



Northamptonshire Archaeology

Archaeological evaluation on land at Fengrain
Hook Lane, Wimblington, Cambridgeshire
August 2011



Northamptonshire Archaeology

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Report 11/174

August 2011



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QUALITY CONTROL

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Verified by	Adam Yates		
Approved by	Andy Chapman		

OASIS 108986

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project title	Archaeological evaluation on land at Fengrain, Hook Lane, Wimblington, Cambridgeshire August 2011	
Short description	An archaeological trial trench evaluation was carried out to inform a planning application for the construction of a grain store, together with associated silos, dryer plant, gantry and balancing pond at Fengrain, Hook Lane, Wimblington, Cambridgeshire. The evaluation did not identify any significant archaeological remains.	
Project type	Trial trench evaluation	
Previous work	None	
Current land use	Arable	
Future work	Unknown	
Monument type and period	None	
Significant finds	None	
PROJECT LOCATION		
County	Cambridgeshire	
Site address	Fengrain, Hook Lane, Wimblington, Cambridgeshire	
Easting Northing	TL 4241 9327	
Area (sq m/ha)	0.6ha	
Height aOD	5m aOD	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA)	
Project brief originator	Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team Kasia Gdaniec	
Project Design originator	NA	
Director/Supervisor	Stephen Morris	
Project Manager	Adam Yates (NA), Mike Dawson (CgMs)	
Sponsor or funding body	CgMs Consulting, on behalf of Fengrain Ltd	
PROJECT DATE		
Start date	August 5th 2011	
End date	August 5th 2011	
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no.)	Contents
Physical	NA store	
Paper	ECB3638	Site records (1 small archive box)
Digital		Client report PDF
BIBLIOGRAPHY		Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (NA report)
Title	Archaeological evaluation on land at Fengrain, Hook Lane, Wimblington, Cambridgeshire August 2011	
Serial title & volume	11/174	
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OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

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OASIS ID: northamp3-108986

Project details

Project name Archaeological evaluation on land at Fengrain, Hook Lane, Wimblington, Cambridgeshire August 2011

Short description of the project An archaeological trial trench evaluation was carried out to inform a planning application for the construction of a grain store, together with associated silos, dryer plant, gantry and balancing pond at Fengrain, Hook Lane, Wimblington, Cambridgeshire. The evaluation did not identify any significant archaeological remains.

Project dates Start: 05-08-2011 End: 05-08-2011

Previous/future work No / Not known

Any associated project reference codes ECB3638 - HER event no.

Current Land use Cultivated Land 3 - Operations to a depth more than 0.25m

Monument type NONE None

Significant Finds NONE None

Project location

Country England

Site location CAMBRIDGESHIRE FENLAND WIMBLINGTON Fengrain, Hook Lane, Wimblington

Study area 6.00 Hectares

Site coordinates TL 4241 9327 52.5182895004 0.09906841837670 52 31 05 N 000 05 56 E Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 5.00m Max: 5.00m

Project creators

Name of Organisation Northamptonshire Archaeology

Project brief originator Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team

Project design originator Northamptonshire Archaeology

Project director/manager Mike Dawson, CgMs Consulting

Project director/manager Adam Yates
 Project supervisor Steve Morris
 Type of sponsor/funding body Developer
 Name of sponsor/funding body Fengrain

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No
 Digital Archive recipient Cambridgeshire County Archaeological Office
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 Digital Media available 'Images raster / digital photography','Text'
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 Paper Media available 'Photograph','Plan','Report','Section'

Project bibliography 1

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Back cover: Trench 1, looking north-west

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION OF LAND AT FENGRAIN, HOOK LANE, WIMBLINGTON, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

AUGUST 2011

Abstract

An archaeological trial trench evaluation was carried out to inform a planning application for the construction of a grain store, together with associated silos, gantry and balancing pond at Fengrain, Hook Lane, Wimblington, Cambridgeshire. The evaluation did not identify any significant archaeological remains.

