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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD**

**APPLEYARD FARM (SOUTH),  
1 HOUGHTONS LANE, ISLEHAM,  
CAMBRIDGESHIRE CB7 5SR**

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION**

CHER ECB 6183

Authors: Keeley-Jade Bingham (Fieldwork and report)	
NGR: TL 6516 7442	Report No: 6048
District: East Cambs	Site Code: ECB 6183
Approved: Claire Halpin MCIfA	Project No: P8298
	Date: 1 June 2020

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<b>Project details</b>			
Project name	Appleyard Farm (South), 1 Houghtons Lane, Isleham, Cambridgeshire CB7 5SR		
<p><i>In May 2020 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological evaluation on land at Appleyard Farm (South), 1 Houghtons Lane, Isleham, Cambridgeshire CB7 5SR (NGR TL 6516 7442; 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 five new dwellings, garaging, access, parking and associated works following demolition of existing agricultural barns (East Cambs Council Approval Ref. 19/01178/OUT), based on the advice of Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team.</i></p> <p><i>An evaluation of the adjacent part of the farm was undertaken in 2018 (Collins et al 2018; ECB 5445). It revealed structural remains at the northern end of the site, which correlate with the former dwellings depicted on the cartographic sources. To the rear of the buildings, the former field was found to contain a large, shallow, slightly irregular pit, which may have been derived from clunch extraction. Though undated the pit is likely to be of some antiquity as it was overlain by deep subsoil deposits. It may be broadly contemporary with the medieval features associated with roadside activity and possible domestic occupation on the north side of Houghtons Lane (Thomelius 2018), or older still.</i></p> <p><i>The current evaluation revealed undated features, a post hole, pits and ditches, in each trench. Pit F1033 (Trench 3) contained a crumb (&lt;1g) of medieval (11<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> century) pottery. Ditches F1022, F1024, and F1026 are on the same alignment as the current plot boundaries and may represent former boundaries. Ditches F1020 and F1035 were on a different alignment and may be earlier.</i></p> <p><i>Like the evaluation to the immediate north (CHER 5445), the pits may represent small scale extraction pits. Whether this was for use in the construction of the farm complex is unknown.</i></p> <p><i>All of the features were overlain by the subsoil and are therefore of some antiquity.</i></p>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	21 – 26 May 2020		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	N	Future work	TBC
P. number	P8298	Site code	ECB 6183
Type of project	Archaeological evaluation		
Site status	-		
Current land use	Part of a farm		
Planned development	Residential		
Main features (+dates)	Undated pits and ditches.		
Significant finds (+dates)	-		
	Cambridgeshire	East Cambs	Isleham
HER/ SMR for area	Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (CHER)		
Post code (if known)	CB7 5SR		
Area of site	850m <sup>2</sup>		
NGR	TL 6516 7442		
Height AOD (min/max)	c.5m AOD		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	Cambridgeshire County Council		
Project supervisor/s (PO)	Archaeological Solutions Ltd		
Funded by	Mr & Mrs Becket		
Full title	Appleyard Farm (South), 1 Houghtons Lane, Isleham, Cambridgeshire CB7 5SR. An Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation		
Authors	Bingham, K.		
Report no.	6048		
Date (of report)	June 2020		

**APPLEYARD FARM (SOUTH), 1 HOUGHTONS LANE, ISLEHAM,  
CAMBRIDGESHIRE CB7 5SR**

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION**

**SUMMARY**

*In May 2020 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological evaluation on land at Appleyard Farm (South), 1 Houghtons Lane, Isleham, Cambridgeshire CB7 5SR (NGR TL 6516 7442; 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 five new dwellings, garaging, access, parking and associated works following demolition of existing agricultural barns (East Cambs Council Approval Ref. 19/01178/OUT), based on the advice of Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team.*

*An evaluation of the adjacent part of the farm was undertaken in 2018 (Collins et al 2018; ECB 5445). It revealed structural remains at the northern end of the site, which correlate with the former dwellings depicted on the cartographic sources. To the rear of the buildings, the former field was found to contain a large, shallow, slightly irregular pit, which may have been derived from clunch extraction. Though undated the pit is likely to be of some antiquity as it was overlain by deep subsoil deposits. It may be broadly contemporary with the medieval features associated with roadside activity and possible domestic occupation on the north side of Houghtons Lane (Thomelius 2018), or older still.*

*The current evaluation revealed undated features, a post hole, pits and ditches, in each trench. Pit F1033 (Trench 3) contained a crumb (<1g) of medieval (11<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> century) pottery. Ditches F1022, F1024, and F1026 are on the same alignment as the current plot boundaries and may represent former boundaries. Ditches F1020 and F1035 were on a different alignment may be earlier.*

*Like the evaluation to the immediate north (CHER 5445), the pits may represent small scale extraction pits. Whether this was for use in the construction of the farm complex is unknown.*

*All of the features were overlain by the subsoil and are therefore of some antiquity.*

**1 INTRODUCTION**

1.1 In May 2020 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological evaluation on land at Appleyard Farm (South), 1 Houghtons Lane, Isleham, Cambridgeshire CB7 5SR (NGR TL 6516 7442; 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 five new dwellings, garaging, access, parking and associated works following demolition of existing agricultural barns (East Cambs Council Approval Ref. 19/01178/OUT), based on the advice of Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team.

1.2 An evaluation of the adjacent part of the farm was undertaken in 2018 (Collins *et al* 2018; ECB 5445). It revealed structural remains at the northern end of the site, which correlate with the former dwellings depicted on the cartographic sources. To the rear of the buildings, the former field was found to contain a large, shallow, slightly irregular pit, which may have been derived from clunch extraction.

1.3 The current evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a brief issued by Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team (HET, Kerry Hopper; dated 24<sup>th</sup> January 2020), and a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by AS (dated 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2020) 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).

1.4 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*

1.5 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2019) 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.

1.6 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 village of Isleham lies c.12km to the south-east of Ely in Cambridgeshire. The site lies at the eastern end of the village on the south side of Houghtons Lane which forms a no-through road extending east from Sheldrick's Road.

2.2 The site itself is part of a larger complex which occupies the area bounded by Sheldrick's Road to the west and Houghton's Lane on the north, while arable fields lie to the east and south. The wider site includes Appleyard Farm which has a modern farmhouse but also includes the remains of historic farm buildings.

## **3 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND SOILS**

3.1 Isleham is situated on a slightly elevated spur of the fen edge, with the site situated at c.62m AOD on the north-east edge of the village with the East Fen to the north, and the landscape rising slightly to the south-west into the core of the village. The site is located 950m to the south of River Lark and 1.1km to the west of its tributary the Lee Brook, with numerous drainage ditches traversing fields to the north and west, but not crossing the site.

