached dwellings with car ports and associated works (phased as 2 self-build properties) (East Cambs Council Approval Ref. 16/01436/FUL), based on the advice of Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team. The evaluation relates to the western proposed house plot only.

1.2 The evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a brief issued by Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team (HET, Gemma Stewart; dated 5th December 2018), and a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by AS (dated 7th January 2018) 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 2018) 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 set back to the south of properties fronting River Lane on the southern edge of Fordham. It comprises part of an existing former builders yard, the overall site extending to some 938m².

3 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND SOILS

3.1 The site is at c.11m AOD on the floor of the shallow valley of the River Snail, whose approximately north-south course passes adjacent to the west of the site. The natural slope rises very gently to the east of the site and comprises fields under arable cultivation. To the west around the river it is wooded, and residential properties of River Lane and Mill Lane extend to the north.

3.2 The site is located on a solid geology of chalk bedrock (Totternhoe Stone Member). Alluvial silt, sand and gravel may extend into the western edge of the site, closest to the river. These deposits are overlain by freely-draining, lime-rich, loamy soils.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 The prehistoric period is represented in the surrounding area by the recovery of a possible Palaeolithic blade (CHER 11758) from a location to the west of Fordham. A Mesolithic 'Thames pick' has been recovered as an unstratified find (CHER 07511). A Mesolithic tranchet axe has also been found to the north of Fordham (CHER 07551). A small Neolithic polished stone axe has been found in the grounds of Fordham Abbey (CHER 07548) and a similar axe has been found to the east of the river Snail (CHER 07552). A Neolithic polished flint sickle has been found to the north of Fordham (CHER 07553) and flint chisel was found at the same location (CHER 07555). A Neolithic Adze was recovered from Isleham Road (CHER 10213). A Neolithic black flint chisel (CHER 11758) is recorded from a location to the west of Fordham. A socketed and looped Bronze Age axe has been found at 44 Mildenhall Road (CHER 07441).

4.2 The Iron Age is represented by three early Iron Age inhumations recorded at Fordham Moor (CHER 07549). A scatter of Iron Age pottery was recorded to the east of Fordham Abbey during the fenland survey (CHER 11287).

4.3 The Romano-British period is represented by an artefact scatter recorded by the fenland survey to the east of Fordham Abbey (CHER 11287A) and coins found within the grounds of Fordham Abbey (CHER 07579).

4.4 An Anglo-Saxon post-built structure and associated features have been recorded Fordham Primary School (CHER CB14610) and sunken featured buildings, boundary ditches as other features have been identified at Hillside Meadow (CHER CB14611; CB14613; CB15031; CB15561). Saxon artefacts have been recovered as unstratified finds from the grounds of Fordham Abbey (CHER 07546).

4.5 Fordham Abbey, located to the south of the current site, was a Gilbertine priory founded before 1227 and dissolved in 1538 (CHER 07449). Documentary evidence suggests that part of the abbey was fortified during the rebellion of the Earl of Essex in 1143 – 1144 (CHER 07545). The earliest fabric within Saint Peter and Saint Mary Magdalene Church dates to the 12th century (CHER 07574). Medieval furlong boundaries have been recorded to the south-west of Fordham (CHER 10309). A medieval coin has been recovered from the grounds of Fordham Abbey (CHER 07579A).

4.6 The current Fordham Abbey is a large, listed, 18th century house with a 17th century dovecote (CHER 07449a). It was built as a private residence for William Metcalfe. The associated park and gardens are recorded as CHER 12340. Thimbles and other metalwork of post-medieval date have been found in the grounds of Fordham Abbey (CHER 07579B).

4.7 The 19th century onwards is represented on the Cambridgeshire HER for the area surrounding the site by Fordham Congregational Church (CHER MCB17176), Fordham Methodist Church (CHER MCB17245), the gardens of Shrubland House (CHER MCB19367), ditches and rubbish pits at 27 Mill Lane (CHER 19640), the site of the former Chequers Inn (CHER MCB21542), the site of the former fire engine house (CHER MCB21543), the primitive Methodist chapel (CHER MCB21544), the site of a former school (CHER MCB21547), the site of the former Green Dragon Inn (CHER MCB21548), nursery gardens noted on the 1901 Ordnance Survey map (CHER MCB21552), Lords Barn which is noted on the 1901 Ordnance Survey map (CHER MCB21555), the former Waterside Lodge (CHER MCB21557), the former Bassingbourne Manor Farm (CHER MCB21558), a former gravel pit (CHER MCB21559), the listed church hall (CHER MCB21562), almshouses marked on the 1926 Ordnance Survey map (CHER MCB21563), the Fordham war memorial (CHER MCB21564), the burial ground (CHER MCB21565), Corn Mill and Island House sluice noted on the 1926 Ordnance Survey map (CHER MCB21566), and a graveyard noted on the 1926 Ordnance Survey map (CHER MCB21567).

4.8 A trial trench evaluation of the eastern proposed house plot was undertaken by AS in 2017 (Edwards, 2017; CHER ECB 5291). This revealed evidence of medieval activity/occupation. In summary:

The evaluation revealed three ditches on the eastern side of the site. The ditches were located close together but not inter-cutting, and on a broadly parallel NW/SE alignment. One of the ditches (F1030) contained two sherds of medieval (late 12th-14th / 15th century) Ely ware; and another (F1017) contained a post-medieval (16th - 17th century) sherd. To the west of the ditches was a large pit (F1035) and smaller pits. The pits contained sparse animal and bird bone, oyster and mussel shell, and carbonised cereal grains. Pit F1028 contained a sherd of medieval (13th – 15th century) pottery.

The ditches appear to extend south from the historic route of River Lane, approximately aligned with the junction of Mill Lane, albeit slightly to the west. They probably represent land divisions between the core of the village and the abbey. The sparse occurrence of finds in particular the pottery, animal bone and shell, suggest the scattering of domestic debris and peripheral activity located between the core areas to the north and south.

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 The evaluation provided for a c.5% sample of the area to be subject to development to be trial trenched. Two trenches of 12m x 1.8m were excavated and targeted the area proposed for the new house plot, parking and landscaping.

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. The finds recovered during the sampling of the topsoil and the metal detecting survey were all of 19th and 20th century date.

