

**KIMBOLTON SCHOOL PLAYING FIELDS
KIMBOLTON
CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCHING

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Preface

Every effort has been made in the preparation and submission of this document and all statements are offered in good faith. Albion Archaeology cannot accept responsibility for errors of fact or opinion resulting from data supplied by a third party, or for any loss or other consequence arising from decisions or actions made upon the basis of facts or opinions expressed in this document.

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Structure of the Report

Section 1 is an introduction to the project, the methodology for which is presented in Section 2. Section 3 comprises a description of the results of the fieldwork, and their significance is discussed in Section 4. Section 5 is a bibliography and Section 6 an appendix containing context details.

Key Terms

Throughout this project design the following terms or abbreviations are used:

CAPCA	Cambridgeshire Archaeology Planning & Countryside Advice office
CHER	Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record
IFA	Institute of Field Archaeologists
LPA	Local Planning Authority

Acknowledgements

The project was commissioned by Edward Valletta, bursar of Kimbolton School. The report was prepared by Richard Gregson with illustrations by Joan Lightning. The Project was monitored on behalf of the LPA by Eliza Gore of CAPCA.

All Albion projects are under the overall management of Drew Shotliff.



Non-technical Summary

Albion Archaeology was commissioned to carry out a trial trenching evaluation at the site of proposed sports pitches at Kimbolton School, Kimbolton, Cambridgeshire.

The site is located within an area of archaeological potential and nearby are significant sites of medieval date. A previous archaeological investigation in the vicinity uncovered medieval and Roman remains.

No significant archaeological features were found in the trial trenches. The only archaeological feature revealed was a ditch probably dating to the post-medieval period.

The evidence from the trial trenching suggests that the site of the proposed sports pitches contains little or no archaeological remains and that settlement associated with Saxon or later medieval Kimbolton was not located in the area.



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 *Project Background*

Planning permission has been granted for the construction of sports pitches on land adjacent to Kimbolton School, Kimbolton, Cambridgeshire.

Because of the archaeological potential of the site, a condition was attached to the permission requiring the implementation of a programme of archaeological work.

The local planning authority's archaeological adviser, the Cambridgeshire Archaeology Planning and Countryside Advice office (CAPCA), issued a Brief (CAPCA 2008) outlining the requirements for this work, commencing with the excavation of a number of trial trenches.

Albion Archaeology was commissioned by Kimbolton School to carry out this initial phase of works. Prior to commencement of the fieldwork, a project design (Albion Archaeology 2008) was prepared and approved by the CAPCA office.

1.2 *Site Description*

Kimbolton School lies on the south side of Kimbolton town and approximately 400m south of the River Kym. The site of the proposed sports pitches lies to the north-west of the school and is centred on grid reference TL09670 67640 (Figure 1).

The planned works comprise the construction of three multi-purpose sports pitches and a hockey pitch. Prior to development, the site comprised mainly open arable land.

The geology of the area comprises River Terrace Gravels overlying Oxford Clay, with the land surface lying at a height of around 35m OD.

1.3 *Archaeological Background*

The origins of Kimbolton date back to the Saxon period. However, the location of the original Saxon settlement is unknown.

The site itself is located within the grounds of what was Kimbolton Deer Park which dates to the 16th century (CHER 00255). Approximately 400m to the south-west is Castle Hill motte which is thought to date to the mid 12th century (CHER CB15402).

Kimbolton School occupies a subsequent medieval castle (CHER 00412) which was largely rebuilt in the 16th century and again significantly remodelled in the 17th and 18th centuries.

An evaluation carried out beneath the teaching and learning centre, approximately 200m to the south-east of the present site, revealed several ditches and a Roman pit (CHER ECB2302). The ditches were thought to relate



to post-medieval landscaping, although one very wide and deep ditch may have been associated with a medieval moat system (CHER MCB17280).

1.4 Project Objectives

The principal objective of the trial trenching was to determine whether archaeological remains were present at the site and, if they were, to determine their extent, condition, nature and significance. This information was to be used to inform any subsequent mitigation strategy designed to protect or preserve by record any significant remains that might be present.

