

Dry Drayton Primary School, Cambridgeshire

An Archaeological Evaluation



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**Dry Drayton Primary School,
Dry Drayton**
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Summary

An Archaeological Evaluation was carried out at Dry Drayton Primary School, Dry Drayton on 9th and 10th April 2014 by the Cambridge Archaeological Unit (CAU). The work was commissioned by Coulson & Son Ltd. on behalf of Cambridgeshire County Council, and was undertaken ahead of construction of a new classroom with associated services, drainage, and an access road.

The work revealed one medieval ditch aligned north-south.

Introduction

Location and Topography

An Archaeological Evaluation was undertaken on land to the south and east of the current Primary School at Dry Drayton, located under playing fields. The work was carried out in response to a brief produced by the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Team (Thomas 2014). The work was pre-determination evaluation in relation to the proposed construction of a new classroom and the access road leading from the main road. The site is located in the village of Dry Drayton, 8km northwest of Cambridge, grid reference TL 3819 6215, (Fig.1).

The underlying geology is Gault Clay overlain locally by head deposits of clay, silt, sand and gravel (BGS website accessed 16/2/2014), at a general height of 30.00m AOD (Ordnance Datum).

Archaeological and Historical Background

The site is located in an area rich in history, most of which dates from the 12th/13th centuries. It is 400m northeast of the 13th century parish church of St. Peter and St. Paul (HER 0250). The site is also 300m north of crop-marks and earthworks that indicate the location of the shrunken medieval village (HER 01091). Investigations in this area in the 1970s found evidence of activity ranging from the 12th century to post-medieval times including a post-dissolution building which apparently was demolished in 1817. The main drains of the building were robbed out in the 1830s.

Listed as *Draitone* in the Domesday Book, the village became known as Dry Drayton by the start of the 13th century to distinguish it from Fen Drayton (5 miles northwest) and the fact that it was susceptible to times of drought (Wright & Lewis 1989). No ancient woodland survives in the parish and the village has been used for arable farming for centuries.

To the rear of Pettits Lane, a medieval ridge and furrow was identified. The slight earthworks lay in an area just outside the core of the Medieval village and is characterised by the ridge and furrow field systems (HER 10084). There have also been remnants of ridge and furrow at View Farm (HER CB15292).

Excavation of the manor site, in May 1979 by Mike Sekulla, derived Roman material suggesting a Roman site within this area (HER 00275b; Sekulla 1981).

Methodology

The trial trenching comprised of one 5.0m x 1.80m trench, and four 2.0m x 2.0m test pits, all excavated down to the natural sandy gravel, (Fig.2).

An 8 ton, 360° tracked machine with a toothless ditching-bucket was used to remove the subsoil and topsoil deposits down to the underlying natural which occurred at a depth of between 0.46m-0.86m. The area was then surveyed into the OS grid.

All work was carried out in strict accordance with the Health and Safety legislation in line with the FAME Manual of Health and Safety in Field Archaeology 2010.

Recording followed the standard CAU context sheet and test-pit sheet using the CAU modified Museum of London system (Spence 1994). A digital photographic record was compiled of all trenches.

Results

The topsoil ranged from 0.20m-0.48m and the subsoil between 0.14m-0.42m with a thin pale mid-brown/grey interface with moderate small gravels 0.05m-0.09m in depth.

Few finds were recovered from the test pits, with only residual finds were identified within the topsoil and subsoil, with the metal detecting not revealing any. In **Trench 1** and **Test Pits 2** and **4**, a small number of residual artefacts were recovered from bucket sampling. Metal detecting produced no finds.

Trench 1		
General Description	Orientation	NW - SE
No archaeological features or deposits were present. A small Neolithic flint was recovered from the subsoil.	Modern Ground Level AOD (m)	30.93
	Avg. Topsoil Depth (m)	0.48
	Subsoil Depth (m)	0.22
	Width (m)	1.80
	Length (m)	5.00

Test Pit 2									
General Description					Orientation			-	
A single feature was identified, a north/south aligned ditch, F.1. This ditch contained a single, highly uniform fill of mid-brown clayey silt with moderate small gravel inclusions. It had a moderate to gentle break of slope, gradual sides with a flat base and was 0.58m deep. Its full width was not exposed in the test pit, however a width of 1.18m was exposed. It contained no finds. See Fig. 3. A rib bone of cattle size was recovered from within the subsoil					Modern Ground Level AOD (m)			30.50	
					Avg. Topsoil Depth (m)			0.33	
					Subsoil Depth (m)			0.42	
					Width (m)			2.00	
					Length (m)			2.00	
Feature No.	Feature Type	Orientation/Shape	Context No.	Cut/Fill	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Artefacts	Archaeological Period
1	Ditch	N-S	050	F	-	-	-	None	medieval
			051	C	1m Slot	1.18m+	0.58	-	

It is probable that this feature represents a remnant of the ridge and furrow agriculture system that would have dominated the area in the past.

