

## Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION:  
ORCHARD FARM  
FOXTON  
CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

NGR: TL 4213 4690

*on behalf of Frederic Smart & Son Ltd*



David Kaye BA AIFA

December 2009

ASC: 1239/FOF/2



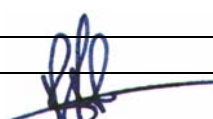
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## Site Data

<i>ASC project code:</i>	FOF	<i>ASC project no:</i>	1239
<i>OASIS ref:</i>	Archaeol2-69107	<i>Event/Accession no:</i>	ECB3306
<i>County:</i>	Cambridgeshire		
<i>Village/Town:</i>	Foxton		
<i>Civil Parish:</i>	Foxton		
<i>NGR (to 8 figs):</i>	TL 4213 4690		
<i>Extent of site:</i>	c.925 sq m		
<i>Present use:</i>	Grass/scrub land		
<i>Planning proposal:</i>	New grain storage building and associated landscaping		
<i>Planning application ref/date:</i>	S/0508/09/F		
<i>Local Planning Authority:</i>	South Cambridgeshire District Council		
<i>Date of fieldwork:</i>	7.12.09		
<i>Commissioned by:</i>	Frederic Smart & Son Ltd Orchard Farm Fowlmere Road Foxton Cambridge CB2 6TA		
<i>Client:</i>	As above		
<i>Contact name:</i>	Douglas Smart		

## Internal Quality Check

<i>Primary Author:</i>	David Kaye BA AIFA	<i>Date:</i>	09.12.2009
<i>Revisions:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	
<i>Edited/Checked By:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	09.12.2009

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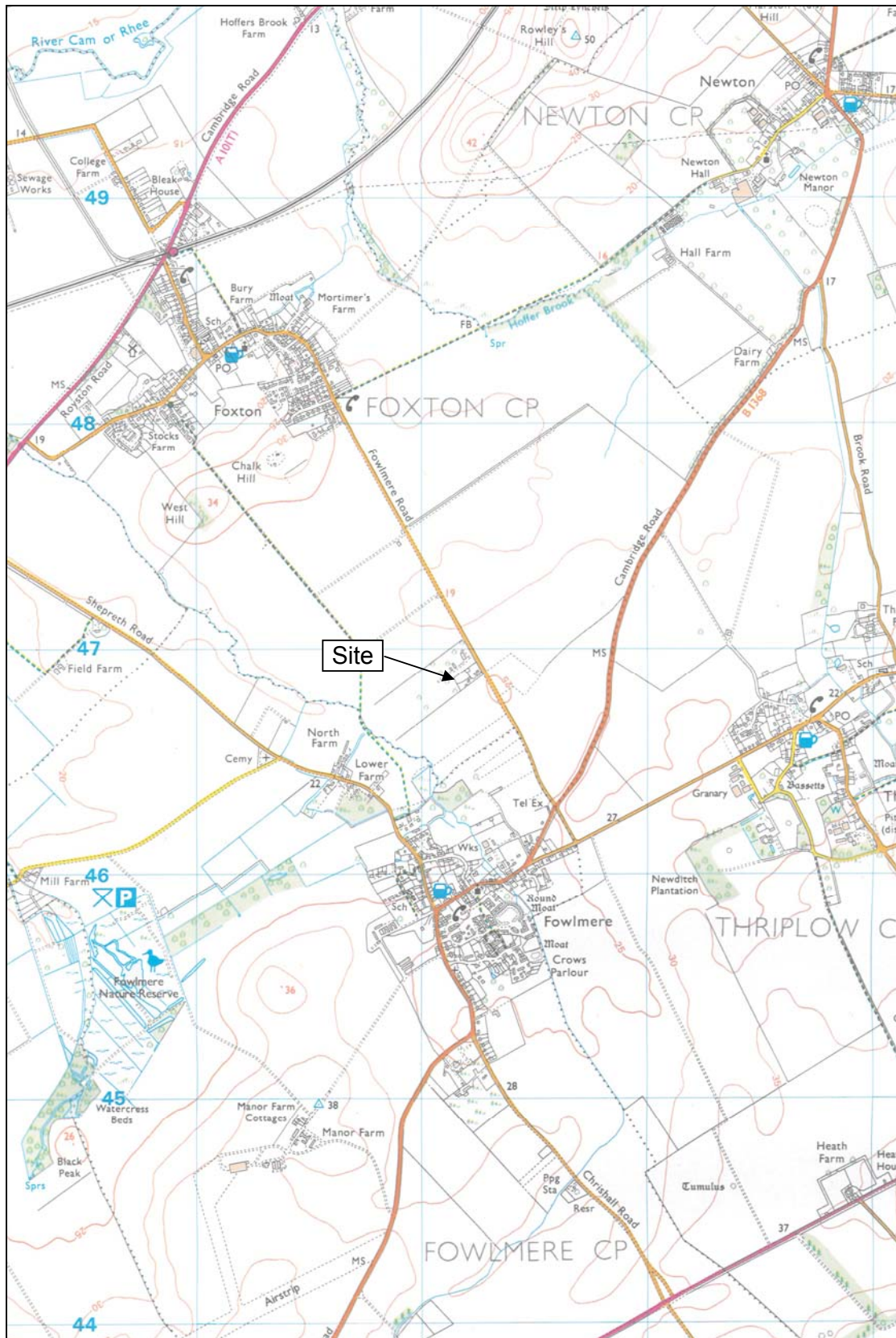
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**Figure 1:** General location (scale 1:25,000)

