

**Land at Manor Farm, The Green, Hilton, Huntingdonshire,  
Cambridgeshire, PE28 9NA**

**Archaeological Evaluation Report**

NGR: TL 2932 6646  
Planning ref: 16/02322/FUL  
Site code: MFHE 18  
PCAS job no.: 2055  
Cams. HER Event No.: ECB5422  
OASIS ref: preconst3-327017

Prepared for Brown & Co. Property & Business Consultants LLP

by

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**Fig. 1:** Site location plan. 1:25,000 (extract from OS explorer map sheet 225)

**Fig. 2:** Extract from the 1<sup>st</sup> edition 1:2500 scale Ordnance Survey map surveyed in 1887 (not reproduced to scale), with the approximate position of the application area overlaid in red.

**Fig. 3:** Trenching plan superimposed on the as-proposed plan of the site. All trenches are 20m x 2m. 1:500. Plan supplied by developer.

Inset top: Trenching plan overlain on existing site plan, 1:1000.

Inset bottom: Trenching plan overlain on 1887 OS map extract c.1:1000

**Fig. 4-8:** Trench plans (1:100) and sections (1:20)

**Appendix 1:** Context Summary

**Appendix 2:** GIS trench locations and levels -

**Appendix 3:** Pottery Assessment – *J. Young*

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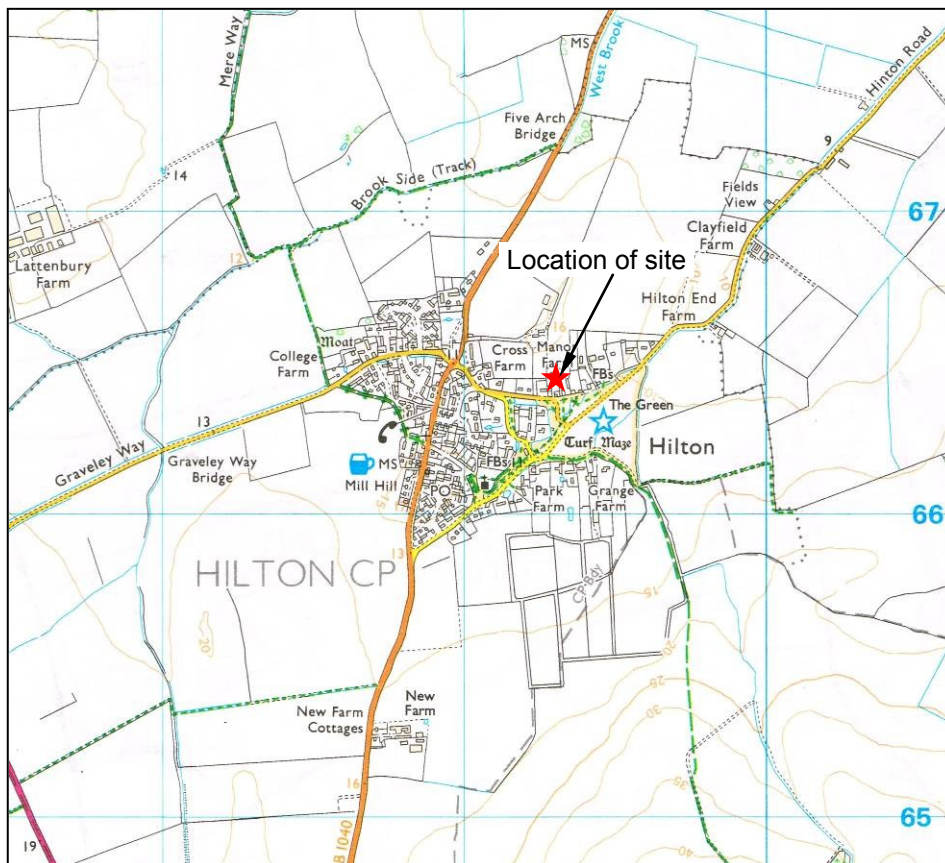
**Appendix 5:** OASIS summary

## Non-Technical Summary

PCAS Archaeology Ltd. was commissioned by Brown & Co. Property & Business Consultants LLP to undertake a scheme of archaeological evaluation trenching on land at Manor Farm, Hilton, to investigate the potential for and survival of buried archaeological remains, with the aim of informing a mitigation strategy in association with proposed residential development.