6 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS

Individual trench descriptions are presented below:

Trench 1 (Figs. 2 & 3)

Sample section 1A 0.00 = 10.81m AOD		
0.00 – 0.00m	L1000	Tarmac
0.10 – 0.29m	L1001	Levelling layer. CBM and gravel
0.29 – 0.48m	L1002	Buried Topsoil. Firm, dark grey brown clayey silt with occasional small CBM, flint and chalk
0.48 – 0.63m	L1003	Subsoil. Firm, mid grey brown clayey silt with occasional chalk
0.63m +	L1006	Natural deposits. Firm, white chalky clay silt with frequent sub angular and sub round chalk, and large flint nodules

Sample section 1B 0.00 = 10.88 AOD		
0.00 – 0.08m	L1000	Tarmac. As above
0.08 – 0.34m	L1001	Levelling layer. As above
0.34 – 0.53m	L1002	Buried Topsoil. As above
0.53 – 0.70	L1003	Subsoil. As above
0.70m +	L1006	Natural deposits. As above

Description: Trench 1 contained ?Ditch 1035 and Tree Hollows F1012 and F1014. The features were overlain by the subsoil and cut the natural. None of the features contained finds, and no finds were present within Subsoil L1003. Modern ?Pit F1039 was visible in section and a post in concrete was also present within the trench.

Tree Hollow F1012 was irregular in plan (1.80+ x 1.94 x 0.41m). It had moderately sloping highly irregular sides and an irregular base. Its fill, L1013, was a friable, mid grey brown clayey silt. It contained no finds.

Tree Hollow F1014 was irregular in plan (1.80+ x 0.72 x 0.42m). It had moderately sloping irregular sides and a narrow concave base. Its fill, L1015, was a friable, mid grey brown clayey silt. It contained no finds.

?Ditch F1035 was linear in plan (1.80+ x 0.55+ x 0.21m), orientated NE/SW. It had moderately sloping irregular sides and a concave base. Its fill, L1036, was a friable,

mid grey brown clayey silt. It contained no finds. F1035 was cut by Tree Hollow F1014.

?Pit F1039 was recorded in section (? x 1.37 x 0.87m). It had steep to moderately sloping slightly irregular sides and a concave base. Its fill, L1004, was a friable, dark orange brown clayey silt with frequent CBM. It contained no finds. It cut Levelling Layer L1001 and was modern.

Trench 2 (Figs. 2 & 4)

Sample section 2A 0.00 = 11.12m AOD		
0.00 – 0.09m	L1007	Hardcore. Crushed CBM and gavel
0.09 – 0.16m	L1008	Made Ground. Friable, dark grey brown silty clay with moderate small and medium angular and sub angular rounded flints
0.16 – 0.20m	L1009	Re-deposited natural. Pale yellow chalky clay.
0.20 – 0.26m	L1002	Buried Topsoil.
0.26m+	L1034	Fill of ?Ditch F1033. Friable, pale grey brown clayey silt.

Sample section 2B 0.00 = 10.98m AOD		
0.00 – 0.17m	L1008	Made Ground. As above
0.17 – 0.28m	L1002	Buried Topsoil. As above
0.28m +	L1006	Natural. As above

Description: Trench 2 contained Quarry Pit F1021, Post Holes F1016 and F1037, and ?Ditch F1033. The quarry pit contained medieval (13th century) pottery, ?Ditch F1033 contained Late 18th – early 20th century pottery; Post Hole F1016 contained timber indicative of a modern date; and Post Hole F1037 was undated. ?Ditch F1033 and Quarry Pit F1021 cut Subsoil L1003, and no finds were present within Subsoil L1003

Post Hole F1016 was sub circular in plan (0.30 x 0.27 x 0.09m). It had moderately sloping sides and a concave base. Its fill, L1017, was a friable, mid grey brown clayey silt. It contained timber indicative of a modern date. It cut Quarry Pit F1021

Post Hole F1037 was circular in plan (0.40 x 0.27m). It had vertical sides and a flat base. Its fill, L1038 was a friable, mid grey brown silty sand. It contained no finds. It cut Quarry Pit F1021

?Ditch F1033 was linear in plan (7.20+ x 0.35+ x 0.33m), orientated E/W. It had moderately sloping sides and its base was unseen. Its fill, L1034, was a friable, pale grey brown clayey silt. It contained late 18th – 20th century pottery (1; 3g) and animal bon (60g). F1033 cut Quarry Pit F1021.

Quarry Pit F1021 was large and not defined in plan because of the confines of the trench (1.80+ x 6.00+ x 1.30m). It contained several fills which are tabulated below. F1021 was cut by ?Ditch F1021.

Layer	Test Pit	Description	Findings
L1024	B, C, D, E	Friable, pale orange brown silty clay with chalk	-
L1023	C	Friable, mid grey brown clayey silt with frequent chalk	Fe nail (1; 27g)
L1027	D	Friable, mid grey brown clayey silt with occasional flint	Medieval (13 th C pottery (18; 67g), Fe nail (1; 3g)
L1028	D	Friable, orange brown sandy silt	-
L1029	D	Friable, light – mid grey brown silty sand	Medieval (13 th C pottery (2; 83g), animal bone (20g)
L1030	D	Friable, light grey clay and chalk	-
L1022	C, D, E	Friable, white pale grey chalk with occasional medium sub angular flint.	Medieval (13 th C pottery (2; 11g)

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 Uppermost in Trench 1 Tarmac L1000 and Levelling Layer L1001 overlay Buried Topsoil L1002. In Trench 2 Hardcore L1007, Made Ground L1008 and Re-deposited Natural L1009 overlay Buried Topsoil L1002.

8.2 Buried Topsoil L1002 was a firm, dark grey brown clayey silt with occasional small CBM, flint and chalk. It overlay Subsoil L1003, a firm, mid grey brown clayey silt with occasional chalk.

8.3 At the base of the sequence, L1006 was a firm, white chalky clay silt with frequent sub angular and sub round chalk, and large flint nodules (0.28 - 0.70m below the current day ground surface).

9 DISCUSSION

9.1 The recorded features are tabulated:

Trench	Context	Description	Spot Date
1	F1012	Tree Hollow	-
	F1014	Tree Hollow	-
	F1035	?Ditch	-
	F1039	?Pit	Modern
2	F1016	Post Hole	Modern
	F1021	Quarry Pit	Medieval (13 th C)
	F1033	?Ditch	Late 18 th – early 20 th C
	F1037	Post Hole	-

9.2 Quarry Pit F1021 (Trench 2) was large and contained several fills. The feature cut Subsoil L1003. It consistently contained medieval (13th century) pottery, notably 18 sherds from L1027, and included fragments of glazed Hedingham ware jugs as well as local coarse wares. A small quantity of animal bone was associated with the pottery and it included butchered cattle. Two fragments of highly corroded iron nails were also present. A low density of carbonised cereal remains, including hulled barley, free-threshing wheat and oats, are representative of a medieval domestic/agricultural economy and diet, but likely represent background scatters of material and not specific episodes of processing or dumping. The environmental remains are consistent with the number of finds and suggest the quarry pit may have been left to backfill gradually with local soils that incorporated detritus from the periphery of the village.

