

**ENTERPRISE NURSERIES  
ELY ROAD  
LANDBEACH  
CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

**RESULTS OF  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD  
EVALUATION**

Project: LE1702  
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22 October 2010

Produced for:  
Mr M. Dwyer



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## Preface

*Every effort has been made in the preparation of this document to provide as complete a summary as possible within the terms of the method statement. All statements and opinions in this document 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.*

*Albion Archaeology was commissioned to undertake the project by GC Planning Partnership on behalf of Mr M. Dwyer and we are grateful to him for his assistance during fieldwork. The project was monitored by Kasia Gdaniec of the Cambridgeshire Archaeology, Planning and Countryside Advice office (CAPCA).*

*The project was managed for Albion by Joe Abrams (Project Manager). Christiane Meckseper (Project Officer) conducted the fieldwork and prepared this report, which includes contributions from Joan Lighting (CAD Technician). The report was approved by Drew Shotliff (Operations Manager), who is responsible for the overall management of all Albion projects.*

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## Version History

Version	Issue date	Reason for re-issue
1.0	22 Oct 2010	n/a

## Structure of the Report

*Section 1 is an introduction to the project, the methodology for which is described in Section 2. The results and a discussion of their significance are presented in Section 3; Section 4 is a bibliography. Section 5 contains an appendix, which comprises an OASIS record form.*

## Key Terms

The following terms or abbreviations are used throughout this report:

ALGAO	Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers
CAPCA	Cambridgeshire Archaeology, Planning and Countryside Advice office
CCC	Cambridgeshire County Council
CHER	Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record
IfA	Institute for Archaeologists



### **Non-Technical Summary**

*This document has been prepared by Albion Archaeology on behalf of Mr M. Dywer who intends to construct a fish stock pond at the Enterprise Nurseries, Ely Road, Landbeach, Cambridgeshire. Because of the archaeological potential of the Development Area, one of the conditions placed on the planning consent requires the implementation of a scheme of archaeological work. This is in accordance with Planning Policy Statement no. 5 (PPS 5).*

*The site lies in an area rich in archaeological remains. These include Roman enclosure ditches and settlement evidence at Landbeach to the north-east, and evidence for prehistoric, Roman and Saxon settlements close to the River Cam and Car Dyke. The Car Dyke is a Roman navigation channel, situated on the other side of the Ely road near Waterbeach.*

*Two 20m evaluation trenches were excavated and recorded in the area of the proposed pond on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2010. This document reports on the findings of the evaluation.*

*The evaluation revealed no archaeological deposits or features and the topsoil contained no archaeological artefacts. It is likely that the former use of the site as a conifer nursery has altered the soil profile and destroyed archaeological remains which may otherwise have existed on this location. The site could also be located in a 'quiet' area between settlement centres or within a large agricultural enclosure.*



## 1. INTRODUCTION

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### 1.1 *Project Background*

Mr. Mark Dwyer intends to construct a fish stock pond at the Enterprise Nurseries, Ely Road, Landbeach, Cambridgeshire. This location is referred to as the Development Area (DA) for the purposes of this document. South Cambridgeshire District Council has granted planning permission (Ref: S/0661/10/F) for this work.

The DA was considered (Section 1.3) to have a reasonably high potential to contain archaeological remains. As a result, one of the conditions placed on the planning consent requires the implementation of a scheme of archaeological work. This is in accordance with Planning Policy Statement no. 5 (PPS 5).

The Local Planning Authorities archaeological advisors, CAPCA, issued a Design Brief (CAPCA 2010) outlining the requirements of a field evaluation, which will constitute the initial phase of investigation. The results of the evaluation will determine whether any further archaeological work is required at the DA. The brief (Section 2.7) indicates that mitigation works (if required) would be subject to a further design brief from CAPCA.

Albion was commissioned by GC Planning Partnership Ltd. to carry out the evaluation.

### 1.2 *Site Location and Description*

The DA comprises an area of *c.* 800sq m centred on TL 48400 64150. It is located on the land of Enterprise Nurseries to the west of the existing disused greenhouses (Fig. 1). Landbeach is located *c.* 3km north of Cambridge and the site is *c.* 1km west of the River Cam.

The DA is relatively flat at *c.* 10m OD and currently comprises rough ground, part of a former conifer plantation. The underlying geology consists of sand and gravel second river terrace deposits over Gault Formation mudstone.