The site lies in the historic core of the village, on the periphery of the farmyard of Manor Farm. Both Manor Farmhouse, and a barn to the rear of the farmhouse, are Grade II Listed buildings.

The trenching plan was configured to avoid existing buildings and at the same time target the proposed development footprint. A single ditch was revealed, corresponding with a boundary seen on historic mapping.



**Figure 1:** location at scale 1:25,000. The site is marked in red. OS mapping © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. PCAS licence no. 100049278.

## 1.0 Introduction

PCAS Archaeology Ltd. (PCAS) undertook an archaeological evaluation on land at Manor Farm in the village of Hilton in the Huntingdonshire district of Cambridgeshire. The aim of this scheme was to inform and advise the demolition of existing agricultural buildings and the construction of two new dwellings.

## 2.0 Location and description (Fig. 1 & 2)

The village of Hilton is situated within the Huntingdonshire district of the county of Cambridgeshire, and lies approximately 6km to the south-west of the market town of St. Ives and 9km to the south-east of Huntingdon town. The Green is on the east side of the village, on both sides of the Fenstanton Road. Manor Farm lies at its northern edge, at a central NGR of TL 2932 6646. The land no longer forms part of an active farm (Barford & Co., 2016).

The proposed development site is a roughly rectangular plot on the east side of No. 9a, Church Lane; accessed by a strip of land off the road running around the north side of The Green (also called The Green), which passes between two residential plots, 'The Old Bakehouse' to the west and 'The Limes' to the east. The house plot of 'The Limes' borders the whole of the east side of the site, while to the west, the site also adjoins a plot containing the remaining Manor Farm buildings, now in separate ownership. The Grade II Listed original farmhouse, 'The Manor House'; Manor Cottage, and a number of outbuildings including a Grade II Listed hand-threshing barn, whose north side directly borders the site, and a range of brick-built stable buildings whose northernmost building extends on to the site. The site is approximately 0.41ha in total area, with an access corridor some 18m wide and a main plot measuring 75m x 39m. The plot is presently occupied by a group of dilapidated post-medieval and modern farm outbuildings on areas of hard-standing, most recently used for commercial storage; the remainder of the site is under grass and scrub, with disused agricultural equipment and construction materials and some self-set trees (Barford & Co., 2016). The site falls largely within the Hilton Conservation Area, although its north end lies outside the Conservation Area.

## 3.0 Geology and topography

Hilton is situated on the north-facing slope of the Great Ouse river valley, between the 15m and 10m OS contours. The site features a gradual downwards slope to the road at the south side, falling from approximately 13m OD at the northern field edge to approximately 11.4m OD within the access strip at the south side.

The majority of Hilton village is on a solid geology of Oxford Clay Formation mudstone, with no overlying drift. A narrow band of River Terrace Deposits sand and gravel runs across the north-eastern edge of the village, following the route of a watercourse, and this material probably extends onto the south side, if not the whole, of the site (bgs.ac.uk).

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Left: Looking north along the east side of site, and the area of Tr. 2, 4 & 5



Right: Looking west in the area of Tr. 3



Right: Looking north across the area of Tr. 1

#### 4.0 Planning background

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) came into force in March 2012 (revised July 2018), placing the responsibility for dealing with heritage assets affected by development proposals with the developer.

An extract of Section 189 of NPPF reads:

*189. In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected ... Where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.*

Full planning permission for the construction of two new dwellings with carports, following the demolition of the existing buildings, was granted by Huntingdonshire District Council in October 2017 (planning application number 16/02322/FUL).