## Summary

*In December 2009 Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd carried out an evaluation at Orchard Farm, Foxton, Cambridgeshire. Two trenches were excavated, to explore whether the known Iron Age and Roman archaeology present in the adjacent fields, extended onto the site. No archaeological cut features, deposits or artefacts were encountered during the evaluation.*

*The stratigraphy of the site consisted of several layers of made ground, overlying the natural geology. It is likely that the ground was truncated during the construction of the adjacent grain store, in 2005. If there was archaeology present on the site at that time, it is probable that all but the deep cut features would have been destroyed.*

## 1. Introduction

1.1 In December 2009 *Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd* (ASC) carried out an evaluation at Orchard Farm, Foxton, Cambridgeshire. The project was commissioned by Frederic Smart and Son Ltd, and was carried out according to a brief (McConnell 2009) prepared on behalf of the local planning authority (LPA), *South Cambridgeshire District Council*, by their archaeological advisor (AA), *Cambridgeshire Archaeology Planning and Countryside Advice*, and a project design prepared by ASC (Rouse 2009). The relevant planning application reference is S/0508/09/F.

### 1.2 *Planning Background*

This evaluation was required under the terms of *Planning Policy Guidance Note 16* (PPG16), as a condition of planning permission for the development of the site.

### 1.3 *Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd*

*Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd* (ASC) is an independent archaeological practice providing a full range of archaeological services including consultancy, field evaluation, mitigation and post-excavation studies, historic building recording and analysis. ASC is recognised as a *Registered Organisation* by the Institute for Archaeologists, in recognition of its high standards and working practices.

### 1.4 *The Site*

#### 1.4.1 *Location & Description*

The development site is located in the parish of Foxton, in the administrative district of South Cambridgeshire (Fig. 1). It is situated on the west side of Fowlmere Road c.1km south of the village and is centred on Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference TL 4213 4690 (Fig. 2).

The development site comprises a rectangular plot of land located immediately to the southwest of an existing storage building. It is surrounded on the remaining sides by grass and scrub.

