



**LAND AT THE CAUSEWAY
WEST WRATTING
CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCHING

Project: WW1750
CHER event no.: ECB3527

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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.

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This report has been prepared by Richard Gregson (Archaeological Supervisor), who also undertook the fieldwork. The finds were analysed by Jackie Wells (Artefacts Officer). Illustrations were prepared by Joan Lightning (CAD Technician).

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1.0	09/03/11	n/a

Key Terms

Throughout this report the following terms or abbreviations are used:

CAPCA	Cambridgeshire Archaeology, Planning and Countryside Advice office
CCC	Cambridgeshire County Council
CHER	Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record
IfA	Institute for Archaeologists
LPA	Local Planning Authority



Non-Technical Summary

Planning permission for the construction of a dwelling at The Causeway, West Wratting has been granted by South Cambridgeshire District Council. Due to the high archaeological potential of the site a condition for a scheme of archaeological work was placed on the planning consent. The initial phase of work comprised trial trenching.

The development site is located in the medieval core of West Wratting. On the opposite side of the Causeway sits the 13th-century St Andrew's Church and to the north is West Wratting Hall. Approximately 300m to north-east lies the site of a possible Roman farmstead and to the north-west, at a distance of 130m and 200m respectively, lie undated earthworks and an earthwork bank.

The trial trenching was carried out in February 2011 and comprised the excavation of a 10m x 1.6m trial trench located within the footprint of the proposed new building.

The trial trenching uncovered what appears to be a boundary ditch that has been in use for many centuries. It was periodically recut, with its final recut and infilling happening in recent times. The dating of the earliest phase of the ditch is uncertain due to the recovery of only one small sherd of abraded late Bronze Age/early Iron Age pottery. However, the absence of other finds and the nature of the fill of this earliest ditch suggest it is of some antiquity. The boundary was probably in existence during the medieval period but a prehistoric date for its origin cannot be ruled out.

No other archaeological features or deposits were found within the trench. This suggests that the land in the vicinity of the proposed new building was not the site of domestic or other activity during the medieval and later periods despite its proximity to the parish church and village centre.



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 *Planning Background*

Planning permission for the construction of a dwelling at The Causeway, West Wrating has been granted by South Cambridgeshire District Council (S/0975/10/F).

Due to the high archaeological potential of the site, the Cambridgeshire Archaeology Planning and Countryside Advice office (CAPCA) advised the LPA that a condition for a scheme of archaeological work should be placed on the planning consent.

The CAPCA office issued a brief (CAPCA 2011) outlining the requirements for an archaeological evaluation as the first stage of the work required to address the condition. The evaluation was to comprise trial trenching, the results of which would be used to characterise the archaeological potential of the site and determine whether there is any need for further investigation.

1.2 *Site Location, Topography and Geology*

The site of the proposed development lies in the centre of the village of West Wrating and comprises a small area of open, rough ground measuring approximately 0.2ha in area and centred on grid reference TL6050/5234 (Figure 1).

A small portion of the site fronts onto The Causeway, with the bulk lying to the rear of adjacent properties.

The ground lies at a height of *c.*105m OD with the geology of the area comprising Lewes Nodular Chalk formation.

The proposed development will comprise a detached dwelling of 2.5 storeys with associated hard and soft landscaping.

1.3 *Archaeological Background*

The development site is located in the medieval core of West Wrating. On the opposite side of the Causeway sits the 13th-century St Andrew's Church (CHER MCB17145), and to the north is West Wrating Hall (CHER MCB18513), an 18th-century farmhouse which was extended during the 19th century.

Approximately 300m to north-east of the development lies the site of a possible Roman farmstead (CHER10187) which was revealed by fieldwalking.

To the north-west at a distance of 130m and 200m respectively lie undated earthworks (CHER10248) and an earthwork bank (CHER10249).

1.4 *Project Objectives*

The principal objective of the evaluation was to determine whether archaeological remains were present at the proposed development site and, if so, to determine their extent, condition, nature and significance. This information



was to be used in the formulation of an appropriate mitigation strategy for the archaeological remains, if 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 to produce an archive report that fully described the archaeological works.