### 1.3 *Archaeological and Historical Background*

The DA lies on the second river gravel terrace of the River Cam in an area rich in archaeological remains. The Cambridgeshire HER was consulted prior to the compilation of this WSI and a radius of 500m around the DA was searched (referred to as the “study area”). The results are briefly summarised below.

#### 1.3.1 *Late prehistoric period (4000 BC – 800 BC)*

An isolated Neolithic elongated polished axe (HER 02131) was found in a field to the north of Car Dyke Road in Waterbeach. A focus of late prehistoric activity (HER MCB16002) was identified in an evaluation carried out on the site of the proposed Cambridge Rowing Lake. Remains consisted of a posthole, a series of small pits, and a ditch which contained worked and burnt flint. Traces of “dubious linear features” (HER 08316) of uncertain date are recorded adjacent to the late prehistoric site.

Undated cropmark complex HER 08471 in the southern part of the study area contains several circular features which may represent prehistoric ring ditches.



### 1.3.2 Iron Age to Roman period (800 BC – AD 400)

The majority of sites recorded in the study area consist of remains dating to the Iron Age and Roman periods. A large number of these, and other sites in the study area, were identified during investigations for the proposed Cambridge Rowing Lake.

Several large concentrations of enclosures, trackways, hut circles and field boundaries (HER 08312, HER 08312a, HER 08314, HER 08317, HER 11175) lie in the fields immediately west and north-west of the DA, between Ely Road and Landbeach Road. The cropmarks have not been reliably dated but several isolated findspots of Roman pottery and a coin (HER 05888) and a Roman unidentified object (HER 05313) in the area of the cropmark complex HER 08312 suggest that they are Iron Age to Roman in date. Cropmark complex HER 11568, to the north-east of HER 08312, was investigated and revealed a Roman trackway, settlement and enclosure associated with Roman pottery.

Several Roman sites (HER 08313, HER 08328, HER 08873, HER 11560, HER 11561 and HER MCB 15996 and HER MCB 16009) and isolated findspots of Roman material (HER 05409, HER 05314) have also been identified on the eastern side of the Ely Road in Waterbeach. These consist of rectangular enclosures and field systems, linear ditches and trackways. Excavations revealed the existence of an extensive industrial area as part of HER 08873 which utilised quern and mill stones and large storage jars. Roman pottery kilns and two inhumations were excavated at HER 11561 in the north-eastern part of the study area.

The Scheduled Ancient Monument of Car Dyke canal (SAM 3), a Roman waterway, is located just to the north-east outside the study area.

### 1.3.3 Saxon period (410 – 1065)

A collection of Saxon weapons (HER 05351) was dredged from near the mouth of the Car Dyke at Waterbeach. Isolated findspots of hand-made pottery (HER 11560 A and B) could be Saxon or Iron Age in date.

A series of test pits, excavated as part of the Cambridge Rowing Lake investigations revealed the partial remains of a Saxon settlement (HER 09049) in the eastern part of the study area at Waterbeach. Here a number of features containing early Saxon pottery were identified, including a possible sunken-featured building. Metal detecting also retrieved two pierced 4th-century coins and a number of other Saxon artefacts. The Saxon settlement represents the continuation of an earlier Roman settlement (HER MCB 15996) on the same site.

### 1.3.4 Medieval period (1066 – 1539)

Parallel ditches which may define the alternative line of the medieval Cambridge Way were defined during the Cambridge Rowing Lake investigations at Waterbeach. A cluster of pits adjacent to the trackway may be related to quarrying, possibly for maintaining the surface of the track (HER MCB 16003).



The remains of Landbeach shrunken medieval village (HER 08855 and HER 04262) are situated to the north-west of the centre of Landbeach outside the study area.

### **1.3.5 Post -medieval period (1540 – 1900)**

The existence of a milestone was recorded on the verge of the Ely Road near Milton in the southern part of the study area. A number of listed buildings, dating to the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, are recorded along Landbeach High Street. These are not discussed as part of this report.

### **1.3.6 Modern period (1901 – present)**

Two pillboxes (HER MCB 15214 and HER MCB 16402) are situated on the western bank of the River Cam at the eastern limit of the study area.

## **1.4 Project Objectives**

The principal objective of the evaluation was to determine whether archaeological remains are present within the development area, and, if so, to characterise their location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality.

The programme of trial trenching was also intended to establish the artefact contents of the ploughsoil and lower soil horizons, if present, investigate site formation processes and establish the environmental potential of the site (CAPCA 2010).