3.2 The site is situated on solid geology of the Zig Zag Chalk Formation, and overlain by freely-draining lime-rich loamy soils.

## **4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

4.1 The site is located within an area of archaeological potential, with remains recorded on the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (CHER). Prehistoric finds are fairly well-represented in the Isleham area; a Palaeolithic handaxe has been recovered from Soham Fen (CHER MCB19231) and the CHER records several instances of Mesolithic flint artefacts (CHER 10883; 10954) and Mesolithic antler axes (CHER 07622) recovered in the area. A Mesolithic pit has been recorded at Hall Barn Road (CHER MCB20930). The Neolithic is represented by flintwork (CHER 07590, 10862, 10883A, 10954A, 10966, 11280) and a possible long barrow near Rymanmoor Long Turning, identified from aerial photos (CHER 10957). Bronze Age flintwork has also been recovered in the Isleham area (CHER 07537, 07623, 10883B, 10968) as has pottery (CHER 07590A) and this period is also represented by a bronze socketed axe (CHER 11711), early Bronze Age settlement evidence at Prickwillow Road (CHER 11896) and similarly dated features at Hall Farm (CHER MCB17270). Middle Bronze Age settlement has been recorded on a sand island in Isleham Fen (CHER 07536) Iron Age pottery was recovered during a test pit survey at Little London Lane (CHER MCB19744). Early Iron Age features have been recorded at Isleham Community Centre (CHER MCB22685). A late Prehistoric pit has been recorded at Hall Barn Road (CHER CB15282).

4.2 The Roman period is less well-represented with only finds of metalwork (CHER 07589), brooches (CHER 10863 and 11710), a saddle quern (CHER 10864) and pottery recovered during a test pit survey at Little London Lane (CHER MCB19744) recorded on the CHER. Roman ditch systems have been recorded at

32-34 Church Lane (CHER MCB20915) and Ellwoods Close (CHER MCB20917), with evidence at Ellwoods Close of a possible high status Roman building (CHER ECB4634). An archaeological evaluation carried out in November 2017 also revealed twelve linear ditches and one possible extraction pit; the features contained Roman, late Saxon and Saxo-Norman material evidence (HER MCB24946).

4.3 Although the Saxon period is represented only by a few spot finds, including a disc brooch (CHER 11691), pottery at St Andrew's Close (CHER MCB19749), and ditches at Ellwoods Close (CHER MCB20918), evidence for medieval occupation in Isleham is abundant. The scheduled earthwork remains of the priory fish ponds, hollow ways and building platforms lie to the west of the current proposed development site (NHLE 1013278). The Priory was a medieval Alien Benedictine institution (CHER DCB221), located some 100m to the west of the medieval Church of St Andrew (CHER 07591). The Chapel of St Margaret of Antioch (CHER 07529) survives as a standing structure, with the buried remains of the foundations of the conventional buildings and the earthworks remains of the associated agricultural and other elements of the complex to the north of the Grade I building, listed under CHER MCB14478). Possible medieval field systems (CHER 11895), property boundaries (CHER CB15283, MCB20930), clunch-processing sites (CHER MCB16866 and MCB20069), settlement activity (CHER 07528, MCB18442, MCB19827), pits and ditches (CHER MCB23922) and a variety of finds (CHER 11074, 11574, 11712, MCB19712, MCB19713, MCB19719, MCB19721, MCB19744, MCB19749, MCB19750, MCB19752) are amongst the other evidence for medieval activity within Isleham. A recent excavation by Archaeological Solutions on the north side of Houghton Lane recorded shallow medieval pits, gullies and ditches containing relatively low quantities of domestic detritus including pottery, butchered bone and shell, as well as low concentrations of carbonised cereal remains that may relate to peripheral roadside and agricultural activity on the margins of the village, or may indicate a low level of occupation (Archaeological Solutions *in prep*)

4.4 Post-medieval activity is represented by a windmill (CHER 07611), a quarry (CHER11214) shown on early maps. Other sites of this date include the gardens of Isleham Hall (CHER MCB19362), wall foundations at 12 West Street (CHER MCB19442), post-medieval pottery from the church social centre grounds (CHER MCB19714), pottery from Waterside (CHER MCB19716), 20 East Road (CHER MCB19718), 6 Bowers Lane (CHER MCB19720), 94 The Causeway (CHER MCB19722), West Street (CHER MCB19745), Mill Street (CHER MCB19746), Church Street (CHER MCB19747, MCB19748), and East Road (CHER MCB19751)

4.5 Isleham's chalk and lime industry is represented by 19<sup>th</sup> century kilns at High Street (CHER 07489), and several quarries (e.g. CHER MCB22016, MCB22017, MCB22018, MCB22019). These industries would have been supported by the Great Eastern Railway, which was constructed in 1884 (CHER 07633). Modern sites recorded on the Cambridgeshire HER include High Street Chapel (CHER MCB17085), Isleham Baptist Church (CHER MCB17214), allotments (CHER MCB22014, MCB22015), former blacksmith's shops (CHER MCB22020, MCB22021, MCB22022), a former Malthouse (CHER MCB22023), a former windmill (CHER MCB22027), Peyton's Almshouses (CHER MCB22029), the site of St Bernard's wagon works (CHER MCB22030), the site of the former Methodist chapel (CHER MCB22031)



4.6 Investigation of the adjacent part of the farm (which includes the north eastern part of the current proposed development area) in 2018 by AS (Collins et al 2018, ECB 5445) revealed, in summary:

*The site is located within an area of archaeological potential, in particular for activity that may relate to the medieval and post-medieval agricultural activity, the latter including the roadside development of farms and associated industries. Historic maps demonstrate that the site was formerly part of the complex of East End Farm (now Appleyard Farm), and that the street frontage of the site was to the east of the main farm and formerly occupied by a range of small dwellings from at least 1887. The dwellings were probably occupied by labourers but were cleared from the site by 1979. To the rear of these buildings the majority of the site was part of a larger field.*

*The evaluation revealed structural remains at the northern end of the site, which correlate with the former dwellings depicted on the cartographic sources. The structures incorporated clunch walls and red-brick walls, a fire place and evidence of repairs. Outbuildings may also have included a pig house and a brick-built latrine with a drain. The bricks used in these structures, and the pottery contained in layers within them, are consistent with construction in, or after, the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. To the rear of the buildings, the former field was found to contain a large, shallow, slightly irregular pit, which may have been derived from clunch extraction. Clunch would have been likely used to provide building materials to the farm. The potential does remain that the large pit may have been derived from much earlier activity, but this cannot be demonstrated from the excavated evidence*

*A series of distinct structural remains which were encountered in Trench 1. These generally correlate with buildings depicted on late 19<sup>th</sup> century historic maps. The remains of a single wall of a clunch-built range was recorded which incorporated the base of a possible fireplace and may have formed part of a worker's cottage or outbuilding of probable 19<sup>th</sup> century date.*

*A single wall of a brick range was also recorded constructed of yellow brick consistent with a mid-19<sup>th</sup> century or later date, which was adjoined by a red brick-lined well, which is marked on historic maps. An ephemeral brick structure (outhouse) likely formed a privy and included the base of an internal partition and drain.*

## **5 METHODOLOGY**

5.1 The brief required a sample of the development area where all new groundworks are proposed to be investigated by trenching. It however excluded the north eastern part of the site that was subject to previous evaluation in 2018. Three trenches of between 20 - 50m x 1.8m were excavated across the new house plots/garages/access (Trench 1: 50m; Trench 2: 21m; and Trench 3: 36.50m). They avoided the existing standing buildings and concrete access road which is to remain (Fig. 2).