2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Fieldwork

The trial trenching was carried out during the 21st and 22nd February 2011 and comprised the excavation of a 10m x 1.6m trial trench located within the footprint of the proposed new building (Figures 1 and 2). This equated to a 12.5% (16m²) sample of the c.128 m² building area.

The trench was opened by a mechanical excavator, fitted with a flat-edged ditching bucket, operated by an experienced driver, under the supervision of an appropriately experienced archaeologist.

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

Throughout the project the standards set out in the following documents were adhered to:

• Albion Archaeology	<i>Procedures Manual: Volume 1 Fieldwork</i> (2nd edn, 2001).
• 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</i> (HER 2004/1).
• English Heritage	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)</i> (2009)
• IfA	<i>By-Laws and Code of Conduct</i> <i>Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation</i>

2.2 Archive

The archive of finds and records generated during the project will be deposited with the Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology Store under the accession number ECB3527.

Details of the project and its findings have been submitted to the Archaeology Data Service's OASIS database under reference number albionar1-93813.



3. RESULTS

Summary descriptions of the deposits encountered and finds recovered are provided below. Full details are set out in Appendices 1 and 2. The findings are illustrated in Figure 2.

The trial trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.3m, down to geological deposits of chalky clay (104). Overburden consisted of four layers: topsoil (100); a chalky make-up layer (101); buried topsoil (102) and subsoil (103). Topsoil comprised dark grey brown clay silt. The chalky make-up layer comprised mid brown grey clay silt with frequent flecks and small pieces of chalk. Buried topsoil comprised mid grey brown clay silt and subsoil comprised mid orange brown silty clay.

Immediately beneath the topsoil, at the northern end of the trench, was the most recent of a series of intercutting features, indicative of a ditch running perpendicular to the trench that had been recut at least six times on the same general alignment. The six recuts are dated primarily by their stratigraphic relationships — ditches [105] and [110] are the earliest, followed sequentially by ditches [112], [116], [118] and [122].

The deposits within the earlier five ditches were fairly similar. They varied from light orange brown to mid brown grey silty clay and were probably the result of gradual silting-up. The deposits within the latest ditch [122] were generally dark brown grey, clay silts; they were probably the result of rubbish deposition as well as natural silting.

Dating evidence was recovered from the earliest ditch [105] in the form of a small, abraded sherd of late Bronze Age/early Iron Age pottery. Artefacts were also recovered from the latest ditch; they comprised a variety of modern material, including a fragment of clay pipe, an incomplete 19th-century brick, a modern concrete paviour, and a piece of clinker (Appendix 2).

The remainder of the trench contained no other archaeological features or deposits.



4. CONCLUSIONS

The trial trenching uncovered what appears to be a land boundary that has been in use for many centuries. It was periodically recut following phases of neglect and natural infilling. Its final recut and infilling happened in recent times as confirmed by the artefacts recovered from it and by 19th- and 20th-century OS maps, which depict the boundary within the current development area and adjacent properties (Figure 1).

The dating of the earliest phase of the ditch is uncertain due to the recovery of only one small sherd of pottery. Although the sherd is datable to the late Bronze Age/early Iron Age, its abraded condition suggests that it may have been deposited in the ditch a considerable time after it was made. However, the absence of other finds and the nature of the fill of this feature do suggest it is of some antiquity and a prehistoric date for its origin cannot be ruled out.

The boundary was probably in existence during the medieval period, which is significant in itself. If the boundary did originate in the late prehistoric period, then its significance would be further increased.

No other archaeological features or deposits were found within the trench. This suggests that the land in the vicinity of the proposed new building was not the site of domestic or other activity during the medieval and later periods, despite its proximity to the parish church and village centre.



5. REFERENCES

Albion Archaeology 2011. *Land at the Causeway, West Wrating, Cambridgeshire: Project Design for Archaeological Trial Trenching*. Ref 2011/10.

CAPCA 2010. *Brief for Archaeological Evaluation: The Causeway, West Wrating*. January 6th 2011.