1 INTRODUCTION

In August 2011, archaeological trial trench evaluation was carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA) on land at Fengrain, Hook Lane, Wimblington, Cambridgeshire (NGR: TL 4241 9327; Fig 1). The work was commissioned by CgMs Consulting on behalf of Fengrain Ltd.

The work was undertaken to inform a planning application (F/YR10/0226/F) for the erection of a grain store with associated silos, dryer plant, gantry and balancing pond. The evaluation met the requirements of a Brief issued by the Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team (Gdaniec 2011) and supplemented by a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by NA (NA 2011).

The objectives of the evaluation were to determine the presence of any archaeological features or deposits within the application area and to date and characterise their extent, depth of burial and state of preservation.

Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (HER) has assigned event number ECB3638 for the work.

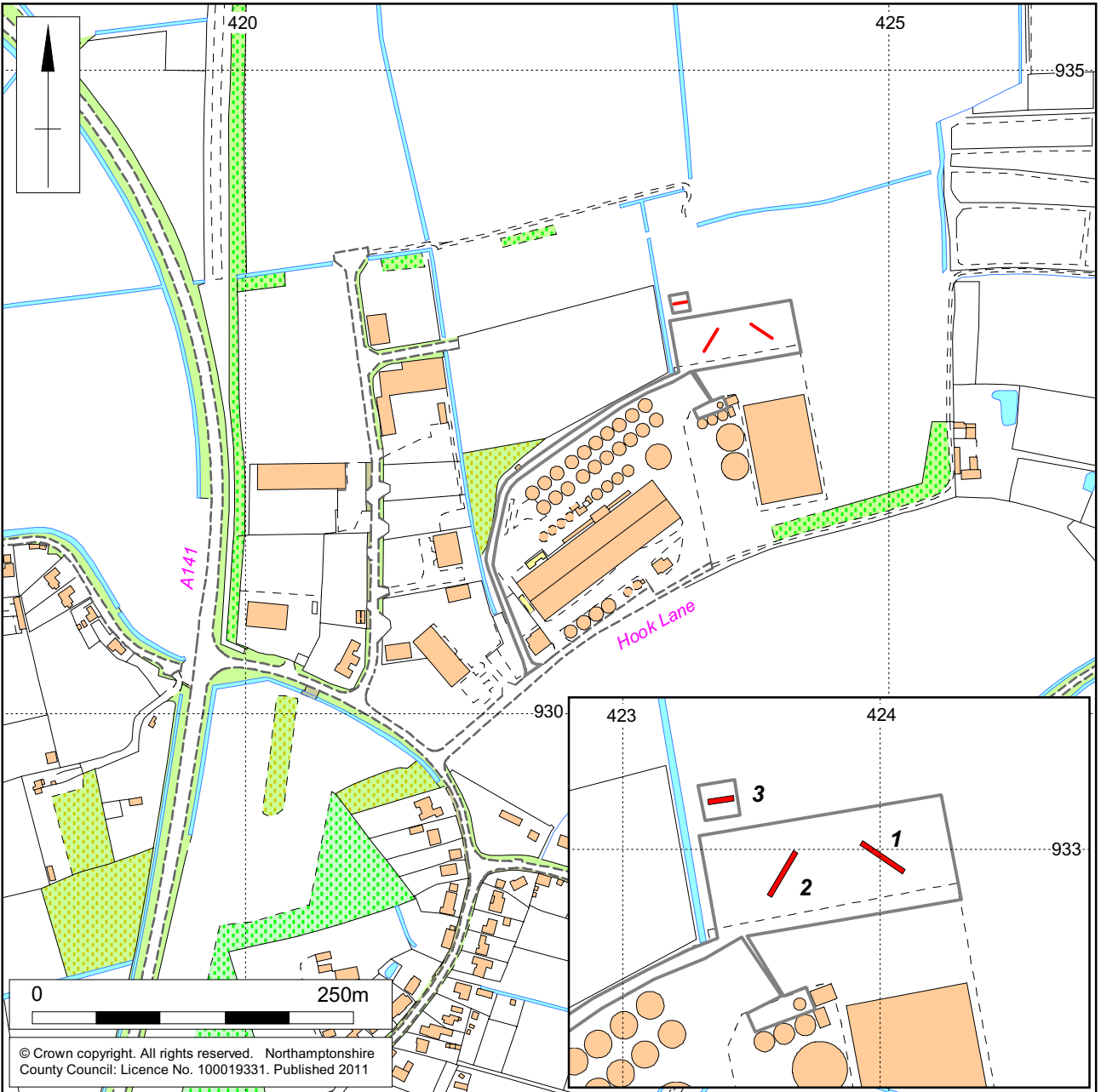
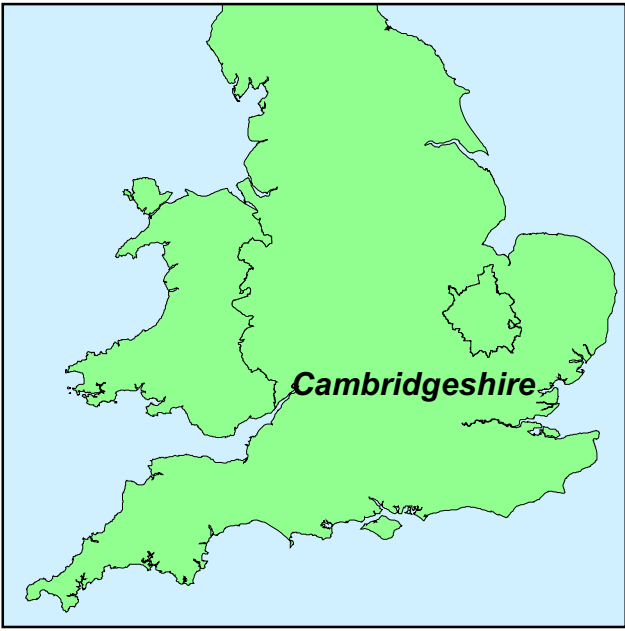
2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Location and topography