In accordance with Policy En12 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan (1995) and Policy CS1 of the Huntingdonshire Core Strategy (2009), Condition 3 of the grant of planning permission required a written scheme of investigation for a programme of archaeological work; to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of site works. This document (Savage, 2018) was prepared and approved.

The results of the evaluation are presented below, with the aim of informing the requirements and design of any archaeological mitigation which may be prepared in association in advance of development.

#### 5.0 Archaeological and historical background

A search of the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record for a study area of 1km radius around the proposed development site was made during the production of the project brief, and the full results of this search are included in the approved WSI.

Archaeological investigations in 2004 on the High Street, some 400m to the west of the present site, identified Iron Age activity in the form of a ditch, with an undated post-hole and pit in possible association, and a possible buried soil (HER ref. ECB1890).

The layout of the village suggests inaugural settlement development to the north-east of the medieval church, although evidence for late Saxon and medieval settlement is recorded from excavations at Scotts Close, more to the north of the church. Ditches demarcating plots of land were exposed, with clusters of pits believed to be drainage sumps or livestock watering holes, and a single early to mid-Saxon inhumation burial (HER ref. ECB2558). A fragmentary medieval moat, recorded on the north-eastern edge of The Green also suggests this pattern of development for the village. This feature, at St. John's College Farm, was originally rectangular; it is fed by local springs and incorporates the remains of fish ponds (HER ref. 01042).

Listed buildings of 17<sup>th</sup>-century date adjacent to the proposed development area indicate that this part of the village was developed by this time, if not earlier. A turf maze on the village green itself, now Grade II Listed, is believed to have been cut in 1660, although this may have been a recutting of an earlier feature; it has been recut and redesigned on several subsequent occasions (HER ref. DCB493).

Manor Farm farmhouse and its associated barn are recorded as being early 18<sup>th</sup>-century. The brick-built house has two storeys and a hipped roof, incorporating dormer windows to







The fieldwork took place between 8<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> August 2018; the staff involved were S. Savage, A. Pascoe and G. Perkins. Conditions were generally sunny with occasional heavy rain showers.

## 7.0 Results

**Of five trenches excavated, only one contained any cut archaeological features (Trench 2). Provisionally, dating evidence from this feature is a later post-medieval. A sequence of modern and natural layers was recorded in all trenches, the majority of which were disturbed by modern services.**

### Trench 1 (Fig 4)

Trench 1, aligned N-S in the NW corner of the site, was excavated to 0.70m below existing ground level. The earliest exposed deposit was natural clay, (101). Through the centre of the trench a deposit of alluvium (102) was recorded.

Above this, subsoil (105) was beneath buried topsoil (100). Towards the south end of the trench the topsoil was beneath a modern layer of chalk (106). Further north the topsoil was covered by a layer of modern building materials (103). Both layers were sealed by a modern building construction layer (104).

No dating evidence was recovered from this trench.



Right: Trench 1 looking N

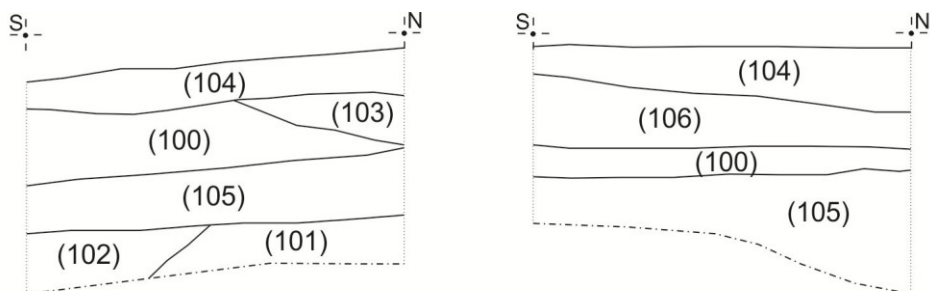
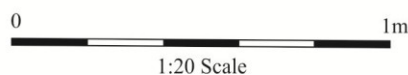


Figure 4: Sample sections from Trench 1 (L - North end of trench, R - South end of trench). 1:20.