9.3 Features in Trench 1 were overlain by Subsoil L1003 and therefore of some antiquity. Two irregular tree hollows contained no finds. A possible ENE/WSW aligned ditch (F1035) was also sealed by the subsoil and partially truncated by a tree hollow but the feature was shallow and contained no finds.

9.4 Made ground and modern features were also present in Trench 2. The features included an E/W aligned ?ditch that contained late post-medieval to early modern pottery and animal bone. It was parallel to the existing northern boundary of the site.

9.5 A trial trench evaluation of the adjacent plot revealed pits which contained sparse medieval pottery, animal bone, oyster and mussel shell, and carbonised cereal grain (Edwards 2017). The material is broadly comparable to the composition of the finds from Quarry Pit F1021. Three ditches, aligned NW/SE, were recorded on the adjacent plot, and they are approximately perpendicular to the ?Ditch F1035. The previously recorded ditches and pits were interpreted as representing land divisions and peripheral activity located between the core areas of the historic village nucleus to the north and the abbey to the south. The features recorded in this evaluation add further credence to this interpretation.

10 CONCLUSION

10.1 The site had a potential for remains of medieval and post-medieval occupation associated with a former inn and Fordham Abbey which are close by. The medieval church lies to the north and archaeological investigations in this area have found Saxon settlement and other occupation evidence. An evaluation on land adjacent to the east recorded medieval ditches and pits, containing a sparse

artefactual assemblage, consistent with land divisions and the scattering/dispersal of domestic debris into peripheral areas located between the core areas of the historic village nucleus to the north and the abbey to the south

10.2 The current evaluation revealed a large quarry pit with multiple fills that contained sparse medieval pottery, animal bone, iron nails and carbonised cereal grains. The composition of the assemblage is consistent with that associated with the medieval features recorded to the east, and supports a pattern of dispersal of domestic detritus into peripheral areas, and the likely exploitation of a quarry pit. A possible ditch may be aligned perpendicular to the previously recorded ditches.

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. The archive will be deposited following the gaining of the transfer of title.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions would like to thank Mr Steve Edgley for funding the work and for all his assistance.

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

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Web resources

www.old-maps.co.uk

Appendix 1 - Concordance of Finds

ECB5795 - P7881, Builders Yard, Rear of 3-7 River Lane, Fordham

Feature	Context	Segment	Trench	Description	Spot Date (Pot Only)	Pot Qty	Pottery (g)	CBM (g)	A.Bone (g)	Other Material	Other Qty	Other (g)
1021	1022	A	2	Fill of Quarry Pit	13th C	2	11					
	1023	A	2	Fill of Quarry Pit						Fe Nail	1	27
	1027	B	2	Fill of Quarry Pit	13th C	18	67			Fe Nail	1	3
	1029		2	Fill of Quarry Pit	13th C	2	83		20			
1033	1034		2	Fill of ?Ditch	Late 18th-early 20th C	1	3		60			

APPENDIX 2 SPECIALIST REPORTS

The Pottery

Peter Thompson

The archaeological evaluation recovered 23 sherds of pottery weighing 164g from two features. All except one sherd came from Quarry Pit F1021 and these are all medieval. Seven sherds are particularly coarse examples of local South-East Fenland Calcareous Buff ware all from F1021 L1027 Segment B. The remaining 15 sherds were present in F1021 L1022 Segment A, L1027 Segment B and L1029, and are all glazed Hedingham fine wares. These sherds are in quite good condition and include two from a stamped strip jug demonstrating a 13th century date, or just possibly an early 14th centuries date. As they came from a quarry pit they might be residual. The remaining sherd from Ditch F1033 is an early modern to modern Transfer Printed ware.

Methodology

The sherds were examined under x35 binocular microscope and recorded according to the Medieval Pottery Research Group Guidelines (Slowikowski et al 2001). Fabric codes are those used for the Cambridgeshire County Council pottery type series (Spoerry 2016).

KEY:

SEFEN: South-East Fenland Calcareous Buff ware mid 12th -15th

HEDI: Hedingham fine ware mid 12th-early 14th

TPW: Transfer Printed ware late 18th+

Feature	Context	Quantity	Date	Comment
Quarry pit 1021	1022 A	2x11g HEDI	13 th	
	1027 B	7x30g SEFEN 11x37g HEDI	13 th	HEDI: row of stamps from stamped grid jug
	1029	2x83g HEDI	13 th	HEDI: jug rim 16cm diam and strap handle 4-5; x1 green glazed body from stamped strip jug
Ditch 1033	1034	1x3g TPW	late 18 th -early 20 th	

Table 1: Quantification of pottery 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

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The Iron Nails

Andrew Peachey

Two iron nail fragments were found

Context	Dimensions	Comment
(1023) A	>110x7x4mm	Retangular section shank (head missing); badly corroded
(1027) B	Diameter 5mm	Circular section shank with slightly domed circular head (16mm wide)

The Animal Bone

Julie Curl

The bone assemblage

Bone in this assemblage was identified to species where possible using a variety of reference material and butchering recorded.

A total of 80g of bone, consisting of sixteen pieces. The remains were recovered from a medieval quarry pit and a late 18th – early 20th century ?ditch fill. The bone is quantified by context in Table 2.

Ctxt	Feature	Ctxt Qty	Wt (g)	Type/Date	Species	NISP
1029	1021	2	20	Quarry Pit	Cattle	1
					Mammal	1
1034	1033	14	60	?Ditch	Sheep/ Goat	3
					Pig	1
					Mammal	10

Table 2. Quantification of the bone assemblage

The remains are in good condition, although bone is quite fragmented from butchering, disturbance and wear. No gnawing or burning was seen in this assemblage and invertebrate damage was low; which would suggest burial was quite rapid before scavengers could access the remains.

Cattle was observed from Quarry Pit 1021, Fill L1029, with an adult lower molar.

Three mid-leg limb bones from **sheep/goat** were recorded from ?Ditch F1033, Fill L1034, with a distal chopped tibia, and pieces of butchered radius and ulna, the butchering clearly shows cuts of meat and meat removal.

Conclusions

This is a small assemblage that is derived from the main two domestic food mammals. Butchering of the sheep/goat clearly shows meat use. Both animals could have provided milk, meat and by-products such as skins, with cattle also providing traction and sheep producing fleeces.

Bibliography

Baker, P. and Worley, F. 2014. *Animal Bones and Archaeology, Guidelines for best practice*. English Heritage.

