

**3 & 5 OLD STATION ROAD
RAMSEY, CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD

**3 & 5 OLD STATION ROAD, RAMSEY,
CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

CHER no. ECB 3016

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NGR: TL 2847 8479	Report No: 3204
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OASIS SUMMARY SHEET

Project details			
Project name	<i>3 & 5 Old Station Road Ramsey, Cambridgeshire: An archaeological evaluation.</i>		
<p><i>In October 2008, Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological evaluation at 3 & 5 Old Station Road Ramsey, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 2847 8479). A residential development is proposed for the site including two new blocks to contain ten residential apartments with associated parking and small-scale landscaping after demolition of an existing warehouse on the site. The works were carried out to comply with a planning condition requiring archaeological investigation of the site (Planning ref: 07/04098/FUL).</i></p> <p><i>The desk-based assessment showed potential for multi-period remains to be encountered on the site. Previous excavations have indicated that the land close to the site was reclaimed in the medieval period which likely explains the dearth of prehistoric and Roman remains in the vicinity. There was a considerable potential for encountering evidence from the 12th to 13th century onwards relating to the urban expansion of the town.</i></p> <p><i>Trench 2 contained a number of small boundary ditches or gullies. The earliest of these were Ditch F1020 and Gully F1023. No datable artefacts were recovered from either of these although Ditch F1020 did contain an iron square-headed nail. These were sealed by the accumulation of subsoil (L1012). Later, over the approximate line of Ditch F1020 a further ditch (F1018) was cut and when this was filled it was re-cut (F1016). At the eastern end of Trench 2 a construction cut or large pit (F1013) was present.</i></p>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	<i>22nd October – 28th October, 2008</i>		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>	Future work (Y/N/?)	<i>?</i>
P. number	<i>3237</i>	Site code	<i>AS 1173</i>
Type of project	<i>An Archaeological Evaluation</i>		
Site status	<i>Possible archaeological potential</i>		
Current land use	<i>Part of Bury industrial estate occupied by a single warehouse.</i>		
Planned development	<i>Residential development including the construction of two blocks with ten residential apartments.</i>		
Main features (+dates)			
Significant finds (+dates)			
Project location			
County/ District/ Parish	<i>Cambridgeshire</i>	<i>Huntingdonshire</i>	<i>Ramsey</i>
HER/ SMR for area	<i>Cambridgeshire</i>		
Post code (if known)			
Area of site	<i>1169 sq m</i>		
NGR	<i>TL 2847 8479</i>		
Height AOD (max/ min)	<i>c.7m AOD</i>		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	<i>Cambridgeshire Archaeology Planning and Countryside Advice (CAPCA)</i>		
Project supervisor/s (PO)	<i>Martin Brook</i>		
Funded by	<i>Campbell Rees Associates Architects and Designers</i>		
Full title	<i>3 & 5 Old Station Road Ramsey, Cambridgeshire: An archaeological evaluation.</i>		
Authors	<i>Brook, M & Unger, S,</i>		
Report no.	<i>3204</i>		
Date (of report)	<i>October2008</i>		

3 & 5 OLD STATION ROAD, RAMSEY, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

SUMMARY

In October 2008, Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological evaluation of 3 & 5 Old Station Road Ramsey, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 2847 8479). A residential development is proposed for the site including two new blocks to contain ten residential apartments with associated parking and small-scale landscaping after demolition of an existing warehouse on the site. The works are to be carried out to comply with a planning condition requiring archaeological investigation of the site (Planning ref: 07/04098/FUL).

The desk-based assessment showed potential for multi-period remains to be encountered on the site. Previous excavations have indicated that the land close to the site was reclaimed in the medieval period which likely explains the dearth of prehistoric and Roman remains in the vicinity. There was a considerable potential for encountering evidence from the 12th to 13th century onwards relating to the urban expansion of the town.

Trench 2 contained small boundary ditches or gullies. The earliest of these were Ditch F1020 and Gully F1023. No datable artefacts were recovered from either of these although Ditch F1020 did contain an iron square-headed nail. The features were sealed by the accumulation of subsoil (L1012). Later, over the approximate line of Ditch F1020 a further ditch (F1018) was cut and when this was filled it was re-cut (F1016). At the eastern end of Trench 2 a construction cut or large pit (F1013) was present.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In October 2008, Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) conducted an archaeological trial trenching evaluation on land at 3 & 5 Old Station Road, Ramsey, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 2847 8479; Figs 1-2). The evaluation was commissioned by Campbell Rees Associates Architect and Designers on behalf of their client in order to support a planning application for a proposed residential development (Planning ref: 07/04098/FUL).

1.2 The evaluation was conducted in accordance with a brief issued by CAPCA (dated 17/07/2008) and a specification compiled by AS (dated 24/07/2008). It followed the Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* and the procedures outlined in the Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment* and *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (revised 2001). It also adhered to the *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003).

1.3 The evaluation aimed to determine the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains liable to be threatened by the proposed development. The evaluation also aimed to identify area of previous ground disturbance on the site.

Planning policy context

1.4 The relevant planning policies which apply to the effect of development with regard to cultural heritage are Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 'Planning and the Historic Environment' (PPG15) and Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 'Archaeology and Planning' (PPG16) (Department of the Environment).

1.5 PPG16 (1990) is the national Planning Policy Guidance Note which applies to archaeology. It states that there should always be a presumption in favour of preserving nationally important archaeological remains in situ. However, when there is no overriding case for preservation, developers are required to fund opportunities for the recording and, where necessary, the excavation of the site. This condition is widely applied by local authorities.

1.6 PPG15 (1994) is the national Planning Policy Guidance Note which applies to the conservation of the historic environment by protecting the character and appearance of Conservation Areas and protecting listed buildings (of architectural or historical interest) from demolition and unsympathetic change and safeguarding their settings as far as is possible. This condition is also widely applied by local authorities.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE (Figs. 1 - 2)

2.1 The site lies in the centre of the historic core of the medieval Fenland settlement of Ramsey. Ramsey lies in the north-western part of the county of Cambridgeshire, c. 9km to the west of the market town of Chatteris. The site is approximately 1km south-west of the remains of the medieval complex of Ramsey Abbey.

2.2 The site lies to the south-west of the centre of the town of Ramsey on land thought to have been fenland but possibly reclaimed in the medieval period. Archaeological work at No. 46 High Street (adjacent to the site) demonstrated this process of medieval land reclamation and later urban expansion (CHER MCB16326). The site lies in part of the Bury Industrial park which dominates the area to the west of the site. Residential housing is located to the north and south of the site. Presently there is an existing warehouse structure located on the site.

3 METHODOLOGY (Desk-based assessment)

Information was sought from a variety of available sources in order to meet the objectives of the desk-based assessment.