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**Trench 2 (Fig. 5)**

Trench 2, towards the NE corner of the site, was orientated c.E-W. It was excavated to 0.75m below existing ground level, where natural geology was encountered. At the east end of the trench was a buff coloured mottled clay (203); to the west this became a dark grey clay (204).

A single feature was cut into the natural clay towards the east end of the trench, ditch [205]. This crossed the trench on a c.N-S alignment, and presented a shallow profile, containing a single fill (206), from which a fragment of medieval roof tile and a sherd of modern transfer print pottery was recovered.

Ditch [205] was sealed by buried soil (202), which was itself was covered by a layer of modern hardcore (201), a consolidation for yard surface (200).

Right: Ditch [205] in section

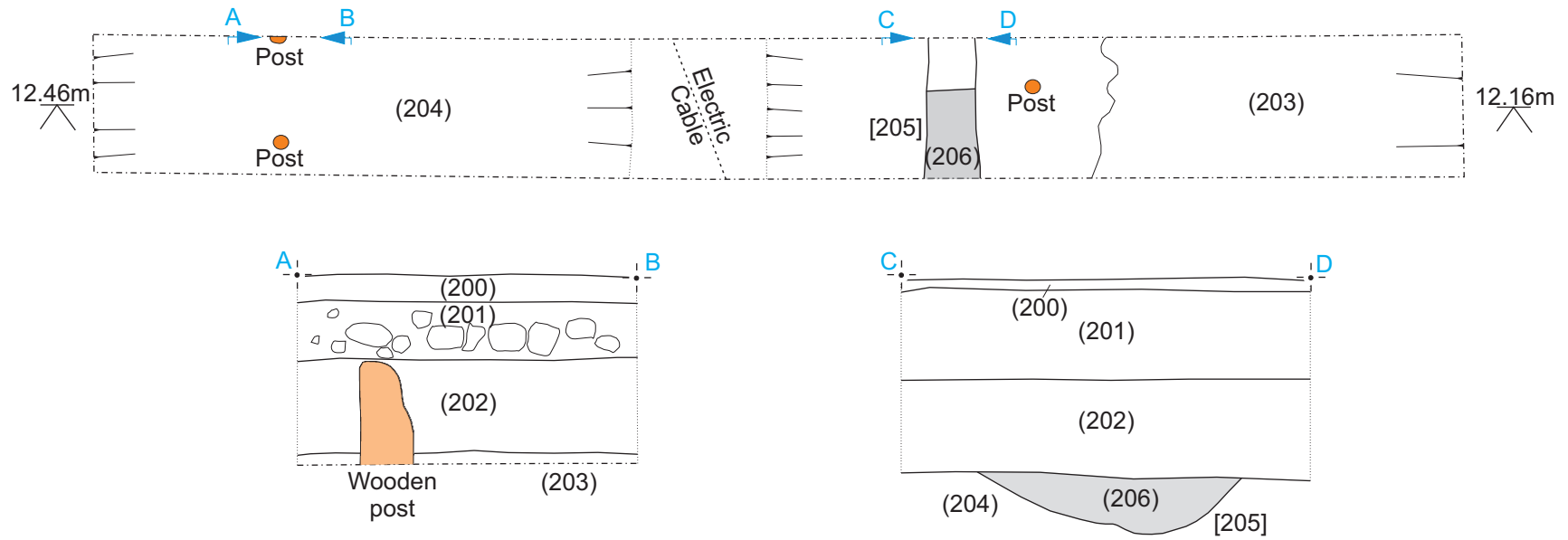
**Trench 3 (Fig. 6)**

Trench 3 lay close to the centre of the site, on a c. E-W alignment. It was excavated to c. 1m below existing ground level, revealing natural clay (303). At the east end of the trench a layer of sandy gravel was encountered, (304). This was covered by subsoil (302), which in turn was beneath a thick layer of brick rubble, stone and gravel (301). The topsoil (300) was the uppermost layer.