The proposed development is located in an open field immediately to the north of the existing Grain Intake Centre, adjacent to Eastwood End, which forms a distinct part of Wimblington. The site lies on a small knoll some 5m aOD high, which overlooks fen deposits to the north and east (Hall, fig 37).

2.2 Geology by Steve Critchley

The solid geology is composed of unexposed mudstones of the Ampthill Clay Formation, a part of the Ancholme Group of Jurassic age overlain by mid Pleistocene glacial tills deposited during the Lowestoft glaciation Stage of the Anglian Glaciation (BGS 1980). Composed of grey-brown stiff stoney clays the tills have suffered later alteration by the effects of late Pleistocene Devensian Stage periglacial ground ice erosion. The latter features were observed to be mainly cryoturbation involutions with some ice wedges picked out by their end stage orange-brown sandy infills (Burton 1987).



Scale 1:5000 (Inset 1:2500)

Site location Fig 1

This was the case in trenches 1 and 2 (Figs 3 and 5), whereas the exposed till in trench 3 consisted predominantly of derived chalk incorporated into the till as frozen bedrock/regolith (Fig 7).

2.3 Historical and archaeological background

The site was included in the Fenland Survey but no significant archaeological remains or artefacts were found (Hall 1992, fig 36; 30m transects and good conditions).

A 500m radius search of Cambridgeshire's Historic Environment Record (HER) has been undertaken. The following presents a brief summary of the notable entries (Fig 2):

A combination of aerial photography, fieldwalking and trial trench evaluation has identified a series of Iron Age and Roman settlement and field systems to the north (CHER 08984) and south (CHER 10006, 11416B, MCB18530 and MCB17555) of the site.