3.1 Archaeological databases

3.1.1 The standard collation of all known archaeological sites and spot-finds within Huntingdon comes from the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (CHER). In order to provide a representative sample, the CHER database was searched for all known entries within a 750m radius of the site. Entries within an approximate 750m radius of the site are listed (Appendix 1) and plotted below (Figure 3). Their significance, where relevant, is discussed in Section 4.2. Significant CHER entries from beyond the 750m radius have also been discussed where relevant.

3.2 Historical and cartographic sources

3.2.1 The principal source for these types of evidence was the Cambridgeshire Archive (CA), Cambridge. Relevant documents are listed in Appendix 2 and reproduced in Figures 4-8.

3.3 Secondary sources

3.3.1 The principal sources of secondary material were the Cambridgeshire Archives as well as AS's own reference library. All sources, including websites, are listed in the bibliography.

3.4 Geological/geotechnical information

3.4.1 A description of the superficial and solid geology of the local and surrounding area was compiled in order to assess the likely presence and potential condition of any archaeological remains on the site. This information was drawn from appropriate maps based on the work of the Geological Survey of Great Britain.

4 THE EVIDENCE

4.1 Topography, geology and soils

4.1.1 Ramsey lies on a peninsula of Boulder Clay till overlying Oxford Clay, which projects *c.* 4km from the south-western Fen edge; some areas of gravel skirtland are present around the margins of the peninsula. The drift geology of the area comprises Glacial Till. From the later Bronze Age onwards, peat encroached on the peninsula and, in the medieval period, the fen edge on the north and south-east sides of the town would have extended to the present built-up area (Hall 1992, 41, and fig. 25). Late-forming peat deposits have been recorded in a number of recent archaeological evaluations in the core of the town, indicative of the water level rise at this time, and have been recorded by the Fenland Survey (Hall, 1992). Ramsey lies at a height of *c.* 5m AOD. The land rises gently towards the south-west, reaching 10m AOD and falls away slightly towards the fen to the north and east. The soils of the area are of the Evesham 3 association and typically consist of slow permeable calcareous clayey soils which traditionally support the cultivation of winter cereals and grassland

4.2 Archaeological and historical background

Prehistoric and Romano-British (c.700, 000 BC – 410 AD)

4.2.1 There is a dearth of prehistoric finds recovered in Ramsey which may be attributed to its fenland location. It is also possible that the area was not permanently occupied due to the heavy soils which did not promote prosperous cultivation. Despite these factors, chance finds of prehistoric artefacts have been found reasonably close to the site. Nineteenth century discoveries include a Palaeolithic handaxe produced from a garden in Victoria Road (CHER 02877; now lost) and a Neolithic polished greenstone axe from the north-west of the town (CHER 1899; also lost). Evidence of activity in the Mesolithic and Neolithic periods has been identified during work on the Fenland project (Hall, 1992). A common feature of these flint scatter sites was the slightly higher elevation of the ground placed over well drained pockets of gravel situated close to the fen edge (c. 2km east of the site; Hall 1992, 41). Eight Bronze Age barrows represent more permanent prehistoric activity in Ramsey and may be associated with the cremations and barrows discovered at both Whittlesey and Thorney, further evidence of a possible fen edge 'ritual area' (Hall 1992, 42). Although its exact provenance is unknown, a Bronze Age chisel and palstave was found in Ramsey in the 19th century (CHER 02810). In the later Bronze Age, peat growth increased in the fens. Settlements located on the Fen edge seem to have been abandoned, including those on the Ramsey peninsula, presumably in favour of 'upland' sites further south which may account for the dearth of Iron Age finds in Ramsey.

4.2.2 Like the prehistoric period, little archaeological evidence of Roman activity has been encountered. The Fenland Survey recorded no Roman sites (excluding possible Roman ground disturbance CHER 07807) despite Ramsey's location only 11km east of Ermine Street. Numerous stray finds have indicated that a possible villa site may exist to the west of the town (CHER 2888). To the north-west of the site towards the High Street, stray finds of Roman pottery (CHER 02874) and a Roman Samian bowl (CHER 01550) have been recorded. Two Roman coins have also been discovered to the south of the town, c. 500m south-east of the site.

Anglo-Saxon and Medieval (AD 411 – 1539)

4.2.3 Ramsey has produced no early or middle Saxon evidence which could perhaps be expected due to the clay terrain which was not conducive to settlement (Hall 1992, 42). The late Saxon and early medieval town developed around the foundation of the Benedictine monastery which was built in Ramsey in c. 969, part of the widespread 10th century monastic movement (CHER 02781). Unlike most pre-conquest foundations, it was not located on a Roman road but on a Fen 'island'. The original wooden monastery was completed by 991 but substantial rebuilding in stone of the abbey structures and church took place in the 12th and 13th centuries. Little is known about the late Saxon era of the abbey although an evaluation which took place at Ramsey Abbey school in 1996 yielded several late Saxon features further confirming the date of primary activity in the area (CHER 11953).

4.2.4 The settlement at Ramsey was not mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086, which may be due to its inclusion within the parish of Bury (Hall 1992, 42). Its name may have derived from the two words *Ram* and *Eie*, meaning ‘Ram island’ based upon the legend of a ram separated from his flock and trapped on the island (Dewindt 2006, 13). Another possibility is its meaning is ‘island of branches’ (*insula ramarum*) relating to the abundance of trees in Ramsey (Dewindt 2006, 13). The town was granted a weekly market and annual fair in the year 1200 and the former abbey infirmary or guest house is likely to have been transformed into the parish church of St Thomas à Beckett in 1291 (CHER 02832; Dickinson 1964, 3). Geoffrey de Mandeville took possession of the Abbey in 1140 and was most likely to have been the architect of the small motte and moat located at Bailey’s Hill (CHER 01777; SAM no. 154). Figure 4 shows a plan of the medieval town indicating the location of the abbey, gatehouse, church and market (Dewindt 2006, 25). The plan also demonstrates the proximity of the site to these medieval settlement features.

4.2.5 A considerable amount of fieldwork has taken place in the town which has yielded substantial medieval remains indicative of a well managed and developed settlement. Numerous archaeological investigations along the road named Great Whyte (to the north-west of the town) have recovered medieval evidence of activity. An evaluation at No. 30 Great Whyte (c. 300m north-east of the site; CHER CB15308) revealed a single medieval ditch containing medieval pottery and animal bone. A further investigation at numbers 96-98 yielded evidence of reclamation of land from the fen edge with 15th century pottery signifying the beginning of domestic land use in this area (CHER MCB16899). There are two medieval buildings (possible late medieval halls) along the road which were also constructed in the 15th century indicative of roadside development at this time (MCB17322, MCB17333). A large number of investigations along the eastern extent of the High Street have also produced evidence of land reclamation and subsequent domestic use. An evaluation and subsequent excavation at No. 50-52 High Street revealed that the site was marginal land until the 12th and 13th centuries. After the reclamation, evidence of five structures were found in the eastern part of the site built between the 12th to the 16th centuries (CHER MCB16483; c. 250m north-east of the site). On a plot adjacent to the site, investigations at No 46-48 High Street also revealed alluvial layers and 13th century features found alongside the a 15th century building (CHER MCB16326). There were similar finds of land reclamation and domestic use during the excavation at 42 High Street (CHER ECB1862). The evidence indicates that this part of the town called Brigstrate (within which the current site may lie) was not developed in the early medieval period but that there is a moderate to high potential of encountering 13th century remains above alluvial layers.