Test Pit 3		
General Description	Orientation	-
No archaeological features or deposits were present.	Modern Ground Level AOD (m)	30.10
	Avg. Topsoil Depth (m)	0.20
	Subsoil Depth (m)	0.31
	Width (m)	2.00
	Length (m)	2.00

Test Pit 4		
General Description	Orientation	-
No archaeological features or deposits were present. A fragment of 19 th century white ware and a fragment of horse sized tibia was recovered from the topsoil.	Modern Ground Level AOD (m)	29.78
	Avg. Topsoil Depth (m)	0.37
	Subsoil Depth (m)	0.09
	Width (m)	2.00
	Length (m)	2.00

Test Pit 5		
General Description	Orientation	-
No archaeological features or deposits were present.	Modern Ground Level AOD (m)	29.63
	Avg. Topsoil Depth (m)	0.34
	Subsoil Depth (m)	0.23
	Width (m)	2.00
	Length (m)	2.00

Discussion

This evaluation produced little evidence of archaeological activity. The presence of one feature in Test Pit 2 suggests a limited archaeological presence in the form of medieval ridge and furrow. The lack of any features and few residual artefacts in the remaining three pits and trial trench suggest the site lies outside the area of settlement. Although the limited size of the test pits/trial trench have to be taken into account as they provide only a partial view of any potential archaeological activity within the vicinity. The archaeology present suggests that the land was previously arable farmland.

Acknowledgements

The excavation was commissioned by Coulson & Son Ltd. And carried out on behalf of Cambridgeshire County Council. Andy Thomas monitored the site on behalf of the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Team. The Project Manager was Alison Dickens, and the site was excavated and recorded by the Author, Christopher Wakefield and Rob Barrett. The site was surveyed by Jonathon Moller and the graphics were produced by Bryan Crossan. Finds were washed and catalogued by Justin Wiles. Thanks also to Daniel Sharman for identification of bone.

