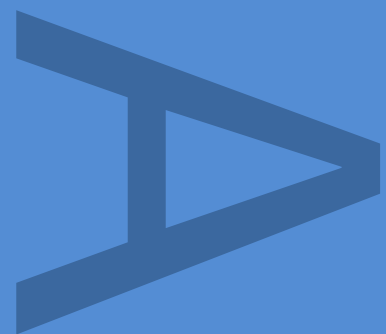


LAND AT 38 ELM STREET AND  
SILVER STREET,  
PETERBOROUGH,  
CAMBRIDGESHIRE

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL  
TRENCH EVALUATION

JUNE 2014



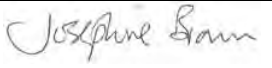
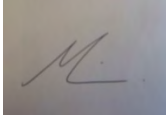
PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY  
R11741

# LAND AT 38 ELM STREET AND SILVER STREET, PETERBOROUGH, CAMBS

## AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

### Quality Control

Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd	
Project Number	K3536
Report Number	R11741

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## **Land at 38 Elm Street and Silver Street, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire:**

### **An Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation**

**Local Planning Authority:** Peterborough District Council

**Planning Reference:** 11/00073/FUL

**Central National Grid Reference:** TL 1895 9737

**Site Code:** PEST14

**Report No.** R11741

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Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd

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**June 2014**

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## **ABSTRACT**

*This report describes the results of a three trench archaeological evaluation, totaling thirty-five meters carried out by Pre-Construct Archaeology on land at 38 Elm Street and Silver Street, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL1895 9737) on the 29<sup>th</sup> May 2014. The archaeological work was commissioned by Bill Singh of Silverline Developments in response to a planning condition attached to residential development. The aim of the work was to characterise the archaeological potential of the site.*

*The evaluation identified no archaeological remains.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 An archaeological trial trench evaluation was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd (PCA) on land at 38 Elm Street and Silver Street, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE2 9BL (centred on Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference (NGR) TL1895 9737) on the 29<sup>th</sup> May 2014 (Figure 1, Plate 1).
- 1.2 The archaeological work was commissioned by Bill Singh of Silverline Developments in response to an archaeological planning condition attached to the construction of ten domestic dwellings in the form of single block of flats facing south onto Silver Street and with parking access to the north off Elm Street (Planning Reference 11/00073/FUL).
- 1.3 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by Mark Hinman of PCA (Hinman 2014) in response to written instructions from Rebecca Casa-Hatton of Peterborough City Council Planning Services (PCCPS).
- 1.4 The aim of the evaluation was to determine the location, date, extent, character, condition and quality of any archaeological remains on the site, to assess the significance of any such remains in a local, regional, or national context, as appropriate, and to assess the potential impact of the development proposals on the site's archaeology.
- 1.5 Two trial trenches of 20m and 15m length respectively were excavated and recorded on the 29<sup>th</sup> of May 2014, totalling 35m. No archaeological features or deposits were revealed.
- 1.6 This report describes the results of the archaeological monitoring and excavation. The project archive will be deposited with Peterborough Museum and Art Gallery's facilities.

## **2 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY**

### **2.1 Geology**

- 2.1.1 The underlying geological bedrock of the proposed development area is mudstone of the Oxford formation, formed 156-165 million years ago.
- 2.1.2 The superficial geological deposits underlying the proposed development area are river terrace deposits of sand and gravel (British Geological Survey 2014).
- 2.1.3 The identified geological horizon (6) of the site was a mixed orange brown and light yellow sandy gravel.

### **2.2 Topography**

- 2.2.1 The centre of the proposed development area is located at 10.28m Ordnance Datum (OD).
- 2.2.2 The site is located in the south-central area of Peterborough, to the south of Peterborough town centre. It is bounded by Elm Street to the north and Silver Street to the south, with the residential properties to the east and west. It is currently a derelict area, comprising the foundation remnants of a previously extant residential property with attached garden to the north and the foundation remnants of a block of garages to the south (Plate 1). It has a total area of 950m<sup>2</sup>.
- 2.2.3 The general character of the area is residential with some small pockets of commercial activity along Elm Street and Silver Street.