Post-medieval (AD 1540 – 1900)

4.2.6 A significant event in any monastic town was the break with Catholicism and subsequent Dissolution of the monasteries in the year 1539. After the Dissolution, Ramsey Abbey with its substantial land ownership was granted to the Cromwell family who sold the stone of the buildings, which was used to build local houses and churches. The site served as a quarry until the 17th century, when Ramsey Abbey House was built as a summer house (CHER 02781b; Dickinson 1964, 10). The post-medieval development of the town remains obscure. Fires noted in 1636 and 1731 may account for the lack of older buildings in Ramsey. However, a number of 17th

and 18th century structures survive, fronting the Great Whyte (CHER DCB3206, DCB2566) and the south side of the High Street (CHER DCB4018, DCB2546). Fieldwork in the area has produced substantial remains at Ramsey garden centre (CHER 15006) and in the High Street (CHER MCB16483, MCB16326, ECB1862) indicating previously reclaimed land that continued to be in use throughout the post-medieval period. Closer to the site, the former station of the Great Eastern Joint Railways was constructed in this period (CHER 03696). The track from Ramsey to Somersham opened in the mid 1800's and closed to the public in the 1930's when the new railway to the north-west of the town was opened. The old station continued in use up until the 1950's for goods transportation but was no longer in use by the 1960's.

4.3 Cartographic Evidence

A Plan of the Parish of Ramsey in the County of Huntingdon 1873 (Figure 5)

4.3.1 The parish map of Ramsey depicted the site as being undeveloped in this period lying within an irregular plot of land (no. 87) bounded by roads with Old Station Road to the south aligned roughly east to west. To the north of Plot 87, a small amount of development (presumably residential) had taken place. The remainder of the land was likely to have been agricultural in character. The associated apportionment was not available which may have recorded whether it was arable or pasture land.

1st Edition Ordnance Survey map 1887 (Figure 6) and 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey map 1901 (Figure 7)

4.3.2 By 1887, the landscape surrounding the site had changed considerably. Ramsey railway station and the associated railway line were shown to the south-west of the site. The land within the site still remained undeveloped with a line of trees shown at the southern extent of the site. The 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey map showed no change to the site but much further development on the surrounding land, presumably outbuildings and sheds for the use of the railway.

Ordnance Survey map 1925 (Figure 8)

4.3.3 No further changes were noted to the site by 1925. After the 1930's, the railway station closed and a new station was built to the north west of the town.

5 METHODOLOGY (Trial trenching)

5.1 Three trial trenches were excavated on site in locations approved by CAPCA (Fig. 2). The trench layout represented a standard 5% sample of the site. Trench 3 had to be stepped due to its depth and health and safety guidelines. Full measurements of the trenches are tabulated below.

Trench	Length	Width	Orientation
1	13 m	1.60 m	NW-SE
2	17m	2.20 m	NW-SE
3	5 m	1.60 m	NE-SW

5.2 The trenches were mechanically excavated using a 360° tracked excavator and a mini excavator both fitted with a smooth bladed ditching bucket. Topsoil and undifferentiated overburden were removed under archaeological supervision. Exposed surfaces were then cleaned and examined to ascertain the presence of any archaeological features. Deposits were recorded using pro forma recording sheets, drawn to scale and photographed as appropriate. Excavated spoil was searched for finds and the trenches were scanned with a metal detector.

6 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS

Individual trench descriptions are presented below:

6.1 Trench 1 (Fig. 8)

6.1.1 Trench 1 was located to the north east of Trench 2 and on the eastern boundary of the site, (DP 1).

<i>Sample Section: North-west end, south-west facing</i>		
<i>0.00m = 6.82m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.25m	L1005	Stone ballast. Light yellow/orange, loose sandstone ballast.
0.25 – 0.49m	L1006	Levelling layer. Dark brown/grey compact redeposited clay with frequent CBM inclusions.
0.49 – 0.59m	L1007	Subsoil. Light brown/grey firm clay with occasional CBM
0.59 – 0.68m	L1008	Lens. Light brown/orange, clay with high mineral content.
0.68m +	L1009	Natural. Light yellow/brown boulder clay with high gravel content.

<i>Sample Section: South-east end, south west facing (DP 5)</i>		
<i>0.00m = 6.88m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.26m	L1005	Stone ballast. As above.
0.26 – 0.50m	L1006	Levelling layer. As above.
0.50 – 0.84m	L1007	Subsoil. As above.
0.84 – 0.92m	L1008	Lens. As above.
0.92m +	L1009	Natural. As above.

Description: No archaeological features were present.

6.2 Trench 2 (Fig. 9)

6.2.1 Trench 2 was located to the south-west of Trench 1 and was on the western boundary of the site (DP 2).

<i>Sample Section: North-west end, south –west facing (DP 6)</i>		
<i>0.00m = 7.21m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.32m	L1005	Stone ballast. As above.
0.32 – 0.36m	L1006	Levelling layer. As above.
0.36 – 0.74m	L1012	Subsoil. Light brown/orange, silty clay of firm consistency.
0.74+	L1009	Natural. As above.

<i>Sample Section: South-east end, south- west facing</i>		
<i>0.00m = 7.25m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.34m	L1005	Stone ballast. As above.
0.34 – 0.40m	L1006	Levelling layer. As above.
0.40 – 0.72	L1011	Made ground. Dark grey/blue compacted clay with frequent CBM inclusions.
0.72m +	L1009	Natural. As above

Description: A modern construction cut, (F1013) was present in the east of the trench, and at the western end, cutting the natural gravel, was a small N/S aligned ditch (F1020). A second ditch (F1018) and its recut (F1016) was observed cutting the clay subsoil (L1012) that sealed F1020. Gully F1023 was recorded aligned N/S across the centre of the trench. A number of services were found in this trench. Two electric cables were located in the south eastern end of the trench, one of which was live. Just to the south of these was a water pipe. Another electric cable was located near the north western end of the trench and was also live.

6.2.2 F1013 (Fig. 10) was a modern construction cut, (4.00m long x 0.66m + wide x 0.26m deep) located towards the eastern end of the trench and probably relating to the railway yards present at the site before the current buildings. It was orientated north-west to south-east and extended into the eastern baulk of Trench 2. The feature was excavated in two segments (A + B) tabulated below. F1013 displayed gradually sloping sides and a concave base. The cut was overlain by made ground layer, L1011. Despite the presence of a sherd of medieval pottery in Segment A, a large piece of barbed wire was found in the section of Segment B confirming this as a modern feature.