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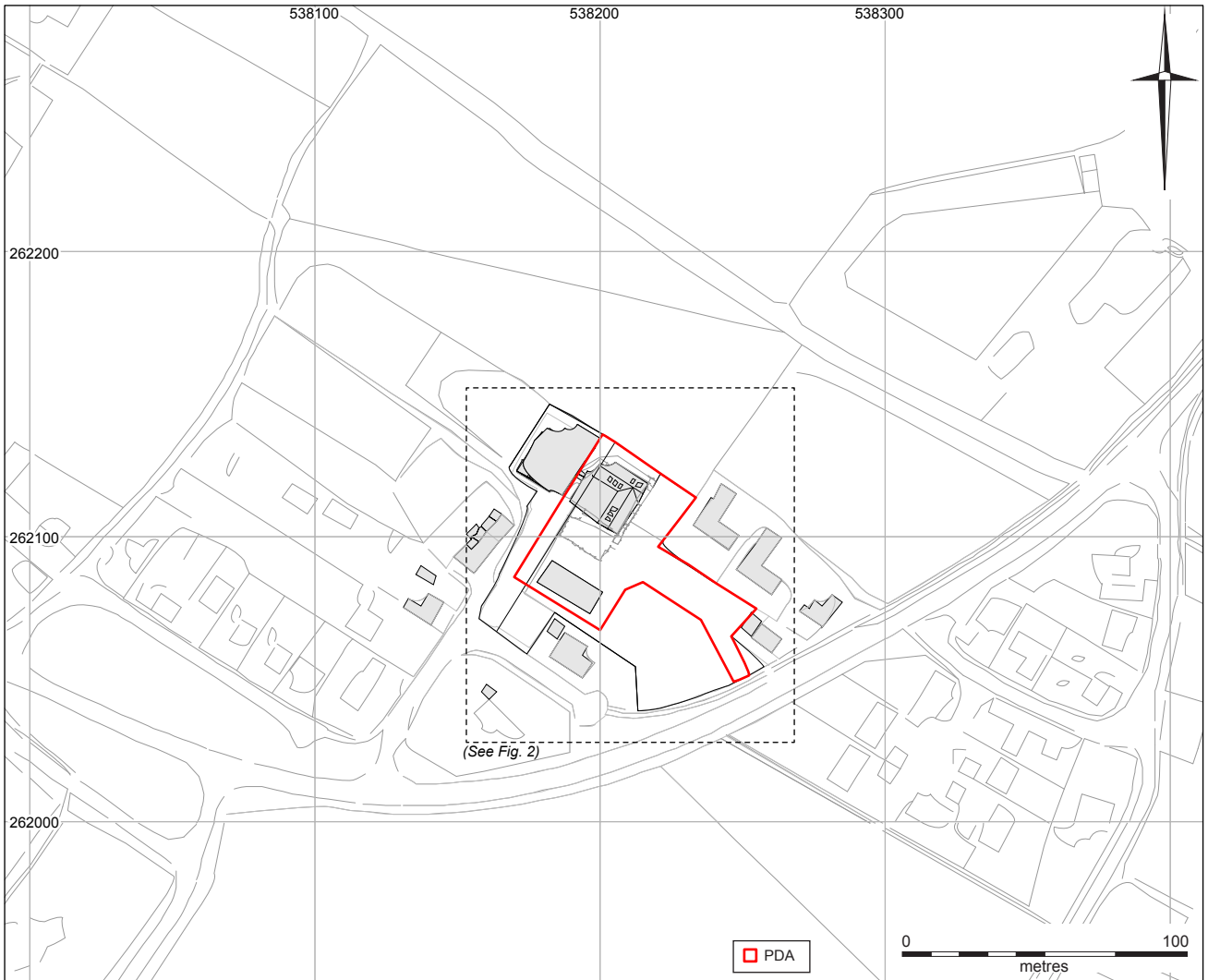
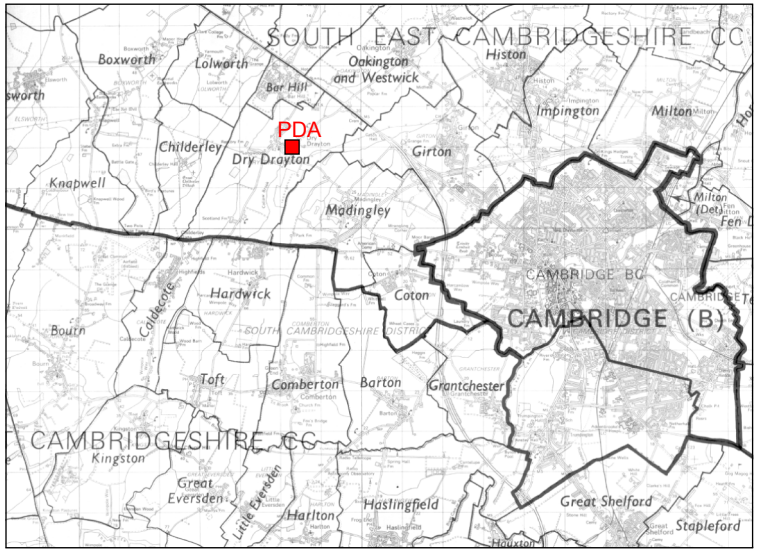
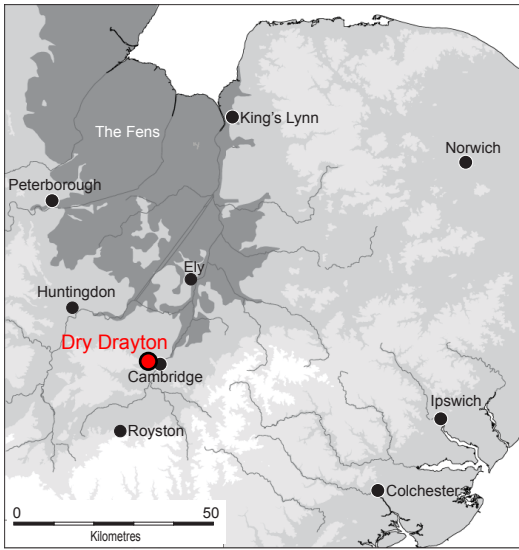