### 3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The following archaeological and historical background has been summarised from the desk-based assessment (Garwood 2014).
- 3.2 In a wider context the fenland around Peterborough is renowned for pre-historic settlement and activities, particularly within the nationally important and archaeologically rich landscape of the Flag Fen basin to east of the proposed development area (PDA), where extensive Bronze Age agriculture, funerary and religious activities have been recorded. The site lies within and along the southern slopes of the Nene river valley. This area, due to its location on free draining river terrace deposits and fertile soils of the lower valley provided favourable conditions for arable farming and settlement during the later prehistoric periods. In the late Iron Age the area was divided into distinct tribal regions or kingdoms. Peterborough lay on the borders of the areas governed by the Catuvellauni to the south, the Corieltauvi to the north and west and the Iceni to the east. Evidence suggests they formed part of a prosperous and relatively peaceful agricultural landscape.
- 3.3 Evidence for early pre-historic activity is recorded just within the general area. Antiquarian chance finds of Palaeolithic flint artefacts comprising a large assemblage of fifty early or middle Acheulian hand-axes, together with a few Levallois flakes (HER 1404) have been recorded and a smaller assemblage of Mesolithic worked flints (HER 1404a) were recovered from an area to the west of site (HER 1645 site 1 and HER 1795 site 2). Evidence of Neolithic activity, in the form of pits and gullies containing Peterborough Ware pottery and associated worked flint, were unearthed during an evaluation and subsequent excavation at The Walnuts, Oundle Road, Woodston, c. 450m to the northwest of the PDA (HER 51924 site 3 and HER 51221 site 4).
- 3.4 In the Roman period, a fortified garrison town was established in the mid-1st century AD at Water Newton (*Durobrivae*), c. 6 km to the west of the site at a point where Roman Ermine Street crosses the River Nene. *Durobrivae* was the centre of the largest industrial complex known in Roman Britain. It began

as a small five-acre fort, built shortly after AD 44 a town gradually developed serving the needs of the fort and of travellers along Ermine Street. This was enclosed by ramparts in the late 2nd century. There was also a large mid-1st century (AD 44–48) Roman fort at Longthorpe, designed to house half a legion, or about 3,000 soldiers.

- 3.5 The evidence for Roman activity within the immediate area of the PDA is fragmentary. The bulk of the evidence comes from antiquarian finds, including objects and coins found to the southwest along Orton Avenue in 1890 (HER 1402 site 5), a poorly located face-urn (HER 1564 site 6) and sherds of Roman, (mostly Nene Valley) pottery. These finds were unearthed during sewer works in Elm Street, Park Street and Queen's Walk in 1886 (HER 1631 site 7). An archaeological evaluation and excavation at 'The Walnuts', revealed multi-period archaeological features and a small amount of residual Roman pottery and roofing tile within later contexts (HER 51925 site 8). This evidence may tentatively suggest some settlement and even structural activity in the immediacy of the site. However the argument for a nearby Roman cemetery is perhaps more convincing given discoveries of Roman burials just outside the search area to the north and west of the PDA (HER 1716b, HER 1405 and HER 10086) and a probable Roman inhumation within a lead coffin found during gravel extraction works on land to the rear of Park Street, just north of the PDA (HER 50656 site 9).
- 3.6 The archaeological evidence for Anglo-Saxon settlement in the area of the PDA is considerable. An extensive Anglo-Saxon burial ground including cremation and inhumation burial dating from 550 AD was uncovered, mostly during gravel-digging, between 1864 and 1920, c. 300m to the north-west of the PDA (HER 1666 site10) and along the boundary between Woodston and Fletton parishes. Further gravel digging in 1877 in the area of the Fletton Towers Estate also uncovered several inhumation burials, while a single inhumation was found close to the PDA within a disused allotment plot in 2007 (HER 51627 site 11). Investigations of this burial, which lay on ridge of undisturbed land between two back-filled quarry areas, revealed a severely disturbed inhumation buried with a Coptic bowl of 6th to 7th century date, a