Davis, S. 1992. *A rapid method for recording information about mammal bones from archaeological sites*. English Heritage AML report 71/92

Table 3 Catalogue of the bone from ECB5795

Ctxt	Feature	Ctxt Qty	Wt (g)	Type/Date	Species	NISP	Age	Element range	Butchering	Comments
1029	1021	2	20	Quarry Pit	Cattle	1	adult	Lower molar	-	Low-med wear
					Mammal	1		Fragment	Chopped	
1034	1033	14	60	?Ditch	Sheep/ Goat	3	juv	Tibia, radius, ulna	Chopped/cut	
					Pig	1		Incisor	-	
					Mammal	10		Fragments of medium to large mammals	Butchered	

The Environmental Samples

Dr John Summers

Introduction

During the archaeological evaluation at 3-7 River Lane, Fordham, four bulk soil samples for environmental archaeological assessment were taken and processed. Two of the sampled deposits were spot dated to the medieval period and the aim of the assessment was to determine the nature of preservation of macrofossil evidence in the deposits and their distribution in deposits on the site.

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 reference literature (Cappers *et al.* 2006; Jacomet 2006; Kerney and Cameron 1979; Kerney 1999) and a reference collection of modern seeds. 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 3.

Preservation of plant remains was through carbonisation. Most of the identifiable specimens were cereal caryopses, with hulled barley (*Hordeum* sp.) most frequent. Free-threshing type wheat (*Triticum aestivum/ turgidum* type) and oat (*Avena* sp.) were also recorded. This range of crops is quite typical within medieval assemblages of carbonised plant macrofossils. Small numbers of non-cereal taxa were present in the form of medium Fabaceae (vetch/ tare) and small grass (Poaceae), which could have been present as arable weeds. However, their number was limited and the main impression was of cleaned grain. However, the density of carbonised remains was relatively low, indicating their presence as background scatters of remains deposited as mixed material from multiple sources. Some of this material could have been present on the surface for a time as scattered, wind-blown debris. Under such conditions, smaller, more fragile chaff and weed seed elements tend to survive less well.

Charcoal remains were present but the number of fragments was limited. This would preclude any meaningful, detailed analysis of fuel wood exploitation.

A number of fragments of wood were noted in the sample from Post Hole F1016 L1017. This deposit is undated but the nature of the material suggests that it is relatively modern in origin.

Preservation of mollusc shells was good, as is frequently the case in the calcareous soils of this area. Many of the species identified were grassland taxa, such as *Pupilla muscorum*, *Helicella itala* and *Vallonia* sp., although ground litter taxa (*Cochlicopa* sp. and *Trichia hispida* group) were also present.

Conclusions

Although the density of remains in the samples from 3-7 River Lane, Fordham, was limited, carbonised cereal remains were recovered from all four sampled deposits. This indicates that, although the sampled features were not routinely receiving dumps of carbonised material from domestic or arable processing activities, there was a significant amount of carbonised material on the site from surrounding activities.

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 Palynology 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 taken (litres)	Volume processed (litres)	% processed	Cereals			Non-cereal taxa		Hazelnut shell	Charcoal		Molluscs		Contaminants					Other remains
										Cereal grains	Cereal chaff	Notes	Seeds	Notes		Charcoal > 2mm	Notes	Molluscs	Notes	Roots	Molluscs	Modern seeds	Insects	Earthworm capsules	
ECB5795	1	1017	1016	Fill of Pit	2	-	10	10	100%	X	-	Hord (2), NFI (1)	-	-	-	-	X	<i>Pupilla muscorum</i>	X	X	-	-	-	Wood frags (XX), Coal (X)	
ECB5795	2	1019A	1018	Fill of Ditch	2	-	20	40	50%	X	-	Hord (1), FTW (1), Trit (2), NFI (3)	X	Small Poaceae (1)	-	X	-	XX	<i>Cochlicopa</i> sp., <i>Oxychilus</i> sp., <i>Pupilla muscorum</i> , <i>Trichia hispida</i> group, <i>Vallonia</i> sp.	X	XX	X	-	-	Coal (X)
ECB5795	3	1029	1021	Fill of Quarry Pit	2	Late 12th-early 14th C	20	40	50%	XX	-	HB (4), Hord (4), Trit (1), NFI (11)	X	Medium Fabaceae (1)	-	X	-	XX	<i>Cochlicopa</i> sp., <i>Helicella itala</i> , <i>Oxychilus</i> sp., <i>Pupilla muscorum</i> , <i>Vallonia</i> sp., <i>Vertigo</i> sp.	X	XX	X	-	-	Coal (X)

ECB5795	4	1022	1021	Fill of Quarry Pit	2	Late 12th- early 14th C	20	40	50%	X	-	HB (1), Trit (1), cf. Oat (1), NFI (5)	-	-	-	X	-	XX	<i>Carychium</i> sp., <i>Cochlicopa</i> sp., <i>Pupilla</i> <i>muscorum</i> , <i>Trichia</i> <i>hispida</i> group, <i>Vallonia</i> sp.	X	XX	X	-	X	-
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Table 3: Results from the assessment of bulk sample light fractions from 3-7 River Lane, Fordham. Abbreviations: HB = hulled barley (*Hordeum* sp.); Hord = barley (*Hordeum* sp.); FTW = free-threshing type wheat (*Triticum aestivum/ turgidum*); Trit = wheat (*Triticum* sp.); Oat (*Avena* sp.); NFI = not formally identified (indeterminate cereal grain).

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OASIS ID: archaeol7-341127

Project details

Project name	Western Plot, Builders Yard Rear of 3-7 River Lane, Fordham CB7 5PF
Short description of the project	In February 2019 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological evaluation on land at the Western Plot, Builders Yard to the rear of 3-7 River Lane, Fordham, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 6314 7025; 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 2no four bed detached dwellings with car ports and associated works (phased as 2 self-build properties) (East Cambs Council Approval Ref. 16/01436/FUL), based on the advice of Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team. The site had a potential for remains of medieval and post-medieval occupation associated with a former inn and Fordham Abbey which are close by. The medieval church lies to the north and archaeological investigations in this area have found Saxon settlement and other occupation evidence. An evaluation on land adjacent to the east recorded medieval ditches and pits, containing a sparse artefactual assemblage, consistent with land divisions and the scattering/dispersal of domestic debris into peripheral areas located between the core areas of the historic village nucleus to the north and the abbey to the south. The current evaluation revealed a large quarry pit with multiple fills that contained sparse medieval pottery, animal bone, iron nails and carbonised cereal grains. The composition of the assemblage is consistent with that associated with the medieval features recorded to the east, and supports a pattern of dispersal of domestic detritus into peripheral areas, and the likely exploitation of a quarry pit. A possible ditch may be aligned perpendicular to the previously recorded ditches.
Project dates	Start: 05-02-2019 End: 07-02-2019
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	P7881 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	ECB5795 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	Area of Archaeological Importance (AAI)
Current Land use	Other 15 - Other
Monument type	QUARRY PIT Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Medieval
Significant Finds	ANIMAL BONE Medieval
Methods & techniques	"Targeted Trenches"
Development type	Urban residential (e.g. flats, houses, etc.)
Prompt	Planning condition