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. The 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.

## 6 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS

6.1 The finds observed during the sampling of the topsoil and subsoil, and the metal detecting survey, were all of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century date.

Individual trench descriptions are presented below:

### Trench 1 Figs. 2 – 3

Sample Section 1A 0.00 = 6.02m AOD		
0.00 – 0.05m	L1000	Topsoil. Friable, dark grey brown sandy silt with moderate small sub-angular and sub-rounded flints and chalk.
0.05 – 0.34m	L1001	Subsoil. Firm, mid grey brown sandy silt with moderate small sub-rounded chalk.
0.34m +	L1002	Natural Deposits. Solid white chalk.

Sample Section 1B 0.00 = 6.41m AOD		
0.00 – 0.14m	L1000	Topsoil. As Sample Section 1A.
0.14 – 0.34m	L1001	Subsoil. As Sample Section 1A.
0.34m +	L1002	Natural Deposits. As Sample Section 1A.

Sample Section 1C 0.00 = 6.74m AOD		
0.00 – 0.34m	L1000	Topsoil. As Sample Section 1A.
0.34 – 0.65m	L1001	Subsoil. As Sample Section 1A.
0.65m +	L1002	Natural Deposits. As Sample Section 1A.

Sample Section 1D 0.00 = 7.17m AOD		
0.00 – 0.24m	L1000	Topsoil. As Sample Section 1A.
0.24 – 0.47m	L1001	Subsoil. As Sample Section 1A.
0.47m +	L1002	Natural Deposits. As Sample Section 1A.

Sample Section 1E 0.00 = 6.85m AOD		
0.00 – 0.30m	L1003	Made Ground. Mixed layer sand, fragments of Tarmac, concrete and brick rubble
0.30 – 0.38m	L1000	Topsoil. As Sample Section 1A.
0.38 – 0.77m	L1001	Subsoil. As Sample Section 1A.
0.77 – 1.13m	L1021	Fill of Ditch F1020
1.13m+	L1002	Natural Deposits. As Sample Section 1A.

*Description: Trench 1 contained three shallow undated pits (F1016, F1018 and F1031) and two undated ditches (F1020 and F1022).*

Pit F1016 was elongated in plan (1.10 x 0.59 x 0.24m). It had steep sides and a flattish base. Its fill (L1017) was a pale grey silty clay. It contained no finds.

Pit F1018 was ?sub-circular in plan (9.00 x 1.20+ x 0.26m). It had moderate to gently sloping sides and a flat base. Its fill (L1019) was a firm, mid brown grey silt with moderate small sub-rounded chalk. It contained no finds.

Ditch F1020 was linear in plan (2.00+ x 0.83 x 0.37m), orientated northeast / southwest. It had steep to moderately sloping sides and a concave base. Its fill (L1021) was a firm, pale grey silty clay with frequent small sub-rounded chalk. It contained no finds. It was cut by Ditch F1022.

Ditch F1022 was linear in plan (2.00+ x 2.05 x 0.19m), orientated east / west. It had moderate to gently sloping sides and a flattish base. Its fill (L1023) was a firm pale grey clay silt with occasional small sub-rounded chalk. It contained no finds. It cut Ditch F1020.

Pit F1031 was sub-circular in plan (2.40 x 1.50+ x 0.14m). It had shallow sides and a flat base. Its fill (L1032) was a firm, pale grey silty clay. It contained no finds.

## **Trench 2** Figs. 2 & 4

Sample Section 2A 0.00 = 6.64m AOD		
0.00 – 0.10m	L1028	Yard surface. Friable, mid-dark grey sand with frequent stone and bitumen fragments.
0.10 – 0.28m	L1029	Levelling layer. Friable, yellow brown sand with sparse small stones.
0.28 – 0.47m	L1003	Made ground. As Sample Section 1E
0.47m +	L1002	Natural Deposits. As Sample Section 1A.

Sample Section 2B 0.00 = 6.82m AOD		
0.00 – 0.08m	L1028	Yard surface. As Sample Section 1A.
0.08 – 0.18m	L1030	Former yard surface. Pale grey concrete.
0.18 – 0.30m	L1029	Levelling layer. As Sample Section 2A.
0.30 – 0.62m	L1003	Made Ground. As Sample Section 1E
0.62m +	L1002	Natural Deposits. As Sample Section 1A.

*Description: Trench 2 contained undated Pits F1004, F1006, F1008, F1012 and F1014, and undated Post Hole F1010.*

Pit F1004 was sub-circular in plan (1.40 x 1.12 x 0.10m). It had gently sloping sides and a flat base. Its fill (L1005) was a firm, mid brown grey silt with moderate small sub-rounded chalk. It contained no finds.

Pit F1006 was sub-circular in plan (1.30+ x 1.20+ x 0.12m). It had shallow side and a flat base. Its fill (L1007) was a firm, pale grey silty clay. It contained no finds.

Pit F1008 was a ?sub-circular in plan (1.80 x 0.30+ x 0.30m). It had steep to moderately sloping sides and a flat base. Its fill (L1009) was a firm, mid grey silt with moderate small sub-rounded chalk. It contained no finds.

Post Hole F1010 was sub-circular in plan (0.30 x 0.10+ x 0.23m). It had steep sides and a concave base. Its fill (L1011) was a firm, mid brown grey silt with moderate small sub-angular chalk. It contained no finds.

Pit F1012 was irregular in plan (1.20+ x 0.92+ x 0.09m). It had shallow sides and a flattish base. Its fill (L1013) was a firm, pale grey silty clay. It contained no finds. It cut Pit F1014.

Pit F1014 was sub-circular in plan (1.50+ x 1.20+ x 0.19m). It had shallow sides and an irregular base. Its fill (L1015) was a firm, pale grey silty clay. It contained no finds. It was cut by Pit F1012.