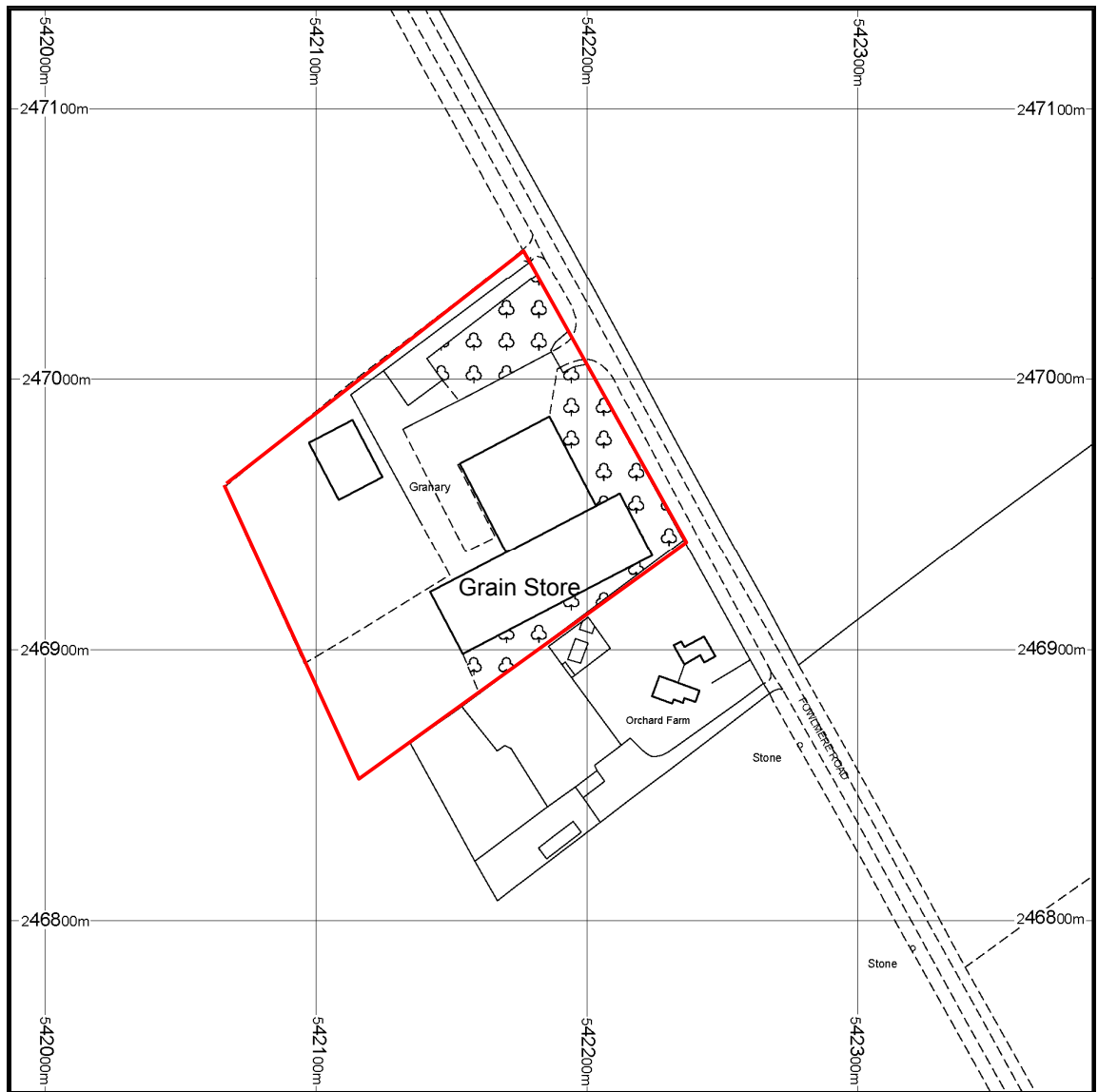
#### 1.4.2 *Geology & Topography*

The soils of the area belong to the Swaffham Prior Association, which are characterised as *well drained calcareous coarse and fine loamy soils over chalk*