The broader objective of the project was to add to the knowledge and understanding of the origins and nature of settlement in the area and produce an archive report that fully described the archaeological works.



2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Standards

The project adhered throughout to the standards set out in the following documents:

• IFA	<i>By-Laws and Code of Conduct</i>
	<i>Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation</i>
• English Heritage	<i>Management of Archaeological Projects (1991)</i>
• Albion Archaeology	<i>Procedures Manual: Volume 1 Fieldwork (2nd edn, 2001).</i>
• ALGAO (east)	<i>Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England</i>
• CCC	<i>Deposition of Archaeological Archives in the Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology Store (HER 2004/1).</i>

2.2 Trial Trenching

The trial trenching took place on 16th and 17th October 2008. Four trenches were opened, covering a total area of 410m² (Figure 2).

The trenches were opened by a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, working under close archaeological supervision. Overburden was removed down to the top of the undisturbed geological deposits. The spoil heaps were scanned for artefacts.

A photographic record was compiled of each trench. All deposits and features were recorded using a unique number sequence, commencing at 100 for Trench 1, 200 for Trench 2 *etc.* A full methodology was provided in the Project Design (Albion Archaeology 2008).

2.3 Archive

The full archive for the project will be deposited at the Cambridgeshire County Archaeological Stores. This will include:

- The report
- Site plans and section drawings
- Context recording sheets
- Site registers
- Site photographs – digital and 35mm film

In addition, a copy of this report will be sent to the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record located in County Hall, Cambridgeshire, and to the online OASIS database (ref. albionar1/50548).



3. FIELDWORK RESULTS

3.1 *Geological Deposits and Overburden*

The overburden of top- and subsoil was generally consistent in colour and composition throughout the site. It varied in total thickness from 0.37m to 0.75m. The topsoil consisted of dark grey brown clay silt, 0.10m to 0.45m thick which sealed a lighter hued orange brown silty clay subsoil, 0.15m to 0.45m thick.

Undisturbed geological strata were reached at depths of between 0.37m and 0.75m below the ground surface (33.88m OD – 34.48m OD). These deposits predominantly comprised mid brown orange terrace gravels with occasional patches of light orange grey clay.

3.2 *Non – Archaeological Features*

Two irregular features were investigated in Trenches 3 and 4. They varied from 0.5m to 1.5m long and from 0.3m to 0.81m wide. Deposits within them comprised dark brown grey clay silt with occasional patches of mid brown orange and light grey orange sandy silt. These features were identified as ground disturbance associated with tree rooting.

3.3 *Archaeological Features*

A NNE – SSW orientated ditch [106/204] was recorded in Trenches 1 and 2. It was up to 1.75m wide and 0.42m deep. The lower deposits within it varied from mid to dark grey brown clay silt and were probably naturally deposited. The upper deposits were probably post-medieval or modern backfill comprising light grey brown sandy gravel. One small piece of post-medieval brick was recovered from the lower deposits.



4. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

No significant archaeological features were found in the trial trenches. The only archaeological feature revealed was a ditch probably dating to the post-medieval period. This ditch is visible as a meandering crop mark on aerial photographs and probably represents a field boundary.

The evidence from the evaluation suggests that the site of the proposed sports pitches contains little or no archaeological remains and that settlement associated with Saxon or later medieval Kimbolton was not located in the area.



5. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Albion Archaeology, 2008. *Kimbolton School Playing Fields, Kimbolton, Cambridgeshire: Project Design for Archaeological Trial trenching* (Document 2008:103)

CAPCA 2008. *Brief for Archaeological Remediation Works: Kimbolton School Playing Fields.*



6. APPENDIX: CONTEXT SUMMARY



Trench: 1

Max Dimensions: Length: 75.00 m. Width: 1.50 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.4 m. Max: 0.45 m.

Co-ordinates: OS Grid Ref.: TL 09622/67775

OS Grid Ref.: TL 09679/67705

Reason: Evaluation of proposed sports pitches.