Eastwood End may have its origins in the medieval period and archaeological investigation at Plot 2 Bridge identified possible buildings dating to the fourteenth to fifteenth centuries. The Fenland Survey shows a roughly T-shaped settlement, presumably based on the contemporary street pattern, which does not extend as far as the Grain Intake Centre. This conclusion may be supported by the absence of medieval remains in the northern part of Bridge Lane where only plough furrow and more recent ditches were found (MCB16926).

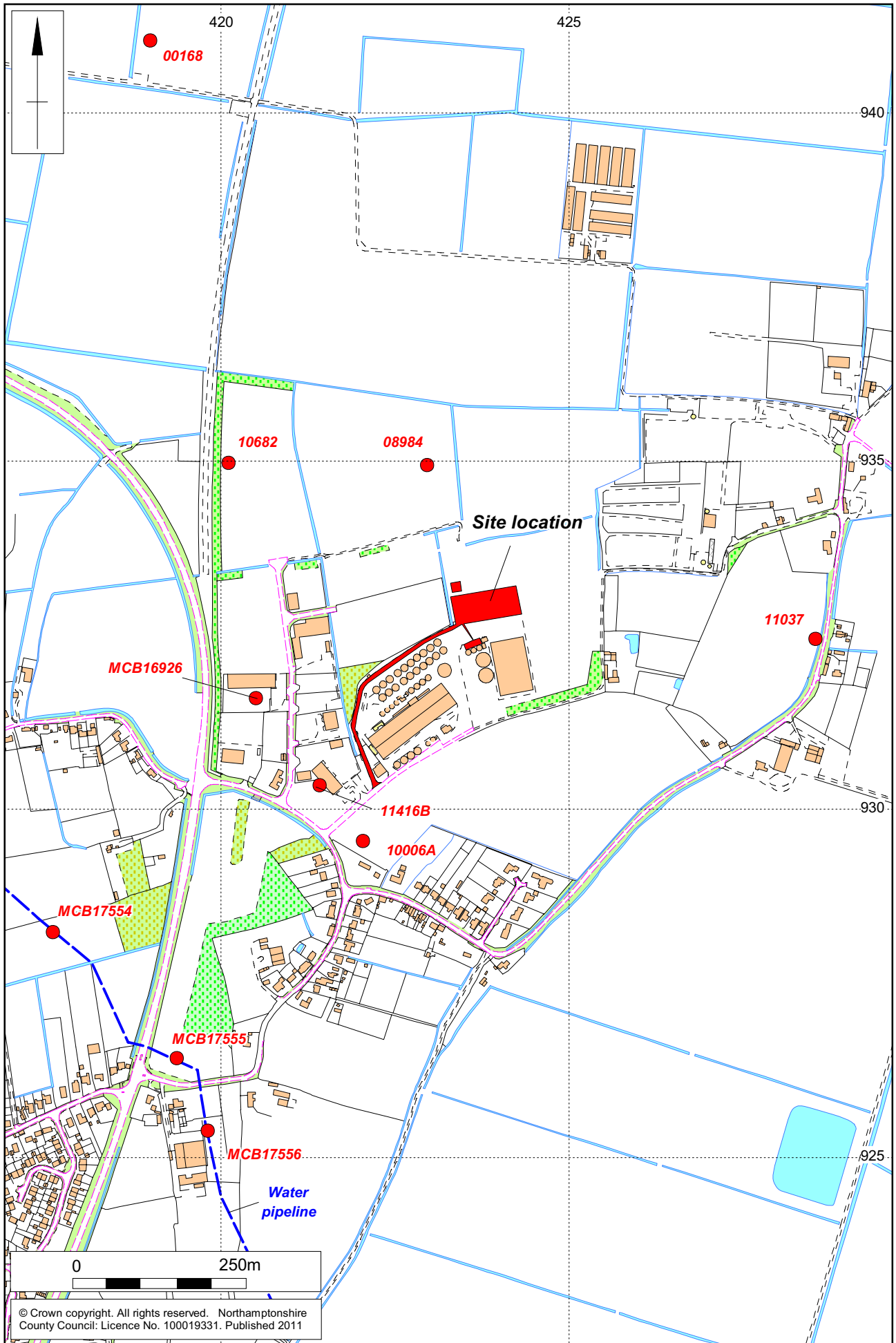
Other entries comprise undated ditches (MCB17554 and MCB 17556), a soil mark (CHER 00168), a possibly recent bank (CHER 10682) and a silted canal and peat cutting (CHER 11037).