### **Trench 3** Figs. 2 & 4

Sample Section 3A 0.00 = 7.19m AOD		
0.00 – 0.30m	L1000	Topsoil. As Sample Section 1A.
0.30 – 0.68m	L1001	Subsoil. As Sample Section 1A.
0.68m +	L1002	Natural Deposits. As Sample Section 1A.

Sample Section 3B 0.00 = 7.74m AOD		
0.00 – 0.30m	L1000	Topsoil. As Sample Section 1A.
0.30 – 0.75m	L1001	Subsoil. As Sample Section 1A.
0.75m +	L1002	Natural Deposits. As Sample Section 1A.

*Description: Trench 3 contained undated Ditches F1024, F1026, and F1035. and Pit F1033. The latter contained a crumb (<1g) of medieval (11<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> century) pottery.*

Ditch F1024 was linear in plan (1.80+ x 1.10 x 0.21m), orientated northwest / southeast. It had moderately sloping sides and a shallow concave base. Its fill (L1025) was a firm, pale brown grey silty clay. It contained no finds.

Ditch F1026 was linear in plan (2.00+ x 0.63 x 0.35m), orientated northwest / southeast. It had steep sides and an irregular base. Its fill (L1027) was a firm, pale grey silty clay with occasional small sub-angular chalk. It contained no finds.

Pit F1033 was sub-circular pit in plan (2.00+ x 0.74 x 0.19m). It had gently sloping sides and a flattish base. It was cut by ditch (F1035). Its fill (L1034) was a firm, pale grey silty clay with occasional small sub-angular chalk. It contained a crumb (<1g) of medieval (11<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> century) pottery.

Ditch Terminal F1035 was linear (1.00+ x 1.15 x 0.22m), orientated northeast / southwest. It had shallow sides and a concave base. Its fill (L1036) was a firm, pale grey silty clay. It contained no finds. It cut Pit F1033.

## **7 CONFIDENCE RATING**

7.1 It is not felt that any factors inhibited the recognition of archaeological features or finds.

## **8 DEPOSIT MODEL**

8.1 On the eastern and southern sides of the site (Trenches 1 and 3) a 0.05m – 0.34m thick topsoil layer (L1000), comprising a friable, dark grey brown sandy silt with moderate small sub-angular and sub-rounded flints and chalk, overlay a 0.20m – 0.45m thick subsoil layer (L1001) of firm, mid grey brown sandy silt with moderate small sub-rounded chalk. The natural deposits (L1002) of solid white chalk were encountered at a depth of between 0.34m and 0.75m below the current ground surface.

8.2 In the centre of the site (Trench 2) uppermost was the current yard surface (L1028), a 0.10m thick layer of friable, mid-dark grey sand with frequent stone and bitumen fragments. Below L1028 was a 0.18m thick levelling layer (L1029) of friable, yellow brown sand with sparse small stones. Below L1029 was a 0.19m thick made ground layer (L1003) of compact, mixed layers of sand, Tarmac, concrete and modern (20<sup>th</sup> century) brick rubble. The natural deposits (L1002) were encountered at a depth of between 0.47m and 0.62m below the current ground surface.

## **9 DISCUSSION**

9.1 The recorded features are tabulated:

Trench	Context	Description	Date
1	F1016	Pit	-
	F1018	Pit	-
	F1020	Ditch	-
	F1022	Ditch	-
	F1031	Pit	-
2	F1004	Pit	-
	F1006	Pit	-
	F1008	Pit	-
	F1010	Post Hole	-
	F1012	Pit	-
	F1014	Pit	-
3	F1024	Ditch	-
	F1026	Ditch	-
	F1033	Pit	<1g of medieval (11 <sup>th</sup> – 14 <sup>th</sup> century) pottery
	F1035	Ditch Terminal	-

9.2 Although in the centre of the site (Trench 2) the ground had been reduced in the past for the construction of the farm hardstanding, this action did not appear to have truncated the archaeological features. The natural deposits were encountered at a similar depth as in the other trenches and the features were of similar dimensions.

9.3 The current evaluation revealed undated features, a post hole, pits and ditches, in each trench. Pit F1033 (Trench 3) contained a crumb (<1g) of medieval (11<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> century) pottery. Ditches F1022, F1024, and F1026 are on the same alignment as the current plot boundaries and may represent former boundaries. Ditches F1020 and F1035 were on a different alignment may be earlier.

9.4 Like the evaluation to the immediate north (CHER 5445), the pits may represent small scale extraction pits. Whether this was for use in the construction of the farm complex is unknown.

9.5 All of the features were overlain by the subsoil and are therefore of some antiquity.

## 10 CONCLUSION

10.1 The site is located towards the north-eastern edge of the village of Isleham, on the edge of a spur that descends gradually into the fenland. It is within an area of archaeological potential, in particular for activity that may relate to the medieval and post-medieval agricultural activity. The latter including the roadside development of farms and associated industries. Historic maps demonstrate that the site was

formerly part of the complex of East End Farm (now Appleyard Farm), and that the street frontage of the site was to the east of the main farm and formerly occupied by a range of small dwellings from at least 1887. The dwellings were probably occupied by labourers but were cleared from the site by 1979. To the rear of these buildings the majority of the site was part of a larger field.

10.2 The earlier evaluation (CHER 5445) revealed structural remains at the northern end of the site, which correlate with the former dwellings depicted on the cartographic sources. The structures incorporated clunch walls and red-brick walls, a fire place and evidence of repairs. Outbuildings may also have included a pig house and a brick-built latrine with a drain. The bricks used in these structures, and the pottery contained in layers within them, are consistent with construction in, or after, the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. To the rear of the buildings, the former field was found to contain a large, shallow, slightly irregular pit, probably for clunch extraction. Though undated the pit is likely to be of some antiquity as it was overlain by deep subsoil deposits. It may be broadly contemporary with the medieval features associated with roadside activity and possible domestic occupation on the north side of Houghtons Lane (Thomelius 2018), or older still.

10.3 The current evaluation suggests the area was a field to the rear of the Appleyard Farm complex. At some time in the past small scale extraction took place, possibly during the medieval period and broadly contemporary with the roadside activity and possible occupation present on the north side of Houghtons Lane (Thomelius 2018), or earlier.

## **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 & Mrs Becket for funding the works and for their assistance. AS would also like to acknowledge the assistance of Mr Andrew Fleet.

AS would like to acknowledge the input and advice of Ms Kasia Gdaniec and Ms Kerry Hopper, Archaeological Officers, Cambridgeshire County Council.