6. APPENDIX 1: TRENCH SUMMARY



Trench: 1

Max Dimensions: Length: 10.00 m. Width: 1.60 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.4 m. Max: 1.2 m.

Co-ordinates: OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 60498: Northing: 52344)

OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 60506: Northing: 52338)

Reason: To evaluate area within proposed new building footprint.

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
100	Topsoil	Friable dark brown grey clay silt occasional flecks charcoal, occasional small-medium stones 0.42m thick.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
101	Make up layer	Friable mid brown grey clay silt frequent flecks chalk, moderate small chalk, occasional flecks charcoal 0.25m thick.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
102	Buried topsoil	Firm mid brown grey clay silt occasional flecks chalk, occasional flecks charcoal, occasional small-medium stones 0.50m thick.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
103	Subsoil	Firm mid orange brown silty clay occasional flecks chalk, occasional small stones 0.68m thick.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
104	Natural	Firm light yellow brown chalky clay frequent flecks chalk, moderate small-medium chalk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
105	Ditch	Linear NE-SW sides: near vertical base: concave dimensions: min breadth 1.m, min depth 0.63m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
106	Primary fill	Firm light orange brown silty clay occasional small stones 0.08m thick.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
107	Fill	Firm mid grey brown silty clay occasional flecks chalk, occasional small stones 0.30m thick.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
108	Fill	Firm mid brown grey silty clay occasional flecks chalk, occasional small stones 0.13m thick.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
109	Upper fill	Firm mid grey brown silty clay occasional flecks chalk, occasional small stones 0.25m thick.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
110	Ditch	Linear NE-SW sides: convex base: concave dimensions: min breadth 0.62m, min depth 0.35m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
111	Fill	Firm mid brown grey silty clay occasional flecks chalk, occasional small stones 0.35m thick.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
112	Ditch	Linear NE-SW sides: concave base: flat dimensions: min breadth 1.46m, min depth 1.08m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
113	Primary fill	Firm mid grey brown silty clay moderate flecks chalk, occasional small stones 0.37m thick.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
114	Fill	Firm mid yellow brown silty clay occasional flecks chalk, occasional small stones 0.08m thick.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
115	Upper fill	Firm mid grey brown silty clay occasional flecks chalk, occasional small stones 0.7m thick.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
116	Ditch	Linear NE-SW sides: steep dimensions: min breadth 0.72m, min depth 1.42m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
117	Fill	Firm mid grey brown silty clay moderate flecks chalk, occasional small stones 1.42m thick.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
118	Ditch	Linear NE-SW sides: convex base: concave dimensions: min breadth 2.97m, max depth 1.52m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
119	Primary fill	Firm mid grey brown silty clay moderate flecks chalk, occasional small stones 0.40m thick.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
120	Fill	Firm light brown yellow silty clay moderate flecks chalk, occasional small stones 0.15m thick.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
121	Upper Fill	Firm mid grey brown silty clay occasional flecks chalk, occasional small stones 0.87m thick.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Trench: 1

Max Dimensions: Length: 10.00 m. Width: 1.60 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.4 m. Max: 1.2 m.

Co-ordinates: OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 60498: Northing: 52344)

OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 60506: Northing: 52338)

Reason: To evaluate area within proposed new building footprint.

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
122	Ditch	Linear NE-SW sides: convex base: concave dimensions: max breadth 4.m, max depth 1.55m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
123	Primary fill	Friable mid grey clay silt moderate flecks chalk, occasional flecks charcoal, occasional small stones 0.25m thick.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
124	Fill	Friable dark brown grey clay silt occasional flecks chalk, occasional small-medium stones 0.54m thick.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
125	Backfill	Friable dark brown grey clay silt frequent small-large chalk, occasional flecks charcoal, occasional small stones 0.17m thick.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
126	Upper fill	Friable mid grey clay silt moderate flecks chalk, moderate small chalk, occasional flecks charcoal 0.20m thick.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
127	Natural	Firm mid brown orange silty clay occasional flecks chalk	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



7. APPENDIX 2: FINDS SUMMARY

An abraded, coarse flint-tempered sherd (1g) of late Bronze Age/early Iron Age date was recovered from fill (107) of ditch [105].

