



# Northamptonshire Archaeology

Archaeological evaluation at 124 Creek Road  
March, Cambridgeshire  
May 2010, ECB 3379



## Northamptonshire Archaeology

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Northamptonshire  
County Council

Tim Upson-Smith

Report 10/128

July 2010



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**QUALITY CONTROL**

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**OASIS REPORT FORM**

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>	
Project title	Archaeological evaluation at 124 Creek Road, March, Cambridgeshire May 2010, ECB 3379
An archaeological evaluation comprising a single 10m long trial trench was undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology on land at 124 Creek Road, March ahead of proposed residential and commercial development. The evaluation identified a ditch, which was undated, and a late 19th-century brick-lined sump, probably for a two-hole toilet.	
Project type	Evaluation
Previous work	none
Future work	Unknown
Monument type and period	undated
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>	
County	Cambridgeshire
Site address	124 Creek Road, March, Cambridgeshire
Area	370 sq m
Easting / Northing	TL4207 9717
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>	
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology
Project brief originator	Cambridgeshire County Council
Project Design originator	Northamptonshire Archaeology
Director/Supervisor	Tim Upson-Smith
Project Manager	Antony Walsh
Sponsor or funding body	Rebecca Amps
<b>PROJECT DATE</b>	
Start date	May 2010
End date	May 2010
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	
Title	Archaeological Evaluation 124 Creek Road, March, Cambridgeshire
Serial title & volume	Northamptonshire Archaeology Report 10/128
Author(s)	Tim Upson-Smith
Page numbers	12
Date	July 2010

SITE NAME:	124 - 124A Creek Road, March
NATIONAL GRID REF:	TL 4207 9717
CLIENT:	Rebecca Amps
DATE:	12 May 2010
CONTRACTOR:	Northamptonshire Archaeology
	2 Bolton House
	Wootton Hall Park
	Northampton, NN4 8BE
EVENT NUMBER:	ECB 3379

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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION AT 124 CREEK ROAD,  
MARCH, CAMBRIDGESHIRE  
MAY 2010  
ECB 3379**

*Abstract*

*An archaeological evaluation comprising a single 10m long trial trench was undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology on land at 124 Creek Road, March ahead of proposed residential and commercial development. The evaluation identified a ditch, which was undated, and a late 19th-century brick-lined sump, probably for a two-hole toilet.*

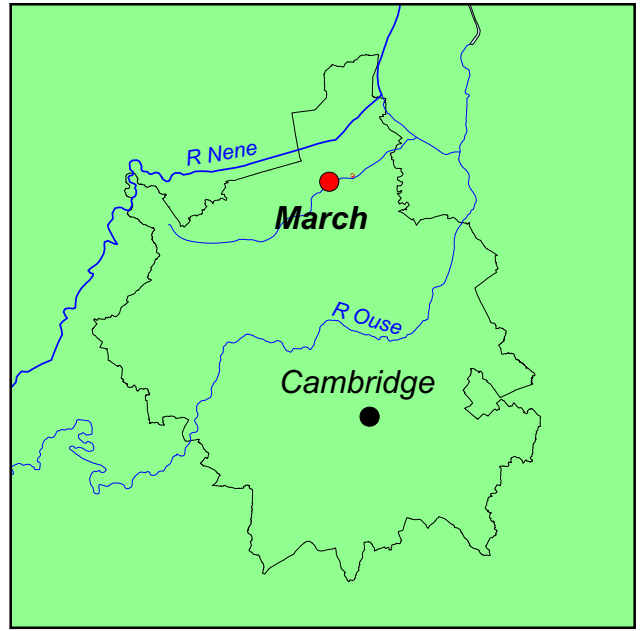
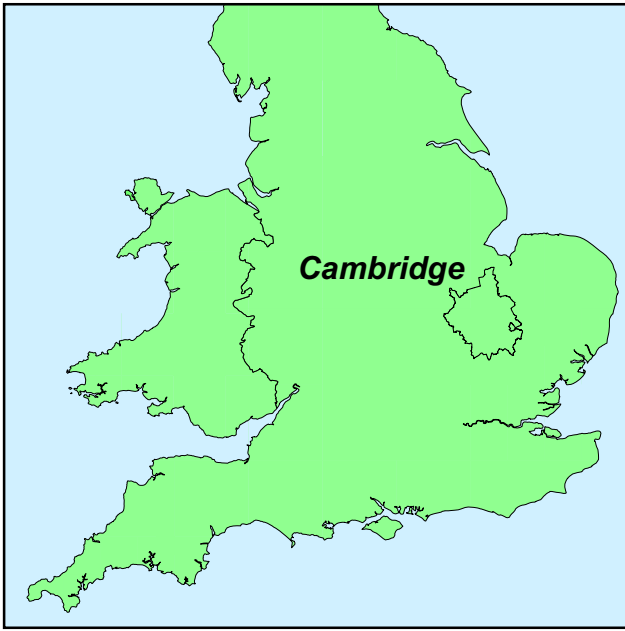
## **1 INTRODUCTION**