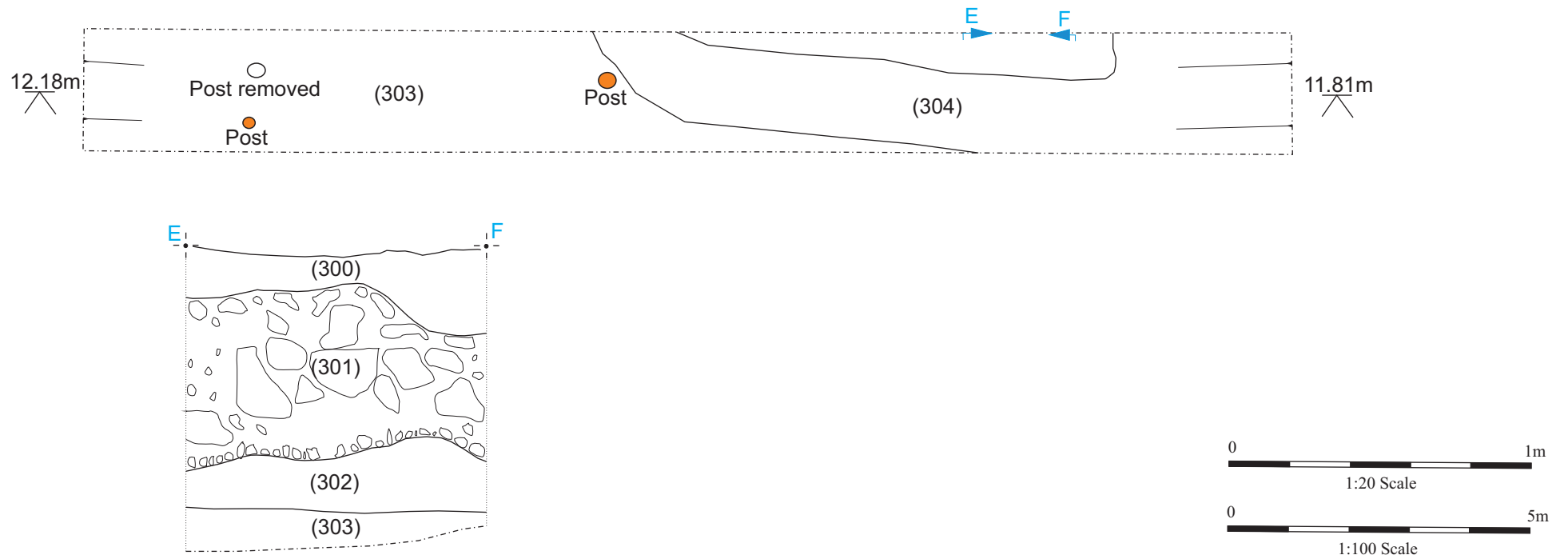
Right: Trench 3 looking west



**Figure 5: Trench 2 plan (1:100) and section (1:20)**



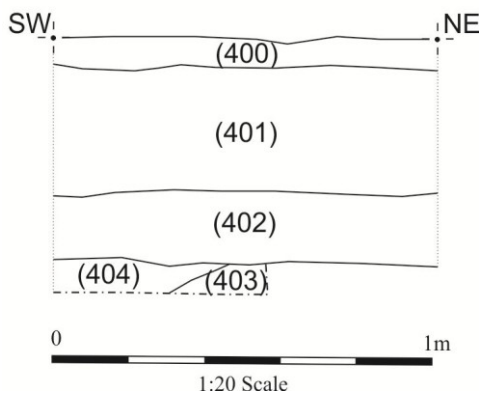
**Figure 6: Trench 3 plan (1:100) and section (1:20)**