Position in the planning process Not known / Not recorded

Project location

Country England
 Site location CAMBRIDGESHIRE EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE FORDHAM Western Plot, Builders Yard Rear of 3 - 7 River lane, Fordham
 Postcode CB7 5PF
 Study area 938 Square metres
 Site coordinates TL 6314 7025 52.305668547528 0.3931226371 52 18 20 N 000 23 35 E Point
 Height OD / Depth Min: 11m Max: 11m

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
 Type of sponsor/funding body Mr Steve Edgley
 Name of sponsor/funding body Mr Steve Edgley

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient Cambridgeshire Council Archaeological Store
 Physical Contents "Animal Bones","Ceramics","other"
 Digital Archive recipient Cambirdge County Archaeological Store
 Digital Contents "Animal Bones","Ceramics","other"
 Digital Media available "Database","Images raster / digital photography","Spreadsheets","Text"
 Paper Archive recipient Cambridge County Archaeological Store
 Paper Contents "Animal Bones","Ceramics","other"
 Paper Media available "Context sheet","Drawing","Map","Photograph","Plan","Report","Section","Survey "

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
 Title Western Plot, Builders Yard, Rear of 3 - 7 River Lane, Fordham, Cambridgeshire. An Archaeological Evaluation
 Author(s)/Editor(s) Haygreen, J
 Other 5767

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PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX (P7881)



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3
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4
Trench 2 looking west with Test Pit E in foreground



5
Trench 2 looking east with Test Pit A in foreground



6
Post Hole F1016 in Trench 2



7
Quarry Pit F1021A in Test Pit E, Trench 2



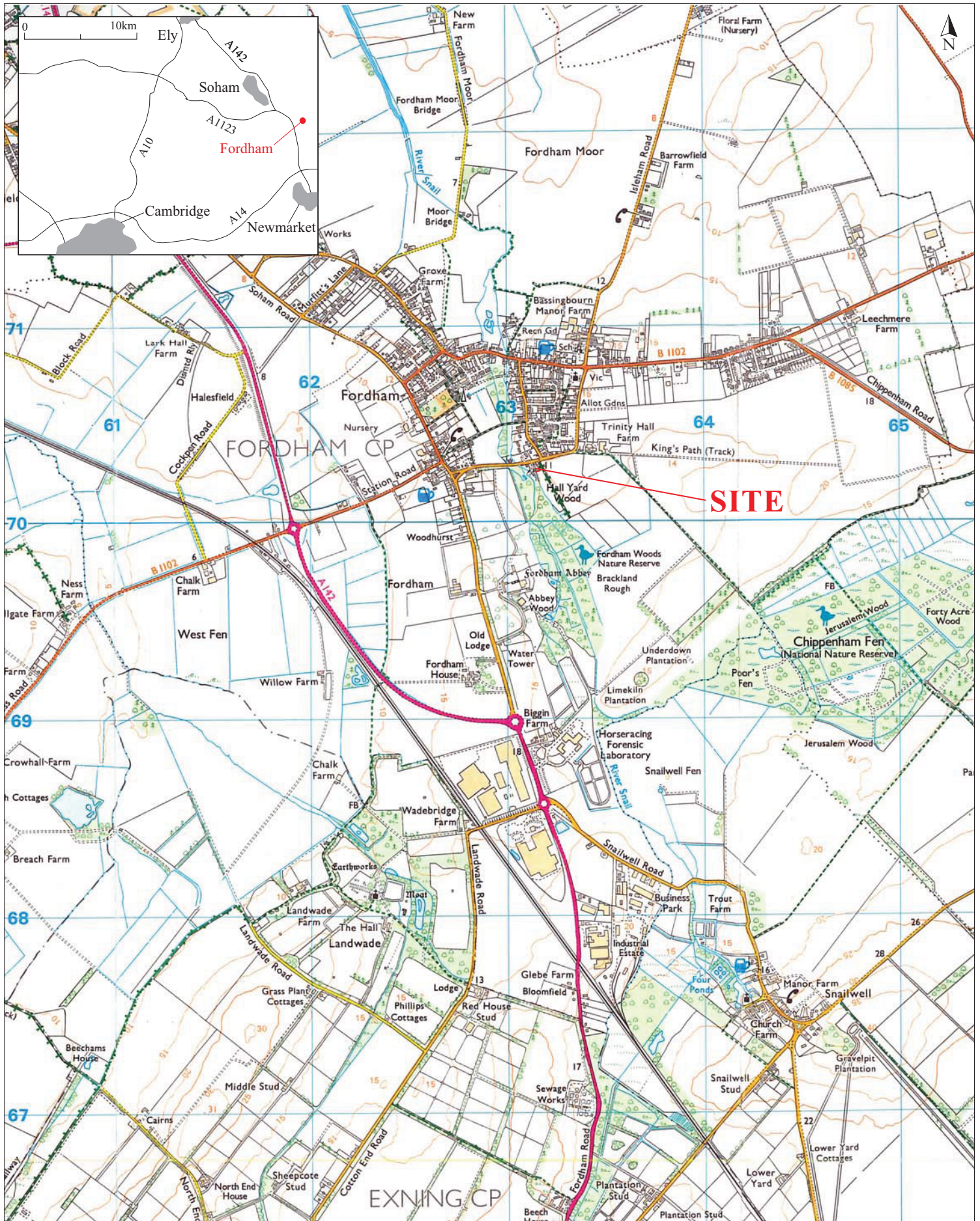
8
Quarry Pit F1021B in Test Pit D, Trench 2