Northamptonshire Archaeology were commissioned by Rebecca Amps to undertake an archaeological evaluation consisting of a single 10m long trial trench on land at 124 Creek Road, March, Cambridgeshire (Fig 1 and 2; NGR TL4207 9717). The work was undertaken to inform a planning application for the proposed development consisting of the erection of a three-bedroom house and an attached shop with parking (Planning Application: F/YR09/0260/F).

The work was carried out in accordance with the agreed specification produced by Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA 2010) to meet the requirements of the Design Brief written by the Cambridgeshire Archaeology Planning and Countryside Advice office (CAPCA) (McConnell 19 June 2009). The work was also carried in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (IfA 1994, revised 2008) and *Code of Conduct* (2010) and the Northamptonshire Archaeology *Fieldwork Manual* (2003).

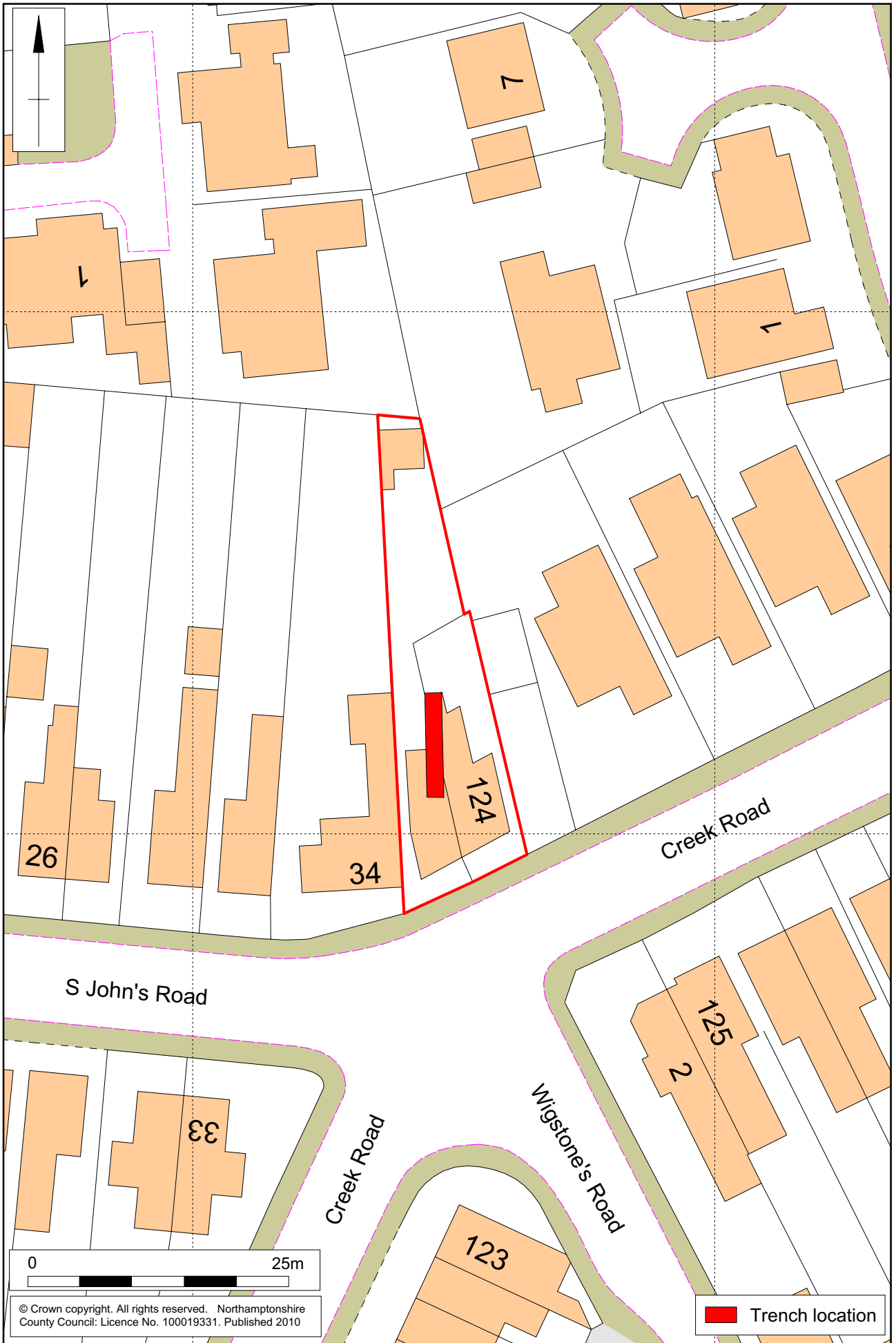
All stages of the project were undertaken in accordance with English Heritage, *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (MoRPHE) (2006). Fieldwork was conducted in accordance with *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003). Reference was made to *Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties 1: Resource Assessment* (Glazebrook 1997) and *Research and Archaeology: a Framework for the Eastern Counties 2, Research Agenda and Strategy* (Brown and Glazebrook 2000).