**Trench 4 (Fig. 7)**

Trench 4 was on the east side of the site, orientated c.NE-SW, and was split due to the presence of a buried electric cable approximately halfway along its length. It was excavated to c.0.70m below existing ground level, revealing natural clay (403). The west end of the trench was dominated by deposit (404) a layer of mottled clay that may indicate the proximity of a palaeochannel. Overall, an identical sequence of deposits was recorded as in Trench 2; buried soil - modern hardcore - modern topsoil.

**Figure 7:** Trench 4 sample section. 1:20



Right: Trench 4 looking southwest. Note the split in the trench to avoid the underground cable.

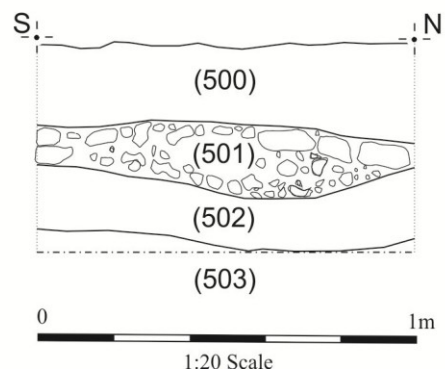


**Trench 5 (Fig. 8)**

Trench 5, in the SE corner of the site, was orientated c.NNW-SSE. It was excavated to c.0.60m below existing. At the north end, the natural geology was a grey silty clay, becoming orange-brown to the south.

As with Trenches 2 & 4, the sequence of deposits was subsoil, covered by modern hardcore, sealed by topsoil. A single fragment of clay tobacco pipe stem was recovered from subsoil (502), identified as dating from the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

**Figure 8:** Trench 5 sample section. 1:20



## 8.0 Discussion & Conclusions

Three trenches (Trenches 2, 4 & 5) revealed the same sequence of deposits above the natural geology: a likely former topsoil buried by a thick layer of modern hardcore, covered by modern topsoil. These trenches were on the east side of the site, in an area which historic mapping records as open land to the rear of the main complex of Manor Farm, with a small number of outbuildings along the eastern site boundary. It seems likely that this area was covered with hardcore as an extension to the traditional farmyard surrounded by the farm buildings. The demolition of these buildings and the eventual construction of the existing farm buildings may have led to the re-introduction of topsoil.

Trenches 1 & 3 were situated on the west side of the site where the traditional farmyard and surrounding building lay. In Trench 1 the subsoil and topsoil were covered by a layer of chalk and hardcore, possible consolidation for the floor layer (104). In Trench 3 a layer of brick rubble, stone and gravel may reflect the demolition of the old farm in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century.

Trench 2 was situated to the northeast of the existing building and exposed the single cut feature; a ditch orientated c.N-S. A fragment of roof tile recovered from the ditch has been identified as 12<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> century in date, however a sherd of 19<sup>th</sup> century transfer print pottery also recovered from this ditch suggests the tile may be residual evidence of an earlier building here. Both artefacts were lightly abraded indicating they had not been damaged in ploughsoil prior to deposition in the ditch. A study of historic mapping (see Figure 2) shows a boundary here, separating a possible orchard in the northeast corner of the site from the working farmyard. It seems likely the ditch revealed in Trench 2 is the boundary that can be observed on historic mapping.

## 9.0 Effectiveness of methodology

Intrusive evaluation was an appropriate method for gathering further information that would clarify the sites archaeological potential. As anticipated, the west side of the site where the historic farm buildings lay, layers of rubble and chalk are likely to be either consolidation for those buildings, the farmyard, or rubble from their demolition in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The body of data produced by this evaluation is considered sufficient to inform the planning and development process.