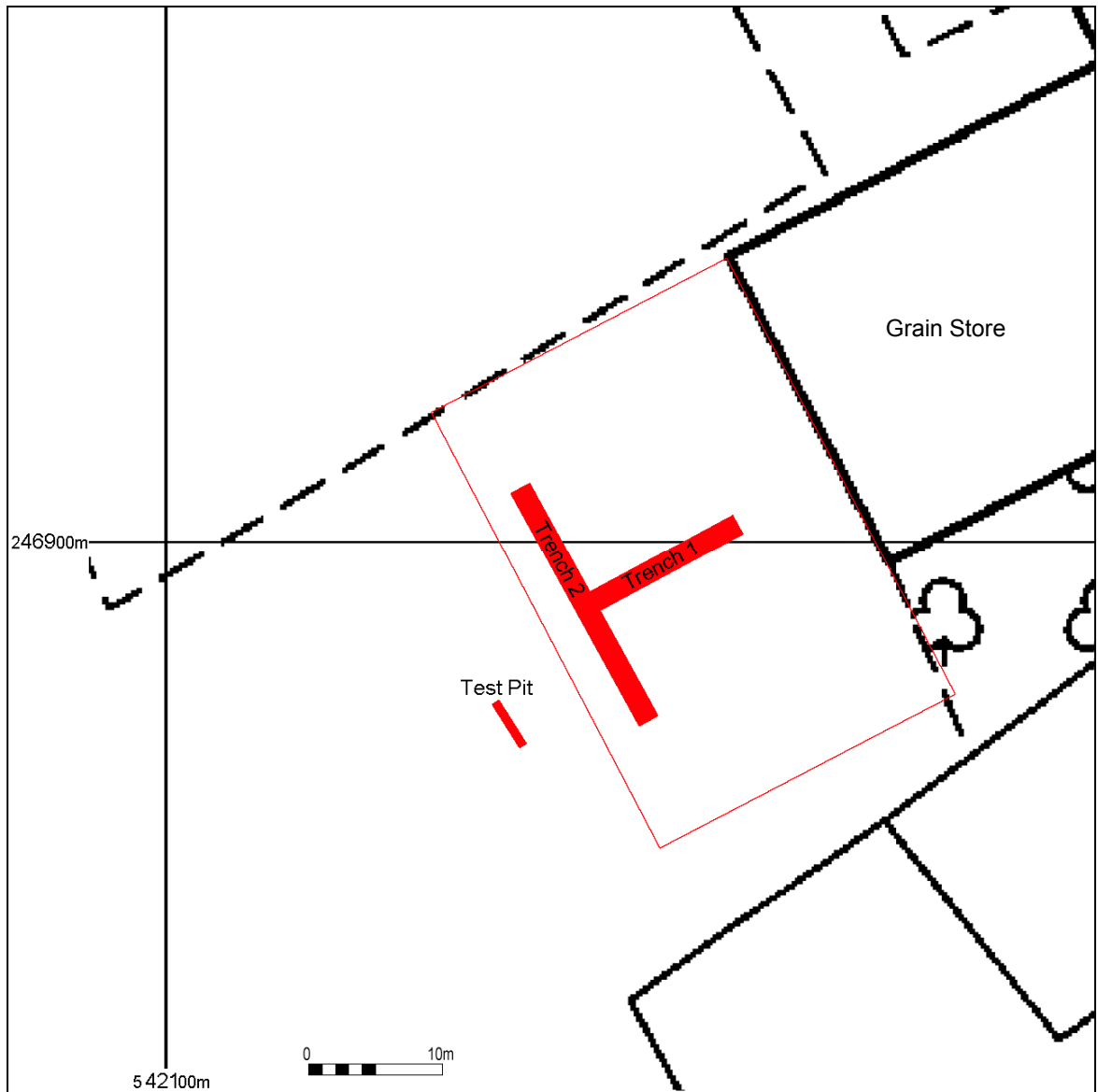
*rubble. Some similar shallow soils. Deep non-calcareous loamy soils in places. Striped and polygonal soil patterns locally. Slight risk of water erosion over chalky drift and chalk (Soil Survey 1983, 511e). The underlying geology comprises Upper Cretaceous Cenomanian Zig Zag Chalk (BGS, Sheet 205). The site is flat and lies at an elevation of c.22m AOD.*

#### 1.4.3 *Proposed Development*

The proposed development comprises an extension to an existing storage building (Fig. 3).