The fieldwork was conducted on the 18th May 2010.



Scale 1:5000

Site Location Fig 1



Scale 1:500

Trench location Fig 2

## 2 BACKGROUND

### 2.1 Historical background

The site lies within an area of archaeological interest, and was believed to have high archaeological potential. A search of the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record was requested, centred on the site (Fig 3).

Bronze Age pottery was found during construction of the Peterborough and Ely branch of the Great Eastern Railway in the early 1860s (05924). More recently, during excavation in 2001-3, archaeology of a similar date was found at the Northern Office Headquarters site (CB15266), comprising a series of late Bronze Age to mid Iron Age ditches, interpreted as the remains of enclosures and/or drove-ways. A single crouched inhumation burial was also found.

A series of prehistoric ditches and two pits were recorded on Creek Road, to the north-east (CB15633, ECB1321). An Iron Age bowl was found in 1938 to the south of Norwood Avenue (05922).

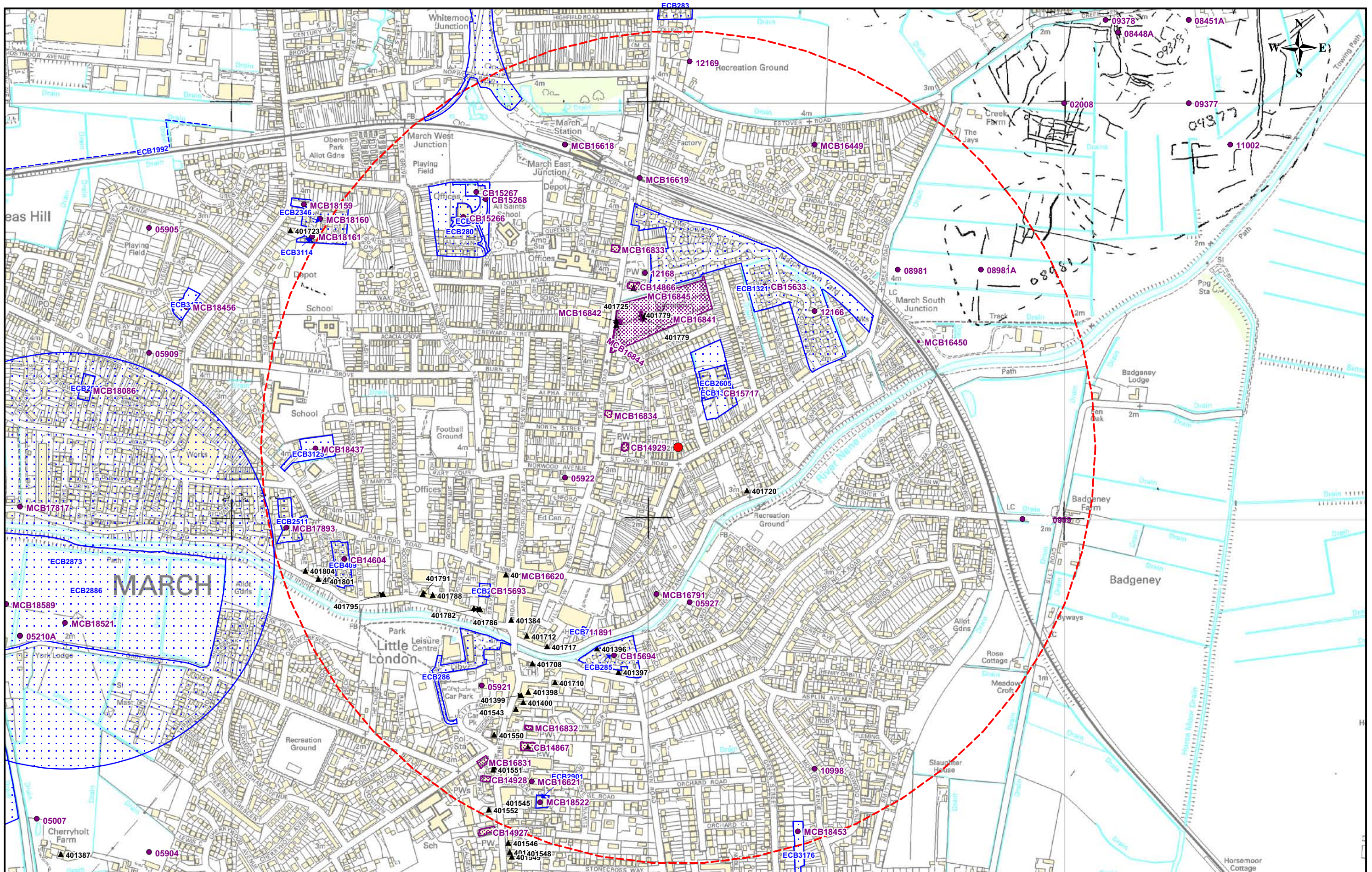
The site lies in an area of known Roman settlement activity. Cropmark evidence c 1km to the north and east shows extensive areas of Roman settlement, field systems and droveways (eg Historic Environment Nos. MCB10768, MCB2571, MCB11188 and MCB12935). Approximately 75m to the north-east, at Cedar Close, is an area of salt production dating to the Roman period (CB15717, ECB2605 and ECB1394), evaluated by Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Field Unit in 2003 and excavated by APS Archaeology in 2007.

Most of the entries nearest the site relate to religious and burial provision in the 19th century. To the north-east is a former Methodist chapel, fronting onto Station Road, built in 1848 (MCB16834). To the north is the civic cemetery, built in 1867-8 (MCB16845, MCB16841, MCB16844) and the parish church of St John (CB14866) built in 1872, designed by TH Wyatt. Directly west of the site is the Roman Catholic Church of Our Lady and St Peter, St. John's Road, built in 1912 (CB14929).