The secondary fill (124) of ditch [122] contained a post-medieval clay tobacco pipe stem (3g). The upper fill (126) of the same feature yielded: an incomplete, gault clay, perforated brick of mid-late 19th-century date; a modern concrete paviour; a piece of clinker (14g); and an animal bone fragment (6g) deriving from a large mammal.



8. APPENDIX 3: OASIS DATA FORM

OASIS ID: albionar1-93813

Project details

Project name	The Causeway, West Wrattling
Short description of the project	Planning permission for the construction of a dwelling at The Causeway, West Wrattling has been granted by South Cambridgeshire District Council. The development site is located in the medieval core of West Wrattling. On the opposite side of the Causeway sits the 13th-century St Andrew's Church and to the north is West Wrattling Hall. Approximately 300m to north-east lies the site of a possible Roman farmstead and to the north-west, at a distance of 130m and 200m respectively, lie undated earthworks and an earthwork bank. In February 2011, a 10m x 1.6m trial trench was excavated within the footprint of the proposed new building. It revealed a land boundary that had been in use for many centuries. It had been periodically recut, with its final recut and infilling happening in recent times. The dating of the earliest phase of the ditch is uncertain due to the recovery of only one small sherd of abraded late Bronze Age/early Iron Age pottery. However, the absence of other finds and the nature of the fill of this feature do suggest that it is of some antiquity. The boundary was very likely in existence during the medieval period but a prehistoric date for its origin cannot be ruled out. No other archaeological features or deposits were found within the trench. This suggests that the land in the vicinity of the proposed new building was not the site of domestic or other activity during the medieval and later periods despite its proximity to the parish church and village centre.
Project dates	Start: 21-02-2011 End: 22-02-2011
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	WW1750 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	ECB3527 - HER event no.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Current Land use	Vacant Land 2 - Vacant land not previously developed
Monument type	DITCH Uncertain
Significant Finds	POTTERY Early Iron Age
Methods & techniques	'Sample Trenches'
Development type	Small-scale (e.g. single house, etc.)
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)



Project location

Country England
 Site location CAMBRIDGESHIRE SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE WEST WRATTING The Causeway, West Wrating
 Study area 128.00 Square metres
 Site coordinates TL 6051 5234 52.1455464321 0.346077990453 52 08 43 N 000 20 45 E Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation Albion Archaeology
 Project brief originator Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
 Project design originator Albion Archaeology
 Project director/manager Robert Wardill
 Project supervisor Richard Gregson

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient Cambs County Archaeological Stores
 Physical Contents 'Ceramics', 'other'
 Digital Archive recipient Cambs County Archaeological Stores
 Digital Contents 'Ceramics', 'other'
 Digital Media available 'Database', 'Images raster / digital photography', 'Text'
 Paper Archive recipient Cambs County Archaeological Store
 Paper Contents 'Ceramics', 'other'
 Paper Media available 'Context sheet', 'Correspondence', 'Microfilm', 'Miscellaneous Material', 'Report'