- knife and other iron objects.
- 3.7 The remains of an Anglo-Saxon village (c. 550 - 700 AD) comprising seven sunken-floored buildings, a cooking-pit, ditches, post holes, querns and evidence of wattle and daub was found immediately west and less than c.100m from the PDA in Hunting Avenue (HER 1631a site 12). The village is likely associated with the burial activity/cemetery (HER 1666) further to the west and possibly also related to the known Anglo Saxon settlement and burial activity in the wider area (HER 8181, HER 52052 and HER 1416).
- 3.8 During the Saxo-Norman and early medieval period, the manor of Fletton is said to have been given to the Abbey of Peterborough by Leuiua de London, but Edward the Confessor attempted to obtain possession of it. Abbot Leuric, paid the king to safeguard its possession to the abbey, who held it in 1086. The manor had originally been assessed as 3 hides but by Domesday this had been raised to 5 hides. A church is mentioned in the Domesday Survey, but this church was rebuilt by the mid-12th century (VCH 1936).
- 3.9 In the 12th century (1125–28) the manor at Fletton was still held by Peterborough Abbey and after the dissolution of Peterborough Abbey, Fletton manor remained in the Crown, but was sold in 1552 by Edward VI. (VCH 1936, Vol 3). The Bridge fair held on 1–3 October by the Abbey of Peterborough and their successors was historically held in the parish of Fletton and Woodston.
- 3.10 Evidence of medieval activity in the immediate area of the site is mainly focused on those discoveries made during archaeological works at the Walnuts Site, Oundle Road to the northwest of the PDA, although an unlocated find of sixteen coins (12 being 14th century) had previously been found in the Woodston area of New Fletton (HER 1643). The archaeological evaluation and excavation at the Walnuts site (HERs 51842 & 51926 site 13) uncovered a long sequence of medieval and post-medieval occupation. This comprised complex occupation remains close to the Oundle Road street frontage consisting of 12th-13th century pitting and 13th-14th century boundaries and evidence for back plot activities, including boundary

changes, rubbish pitting and quarrying, from the 12th and 16th centuries. These discoveries provided an insight into the domestic occupation and associated activities associated with the medieval development of Woodston.

- 3.11 The parish of Fletton lies to the south of Peterborough, separated from it by the river Nene, over which there is a bridge in the middle of the boundary. Fletton spring forms the south-eastern boundary of the present Urban parish. Fletton, during the 19th century, became a suburb of Peterborough, the northern part of the parish having entirely lost its rural character.
- 3.12 Archaeological evidence of post-medieval activity in the immediate area of the site is focused on two sites, that at the Walnuts along Oundle Road and at Park Street, just north of the PDA. Investigation at 'The Walnuts' site (HER 51927 site 14) identified evidence of late Medieval and post-Medieval occupation in the form of a timber, post built agricultural building incorporating a series of associated floors and surfaces. Further evidence for 16th-17th century occupation included a well, boundary ditches, pits, and a large pond, plus back plot boundary changes, pitting and quarrying activities.
- 3.13 Closer to the PDA an archaeological evaluation was carried out in the garden of No. 44 Park Street in 2008 (HER 51608 site 15) revealed extensive quarrying activities dating to the late 19th century, together with a series of later post-medieval pits containing animal burials and garden.

## **4 METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1 Overview**

4.1.1 The archaeological evaluation comprised two trial trenches, of 20m and 15m length by 1.5m width respectively (Figure 2).

### **4.2 Machining and Site Planning**

4.2.1 Ground reduction was carried out under archaeological supervision using a 3 tonne tracked mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket (Plates 2 & 5). Modern foundations and soil deposits were removed in spits down to the level of the undisturbed natural geological horizon where potential archaeological features could be observed and recorded.

4.2.2 Exposed surfaces were cleaned by trowel as appropriate and all further excavation was undertaken manually using hand tools.

4.2.3 Metal-detecting was carried out on all stripped deposits throughout the evaluation process and all archaeological features and spoil heaps were surveyed by metal-detector as they were encountered.

4.2.4 Limits of all excavation areas, pre-excavation and post-excavation plans of archaeological features and heights above Ordnance Datum (m OD) were recorded using a Leica 1200 Global positioning System (GPS) rover unit with RTK differential correction, giving three-dimensional accuracy of 20mm or better.

### **4.3 Recording and Sampling**

4.3.1 Field excavation techniques and recording methods are detailed in the PCA Fieldwork Induction Manual (Operations Manual I) by Joanna Taylor and Gary Brown (2009).

4.3.2 Drawn records are in the form of survey plans, drawn plans and section drawings of all archaeological features at an appropriate scale (1:10, 1:20, 1:50) while all individual deposits and cuts were recorded as written records on PCA Pro-forma context sheets.

4.4 Deposits or the removal of deposits judged by the excavating archaeologist

to constitute individual events were each assigned a unique record number (often referred to within British archaeology as 'context numbers') and recorded on individual pre-printed forms (Taylor and Brown 2009). Archaeological processes recognised by the deposition of material are signified in this report by round brackets (thus), while events constituting the removal of deposits are referred to here as 'cuts' and signified by square brackets [thus]. The record numbers assigned to cuts and deposits are entirely arbitrary and in no way reflect the chronological order in which events took place. All features and deposits recorded during the evaluation are listed in Appendix 2. Artefacts recovered during excavation were assigned to the record number of the deposit from which they were retrieved.