Segment	Context	Description	Date/Finds
A	L1014	Light grey/blue silty clay of firm consistency.	Pottery (7g) (Mid 12 th – 13 th century) CBM (50g) Fe nail (18g)
B	L1014	Light grey/blue silty clay of firm consistency.	Barbed wire in section

Table 1: Excavated Segments of F1013

6.2.3 Natural gravel (L1024) was located at the western end of the trench. Cutting this was a small ditch (F1020) which was aligned north to south across the trench. It

was on average 1.20m wide and 0.35m deep with gently sloping sides and a narrow base. It contained a fill of mid-grey silty clay with frequent gravel (L1021). A square-headed iron nail was recovered from the fill.

6.2.4 Ditch (F1020) was sealed by clay subsoil (L1012). Cut into this, also at the western end of the trench, was a ditch (F1018), not shown on plan, aligned north to south. This was approximately 2m wide (although its eastern edge had been removed by a re-cut (F1016)) and 0.60m deep. It had a U-shaped profile and was filled with mid-brown silty clay (L1019). There was a re-cut (F1016) of this ditch along its eastern edge. This re-cut was 1.15m wide and 0.35m deep and was filled with dull greyish blue clay (L1017). Sealing this was a levelling layer (L1006).

6.2.5 Gully (F1023) was aligned north to south across the centre of the trench. It was on average 0.80m wide and 0.20m deep and filled with dark brown silty clay (L1024) that was sealed by subsoil (L1012).

6.3 Trench 3 (Fig. 9)

6.3.1 Trench 3 was located to the north-west of Trenches 1 and 2 close to the northern boundary of the site (DP 3).

<i>Sample Section: South-west end, south-east facing (DP 7)</i>		
<i>0.00m = 7.28m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.24m	L1000	Topsoil. Dark brown/grey, humic garden soil.
0.24 – 0.53m	L1001	Made ground. Light yellow/brown clay highly compacted with frequent CBM.
0.53 – 0.79m	L1002	Subsoil. Dark brown/grey clayey silt of firm consistency with moderate CBM.
0.79 – 1.21m	L1003	Silting. Light brown/orange silt.
1.21m +	L1022	Natural. Silty clay with frequent gravel.

<i>Sample Section: North-east end, south-east facing</i>		
<i>0.00m = 7.14m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.12m	L1000	Topsoil. As above.
0.12 – 0.55m	L1001	Made ground. As above.
0.55 – 0.66m	L1002	Subsoil. As above.
0.66 – 1.27m	L1003	Silting. As above.
1.27m +	L1022	Natural. As above.

Description: No archaeological features were present. Two electric cables ran through this trench at the south western end. The natural ground was located by a Test Pit.

6.3.2 Test Pit F1010 was a straight-sided test pit cut in the base of Trench 3 to locate the natural ground after safely stepping the trench. The test pit was, 2.60m long x 0.88m wide x 0.25m deep.

7 CONFIDENCE RATING

7.1 The presence of multiple live services in Trench 2 meant that under health and safety guidelines the areas immediately around these services could not be excavated. In the other trenches it is not felt that any factors inhibited the identification of archaeological features or finds.

8 DEPOSIT MODEL

8.1 The deposit model differed across the site. The natural boulder clay (L1009) extended across the site at an average depth of 0.70m but this was not the case in Trench 3 where it was significantly deeper due to the presence of a geological feature. The boulder clay here was at a depth of 2.50m which was located by a geotechnical pit to the east of Trench 3. The geological feature, to which the edges were not located, contained a significant amount of silting which is the natural silty clay that was exposed in the base of Trench 3 (L1022).

8.2 Overlying the natural were subsoils (L1002, L1012 and L1007), which varied in colour from light brown/yellow to a darker brown/grey. The consistency across the site stayed uniformly firm and the subsoil was generally encountered at approximately 0.40m in depth.

8.3 The dark brown/grey topsoil (L1000) was only present in Trench 3 and at its deepest was 0.24m deep. The rest of the site was made up of a levelling layer (L1006), found at approximately 0.20m in depth which was in turn overlain by ballast (L1005) for the final yard surface to rest upon, (this surface was not monitored at time of excavation).

9 DISCUSSION

9.1 Summary of the archaeology

9.1.1 The desk based assessment showed that there was potential for multi-period remains at the site at 3 & 5 Old station road, Ramsey. The land close to the site was reclaimed in the medieval period and there was considerable potential for remains from the 12th to 13th century to tie in with the town's urban expansion.

9.1.2 Natural gravel (L1022) was encountered in the base of the test pit in Trench 3 and at the eastern and western ends of Trench 2. Over the gravel in these trenches was a silty subsoil or B-soil horizon, (L1003) in Trench 3 and (L1012) in Trench 2. Boulder clay (L1009) was revealed in the base of Trench 1.

9.1.3 Trench 2 contained small boundary ditches or gullies. The earliest of these was Ditch F1020 and Gully F1023. No datable artefacts were recovered from either of these although Ditch F1020 did contain an iron square-headed nail. When these have silted, they were sealed by the accumulation of subsoil (L1012). Later, over the

approximate line of Ditch (F1020) a further ditch (F1018) was cut and when this was filled it had been re-cut (F1016).

9.1.4 Trench 2 also contained F1013, a construction cut, which despite containing a residual sherd of medieval pottery was modern in date and was probably associated with the railway yards that were adjacent to the site from the later part of the 19th century.

9.2 Interpretation of the site: archaeology and history

9.2.1 The desk-based assessment of the site noted evidence for numerous periods in the Ramsey area, specifically medieval. It was thought possible that evidence of similar activity would be encountered during the evaluation.

9.2.2 Medieval activity at the site was limited to a few residual pottery sherds that were found in various levelling layers and a modern construction cut across the excavation area. This does indicate activity from this period but certainly not in the quantity that was expected.

9.2.3 The small boundary ditches or gullies recorded in Trench 2 remain undated.

9.3 Interpretation of the site: geology and topography

9.3.1 The desk based assessment identified that the town of Ramsey lies on a peninsular of boulder clay till which projects from the fen edge. This was precisely the natural ground that was encountered at the site although in one area of the site it was evident that the natural clay had been disturbed by a geological feature that had created a depression in the boulder clay and subsequently silted up. No fen deposits were encountered at the site but the water table in trench 1 was discovered at 0.68m as opposed to Trenches 2 and 3 where the water table was not encountered at all.

9.4 Finds and environmental evidence

9.4.1 The residual medieval pottery recovered during the evaluation indicates that medieval activity is likely to have occurred in the vicinity of the site but any archaeological features that may have existed are likely to have been truncated by later activity. Overall the finds assemblage would appear to be of a modern date and is most likely to relate to the use of the site as sidings and land associated with the nearby railway station from the 19th century onwards.

DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE

Archive records, with an inventory, will be deposited with any donated finds from the site at Cambridge County Archaeological Store (CCAS). The archive will be quantified, ordered, indexed, cross-referenced and checked for internal consistency. In addition to the overall site summary, it will be necessary to produce a summary of the artefactual and ecofactual data.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions Limited would like to thank Campbell Rees Associate Architects and Designers for commissioning this evaluation.

AS also gratefully acknowledges the assistance of Sally Thompson and Sarah Poppy at the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record and of staff at the Cambridgeshire Archives.

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APPENDIX 1 HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD DATA

The following sites are those that lie within a *c.* 750m radius of the assessment site. The table has been compiled from data held by the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (CHER). The locations of the sites are shown in Fig. 3. Their significance, where relevant, is discussed in Section 4.2.

HER No.	NGR TL	Description
<i>Prehistoric (c. 700,000 BC – AD 43)</i>		
02810	28 85	A Bronze Age palstave fund in Ramsey in the possession of Mr William Shelton.
02877	2898 8503	A Palaeolithic handaxe found at the Vicarage in Ramsey.
<i>Roman (AD 43- 410)</i>		
01550	2858 8502	A decorated Samian bowl was found during digging for the foundation of an infant's school.
02874	2920 8511	Roman pottery found in Ramsey.
02882	289 845	Two Roman coins found in this field.
07807	285 850	Ground disturbance noted by D. Hal in the Fenland Survey.
<i>Anglo-Saxon and Medieval (AD 410– 1550)</i>		
11953	2922 8515	An evaluation took place at Ramsey Abbey school in 1996 which produced Late Saxon and medieval remains including a pit, ditch with a medieval wall and foundations.
01777	292 848	Booth's Hill. A small motte within a moat probably built by Geoffrey de Mandeville for his own use when he took possession of the Abbey and quartered his soldiers there. It was later adapted into an ice-house. It is SAM no. 154
02781	2918 8503	The Benedictine Abbey of Ramsey was founded in <i>c.</i> 969 AD. The medieval structure does not survive except a rectangular building of mid 13 th century incorporated into the Abbey House and a portion of the gatehouse. Abbey was dissolved in 1539 and most of the buildings were pulled down. Abbey House is now a grammar school. The remains are protected by a SAM order.
02782	29025 85069	Ramsey Abbey gatehouse, standing to the north west of the house and is partly ruined - a small portion of the 15 th century Gatehouse survives. It is a Grade I listed building.
02832	29074 85149	The Church of Thomas a Becket was formerly an aisled structure with an end chapel – possibly the abbey infirmary built in the 12 th century. It became the parish church in the 13 th century. It is a grade I listed building.
02882	289 845	Six medieval coins found in this field.

07829	28 85	An Iron key and oval bowl with worked flint found at the site of St Bennett's Cross in Ramsey.
12329	2939 8517	Ramsey Abbey park – a 13 th century park associated with the abbey.
CB15006	28740 85276	An evaluation at Ramsey Garden Centre revealed medieval deposits possibly representing attempts at land reclamation. Finds included shell, animal bone and tile.
CB15308	2867 8517	An evaluation at 30 Great Whyte revealed a medieval ditch containing pottery and animal bone.
CB15414	28912 85206	An evaluation at Newton Green revealed one medieval pit of 12 th -14 th century date. The presence of alluvial clays and peat indicate that the site was mostly wet during the medieval period.
MCB16326	28699 85055	An evaluation was carried out demonstrating that land at 46-48 High Street was on marginal land which was reclaimed during the medieval period. Several features dated to the 13 th century and there were finds of a building of 15 th century date. See MCB16326 in post-medieval for further remains.
MCB16483	28710 85070	An evaluation and subsequent excavation at 50-52 High Street & Mews Close revealed that this part of Ramsey was not developed until the 12 th -13 th century, prior to which it was prone to flooding. By the late 12 th -13 th and 15 th /16 th centuries five buildings had been constructed in the eastern part of the site. See MCB16483 post-medieval for further remains.
MCB16664	2857 8541	The remains of a medieval timber building (c. 1460) were recorded before its demolition in 1980 on the plot of 88-92 Great Whyte.
MCB16899	2854 8543	An evaluation at 96-98 Great Whyte revealed evidence of medieval reclamation on the edge of the Fenland. Ceramic evidence suggests it was reclaimed in the 15 th century with domestic activity progressing on the site. Later activity was also discovered.
MCB17092	29114 85132	The graveyard of the Church of St Thomas which also contains a medieval cross (grade II listed) and a 13 th century grave slab reused as a stile. It is now closed and part of Ramsey Abbey's SAM.
MCB17332	28683 858314	63 Great Whyte is an open hall house of 14 th century date. It is a grade II listed building.
MCB17333	28604 85447	113 Great Whyte is an open hall house of 14 th century date. It is a grade II listed building.
MCB17337	28857 85072	79/81 High Street is a hall house built in the 15 th century. It is a grade II listed building.
MCB17875	29125 85205	Late medieval feature discovered in the Abbey Gardens which may be a ditch or large pit. 15 th -16 th century material was found.

ECB2221	2916 8503	Geophysical survey of Ramsey Abbey took place in 1999 to try to understand the layout of the Abbey.
ECB1862	28679 85071	Following an evaluation at 42 High Street, excavation confirmed that site was on marginal and that was not likely to have been reclaimed until the medieval period. A series of layers containing refuse, shell and building stone were dated to the 12 th to 13 th centuries. See ECB1862 post-medieval for further remains.
<i>Post-medieval and modern (AD 1550 – present)</i>		
02781b	29182 85043	The Abbey was dissolved in 1539 and many of the buildings were demolished apart from Abbey House which was converted into a house and later a grammar school. It is a listed building with numerous listed features surrounding including the fountain and garden terrace wall.
03696	3244 8156	Great Eastern Joint Railways from Ramsey to Somersham. Track of the old Railway opened in 1863 and closed in 1930.
CB14974	2868 8520	Ramsey Great Whyte Baptist Church founded in 1894.
CB14975	2874 8501	Salem Baptist Church built in 1857. It is a listed building.
CB14976	2863 8503	Methodist Baptist Church on Ramsey High Street built in 1898-9.
CB15006	28740 85276	An evaluation at Ramsey Garden Centre revealed post-medieval deposits possibly representing attempts at land reclamation. Finds included shell, animal bone and tile.
CB15153	26727 83957	World War One and Two airfield which is now agricultural.
CB15171	29363 85511	Military depot and anti-aircraft site.
CB15187	29671 85893	GHQ line and pillbox monuments.
MCB16326	28699 85055	An evaluation and subsequent excavation was carried out demonstrating that land at 46-48 High Street was on marginal land which was reclaimed during the medieval period. Several features dated to the post-medieval period including a structure which went out of use by the 18 th century. See MCB16326 in medieval for further remains.
MCB16456	2910 8519	A spigot mortar base at Church Green.
MCB16483	28710 85070	An evaluation and subsequent excavation at 50-52 High Street & Mews Close revealed that this part of Ramsey was not developed until the 12 th -13 th century, prior to which it was prone to flooding. Post-medieval occupation continued on the site with the construction of a barn and further buildings including a public house in the 19 th century. See MCB16483 medieval for further remains.