The vast majority of cropmarks within the immediate vicinity of the site most likely date from the Iron Age and Roman periods. The Research Agenda and Strategy for the Eastern Counties suggests that while there is ample evidence for landscapes of fields and trackways of Roman and earlier date, there is still a need to provide reliable dating and to more closely tie them into detailed settlement evidence (Brown and Glazebrook 2000, 14 and 19).

Similarly in the Anglo-Saxon period, a more detailed investigation into settlement size and form is still an important research aim in order to complement the large body of data available from cemetery excavations (Brown and Glazebrook 2000, 23).



## 2. METHODOLOGY

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Two 20m-long trenches (Fig. 2) were opened on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2010. This was done using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket, operated by a driver working under close archaeological supervision.

Overburden was removed down to the top of the undisturbed geological deposits. The spoil heaps were scanned for artefacts. Any potential archaeological features were noted, cleaned, excavated by hand, and recorded using Albion Archaeology's *pro forma* sheets. Each trench was subsequently recorded and photographed as appropriate. All deposits were recorded using a unique number sequence.

A full methodology is provided in the Project Design (Albion Archaeology 2010).

The project adhered throughout to the standards prescribed in the following documents:

- IfA *Code of Conduct*  
*Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation*
- Albion Archaeology *Procedures Manual: Volume 1 Fieldwork* (2nd edition, 2001)
- ALGAO (east) *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*
- CCC *Deposition of Archaeological Archives in the Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology Store* (HER 2004/1)
- CAPCA *Brief for Archaeological Evaluation*
- English Heritage *The Management of Archaeological Projects, 2nd edition*

The trenches were inspected by the CAPCA prior to their backfilling.





### 3. RESULTS

#### 3.1 Results

No archaeological features were revealed in any of the trenches. The soil sequence consisted of:

<b>Topsoil</b>	200-300mm thick. Friable dark orange brown sandy silt with occasional to moderate small stones. No artefacts.
<b>Geological deposits upper</b>	100-200mm thick. Friable light to mid brownish yellow sandy silt with moderate small stones. Upper gravel interface. No artefacts.
<b>Geological deposits lower</b>	Light to mid orange and creamy white fine sandy gravel with lenses of light yellowish brown coarse sand. No artefacts.

Until very recently the site had consisted of a conifer tree plantation. Most of the trees had been removed in order to clear the area for the construction of the pond. The presence of the shallow conifer root bowls was still indicated by the undulating lower interface of the topsoil.

No subsoil existed between the topsoil and geological deposits, suggesting that the area had been truncated through ploughing and the repeated planting and removal of conifer trees.

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length</i>	<i>Width</i>	<i>Depth of overburden</i>
1	20m	1.8m	0.6m
2	20m	1.8m	0.6m

**Table 1:** Trench summary

#### 3.2 Significance of Results

The evaluation of the DA at Enterprise Nurseries, Landbeach has revealed no archaeological deposits or features and no artefacts were recovered from the topsoil.

It is likely that the intense cultivation during use as a conifer nursery altered the soil profile in the area and possibly removed any archaeological remains.

The site does lie in an area rich in archaeological remains (Section 1.3), but could conceivably fall in a zone of relative 'quiet' in between concentrated settlement activity or lie within a large agricultural enclosure.