## 10.0 Project archive

The site records, currently in the custody of PCAS, will be prepared according to published guidelines and deposited with a printed copy of this report with the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Team.

## 11.0 Acknowledgements

Pre-Construct Archaeological Services would like to thank Brown & Co. Property & Business Consultants LLP for this commission.

## 12.0 References

Barford & Co., 2016, *Planning, Design and Access Statement, Including Heritage Statement: Application for Two Dwellings with Carports Following Demolition of Buildings, Manor Farm, The Green, Hilton, Cambs, PE28 9NA*. Unpublished planning document consulted online 14-05-2018 at <https://publicaccess.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/online-applications>.

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## Appendix 1: Context Summary MFHE 18

Context	Type	Description	Finds/dating	Notes
100	Layer	Topsoil. Dark brown grey silty clay with rare small rounded pebble inclusions. <0.20m deep		Covered by 103 & 106
101	Layer	natural mid yellow brown clay with rare small pebble inclusions.		above 101
102	Layer	Natural alluvium? Mid greenish grey with rare large pebble inclusions.		
103	Layer	Modern building deposit. CBM and cement fragments. 0.13m deep		Above 100, covered by 104
104	Layer	Modern building deposit. Sub floor layer. 0.17m deep		covers 103 & 106
105	Layer	Subsoil. Mid yellow brown clay. >0.30m deep		covered by 100
106	Layer	Modern chalk deposit. Cobble sized blocks and fragments. 0.19m deep.		Covers 100. Covered by 104
200	Layer	Modern yard surface. very dark grey gritty fine hardcore with stone, concrete and brick fragments and imported type 1 sand mixed with sandy silt. 0.07m deep		covers 201
201	Layer	Modern hardcore. Mid brown silty sand frequent brick. 0.0.16m deep		Make up layer for 200 above
202	Layer	mid-dark greyish brown silty clay, buried soil. Compact with occasional small - mid sized pebble inclusions. 0.26m deep		
203	Layer	buff coloured, grey mottled natural clay		below 202
204	Layer	mid - dark grey compact alluvial clay, with occasional small-mid sized flints and pebbles inclusions.		cut by 205
205	Cut	cut of ditch on c. N-S alignment. Shallow concave sides and base. 0.80m wide, 0.16m deep.		
206	Fill of 205	very dark grey silty clay gritty and compact. Single fill of 205	clay tobacco pipe x 1, pottery x 1	
300	Layer	Topsoil. Dark brownish grey sandy silt. Compact with frequent mid-sized and small stones, frequent large CBM, grit and gravel. <0.26m deep		appears to have been disturbed.
301	Layer	Rubble. Frequent CBM, stone, gravel and grit. Light brownish grey, loose. <0.55m deep		covered by 300
302	Layer	Subsoil. Mid greyish brown (west) light greyish brown (east) silty clay, hard with frequent gravel and grit. <0.26m deep		Covered by 301

303	Layer	Natural clay (east) has a dark layer of leaf deposit. Light yellowish grey, friable with occasional small stone inclusions.		
304	Layer	Mid grey, occasional dark where more organic, well sorted small gravel and sand.		possibly a palaeochannel
400	Layer	Same as 200		
401	Layer	Same as 201		
402	Layer	Same as 202		
403	Layer	Same as 203		
404	Layer	Same as 404		
500	Layer	Topsoil. Dark brownish grey sandy silt, compact with frequent mid-sized stone inclusions, larger CBM and frequent grit and gravel. 0.24m deep		
501	Layer	Rubble. Very frequent CBM, gravel and grit. 0.24m deep		
502	Layer	lower subsoil. Mid greyish brown silty clay hard with occasional mid-sized stone inclusions. 0.18m deep.		
503	Layer	Light greyish brown silty clay friable with very occasional small pebble and grit.		
504	Layer	Mid orange brown silty clay, compact with common small round pebbles and flint inclusions.		