Listed buildings are recorded concentrated along Nene Parade, towards West End and south of the River Nene along High Street. The closest are to the south-west, the memorial erected to mark the coronation of George V in 1910 (MCB16620) and to the south-east, number 93 Nene Parade, an early 19th-century domestic house (401720). Further afield, to the north there is the main railway building, with canopy (dated to the 1860s (MCB16618) and the signal box (MCB16619) and down the line



south of March South Junction there is a World War II pillbox (Type Fw3/22; MCB16450).



Scale (at A3): 1:15000

Date: 13/05/2010

By: cl554

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## **2.2 Topography and geology**

The site is flat, located on the edge of the medieval core of March, centred on TL 4207 9717, on the north side of Creek Road, facing the junction with Wigstone's Road.

March sits on a gravel and clay island, on the old course of the River Nene, surrounded by peaty fen (BGS 1989). The underlying geology of the site comprises Amphill Clay formations. (<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/GeoIndex/index.htm>). The site lies at c3.0m AOD.

## **3 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Objectives**

The objectives of the archaeological evaluation were to obtain sufficient information to establish the extent, character, quality, date and condition of any archaeological features, structures, deposits, artefacts and ecofacts within the area affected by the proposed development.

### **3.2 Methodology**

The evaluation comprised the excavation of one 10m long trench within the proposed development area (Fig 1 & 2).

Topsoil and overburden was removed by mechanical excavator using a 1.6m wide toothless ditching bucket under archaeological supervision. The spoil generated during the evaluation was mounded away from the edges of each trench. Mechanical excavation ceased at undisturbed natural deposits or when archaeological features were identified.