MCB17478	28755 85175	An evaluation at The Grand revealed a possibly late medieval and post-medieval structural remains fronting onto the Great Whyte.
ECB734	29179 85043	A stone wall possibly associated with a pre 19 th century undercroft was found during archaeological recording in Ramsey Abbey.
ECB1937	28792 85460	An evaluation at 48 Newtown Road, concluded that the site was not developed until the late 20 th century.
ECB1862	28679 85071	Following an evaluation at 42 High Street, excavation confirmed that site was on marginal and that was not likely to have been reclaimed until the medieval period. A barn was present on the site in the early 19 th century and reused building stone was found amongst the demolition rubble of the barn. See ECB1862 medieval for further remains.
ECB2036	2921 8514	A single test pit was excavated in advance of the construction of an extension to the dining hall. No archaeological remains were found but post-medieval demolition debris was encountered.
<i>Undated</i>		
02888	28 85	Possible roman pavement and coins found although too uncertain to positively date.
08418	2877 8522	Cobbled surface (undated) found during digging a trench in the garden of 4 New Road.
ECB1052	287 854	Prior to further development, a watching brief was carried out at Marriot's Yard although no archaeological features or finds were found.

APPENDIX 2 CARTOGRAPHIC SOURCES

Date	Map	Scale	Location
1873	Plan of the Parish of Ramsey in the County of Huntingdon (Acc. 4238)	-	HRO
1887	1 st Edition Ordnance Survey map (X15 & X.16)	1:25000	HRO
1901	2 nd Edition Ordnance Survey map (X15 & X.16)	1:25000	HRO
1925	Ordnance Survey map (X15 & X.16)	1:25000	HRO

**APPENDIX 3
CONCORDANCE OF FINDS**

Feature	Context	Trench	Segment	Description	Spot Date	Pottery	CBM (g)	Other
1002		3		Subsoil	19th - 20th	(3), 8g	48	
1003		3		Subsoil	19th - 20th 11th - 12th	(2), 52g (2), 1g	44	Glass Bottle Base (1), 202g
1006		1		Layer			28	Fe Hinge (1), 104g Charcoal (2), 12g
1007		1		Subsoil			1	Fe Nails (2), 14g
1008		1		Layer	Modern	(2), 20g	168	
1013	1014	2	A	Pit Fill	Late 12th - 13th/14th	(1), 7g	50	Fe Nail (1), 18g
1020	1021	2		Ditch Fill				Fe Nail (1), 1g

APPENDIX 4

SPECIALISTS REPORTS

The Pottery

Peter Thompson

The evaluation recovered 10 sherds weighing 95g. Five sherds were small and highly abraded Early Medieval wares, and the remainder early modern to modern English porcelain, factory made refined white earthenwares, and post-medieval red earthenware. These are all quantified on Excel database.

Four tiny residual sherds weighing 11g came from the top soil. These had black cores and oxidised surfaces and contained quartz sand and small round white limestone/calcareous inclusions some of it burnt out. They are probably Early Medieval coarse wares either made locally or relating to the Ely ware industry. One remaining sherd from Construction Cut F1013 (L1014) was an Ely ware, coming from the angle of a body and base, and is potentially the only medieval sherd that is not residual

The Ceramic Building Materials

Andrew Peachey

Excavations recovered eight fragments (167g) of CBM in a highly abraded condition.

The six fragments (138g) recovered from Pit F1013 (L1014), Layer L1008 and Subsoil L1003 are all probably of Romano-British date, however do not exhibit any diagnostic features and are probably residual. These fragments are all 16mm thick and probably formed part of tegula roof tile. They are present in two fabrics, both tempered with varying quantities of quartz and grog.

The remaining two fragments (29g) recovered from Layer L1006 and Subsoil L1007 comprise very small fragments of modern brick.

PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



DP 1: Trial Trench 1. View south-east.



DP 2: Trial Trench 2. View north-west.



DP 3: Trial trench 3. Test pit F1010 to the centre left. View south-west.



DP 4: Construction cut F1013 A and F1013 B. View North-west.



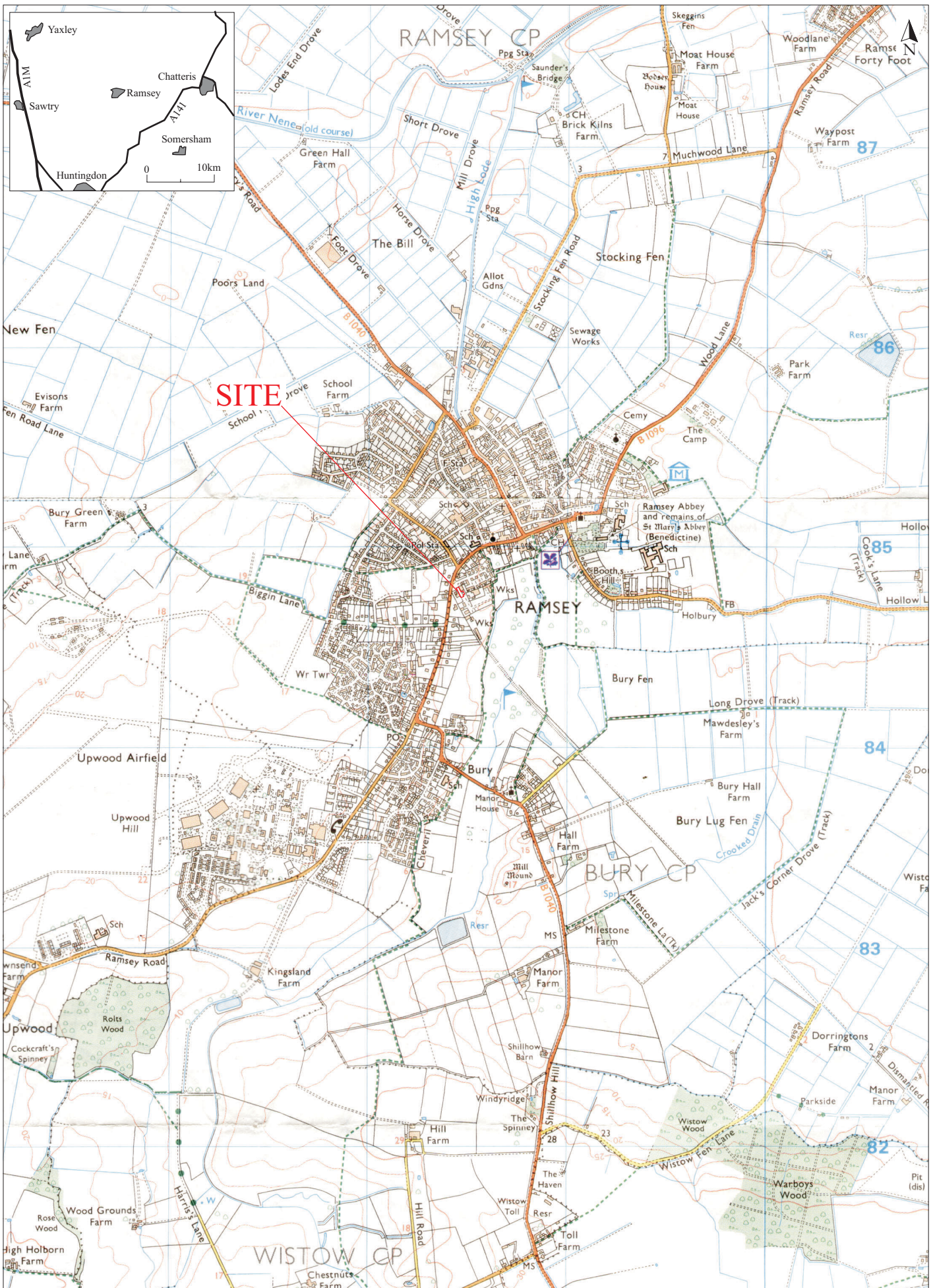
DP 5: Trial trench 1 section. View south-east.