**Figure 2:** Site plan (scale 1:2500)



**Figure 3:** Trench location (*scale 1:500*)



## **2. Aims & Methods**

### **2.1 Aims**

In line with the requirements of the *brief* (Section 3), the aims of the evaluation were:

- To determine the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains liable to be threatened by the proposed development.
- Particular attention to be paid to the amount of truncation to buried deposits, the presence or absence of a palaeosol or 'B' horizon, the preservation of deposits within negative features and site formation processes generally.
- Attention will also be paid to the retrieval of charred plant macrofossils and land molluscs from former dry-land palaeosols and cut features, and to soil pollen analysis; to the retrieval of plant macrofossils, insect, molluscs and pollen from waterlogged deposits located
- Provision for the absolute dating of critical contacts will be made: e.g. the basal contacts of peats over former dryland surfaces; distinct landuse or landmark change in urban contexts.
- To consider any artefact or economic information, in particular the survival of faunal evidence, and provide an assessment of the viability for further study of such information
- Provide a predictive model of surviving archaeological remains detailing zones of relative importance against known development proposals. An impact assessment will also be provided.

### **3.2 Standards**

The work conformed to the requirements of the *brief*, to the relevant sections of the Institute of Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance Notes* (IFA 2001) and *Code of Conduct* (IFA 2000a), to the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers East of England Region *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (ALGAO 2003), to English Heritage guidelines (EH 1991, EH 2006), and to the relevant sections of ASC's own *Operations Manual*.

### **3.3 Methods**

In line with the requirements of the *brief* (Section 2), the methods adopted for this project were:

- A programme of linear trial trenching to adequately sample the threatened area.
- Two trial trenches excavated within the footprint of the proposed new building.

ASC's general methodology for the works required in the *brief* is described in detail in Sections 3.4 *et seq* of the project design (Rouse 2009).

### **2.4 Constraints**

There were no constraints preventing the trenches being located and excavated in the agreed manner. Weather conditions were good for the recording of archaeological features.

### 3. Archaeological & Historical Background

#### 3.1 *Introduction*

The following section provides a summary of the readily available archaeological and historical background to the development site and its environs. Foxton is an area of considerable archaeological and historical interest (eg Wright 1982; Taylor 1997, 49-50), and the focus of interest is considered to lie in the prehistoric and Roman periods.

This section has been compiled with information from the Cambridgeshire County Council *Historic Environment Record* (HER) and other readily available sources.

#### 3.2 *Undated*

3.2.1 Relatively little archaeological excavation has taken place in the vicinity of the development site, but the archaeological importance of the area is defined by the existence of groups of cropmarks, which are present at a variety of locations within the parish. Few of these sites have been subject to detailed archaeological excavation but a number have been the subject of geophysical surveys (Thriplow Landscape Research Group 2003 & 2004)

3.2.2 Two cropmark sites are located in the field west of Orchard Farm and comprise ring ditches (ploughed out burial mounds) one of which contains an internal rectilinear feature (HER08637). Further ring ditches are present to the west (HER 8939) and the area is traversed by two parallel ditches, which may define a track.

3.2.3 A small 'D-shaped' enclosure is present c.600m to the southeast of Orchard Farm (HER08638) and further cropmarks, perhaps representing settlement enclosures are located c.400m to the north of the latter site (HER08639). This area in general may have been attractive for settlement as a number of other enclosures are also present in this area (HER08641, HER08755, HER08923, etc.).

3.2.4 It is likely that the ring ditches are prehistoric in date but none have been subject to archaeological excavation.

#### 3.3 *Prehistoric* (before AD43)

3.3.1 Relatively little is known of the early prehistoric periods in the area but excavation c.300m east of the development site, carried out in advance of the construction of a pipeline revealed a number Neolithic storage pits (HERECB539; EAS 1995).

3.3.2 The pipeline investigations also revealed evidence of early Iron Age activity comprising a number of round houses. There was probably a break in occupation following the abandonment of the round houses but the site was reoccupied during the later Iron Age and a group of pits and ditches has been identified. A temple set within a rectangular ditched enclosure was also present (HERECB539).

3.3.3 Archaeological work at Herod's Farm, c.1km to the west of the development site has revealed a series of field systems and tracks which were in use from

the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC through to the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD (HER07870). An Iron Age ditch has also been identified during excavations on Fowlmere High Street (HER11138A; Spoerry 1993).