9
?Ditch F1033A in Trench 2

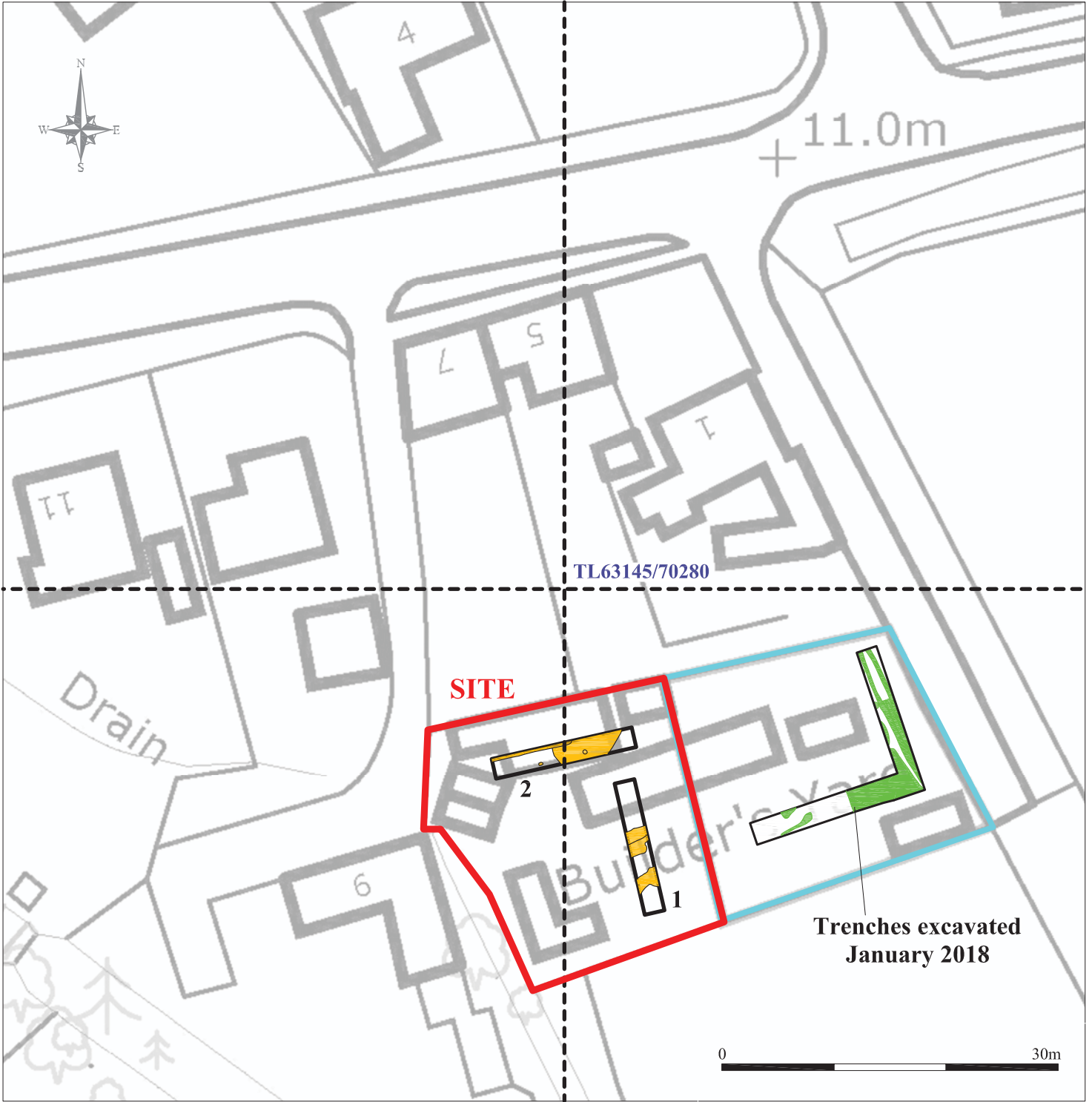


10
Post Hole F1037 in Trench 2

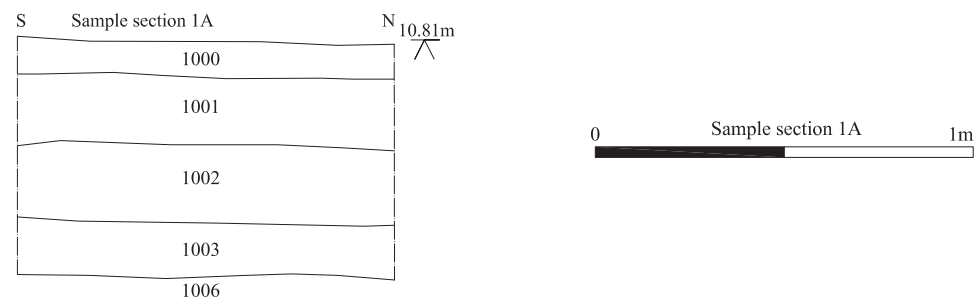
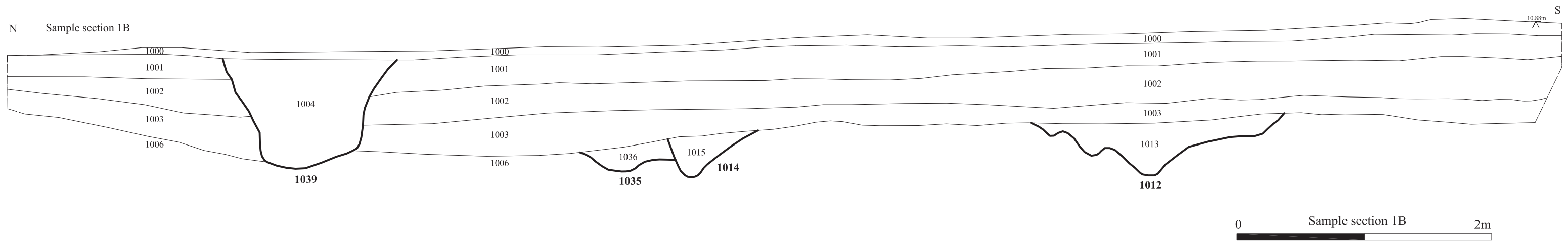
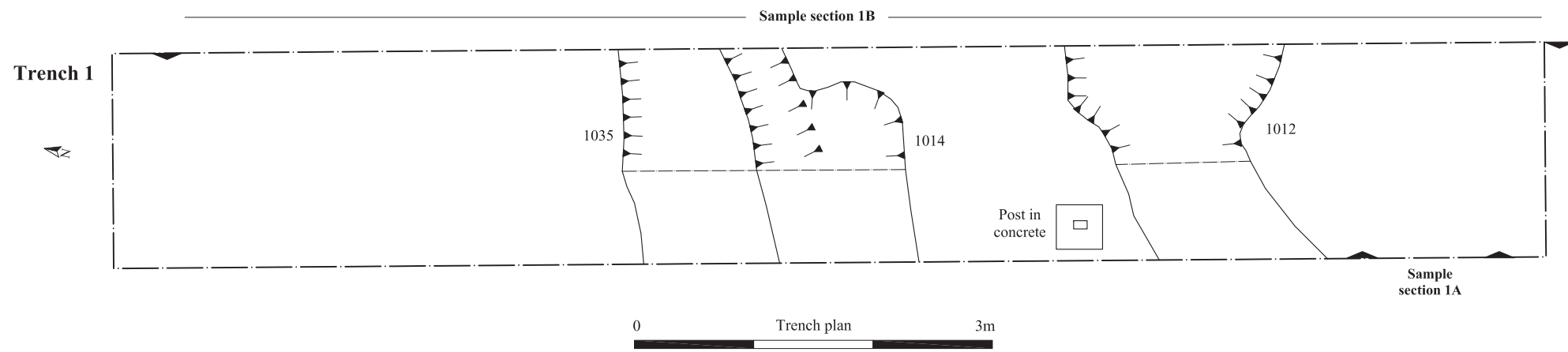