DP 6: Trial trench 2 section. View south-east

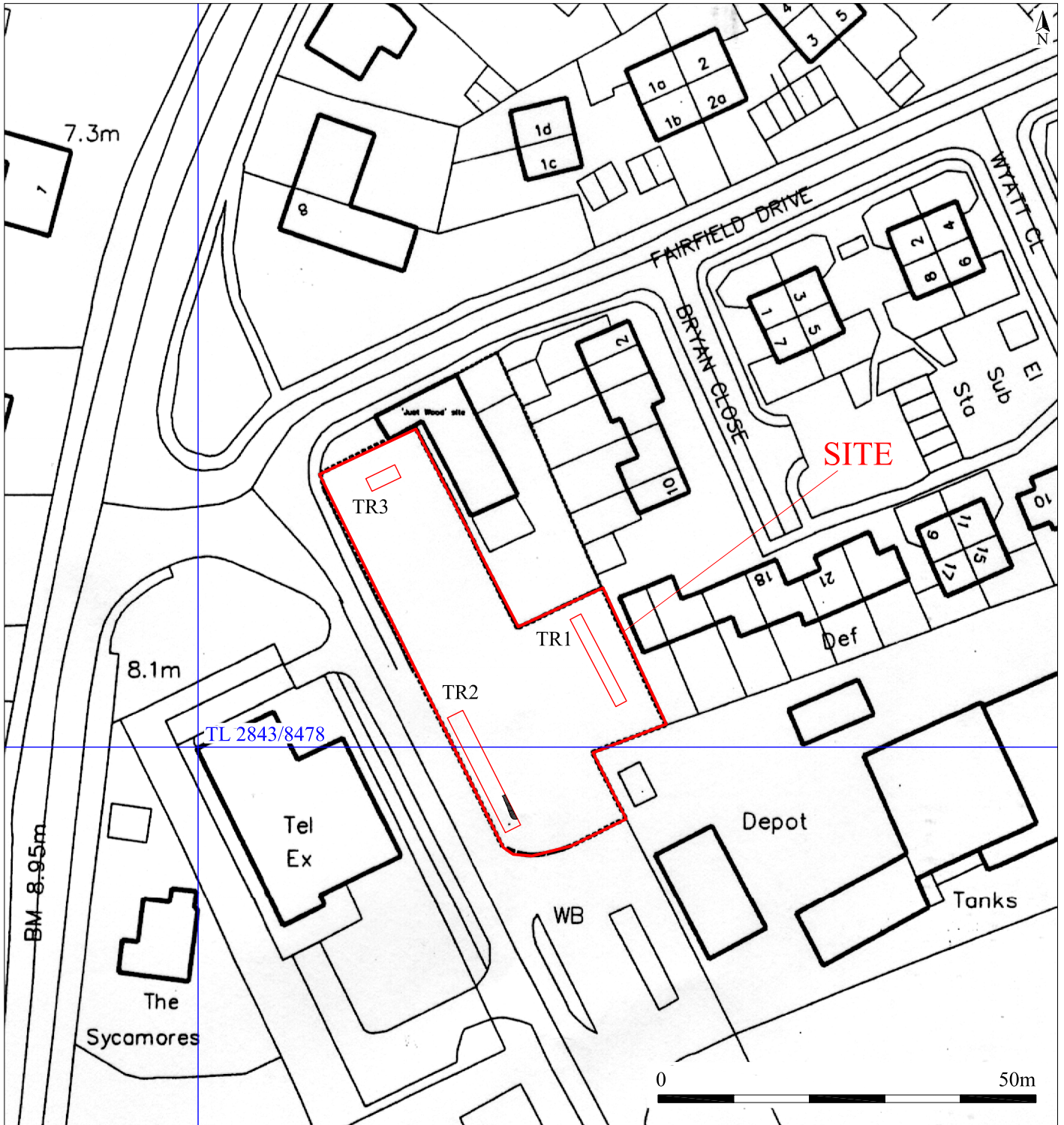


DP 7: Trial trench 3 section. View north-west

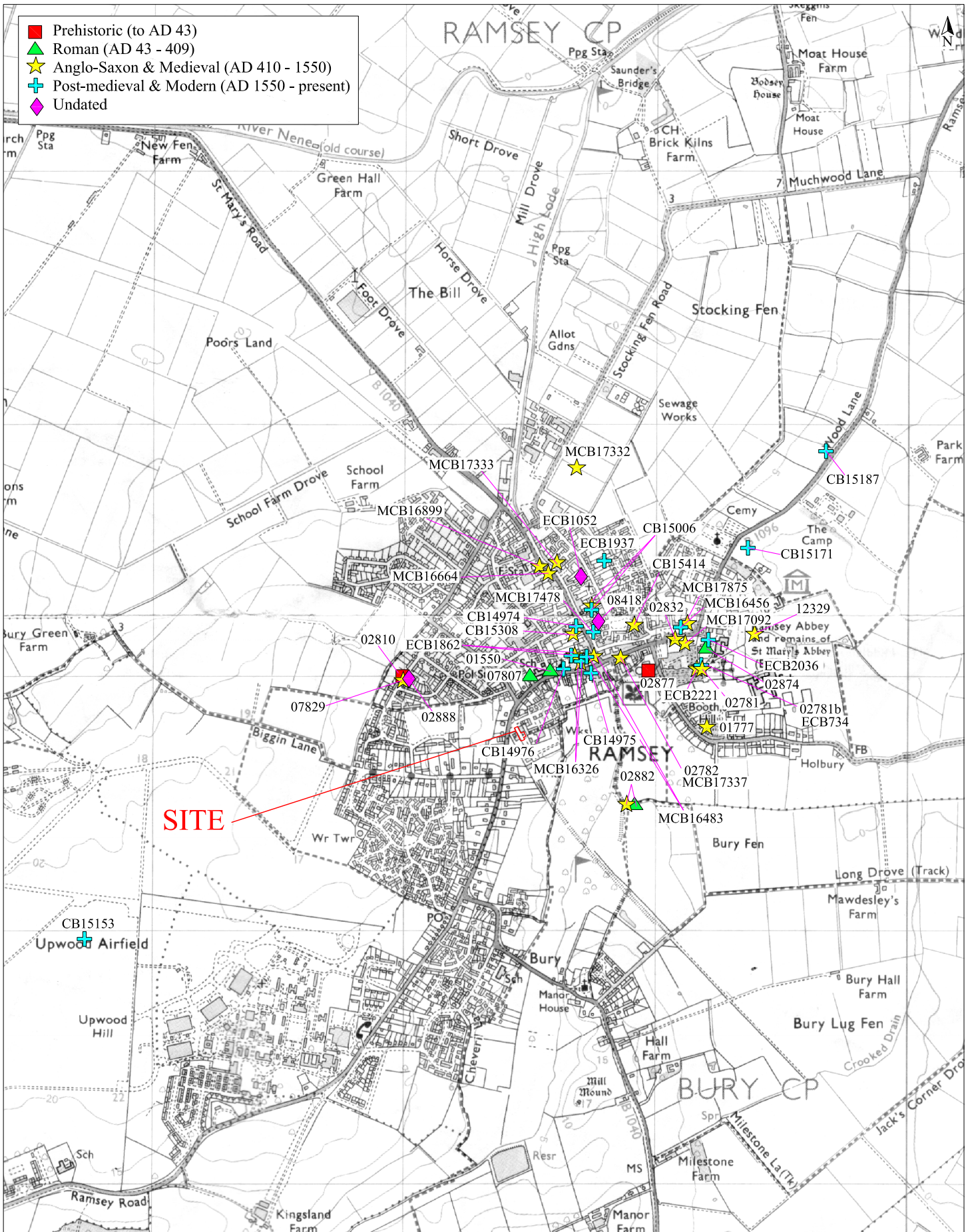


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Fig. 1 Site location plan
 Scale 1:25,000 at A4



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Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan
 Scale 1:750 at A4



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Fig. 3 HER Data
 Scale 1:20,000 at A4



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Fig. 4 Map of Medieval Ramsey (after Dewindt 2006)

Not to scale



Approximate
site location