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the work is to determine and understand the nature, function and character of the archaeological site in its cultural and environmental setting.

The aims of the work were to investigate:

- the character, location, extent, nature and date of any archaeological features or deposits that may be present,
- the presence or absence of any palaeosol or other buried soil horizon,
- the integrity and state of preservation of features or deposits,
- the potential significance of the archaeological remains encountered.



Scale 1:7500 (A3) Site location plan showing Historic Environment Record (HER) data Fig 2

4 METHODOLOGY

The work comprised the excavation of three trial trenches, totalling 50m in length by 2m in width. Two of the trenches, each 20m long, were positioned to investigate the footprint of the proposed grain store (Fig 1, trenches 1 and 2). The other, which was 10m long, was located in the area of the new balancing pond (Fig 1, trench 3).

A JCB mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.8m wide toothless ditching bucket was used to remove overburden to the natural substrate. Deposits were examined by hand excavation to determine their nature.

Recording followed standard NA procedures as described in the *Fieldwork Manual* (NA 2006). Deposits were described on *pro-forma* sheets to include measured and descriptive details of the context, its relationships and interpretation. A photographic record was made using 35mm black and white negative film and 35mm colour slide and digital images.

The topsoil at both ends of each trench was hand sorted for artefacts in order to characterise the content of the ploughsoil. Spoil heaps were scanned by eye and using a metal detector to maximise the recovery of any artefacts.

All works were conducted in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (IfA 2010) and *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (IfA 1994, revised 2008).

5 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

In trenches 1 and 2, the natural substrate (section 2.2) was overlain by an orange-brown sandy loam subsoil, 0.10m-0.20m thick (Figs 4 and 6). The subsoil was absent in trench 3 (Fig 8).

The subsoil was overlain by dark grey-brown clayey loam topsoil which was 0.25m and 0.30m thick in trenches 1 and 2, and deepened to 0.40m in trench 3.

Four modern land drains were present in the western half of trench 2. They were aligned roughly north-south and spaced 1.50m apart (Fig 5). Otherwise no archaeological remains were encountered in the trenches and no artefacts were found.

Trench 1



Trench 1, looking north-west

Fig 3



Trench 1, typical section, looking north-east

Fig 4

Trench 2



Trench 2, looking south-west

Fig 5



Trench 2, typical section looking south-east

Fig 6

Trench 3



Trench 3, looking west Fig 7



Trench 3, typical section looking north Fig 8

6 DISCUSSION

The site of the proposed development lies in an area of significant Iron Age and Roman activity, while the medieval hamlet of Eastwood End is nearby. However, the archaeological evaluation established that no remains or artefacts associated with these activities extended into the development area and that no other remains are present.

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APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT DATA

Trench no	Context	Type	Description	Thickness (m)
1	101	Layer	Topsoil. Dark grey-brown clayey loam	0.25m-0.30m
	102	Layer	Subsoil. Orange-brown sandy loam	0.10m
	103	Layer	Natural. Orange-brown sand with grey chalk	

Trench no	Context	Type	Description	Thickness (m)
2	201	Layer	Topsoil. Dark grey-brown clayey loam	0.25m-0.30m
	202	Layer	Subsoil. Orange brown sandy loam Occasional charcoal flecks	0.10m-0.15m
	203	Layer	Natural. Orange-brown sand with grey chalk	

Trench no	Context	Type	Description	Thickness (m)
3	301	Layer	Topsoil. Dark grey-brown clayey loam	0.40m
	302	Layer	Natural. Light yellow-white chalk with sand	



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