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### **Web resources**

1 Ancestry  
<https://www.ancestry.co.uk/>



**Appendix 1 Concordance of Finds**

**ECB6183 - P8298, Appleyard Farm (south), 1 Houghtons Lane, Isleham**

<b>Feature</b>	<b>Context</b>	<b>Segment</b>	<b>Trench</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Spot Date (Pot Only)</b>	<b>Pot Qty</b>	<b>Pottery (g)</b>	<b>CBM (g)</b>	<b>A.Bone (g)</b>	<b>Other Material</b>	<b>Other Qty</b>	<b>Other (g)</b>
1033	1034		3	Fill of ?Pit	11th-14th C	1	<1					

## APPENDIX 2 SPECIALIST REPORTS

### The Pottery

*Peter Thompson*

The archaeological evaluation recovered less than one gram of a medieval coarseware 'sherd' of 11<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> centuries date, with fine and occasionally medium sub-angular to rounded quartz. The surfaces appear buff with grey core and while no calcareous inclusions are present the sherd is so small it could be an Ely Ware which was produced between the mid 12<sup>th</sup> to mid 14<sup>th</sup> centuries.

### Methodology

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

### Key:

MSW: Medieval Sandy Coarse Ware 11<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup>

Type	Feature	Context	Quantity	Date	Comment
Quarry Pit	1033	1034	1x<1g MSW	11 <sup>th</sup> -14 <sup>th</sup>	

### Bibliography

Barclay, A., Knight, D., Booth, P., Evans, J., Brown, D. & Wood, I. 2016 *A Standard for Pottery Studies in Archaeology*. Prehistoric Ceramics Research Group/Study group for Roman Pottery/Medieval Pottery Research Group/Historic England

Spoerry, P. 2016 The Production and Distribution of Medieval Pottery in Cambridgeshire *East Anglian Archaeology* 159

### The Environmental Samples

*Dr John Summers*

#### Introduction

During the archaeological evaluation at Appleyard Farm, Isleham, three bulk samples for environmental archaeological assessment were taken and processed. The sampled deposits were undated but it is possible that they are medieval in origin.

## 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 1. Preservation of archaeobotanical remains was by carbonisation only, with no evidence of anaerobic waterlogging or mineralisation. Only a single carbonised plant macrofossil was present, in the form of a barley (*Hordeum* sp.) grain in quarry pit fill L1005 (F1004). All samples contained a low concentration of charcoal, but this was insufficient for detailed comment. These low density remains are likely to represent scattered background debris rather than deposition of remains from associated domestic or agricultural processing activities. Terrestrial mollusc shells were well preserved, representing both short calcareous grassland and more sheltered conditions, such as taller damp vegetation on the margin of pit and ditch features. Shells of modern burrowing molluscs (*Cecilioides acicula*) were abundant in quarry pits F1004 and F1006, suggesting some biological disturbance of these deposits. Likewise, abundant modern roots in ditch fill L1025 (F1024) could indicate some disturbance of this deposit.

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- Jacomet, S. 2006, *Identification of Cereal Remains from Archaeological Sites* (2<sup>nd</sup> 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

Sample number	Context	Feature	Description	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	
1	1007	1006	Fill of Quarry Pit	-	40	20	50%	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	XX	<i>Cochlicopa</i> sp., <i>Helicella itala</i> , <i>Pupilla muscorum</i> , <i>Vallonia</i> sp., <i>Vertigo</i> sp.	X	XXX	XX	-	-	-	
2	1005	1004	Fill of Quarry Pit	-	40	20	50%	X	-	Hord (1)	-	-	-	X	-	XX	<i>Cochlicopa</i> sp., <i>Helicella itala</i> , <i>Pupilla muscorum</i> , <i>Trichia hispida</i> group, <i>Vallonia</i> sp.	X	XXX	X	-	-	-
3	1025	1024	Fill of Ditch	-	40	20	50%	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	XX	<i>Cochlicopa</i> sp., <i>Helicella itala</i> , <i>Pupilla muscorum</i> , <i>Trichia hispida</i> group, <i>Vallonia</i> sp., <i>Vertigo</i> sp.	XXX	XX	-	-	-	-	

Table 1: Results from the assessment of bulk sample light fractions from Appleyard Farm. Abbreviations: Hord = barley (*Hordeum* sp.).

## PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX (P8298)



1  
General site overview looking south-west



2  
General site overview looking north-east



3  
Trench 1 looking south-east



4  
Sample section 1A looking east



5  
Sample section 1B looking east



6  
Sample section 1C looking east



7  
Sample section 1D looking east



8  
Pit F1016 in Trench 1 looking north-east



9  
Pit F1018A in Trench 1 looking south-west



10  
Pit F1018B in Trench 1 looking south-west



11  
Pit F1018C in Trench 1 looking south-west



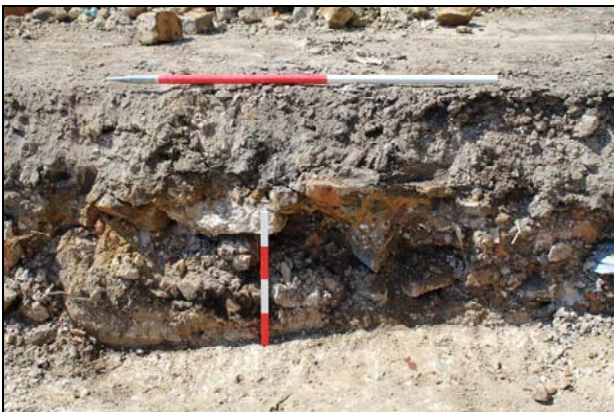
12  
Ditches F1020 and F1022 in Trench 1 looking west