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
100	Topsoil	Friable dark grey brown clay silt occasional small stones 0.40m thick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
101	Subsoil	Firm mid orange brown silty clay occasional small stones 0.15m thick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
102	Natural	Loose mid brown orange sandy gravel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
106	Ditch	Linear NNE-SSW profile: concave base: concave dimensions: max breadth 1.75m, max depth 0.42m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
107	Primary fill	Firm mid grey brown clay silt	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
108	Secondary fill	Friable dark grey brown clay silt	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
109	Upper fill	Loose light grey brown sandy gravel	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Trench: 2

Max Dimensions: Length: 75.00 m. Width: 1.50 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.37 m. Max: 0.52 m.

Co-ordinates: OS Grid Ref.: TL 09641/67662

OS Grid Ref.: TL 09585/67711

Reason: Evaluation of proposed sports pitches.

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
200	Topsoil	Friable dark grey brown clay silt occasional small stones 0.10m thick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
201	Subsoil	Firm mid grey brown silty clay occasional small stones 0.45m thick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
202	Natural	Loose mid brown orange sandy gravel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
204	Ditch	Linear NNE-SSW dimensions: max breadth 0.9m	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
205	Fill	Friable dark grey brown clay silt	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Trench: 3

Max Dimensions: Length: 75.00 m. Width: 1.50 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.45 m. Max: 0.75 m.

Co-ordinates: OS Grid Ref.: TL 09682/67616

OS Grid Ref.: TL 09731/67672

Reason: Evaluation of proposed sports pitches.

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
300	Topsoil	Friable dark grey brown clay silt occasional small stones 0.30m thick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
301	Subsoil	Firm mid orange brown silty clay occasional small stones 0.45m thick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
302	Natural	Loose mid brown orange sandy gravel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Trench: 4

Max Dimensions: Length: 50.00 m. Width: 1.50 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.4 m. Max: 0.7 m.

Co-ordinates: OS Grid Ref.: TL 09779/67617

OS Grid Ref.: TL 09734/67639

Reason: Evaluation of proposed sports pitch.

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
400	Topsoil	Friable dark grey brown clay silt occasional small stones 0.45m thick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
401	Subsoil	Firm mid orange brown silty clay occasional small stones 0.25m thick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
402	Natural	Loose mid brown orange sandy gravel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