3.4 **Roman** (AD43-c.450)

3.4.1 During the Roman period Foxton was away from the main communications routes (OS 1979) and settlement in the region was dominated by the town of *Duroliponte* (Cambridge) which was situated c.10km northeast of the development site (Taylor 1999).

3.4.2 The Iron Age site identified during the construction of the pipeline (above, section 2.3.2) was occupied during the Roman period and a new system of enclosure ditches was laid out during the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD (HERECB539). This went out of use c.150AD but a new field system was laid out during the 3<sup>rd</sup> century with an associated timber building and inhumation cemetery. A significant hoard of Roman iron artefacts was also recorded (EAS 1994; Taylor 1997, 50).

3.4.3 A number of other Roman period artefacts have been recorded in the area, notably a small group of bronze and silver coins and metal objects on the west side of Fowlmere Road c.1km northwest of the development site (HER11563).

3.4.4 Orchard Farm is situated a little to the east of an extensive area of late Iron Age and Roman settlement. This has been designated as a *Scheduled Ancient Monument* (SAM) and extends from Herod's Farm in the west to within c.70m of the development site. Its presence was revealed by a group of cropmarks and geophysical survey and archaeological excavation revealed a large number of archaeological features, burnt daub, and animal bone (SAM 216; HER07870B; Macaulay 1995).

3.5 **Saxon** (c.450-1066)

3.5.1 Little is known of the development site and the surrounding area during the Saxon period. The village of Foxton, which is centred c.1 km northwest of the development site may have originated during this period but the Saxon landscape is not understood in detail.

3.6 **Medieval** (1066-1500)

3.6.1 Foxton was included in the Domesday Survey (1086), where it is referred to as *Foxetune*. At the time of the survey the land was held by the *Abbess of Chatteris* and *Geoffrey de Mandeville* (William & Martin 2003, 528 & 537). The abbess was the principal landholder and the main manor house, known as *Foxton Bury* was situated opposite the church.

3.6.2 Little is known of the development site during this period and Orchard Farm probably comprised open land, part of the open field system of Foxton parish. Two medieval silver coins have been recorded c.300m to the north west of the farm (HER00632) and a bronze seal dating to the 13<sup>th</sup> or 14<sup>th</sup> centuries was recovered c.950m northwest of Orchard Farm (HER08323). A number of medieval tile fragments were recorded during the fieldwalking at Herod's Farm (HER07870C; above, section 2.4.4).

3.7 ***Post-Medieval - Modern*** (1500- present)

- 3.7.1 Foxton was enclosed in c.1830 and the enclosure map shows the layout of rectangular land parcels stretching west from Fowlmere Road. The site of the present farm is shown as open land and the modern farm buildings and granaries occupy the east end of two separate land parcels, held by *Aleph Palmer* and *James Banks*.
- 3.7.2 The first and second edition 1:2,500 scale Ordnance Survey maps were published in 1885 and 1911 respectively and indicate that the layout of the area remained largely unaltered during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Orchard Farm and its' associated buildings are modern in date and were probably constructed during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

## 4 Results

### 4.1 *General*

Two trenches were excavated in a 'T' shape, by a mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.5m toothless ditching bucket. Detailed information regarding the trial trenches and their contents appears in Appendix 1.

### 4.2 **Trench 1** (Fig. 3: Plate 1)

Trench 1 was 12m in length and orientated NE-SW. The stratigraphy consisted of topsoil overlying 850mm of made ground, and the natural geology. The made ground principally consisted of a layer chalk and a layer of dark brown silty clay which contained substantial quantities of 20<sup>th</sup> century brick and demolition rubble. The natural geology was a orangey-brown silty clay with chalk flecks.

No archaeological cut features, deposits or artefacts were present in the trench.

### 4.3 **Trench 2** (Fig. 3)

Trench 2 was 20m in length and orientated NW-SE. The stratigraphy was a continuation of that present in Trench 1.

No archaeological cut features, deposits or artefacts were present in the trench.

### 4.4 **Test pit** (Fig. 3: Plate 2)

A 0.6m wide x 4m deep geological test pit was excavated outside the footprint of the proposed development. The section illustrated that the natural geology encountered in the trenches was a layer 1.3m thick, overlying chalk.