The trench was cleaned by hand to assist the identification and interpretation of exposed archaeological features and the nature of identified features was assessed by sample excavation.

The trench was recorded at 1:20 scale by measured drawing and photography and was located to Ordnance Survey National Grid. The deposits encountered were described fully on individual context recording sheets. The sections of excavated archaeological features were recorded by measured drawing at 1:10. Spot heights and those of individual features were recorded relative to Ordnance Datum.

A photographic record, utilising negative film, supplemented by high resolution digital photography, was maintained during the course of the fieldwork.

## **4 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE**

The trench contained one ditch, which was undated, and the base of a two-hole privy, probably of late 19th or early 20th century date (Fig 4).

Natural Amphill clay [104] was exposed in the trench, c0.55m below the ground surface and was overlain by a mottled orange-brown subsoil, c0.2m thick, which in turn was overlain by dark brown silty-clay loam topsoil. The entire site was covered by a loose mix of topsoil and brick/concrete, a rubble demolition layer.

### **4.1 Ditch 106**

A ditch, [106], was cut into the natural clay (104), and was aligned east-west. It was 1.67m wide and 0.44m deep, with a steep U-shaped profile splaying at the top, and a flat base (Fig 5, Section 2). The fill (105) was a firm mid brown-orange mottled silt.

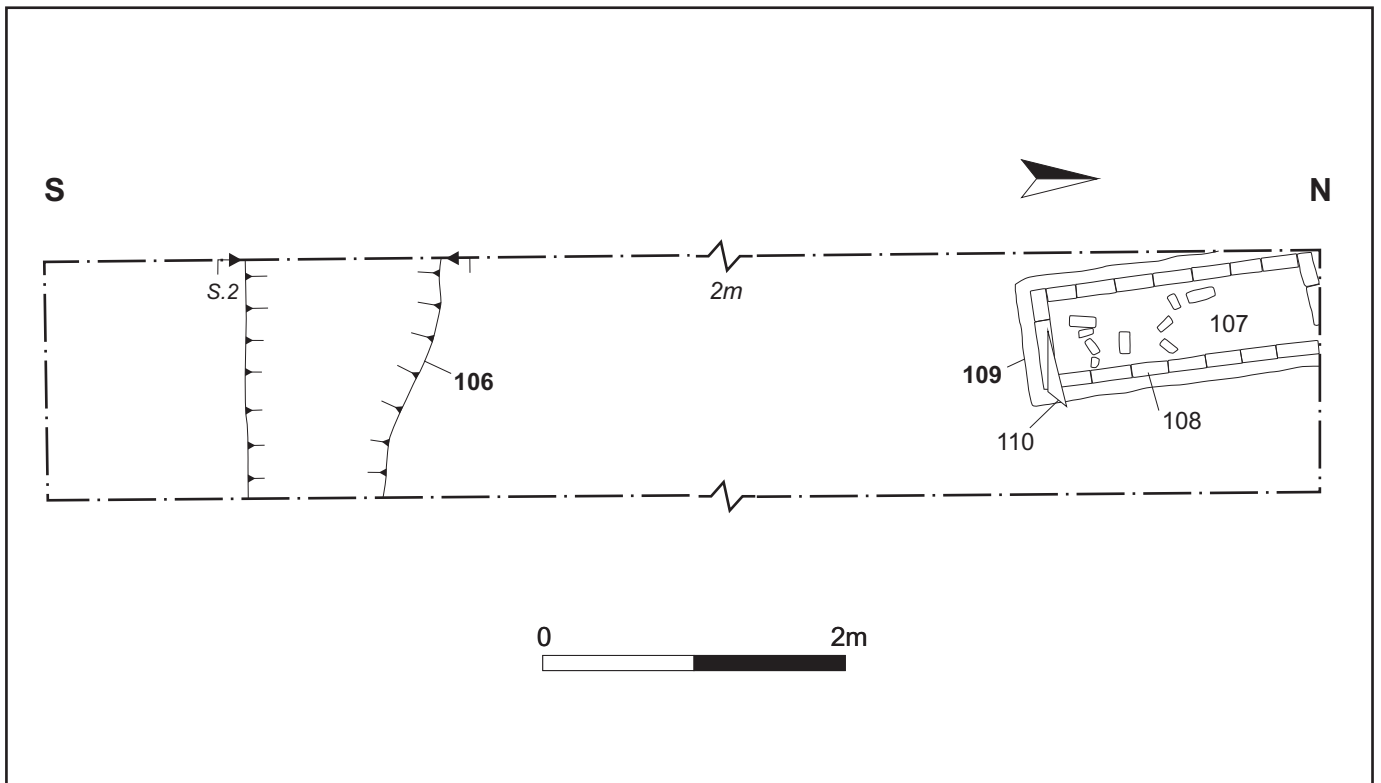
The complete length of the ditch visible in the trench was excavated. No finds were recovered from fill.