- 4.5 Spoil heaps were scanned by metal-detector. No objects were discovered during this process.
- 4.6 High-resolution digital photographs were used to keep a record of the excavation process.

## **5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS**

### **5.1 Overview**

5.1.1 Trench 1 and 2 contained no archaeological features (Plates 3 and 4). The existing topsoil deposit overlay a modern made ground deposit in both trenches.

### **5.2 Modern Overburden**

5.2.1 A modern gravel surface (3) (a mid-orange brown sandy gravel) was present in the north-eastern end of Trench 1 where it had had an average depth of 0.60m and overlay the existing topsoil.

5.2.2 The modern garden soil deposit (4); a dark black brown sandy silt was present in both trenches and had an average depth of 0.34m. The garden soil overlay modern made ground and so has presumably been imported into the area relatively recently.

5.2.3 The modern made ground deposit (5); a mid-grey brown sandy gravel was present in both trenches and had an average depth of 0.64m.

5.2.4 The natural geology (6); a mixed orange brown and light yellow sandy gravel was present in both trenches and had an average maximum depth of 0.68m.

## **6 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

### **6.1 Discussion**

6.1.1 The evaluation revealed no evidence for archaeological remains (Plate 5).

### **6.2 Conclusions**

6.2.1 The WSI (Hinman 2014) and DBA identified the site as having some archaeological potential, especially for the Saxon and Medieval periods.

6.2.2 The evaluation did not uncover any archaeological remains. Although archaeological deposits may have originally been present, modern activity may have truncated any potential archaeological remains.

6.2.3 Based on the results of the evaluation, the potential of the site to contain any further archaeological remains is considered to be low.

## **7 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

- 7.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd would like to thank Silverline Developments for commissioning the work. PCA are also grateful to Rebecca Casa Hilton of Peterborough City Council Planning Services (PCCPS) for her advice and monitoring the work and Bryn Williams for operating the machine. The author would like to thank Mark Hinman for managing the project and Jennifer Simonson of PCA's CAD Department for preparing the figures.

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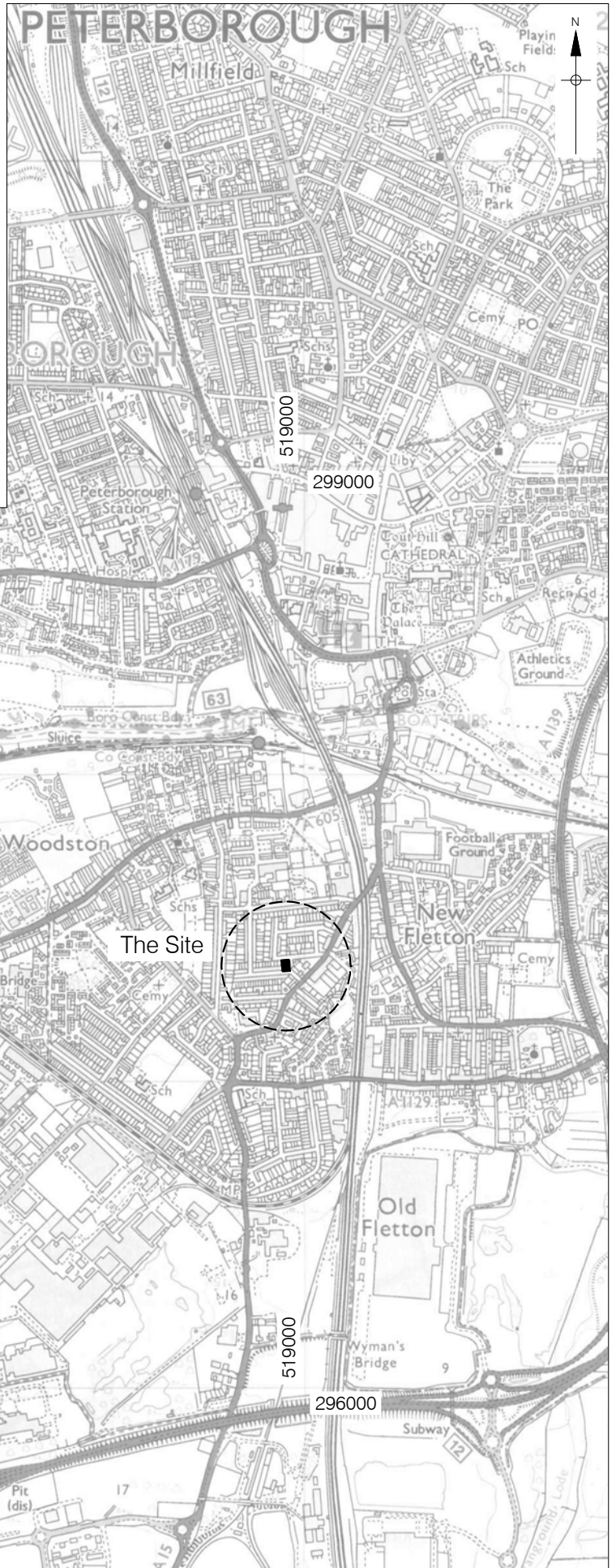
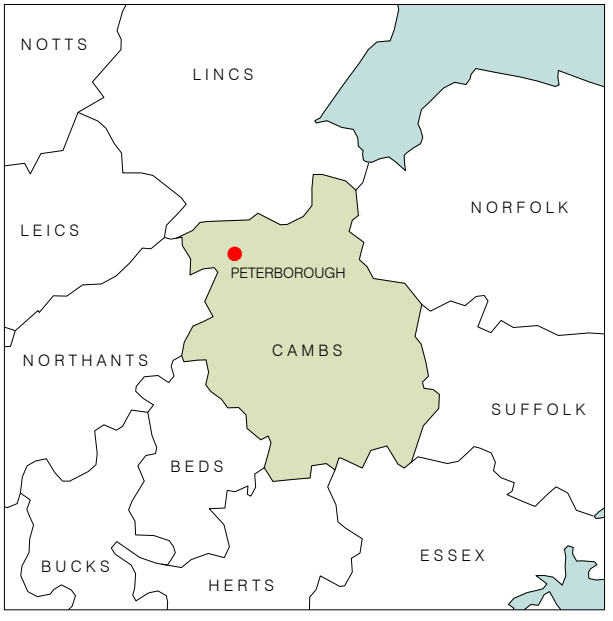
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### **8.2 Websites**