**Appendix 2: GIS trench locations**

MFHE 18 Manor Farm, Hilton, Cambs

*Easting, Northing, level (m OD)*

1a,529281.069,266469.667

1b,529283.080,266449.769

2a,529317.415,266467.907

2b,529337.205,266469.200

3a,529289.509,266441.473

3b,529309.550,266443.556

4a,529327.579,266442.048

4b,529342.664,266455.336

5a,529330.596,266425.742

5b,529339.719,266407.784

## **Appendix 3: Report on the post-Roman pottery and tile from Land at Manor Farm, The Green, Hilton, Cambridgeshire (MFHE 18)**

*By Jane Young*

### **INTRODUCTION**

A single sherd of early modern pottery and a piece of medieval tile were submitted for examination. The material was catalogued by ware (common name) and fabric type using mnemonic codenames. The tile fragment was examined with a x20 binocular microscope. The assemblage was quantified by ware and fabric type with three measures: number of sherds/fragments, estimated vessel/tile count and weight. The ceramic data including attributes such as decoration, condition and usage was entered on a Microsoft Access Database and a copy of this is available in the archive (appendix 3a&b). Recording of the assemblage was in accordance with the guidelines laid out in Slowikowski, *et al.* (2001) and the Archaeological Ceramic Building Materials Group (2001).

### **CONDITION**

The sherd (8grams) and piece of tile (74grams) are in a slightly abraded and stable condition.

### **OVERALL CHRONOLOGY AND SOURCE**

The pottery and tile were recovered from ditch **205** (fill **206**). The recovered basal sherd is from a large Transfer-printed plate (TPW) of mid 19<sup>th</sup> to mid 20<sup>th</sup> century date whilst the tile fragment is from a medieval flat roof tile (PNR) of potential late 12<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> century date. The brightly oxidised tile is 15mm thick and has buff surfaces. The fabric contains abundant fine quartz grains together with common fine calcareous grains as well as some larger calcareous pieces including fossil shell.

### **SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The recovered sherd and tile suggest early modern rubbish disposal in the area of the site and potentially indicate the presence of medieval buildings in the local area.

The sherd has been discarded but the tile fragment should be retained for further study.

### **REFERENCES**

2001, Draft Minimum Standards for the Recovery, Analysis and Publication of Ceramic Building Material, third version [Internet]. Available from <<http://www.geocities.com/acbmg1/CBMGDE3.htm>>

Slowikowski, A. Nenck, B. and Pearce, J. 2001. *Minimum Standards for the Processing, Recording, Analysis and Publication of Post-Roman Ceramics*. Medieval Pottery Research Group, Occasional Paper **2**

Appendix 3a: Pottery archive

context	cname	full name	form type	sherds	vessels	weight	decoration	part	action	description	date
206	TPW	Transfer printed ware	large plate	1	1	8	int blue printed	base	discarded	late	mid 19th to mid 20th

Appendix 3b: CBM archive

context	cname	full name	fabric	frags	weight	description	date
206	PNR	Peg, nib or ridge tile	buff/orange/buff fine sandy + ca	1	74	flat roofer; 15mm thick; fabric incl abundant fine quartz & common fine ca incl + occ largeca incl fossil shell; sand & ca bedded; medieval	late 12th to 15th

**Appendix 4: Finds Catalogue**

Land at Manor Farm, the Green, Hilton, Huntingdonshire, Cambs

MFHE18 PCAS Job 2055

By C. Bentley

Context	Material	No.	Weight (g)	Description	Date	Action
502	C pipe	1	2g	Stem fragment	C19th	Discard

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OASIS ID - preconst3-327017

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View	Version	Completed by	Email	Date
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<a href="#">View 2</a>	2	Alison Lane	alison.lane@pcas-archaeology.co.uk	12 September 2018

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Details	Location	Creators	Archive	Publications
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	1/1

### Validated sections in current version

Details	Location	Creators	Archive	Publications
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