13  
Pit F1031 in Trench 1 looking south-west



14  
Trench 2 looking north-west



15  
Sample section 2A looking west



16  
Sample section 2B looking east



17  
Pit F1004 in Trench 2 looking south-west



18  
Pit F1006 in Trench 2 looking north-west



19  
Pit F1008 in Trench 2 looking south-west



20  
Post Hole F1010 in Trench 2 looking south-west





21  
Pits F1012 and F1014 in Trench 2 looking north-east



22  
Trench 3 looking west



23  
Sample section 3A looking north



24  
Sample section 3B looking north



25  
Ditch F1024 in Trench 3 looking north-west



26  
Ditch F1026 in Trench 3 looking north-west



27  
Pit F1033A in Trench 3 looking west



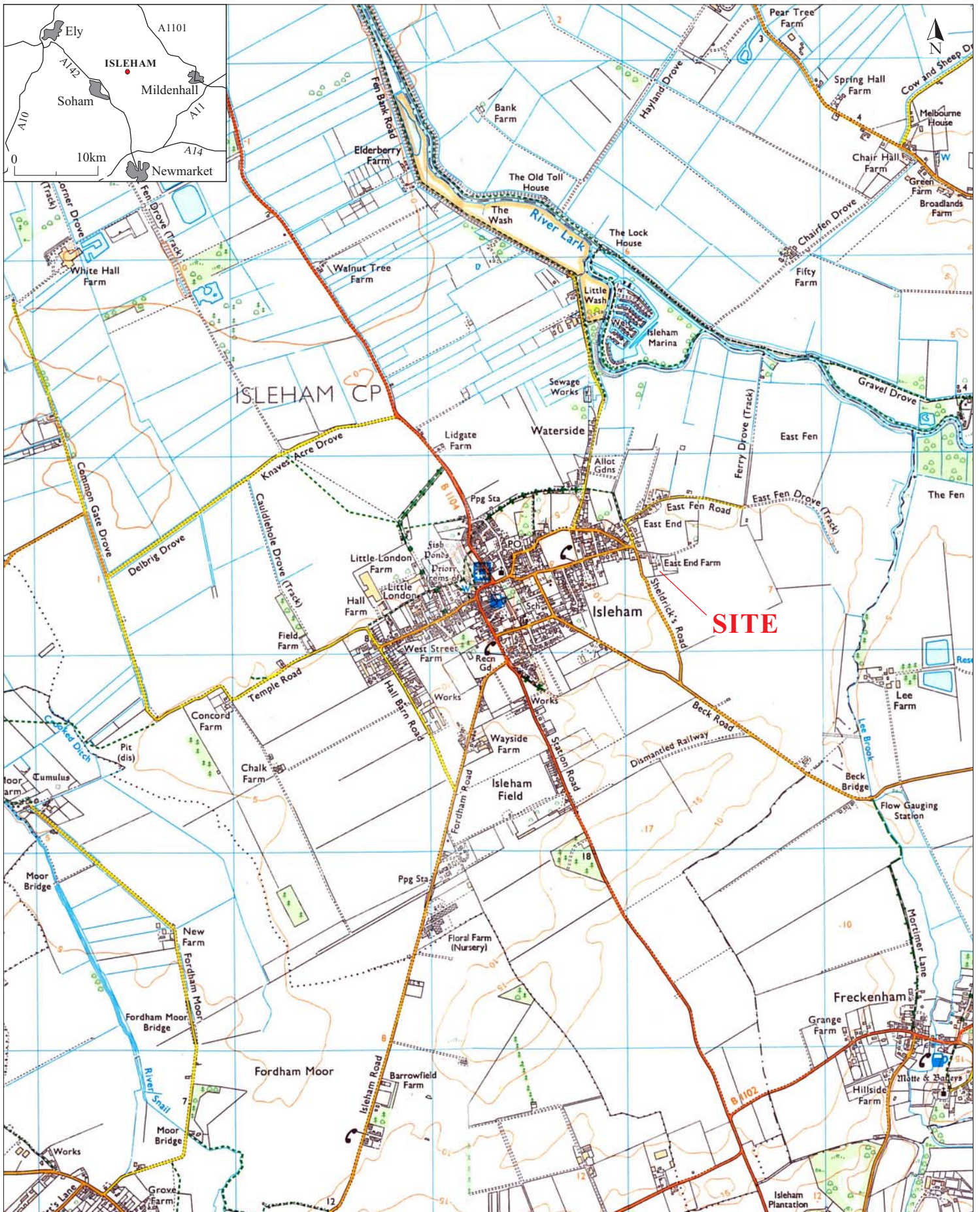
28  
Pit F1033B in Trench 3 looking east