## 4. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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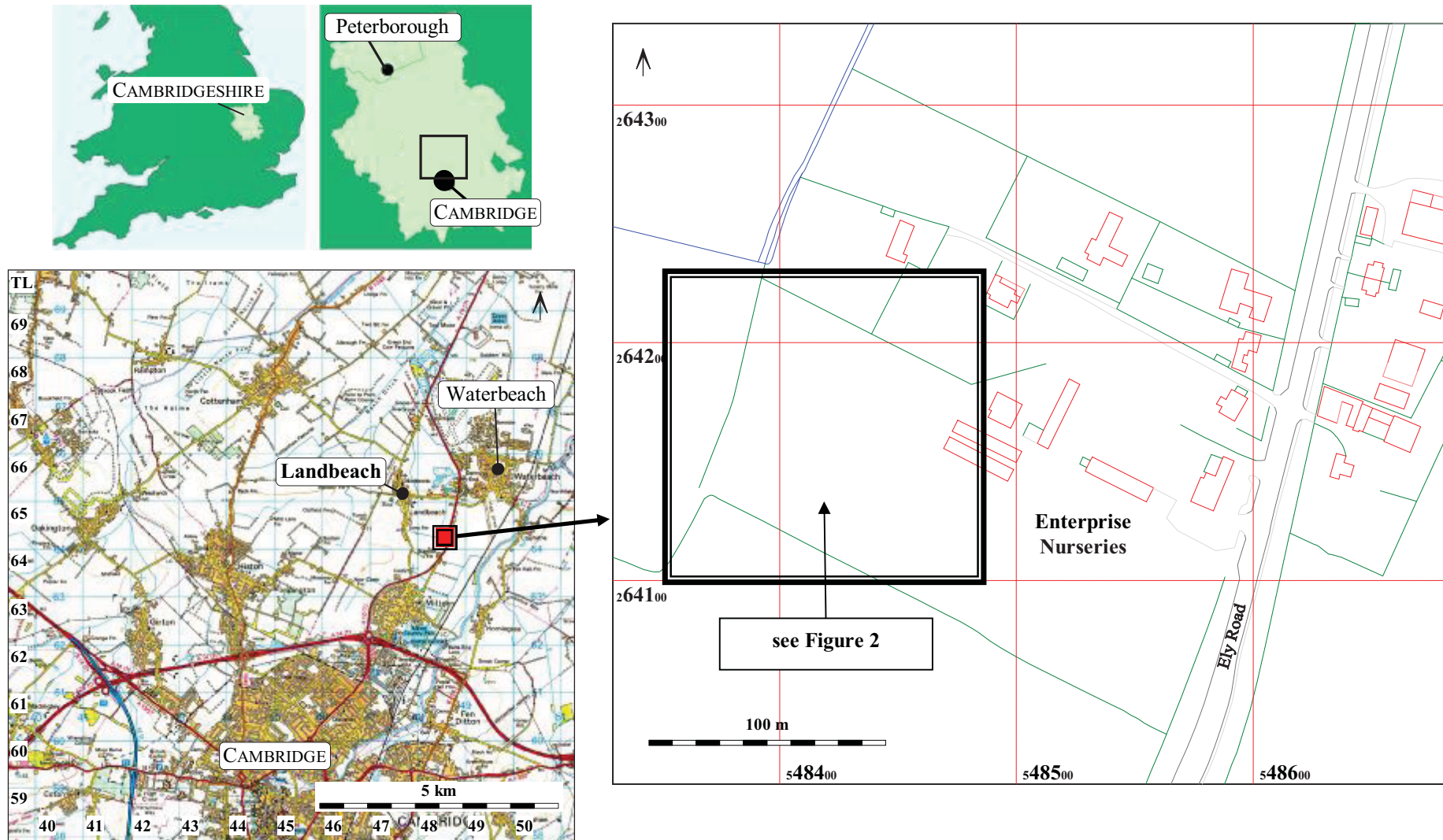
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## 5. APPENDIX: OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM

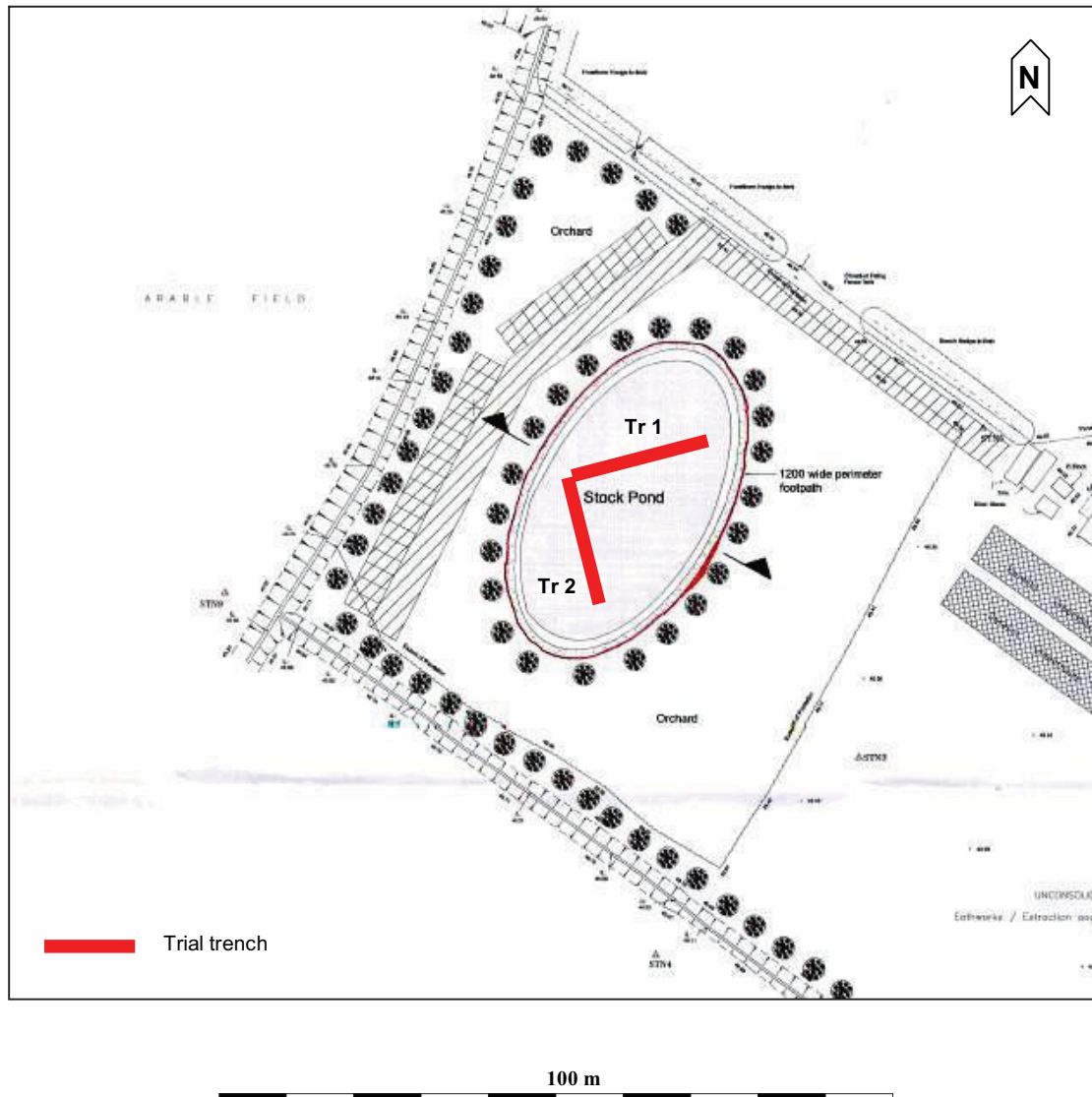
OASIS ID: albionar1-83001

Field	Content
Project Name	Land at Landbeach Enterprise Nurseries
Short Description	Two 20m evaluation trenches were excavated and recorded on 11th October 2010. The evaluation revealed no archaeological deposits or features and the topsoil contained no archaeological artefacts. It is likely that the former use of the site as a conifer nursery has altered the soil profile and potentially destroyed archaeological remains. The site could also be located in a 'quiet' area between settlement centres or within a large agricultural enclosure.
Start / Finish Date	11-10-2010 / 11-10-2010
Previous / Future Work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	LE1702 - Contracting Unit No, ECB3461 - HER event no.
Type of Project	Field evaluation
County	Cambridgeshire
District	South Cambridgeshire
Parish	Landbeach
Study Area	800.00 square metres
NGR	TL 48400 64150
Organisation	Albion Archaeology
Origin of Brief	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Origin of Project Design	Written Scheme of Investigation Produced
Manager	Joe Abrams
Supervisor	Christiane Meckseper
Physical Archive Location	NA
Physical Archive Contents	None
Digital Archive Location	Cambs County Archaeological Store
Digital Archive Contents	Other
Digital Archive Media	Photographs/Report/Summary
Paper Archive Location	Cambs County Archaeological Store
Paper Archive Contents	Other
Paper Archive Media	Context sheet, Correspondence, Microfilm, Miscellaneous Material, Photograph, Report
Publication Table	
Title	Enterprise Nurseries, Ely Road, Landbeach, Cambridgeshire: Results of Archaeological Field Evaluation
Author / Editor	Meckseper, C / Abrams, J
Year	2010
Issuer	Albion Archaeology
Place of Publication	Bedford



**Figure 1: Site location**

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**Figure 2:** Trench location  
(scale approximate)



**Figure 3:** Trench location



**Figure 4:** Trench 1 looking WNW  
(1m scale)



**Figure 5:** Trench 2 looking WNW  
(1m scale)



**Figure 6:** Soil profile (0.5m scale)