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
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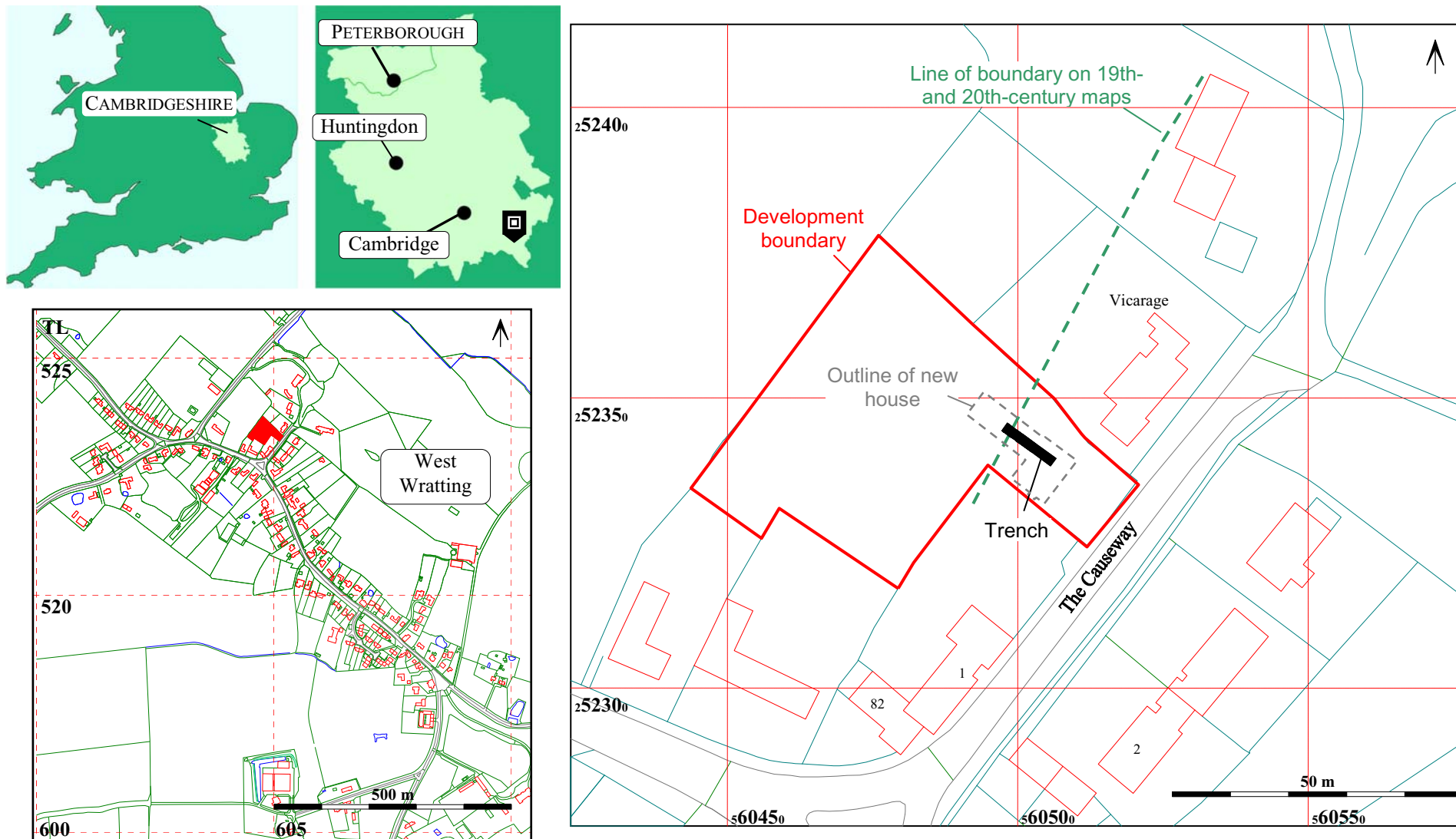
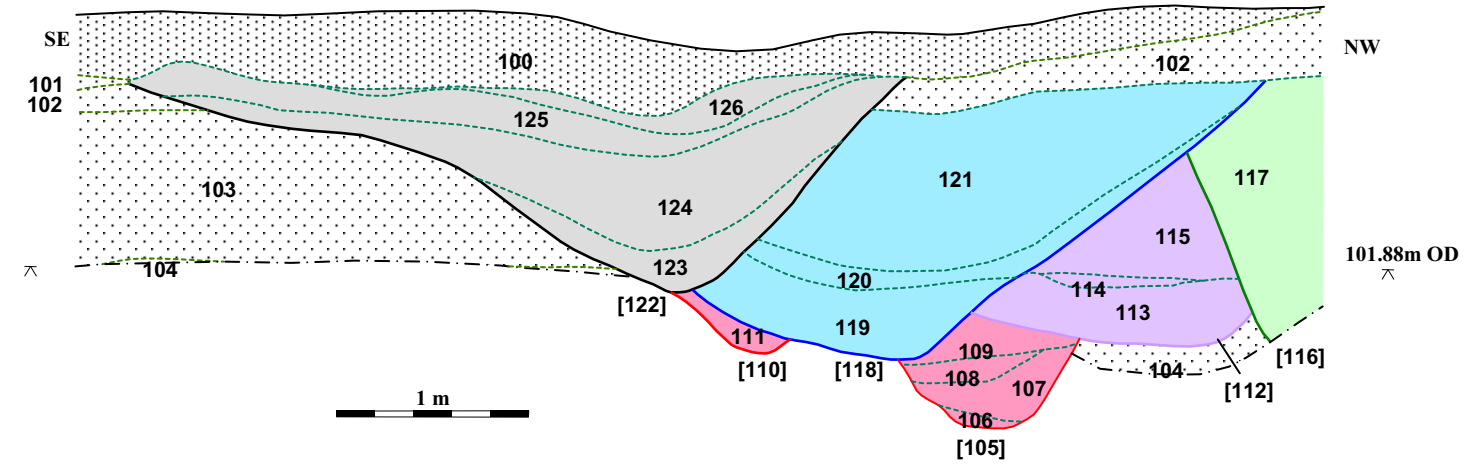
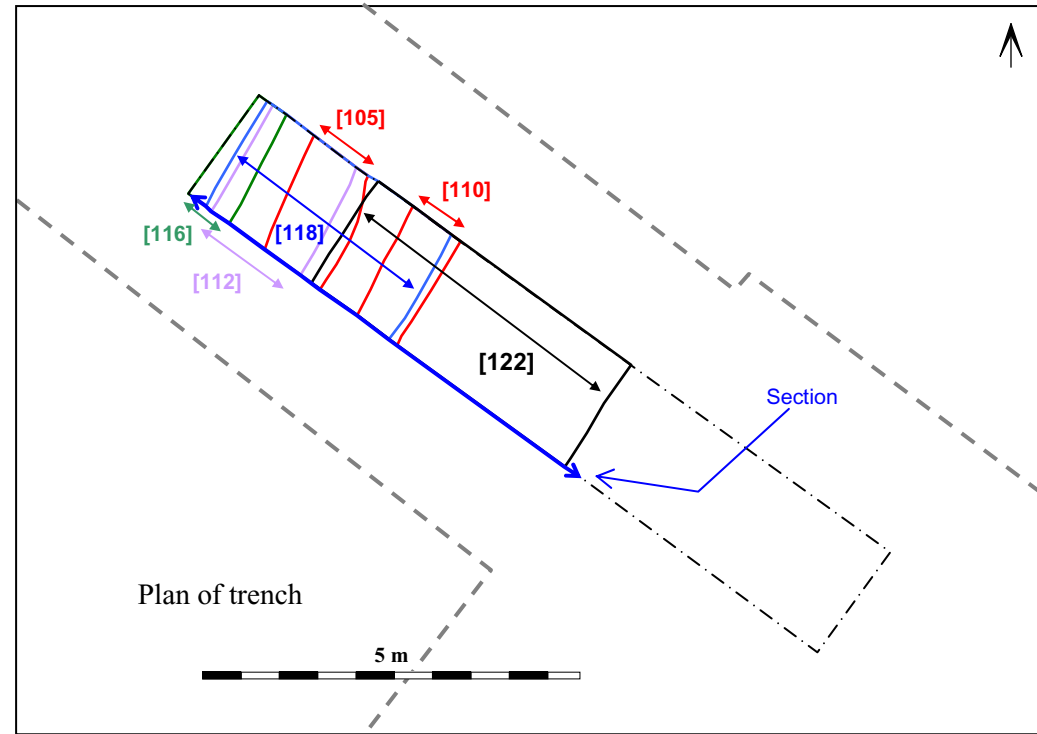


Figure 1: Site location plan

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Section through features. (Colours intended to aid matching of section and plan.)



Photograph of north-west end of trench showing all features. Scale 1m.



Photo-mosaic of section across features. Scale 1m.

Figure 2: Trench results