29  
Pit F1033C in Trench 3 looking north

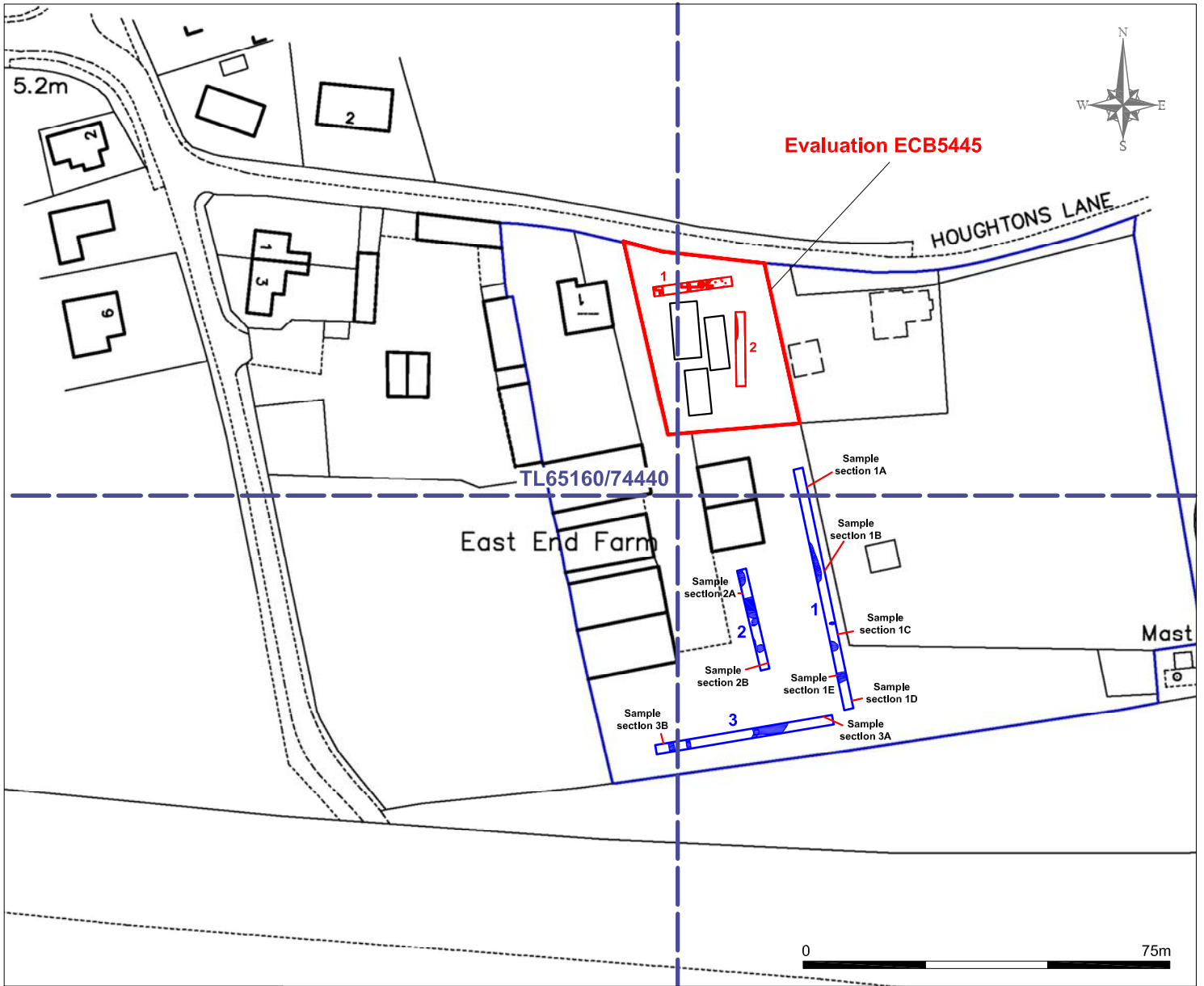


30  
Ditch Terminal F1035 in Trench 3 looking south-west



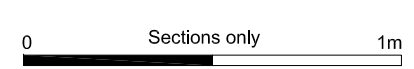
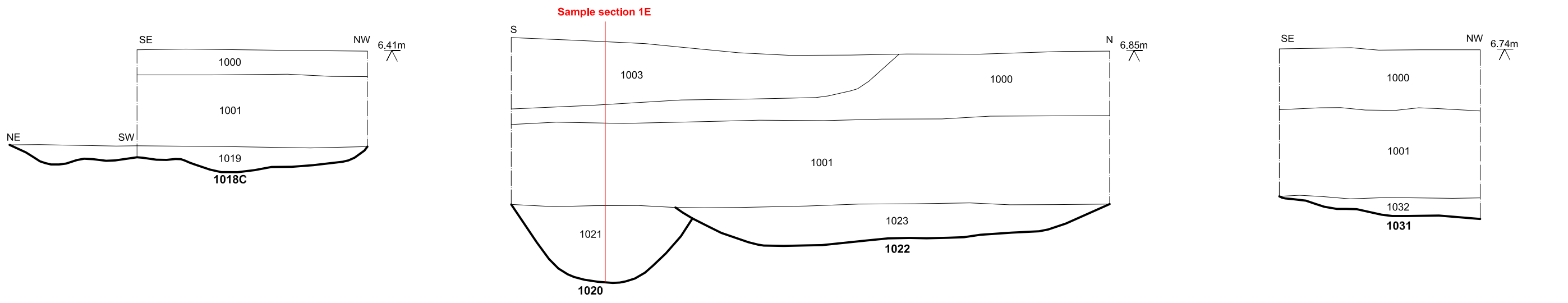
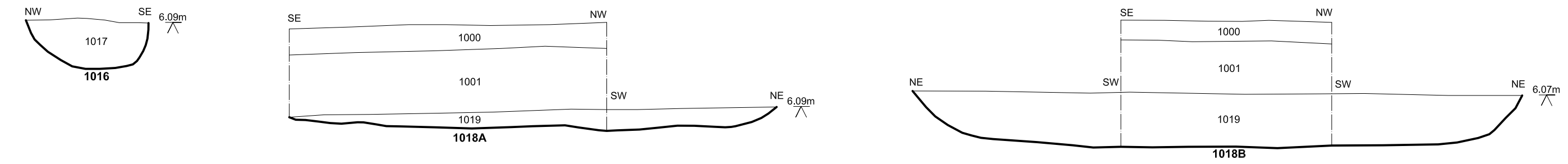
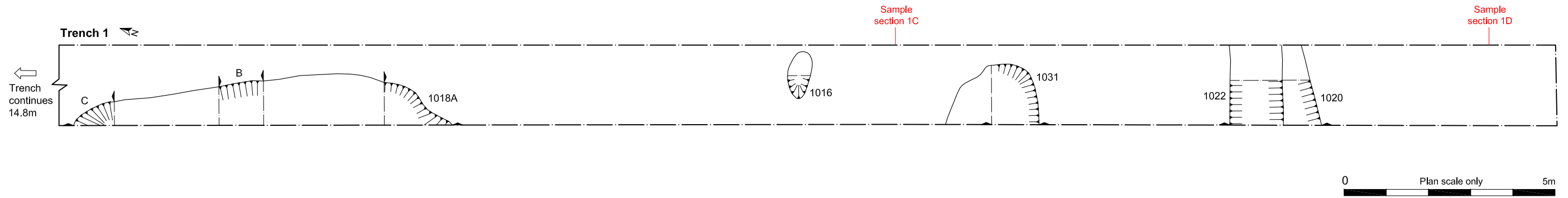
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**Fig. 1 Site location plan**  
 Scale 1:25,000 at A4  
 Appleyard Farm, Houghtons Ln, Isleham, Cambs (P8298)



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<i>Archaeological Solutions Ltd</i>
<b>Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan</b>
Scale 1:1250 at A4
Appleyard Farm, Houghtons Lane, Isleham, Cambs (P8298)