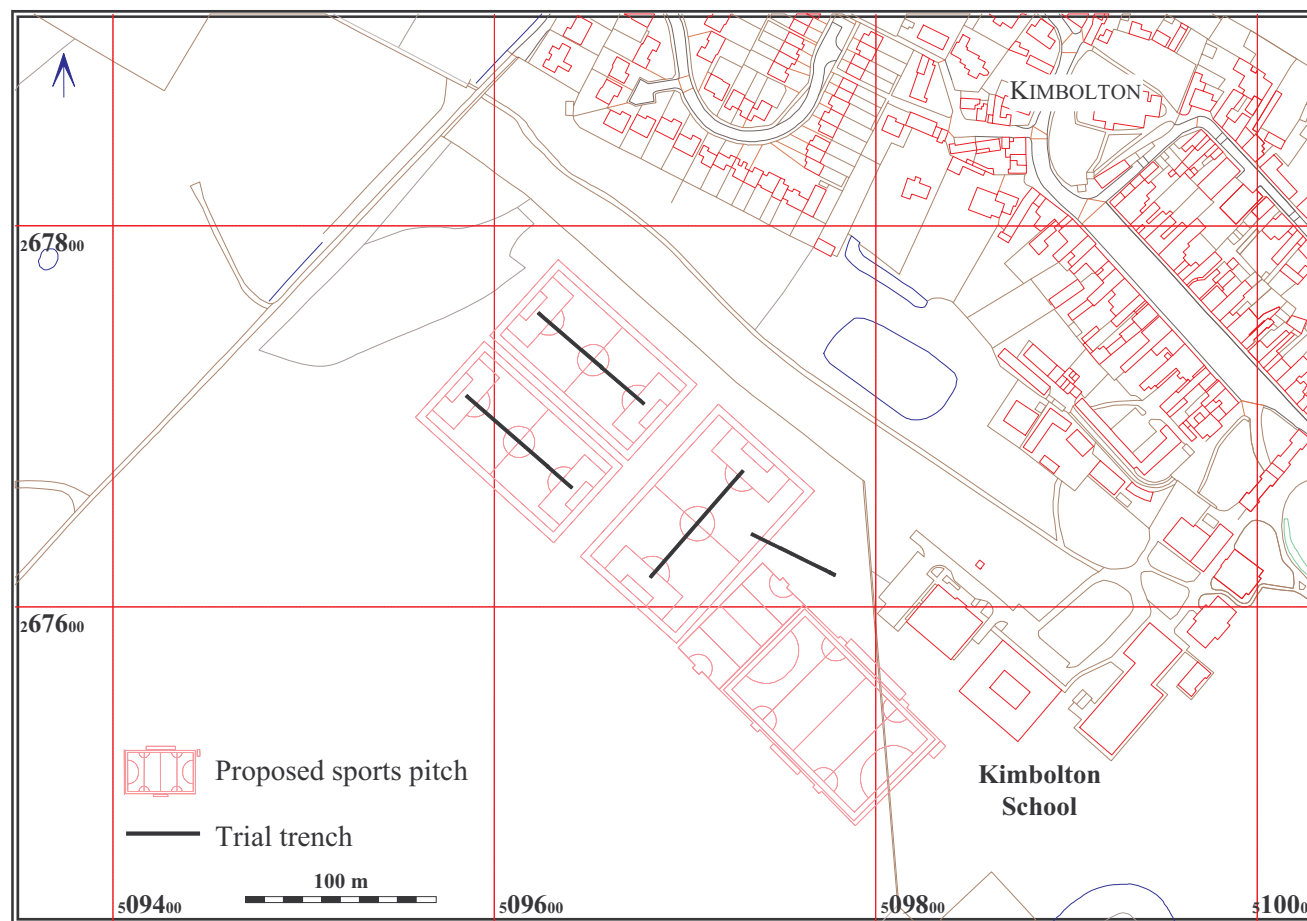
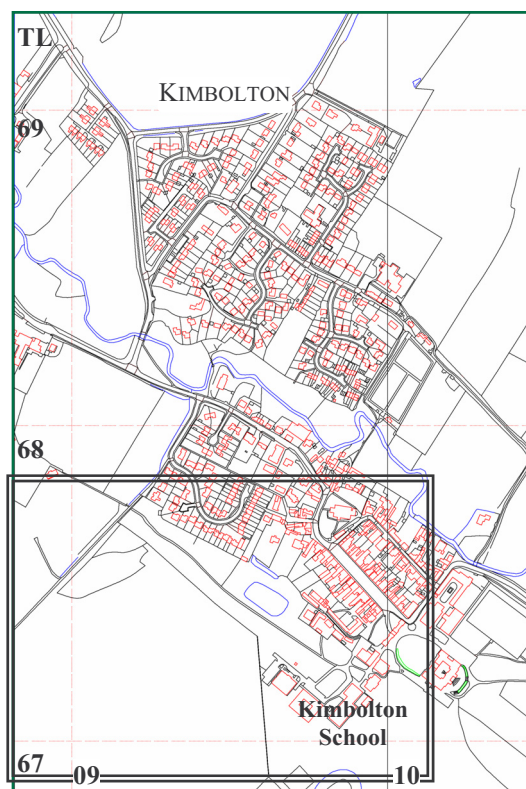
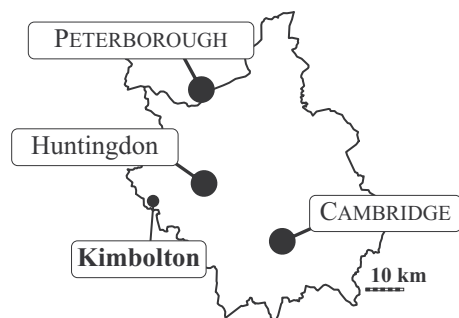


Figure 1: Site location plan

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