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Fig. 1 Site location plan
 Scale 1:25,000 at A4
 River Lane, Fordham, Cambridgeshire (P7881)



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Fig. 2 Trench location plan
Scale 1:500 at A4
River Lane, Fordham, Cambridgeshire (P7881)

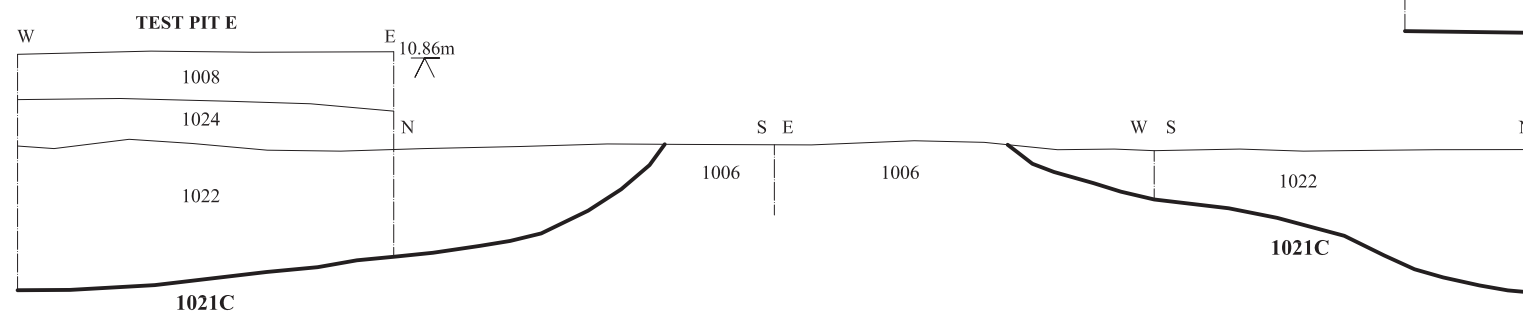
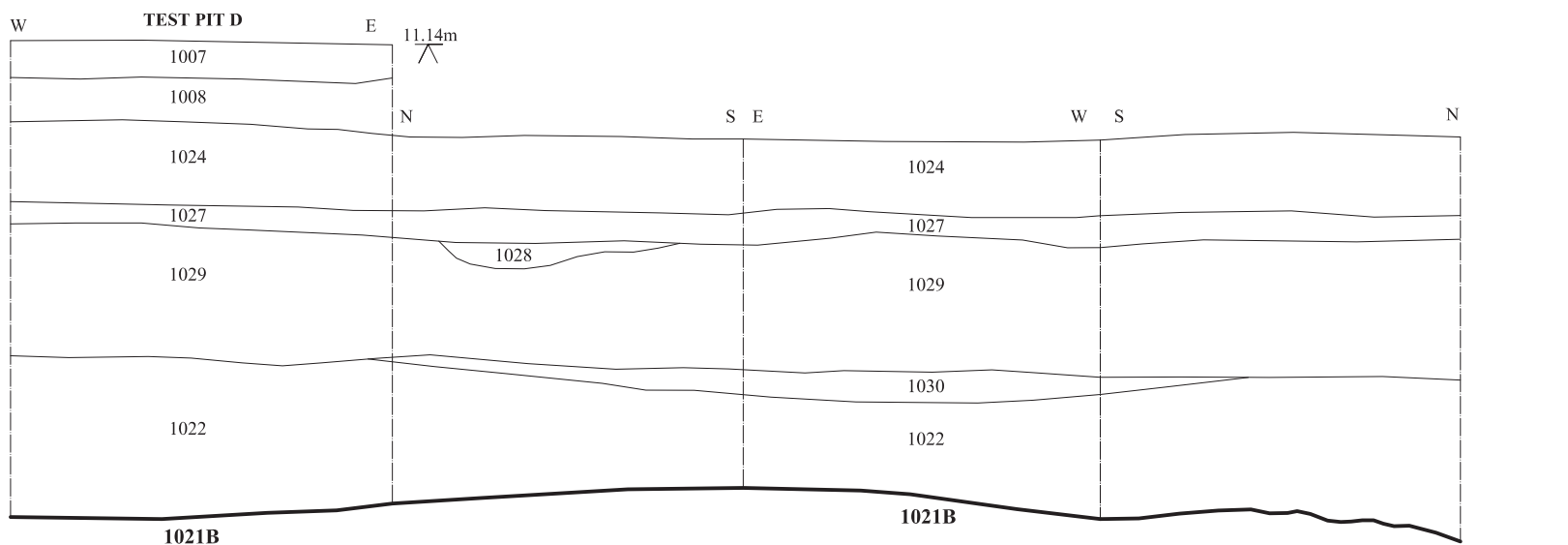
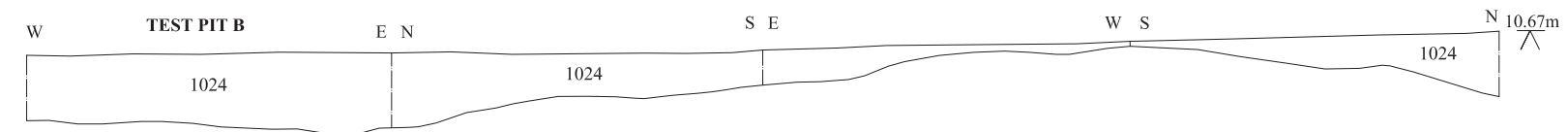
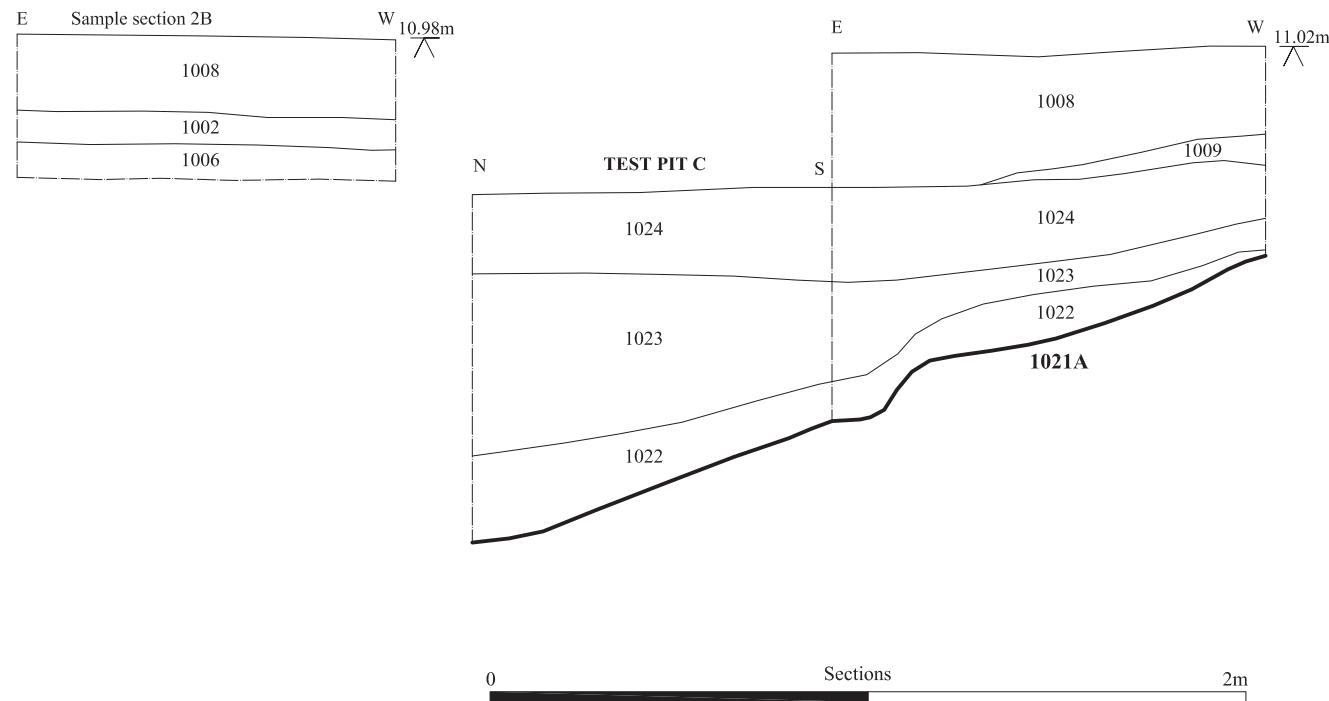