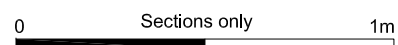
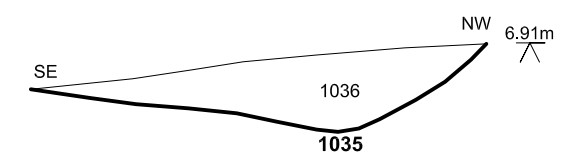
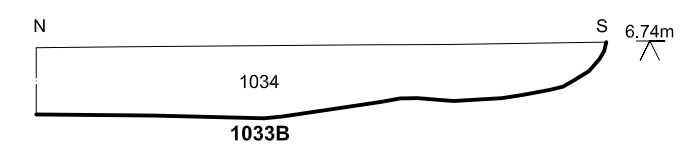
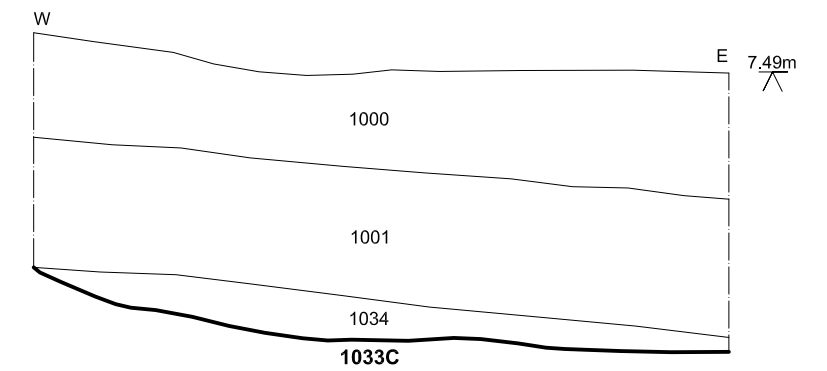
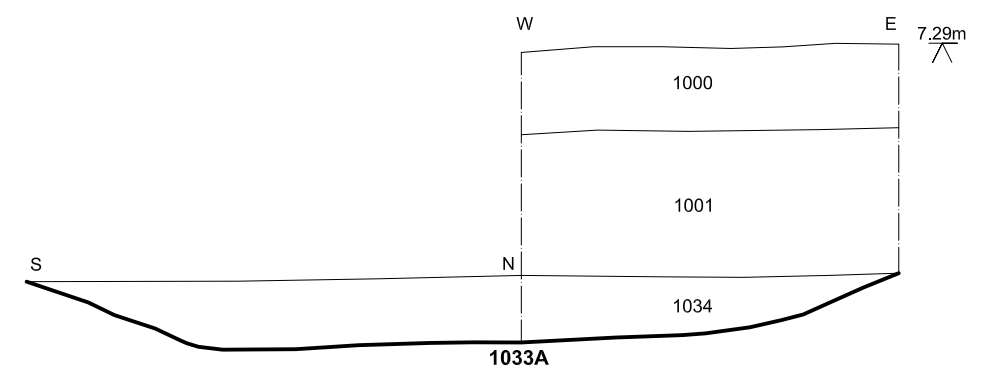
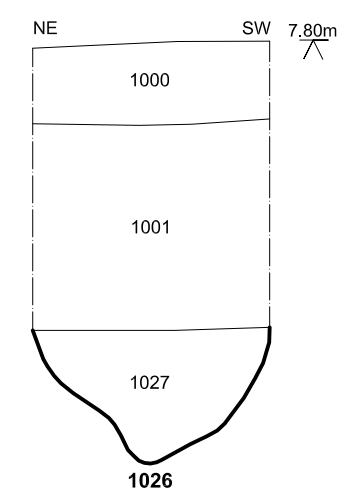
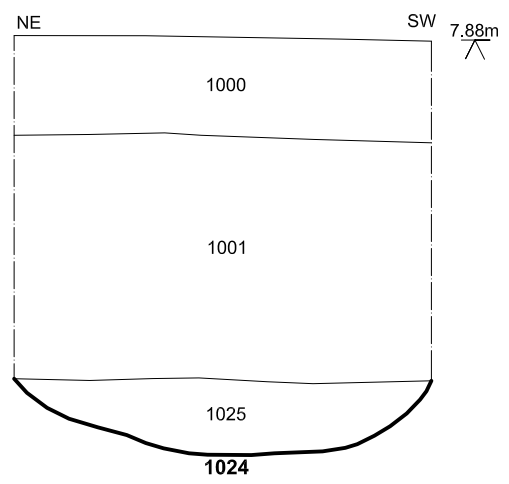
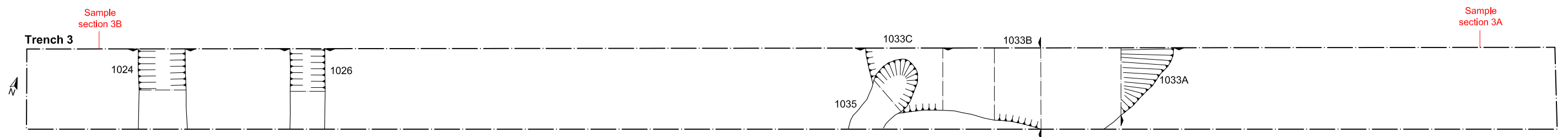
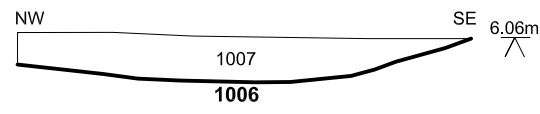
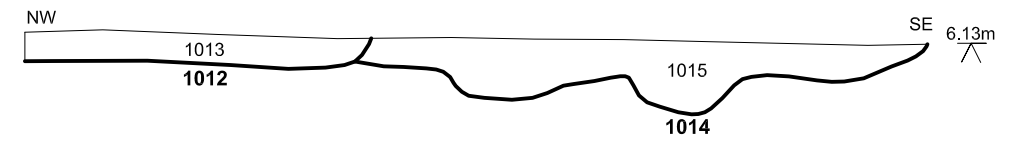
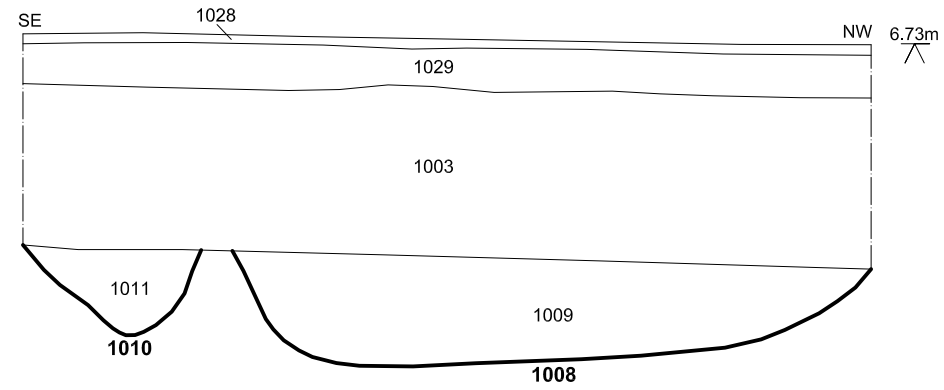
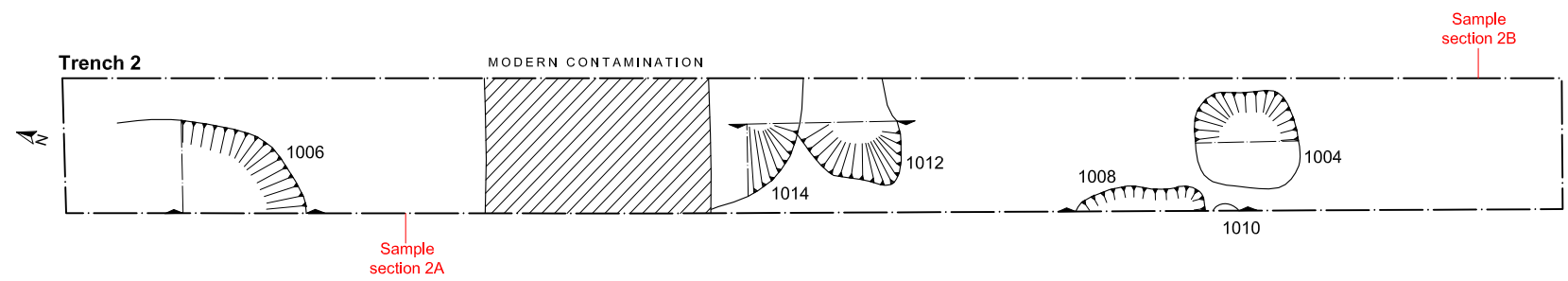


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**Fig. 3 Trench plan and sections**

Scale Plan 1:100, sections 1:20 at A3

Appleyard Farm, Houghtons Lane, Isleham, Cambs (P8298)



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**Fig. 4 Trench plans and sections**  
 Scale Plans 1:100, sections 1:20 at A3  
 Appleyard Farm, Houghtons Lane, Isleham, Cambs (P8298)