**Plate 1:** Stratigraphy of Trench 1



**Plate 2:** Stratigraphy of Test Pit

## **5. Conclusions**

- 5.1 The stratigraphy of the site suggests that the ground has been truncated, probably when the adjacent grain store was constructed in 2005. Prior to this the site was occupied by brick-built pig pens. These were demolished during the development of the adjacent site, and it is that demolition rubble that forms one of the layers of made ground. The chalk layer is probably redeposited natural geology. The floor of the grain store is at least a meter below the existing ground level, and therefore it is likely that the chalk layer observed in the test pit was breached during the construction, and some of that material spread over the site.

If any archaeological features were present at the time of the 2005 development, they were probably destroyed by that process. However, no residual artefactual evidence was recovered from the spoil, suggesting that the site may be outside the core area of archaeological activity associated with the features noted to the west and southwest of the site.

No palaeosols were encountered during the evaluation.

Significant archaeological features were not observed in the trenches. While the existence of individual isolated archaeological features away from the trenches cannot be specifically excluded, it is unlikely that large numbers of archaeological features were present on the site. It is unlikely that the proposed development will have a significant impact on archaeological remains.

## **6. Acknowledgements**

The evaluation was commissioned by Frederic Smart & Son Ltd. The writer is grateful to Douglas Smart for his assistance. The project was monitored by Dan McConnell on behalf of the local planning authority. The project was managed for ASC by Karin Semmelmann MA MIFA. Fieldwork was carried out by David Kaye BA AIFA and Martin Cuthbert BA PIFA. The report was prepared by David Kaye and edited by Bob Zeepvat BA MIFA.

## **7. Archive**

7.1 The project archive will comprise:

1. Brief
2. Project Design
3. Initial Report
4. Clients site plans
5. Site records
6. List of photographs
7. B/W prints & negatives
8. CDROM with copies of all digital files.

7.2 The archive will be deposited with Cambridgeshire County Store.



## 8. References


### *Standards & Specifications*


- ALGAO 2003 *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper **14**.
- EH 1991 *The Management of Archaeological Projects*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. English Heritage (London).
- IFA 2000a Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct*.
- IFA 2001 Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance documents (Desk-Based Assessments, Watching Briefs, Evaluations, Excavations, Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings, Finds)*.
- McConnel, D 2009 *Brief for Archaeological Evaluation at Orchard Farm, Fowlmere Road, Foxton Cambridgeshire* Archaeology Planning and Countryside Advice.
- Rouse, C. 2009 *Project Design for Archaeological Evaluation: Orchard Farm, Foxton, Cambridgeshire* (ASC Report 1239/FOF/1)

### *Secondary Sources*

- BGS *British Geological Survey 1:50,000 Series, Solid & Drift Geology*.
- EAS, 1995 *St Neots to Duxford 900mm Gas Pipeline 1994*. Engineering Archaeological Services Report
- Macaulay S, 1995 *Herod's Farm, Foxton SAM 216. An Iron Age and Roman cropmark site*. Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Field Unit Report **118**
- OS, 1979 *Ordnance Survey Map of Roman Britain*. Ordnance Survey. Southampton
- Soil Survey 1983 *1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales, and accompanying legend* (Harpenden).
- Spoerry P, 1993 *Archaeological Evaluation at High Street, Fowlmere*. Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Field Unit Report
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- Taylor A, 1999 *Cambridge. The Hidden History*. Tempus
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- Williams A & Martin G, 2002 *Domesday Book. A Complete Translation*. Penguin
- Wright A P M (ed) 1982 *The Victoria History of the County of Cambridgeshire* **8**.