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**Fig. 5 Plan of the parish of Ramsey
in the county of Huntingdon, 1873**

Not to scale



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Fig. 6 1st edition OS map, 1887
 Not to scale: reproduced from the 25" to 1 mile map



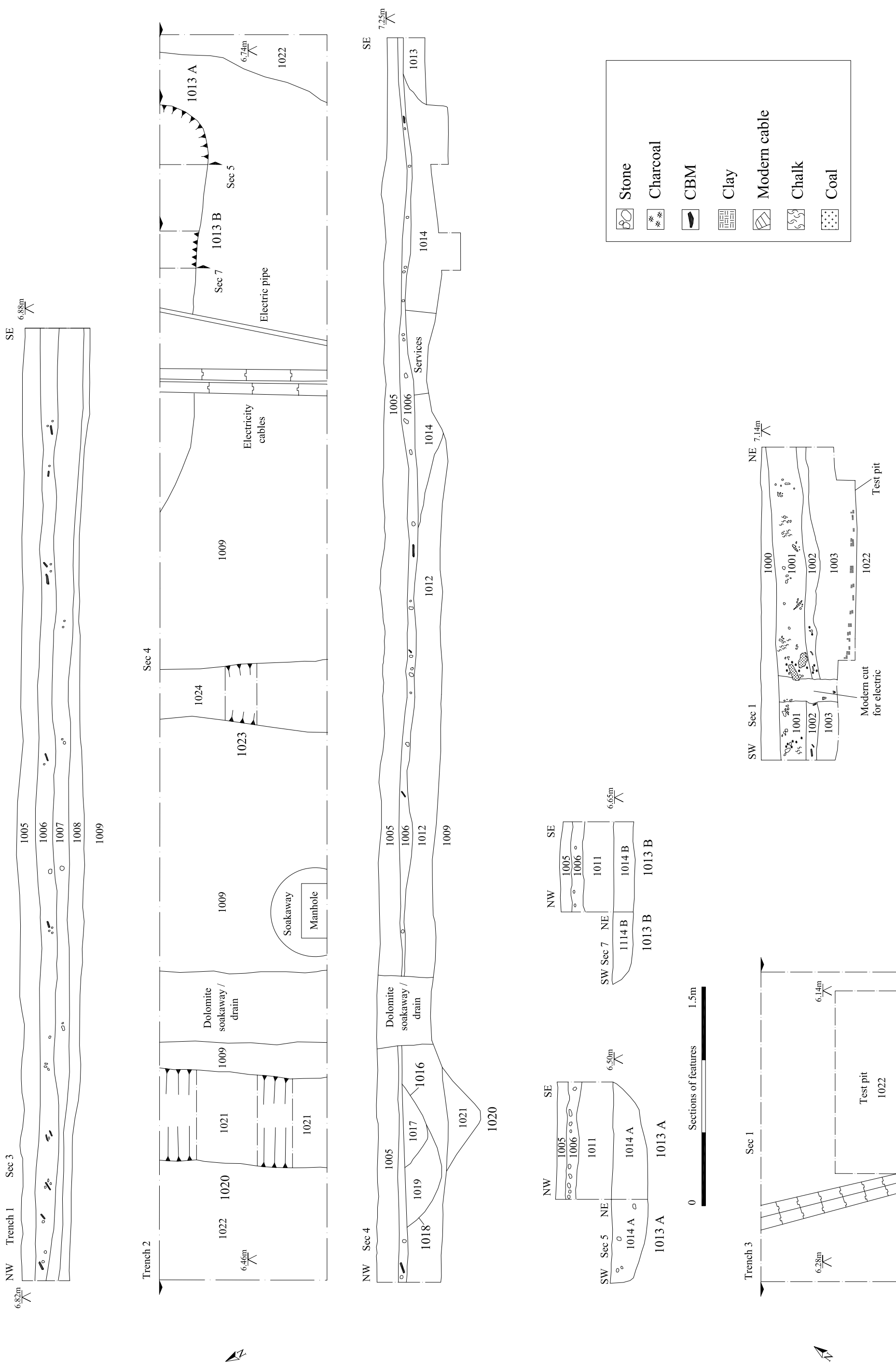
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Fig. 7 2nd edition OS map, 1901
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<p><i>Archaeological Solutions Ltd</i></p> <p>Fig. 8 OS map, 1926</p> <p>Not to scale: reproduced from the 25" to 1mile map</p>
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Fig. 9 Trench plans and sections
 Scale 1:25 and 1:50 at A3

0 5m