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 05/06/14 JS

Figure 1  
 Site Location  
 1:2,000,000 & 1:20,000 at A4



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Figure 2  
Trench Location  
1:625 at A4

**9 APPENDIX 1: PLATES**



Plate 1: The site, view northwest towards Elm Street



Plate 2: Machining of site, view west



Plate 3: Trench 1, view northeast



Plate 4: Trench 2, view east



Plate 5: Site post-excavation, view southwest

## 10 APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT INDEX

Context	Type	Category	Trench
1	Trench	Trench 1	1
2	Trench	Trench 2	2
(3)	Layer	Gravel Surface	1
(4)	Layer	Garden Soil	1, 2
(5)	Layer	Made Ground	1, 2
(6)	Layer	Natural Geological Horizon	1, 2

## 11 APPENDIX 3: OASIS FORM

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### 11.1 OASIS ID: preconst1-180185

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#### Project details

Project name	Land at 38 Elm Street and Silver Street, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire:
Short description of the project	This report describes the results of a three-trench archaeological evaluation, totaling thirty-five meters carried out by Pre-Construct Archaeology on land at 38 Elm Street and Silver Street, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL1895 9737) on the 29th May 2014. The archaeological work was commissioned by Bill Singh of Silverline Developments in response to a planning condition attached to residential development. The aim of the work was to characterise the archaeological potential of the site. The evaluation identified no archaeological remains.
Project dates	Start: 29-05-2014 End: 29-05-2014
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	PEST14 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 13 - Waste ground

#### Project location

Country	England
Site location	CAMBRIDGESHIRE PETERBOROUGH PETERBOROUGH Land at 38 Elm Street and Silver Street, Peterborough
Postcode	PE2 9BU
Study area	63.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TL 518983 297423 51.944950982 0.210266782241 51 56 41 N 000 12 36 E Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 0.52m Max: 0.92m

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### Project creators

Name of Organisation	PCA
Project brief originator	Peterborough City Council Planning Services
Project design originator	Mark Hinman
Project director/manager	Mark Hinman
Project supervisor	Lawrence Morgan-Shelbourne
Type of sponsor/funding body	Silverline Developments
Name of sponsor/funding body	Silverline Developments

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### Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Peterborough Museum and Art Gallery
Digital Contents	"Survey"
Digital Media available	"Database", "Spreadsheets", "Survey", "Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Peterborough Museum and Art Gallery
Paper Contents	"Survey"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Map", "Photograph", "Plan", "Report", "Survey", "Unpublished Text"

Entered by Mark Hinman (mhinman@pre-construct.com)

Entered on 30 May 2014

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