## Appendix 1: Trench Summary Tables

Trench 1							
		Max Dimensions (m)					
		Length	12.2m	Width	1.5m	Depth	1.15m
		Levels					
		Trench top NE end			22.14m OD		
		Trench base NE end			21.13m OD		
		Trench top SW end			21.85m OD		
		Trench base SW end			20.74m OD		
		NGR Co-ordinates					
		NE	TL 42142 46901		SW	TL 42132 46895	
		Orientation			NE-SW		
Reason for Trench			Evaluation				
Context	Type	Description and Interpretation			Width (max: m)	Thickness (max: m)	Depth (BGL: m)
101	Layer	Topsoil			>1.5	0.2	0.2
102	Layer	Made ground			>1.5	0.85	1.05
103	Layer	Natural geology			>1.5	-	>1.05

Trench 2						
	Max Dimensions (m)					
	Length	20m	Width	1.5m	Depth	1.2m
	Levels					
	Trench top NW end			21.96m OD		
	Trench base NW end			20.67m OD		
	Trench top SE end			22.17m OD		
	Trench base SE end			20.82m OD		
	NGR Co-ordinates					
	NW	TL 42126 46904		SE	TL 42136 46886	
	Orientation			NW-SE		
Reason for Trench			Evaluation			
Context	Type	Description and Interpretation		Width (max: m)	Thickness (max: m)	Depth (BGL: m)
201	Layer	Topsoil		>1.5	0.2	0.2
202	Layer	Made ground		>1.5	0.85	1.05
203	Layer	Natural geology		>1.5	-	>1.05

## Appendix 2: List of Photographs

SITE NAME: Orchard Farm, Foxton, Cambridgeshire			SITE NO/CODE: 1239/FOF
Shot	B&W	Digital	Subject
1		√	Working shot, facing SE
2		√	Working shot, facing N
3		√	General view, facing SW
4		√	General view, facing W
5		√	General view, facing W
6		√	General view, facing S
7		√	Test pit, facing W
8		√	Test pit, facing NW
9		√	Test pit, facing NW
10		√	Working shot, facing N
11	√	√	SE facing section of Trench 1
12	√	√	SE facing section of Trench 1
13	√	√	Trench 1, facing SE
14	√	√	Trench 1, facing SE
15		√	Working shot, facing S
16		√	Working shot, facing SW
17	√	√	Trench 2, facing SE
18	√	√	Trench 2, facing SE
19	√	√	Trench 2, facing NW
20	√	√	Trench 2, facing NW

### Appendix 3: ASC OASIS Form

PROJECT DETAILS			
Project Name & OASIS Number	Orchard Farm, Foxton, Cambridgeshire		Archaeol2-69107
Short Description:	<p>In December 2009 Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd carried out an evaluation at Orchard Farm, Foxton, Cambridgeshire. Two trenches were excavated, to explore whether the known Iron Age and Roman archaeology present in the adjacent fields, extended onto the site. No archaeological cut features, deposits or artefacts were encountered during the evaluation.</p> <p>The stratigraphy of the site consisted of several layers of made ground, overlying the natural geology. It is likely that the ground was truncated during the construction of the adjacent grain store, in 2005. If there was archaeology present on the site at that time, it is probable that all but the deep cut features would have been destroyed.</p>		
Project Type:	Trial Trenching		
Site status:	None	Previous work:	None
Current land use:	Agricultural waste land	Future work:	Unknown
Monument type:	None	Monument period:	N/A
Significant finds:	None		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County:	Cambridgeshire	OS reference:	TL 4213 4690
Site address:	Orchard Farm, Foxton, Cambridgeshire		
Study area:	c.925 sq. m	Height OD:	c.22mOD
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation:	Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd		
Project brief originator:	Cambridgeshire Archaeology Planning and Countryside Advice	Project design originator:	ASC Ltd
Project Manager:	Bob Zeepvat BA MIFA	Director/Supervisor:	Karin Semmelmann MA MIFA
Sponsor / funding body:	Frederic Smart & Son Ltd		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date:	07.12.2009	End date:	07.12.2009
PROJECT ARCHIVES			
	Location (Accession no.)	Content (eg. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)	
Physical:	Cambridgeshire County Stores	None	
Paper:	"	Site plans, site records, site record drawings	
Digital:	"	CD containing digital images, list of photographs, B/W prints & negatives, project design, report	
BIBLIOGRAPHY			
Title:	Archaeological Evaluation: Orchard Farm, Foxton, Cambridgeshire		
Serial title & volume:	ASC Ltd Report ref. 1239/FOF/2		
Author(s):	David Kaye BA AIFA		
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