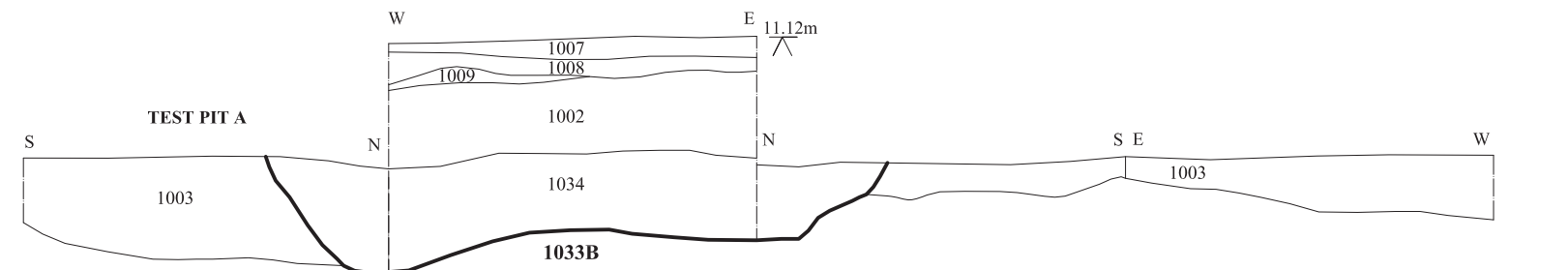
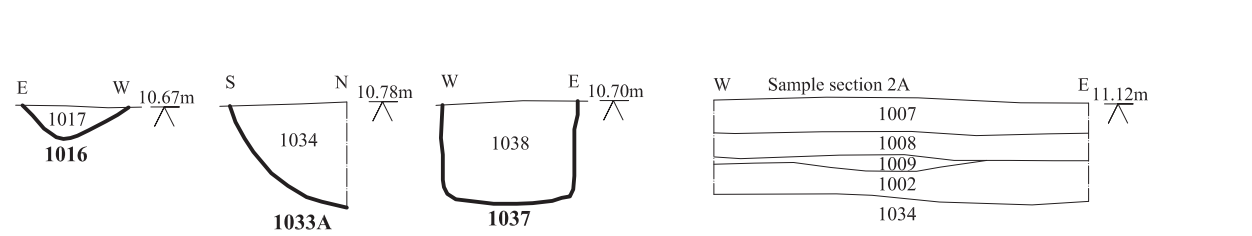
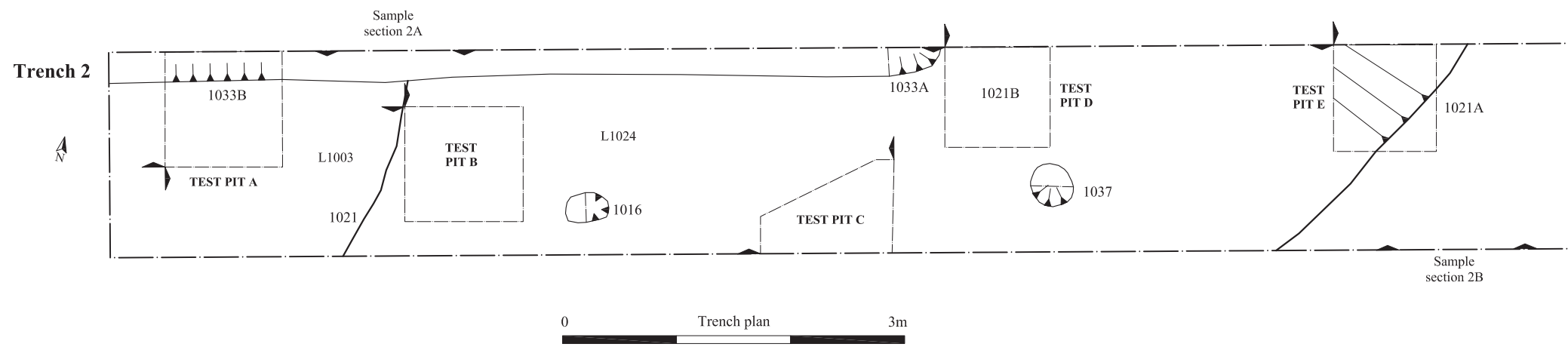


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Fig. 3 Trench 1 plan and sections

Scale Plans 1:50, sections 1:20 & 1:30 at A3

River Lane, Fordham, Cambridgeshire (P7881)



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Fig. 4 Trench 2 plan and sections

Scale Plans 1:50, sections 1:20 & 1:30 at A3

River Lane, Fordham, Cambridgeshire (P7881)