### **4.2 Two-hole privy.**

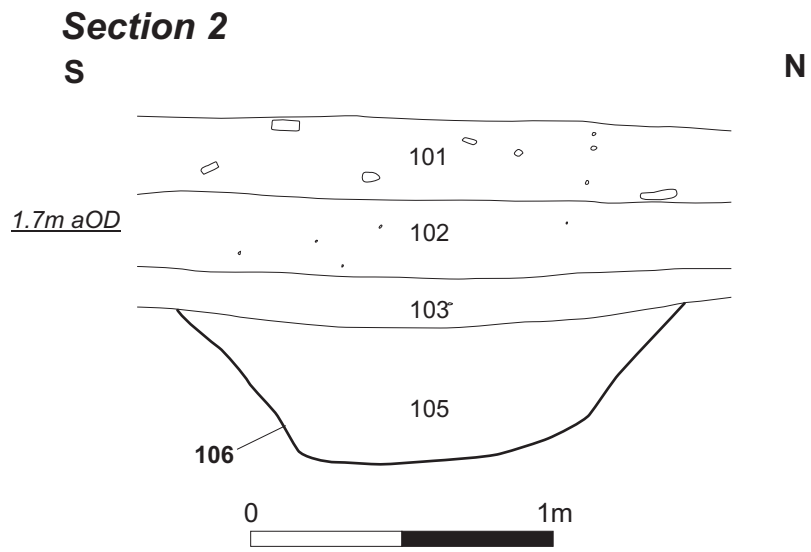
The foundations of a brick built external privy [108] was encountered at the north end of the trench (Fig 4). It was rectangular, and was 1.8m long, and 0.63m wide, laid within a foundation cut [109], 0.11m wider than the structure. The foundation pit was backfilled with a dark brown silty-clay (110). The bricks were orange-red and measured 230mm x 110mm x 65mm (9 x 4¼ x 2¾ inches). They were laid in a stretcher bond in a single skin thick.

## **5 FINDS**

No finds were recovered from the evaluation.



Plan of trench (1:50) and general view of trench, looking north Fig 4



Section 2, ditch [106] and view of ditch at trench section, looking west Fig 5

## **6 DISCUSSION**

No prehistoric, Roman or demonstrably medieval archaeology was found in the evaluation.

There was one ditch which was fully excavated. However, no finds were present in the fill of the ditch to suggest a date for the feature, although it predated the recently demolished buildings. The absence of finds and lack of charcoal in the feature fill suggests that the ditch lay away from any centre of occupation and it is most likely to be the base of a boundary ditch. Its orientation, east to west, is the same as the general line of Creek Road and St John's Road and might suggest that the line of the roads was further north at one time.

The base of the small brick privy was probably part of the recently demolished buildings, still shown on the current mapping.

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## **Web pages**

<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/GeoIndex/index.htm>

Northamptonshire Archaeology

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30 July 2010



**APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT DATA**

Trench	Context	Type	Description	Dimensions /thickness (m)	Artefact type
1	101	Rubble backfill	Loose mix of brown loamy soil, brick and concrete rubble inclusions	0.2m thick	-
	102	Topsoil levelling	Firm dark brown silty-clay loam with brick inclusions	0.15m thick	-
	103	Subsoil	Mottled orange dark brown silty-clay	0.2m thick	-
	104	Natural	Grey-orange mottled clay		-
	105	Fill of ditch	Mid brown-orange mottled silt	0.44m thick	-
	106	Cut of ditch	Linear feature aligned east-west U-shaped	1.67m wide	-
	107	Backfill of toilet	Mottled grey clay with rubble brick inclusions	Not excavated	-
	108	Brick structure	Single width brick outdoor toilet	1.84m long, 0.63m wide	-
	109	Foundation cut	NNW-SSE aligned rectangular cut	1.86m long, 0.18m wide	-
	110	Fill of foundation cut	Dark brown silty-clay	0.18m wide	-



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