Figure 1. Location Plan

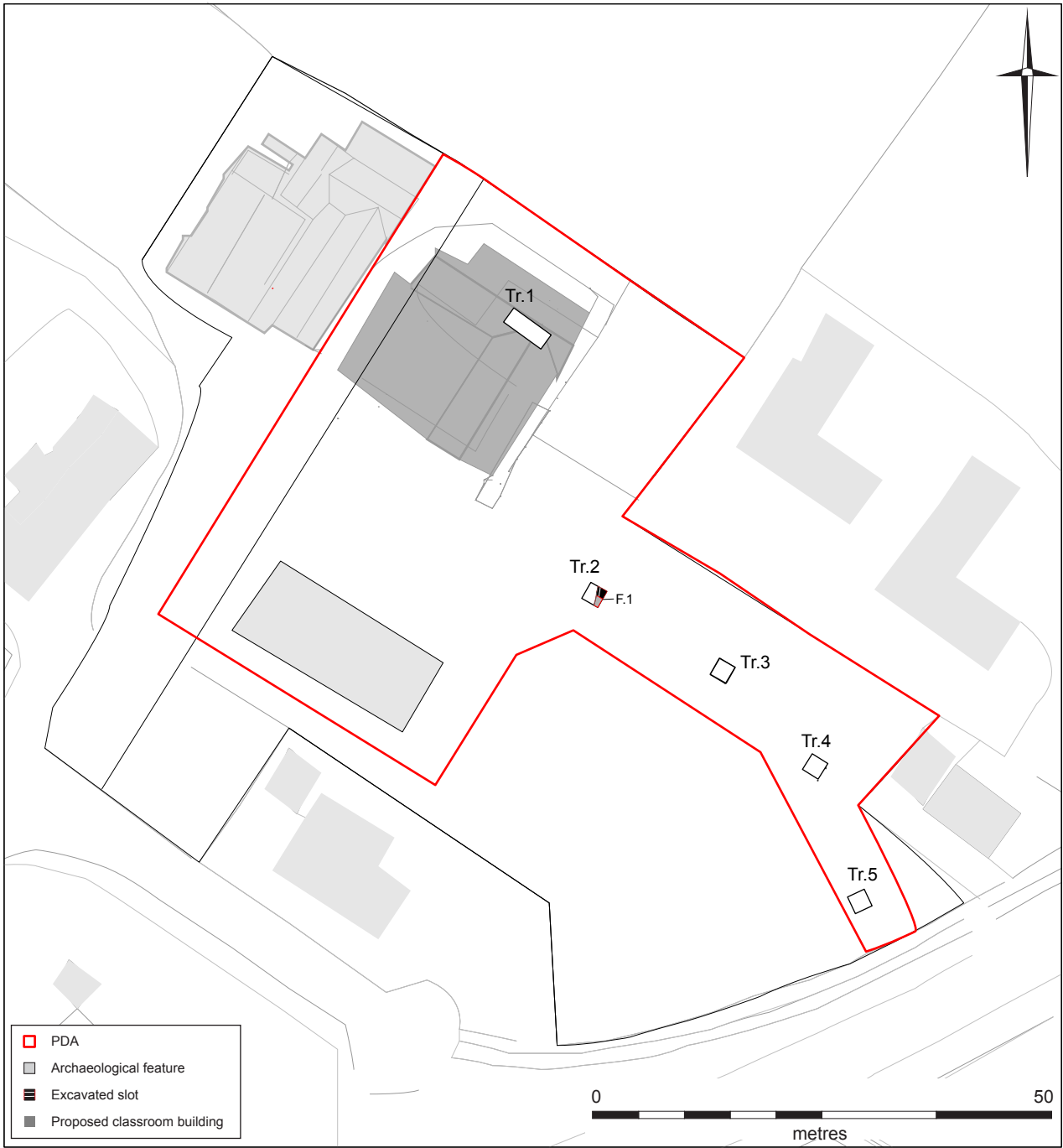


Figure 2. Trench Plan

NW

SE

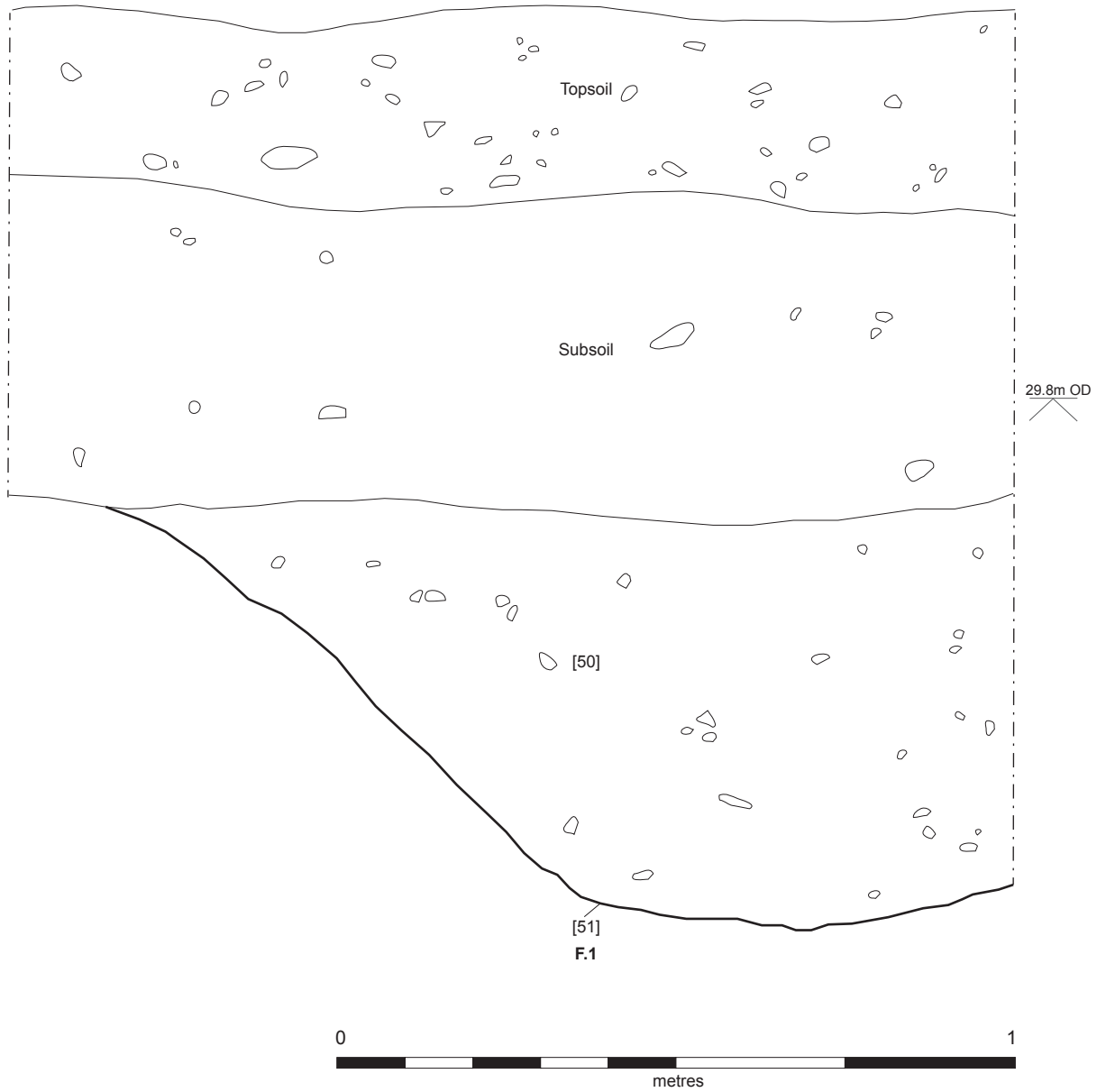


Figure 3. Section of F.1 in Trench 2

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Project details

Project name	Dry Drayton Primary School, An Archaeological Evaluation
Short description of the project	An Archaeological Evaluation was carried out at Dry Drayton Primary School, Dry Drayton on 9th and 10th April 2014 by the Cambridge Archaeological Unit (CAU). The work was commissioned by Coulsan on behalf of the Cambridgeshire County Council. The work was undertaken ahead of the construction of a new classroom with associated services and drainage and an access road. The work revealed one Medieval ditch aligned north-south.
Project dates	Start: 09-04-2014 End: 10-04-2014
Previous/future work	No / Yes
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	Local Authority Designated Archaeological Area
Current Land use	Community Service 1 - Community Buildings
Monument type	DITCH Medieval
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	"Sample Trenches", "Test Pits"
Development type	Public building (e.g. school, church, hospital, medical centre, law courts etc.)
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country	England
Site location	CAMBRIDGESHIRE SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DRY DRAYTON Dry Drayton Primary School
Postcode	CB23 8AT
Study area	3000.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TL 3819 6215 52.2397502132 0.0240787035739 52 14 23 N 000 01 26 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 29.45m Max: 29.45m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Cambridge Archaeological Unit
Project brief originator	Contractor (design and execute)
Project design originator	Alison Dickens
Project director/manager	Alison Dickens
Project supervisor	Lizzy Middleton
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Dry Drayton Primary School

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Cambridge Archaeological Unit
Physical Archive ID	DDS14
Physical Contents	"Animal Bones", "Ceramics"
Digital Archive recipient	Cambridge Archaeological Unit
Digital Archive ID	DDS14
Digital Contents	"none"
Digital Media available	"GIS", "Images raster / digital photography", "Survey", "Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Cambridge Archaeological Unit
Paper Archive ID	DDS14
Paper Contents	"none"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Drawing", "Map", "Photograph", "Plan", "Report", "Section", "Survey", "Unpublished Text"

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