

Summersfield, Papworth Everard

An Archaeological Watching Brief



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Archaeological Monitoring and Recording

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Illustrations by Bryan Crossan

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University of Cambridge

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Summary

Between 23rd and 31st of January 2014 a program of archaeological monitoring and recording was undertaken alongside the construction of a new access road for a housing development at Summersfield and the Papworth Trust, at Papworth Everard, Cambridgeshire (NGR 528650 262730). The site was situated alongside Ermine Street, the supposed route of a Roman Road, and within close proximity to a Romano-British Farmstead. The site was previously occupied by a car park, which had replaced an earlier building constructed on a terrace alongside the road, and as a result the area had been heavily truncated. Two pits and a large amorphous feature of post-Medieval date were recorded. The large amorphous feature was a probable pond recorded in the immediate area on a 1880s map. The two pits may have been associated with St. Johns Hostel.

INTRODUCTION

A program of archaeological monitoring and recording was commissioned by CgMs on behalf of Barratt Eastern Counties on the construction of an access road for the housing development at Summersfield, Papworth Everard, Cambridgeshire. The work was requested by the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Team (CHET) to determine the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance, and quality of any surviving archaeological remains. The project followed a written scheme of investigation as set out by the Cambridge Archaeological Unit (Tabor 2013).

The development area (DA) was situated at between 37m OD and 40m OD, centred on NGR 528650 262730. The underlying geology is Oxford Clay overlain by Boulder Clay drift (British Geological Survey Sheet 187). The site was located towards the base of a ridgeline and was bordered by pre-existing buildings to the north, south and west, with the current route of Ermine Street to the east. Prior to the investigation the site was occupied by a car park that was part of the Papworth Trust head office (Bernard Sunley Centre).

Archaeological Background

The investigation of the access road follows on from an earlier excavation to the southwest on the ridge (Patten 2012). The archaeological background for Summersfield has been summarised previously in the assessment report for this excavation (Patten 2007) and a desktop assessment (Dickens 1998), and will not be reiterated here. The excavation at Summersfield identified an Iron Age settlement that comprised five roundhouses and three enclosures. During the Late Iron Age/early Roman period this developed into a series of enclosures that represented multiple forms of activity, including settlement, horticulture, crop processing, and the management of livestock. The farmstead was set away from Ermine Street, a principle Roman route, and was serviced by a track, which branched off the road across the ridge. By the end of the Roman period the farmstead and, by and large, the ridge, were no longer being utilised, a hiatus in activity followed. In the early

Medieval period a settlement arose to the north of the excavation area, centred on the present day church of St. Peter. Evidence for this settlement was identified in the excavation with five separate enclosures and the remains of two structures representing the southern edge of the settlement.

Of further note to the investigation here, and not really covered by the previous archaeological backgrounds is the early twentieth century development of Papworth Everard. In 1918 the Cambridgeshire Tuberculosis Colony was established by Sir Pendrill Varrier-Jones, and in 1927 this became known as the Papworth Village Settlement. By this time the settlement had moved away from the church and was focused upon Ermine Street (Dickens 1998). The colony was established to provide those suffering from Tuberculosis permanent and adequately paid work, and create a community, and by 1930 the number of patients had risen to c. 350 from 17 in 1918. As the settlement grew cottages and hostels were constructed to house individuals and their families and by 1980 the Settlement owned over 270 of the 280 dwellings in the village (<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=15487>). Maps from the 1930s (County Sheet Cambridgeshire Series 1:2500) and 1970s (National Grid 1:2500 Tile TL2862) show one of these hostels, St. Johns, within the development area. Between 1966 and 1975 the old hostels were demolished and replaced with three new single-storey homes.

Methodology

The archaeological monitoring was undertaken alongside the construction of the access road with all soil and ground clearance undertaken by onsite contractors (Paul John). The tarmac from the car parking area had been removed prior to arrival exposing the rubble from the demolition of a pre-existing building and areas of truncated natural; areas of grass and soil had been left. The stripping of soils and deposits down to an archaeological level was undertaken by a 360° tracked digger with a toothless ditching bucket in the presence of an experienced archaeologist.

Scale plans of all archaeological features were recorded at 1:50 with sections drawn at 1:10 and complimented by digital photographs. The unit modified version of the Museum of London (MoL) recording system was employed throughout with all excavated stratigraphic events assigned a feature number (F.#) and all contexts assigned an individual number ([context #]), these numbers followed the sequence established from previous phases of archaeological work. The DA was fixed to the Ordnance Survey (OS) grid with a Global Positioning System (GPS). The site was identified as SPA13.

RESULTS

Upon the removal of the tarmac that formed the car park for the Papworth Trust it was evident that an earlier building had occupied the space. There was little that survived of the building, some areas of tiled concrete floors possibly the remains of

basements with short sections of brick wall along with a number of clay drains. As noted above, St. Johns Hostel is marked on earlier maps within the DA and was most likely demolished in the early 1970s.

In amongst the areas of disturbance were three separate and discrete features; F.520, F.521, and F.522 (Figure 2). Feature 520 was a sub-circular pit 2.5m by 1.5m cut to a depth of 0.92m, with eight separate fills of alternating silting and backfill (Figure 3). Feature 521 was an almost circular well 4.75m by 4.35m and 1.7m deep. A total of three distinct fills were recorded that comprised silty clays with occasional inclusions (Figure 3). A few fragments of post-Medieval pottery were recovered along with sections of clay-pipe, but there was no evidence for the preservation of organic material either as a deposit or as artefacts. The third feature, F.522, was a large amorphous feature that covered an area in excess of 15m². An exploratory section was excavated into the feature with a toothless ditching bucket that established it was 1.3m deep and comprised a single dark organic silt. The form and size of this feature would suggest that it may have been a pond, or similar such feature, indeed the early 1880s OS map does have what appears to be pond plotted within this area.

DISCUSSION

Despite the location of the DA close to the proposed route of Ermine Street there was no evidence for either the road itself, or any Roman activity. The site had been truncated by the modern car park for the Papworth Trust, and the foundations and services of what was most likely St. Johns Hostel, and it appeared as if the construction of either, or both, of these may have led to the terracing of the hillside here. The pond F.522 was located within the footprint of the hostel and its services and is most likely one of those observed on the 1880s OS map, predating the construction of St. Johns Hostel. The pit F.520 and well F.521 may have been contemporary with the pond; however, it is more probable that they were related to the hostel.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The work was commissioned by CgMS on behalf of Barratts Eastern Counties and the onsite contractor was Paul John. The project was managed by Emma Beadsmoore of the CAU and monitored by Kasia Gdaniec of the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Team (CHET). Graphics were prepared by Jonathan Moller and produced by Bryan Crossan.

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Tabor, J. 2013 *A written scheme of investigation for Archaeological Monitoring and Recording at Summersfield, Papworth-Everard, Cambridgeshire* Unpublished Document.

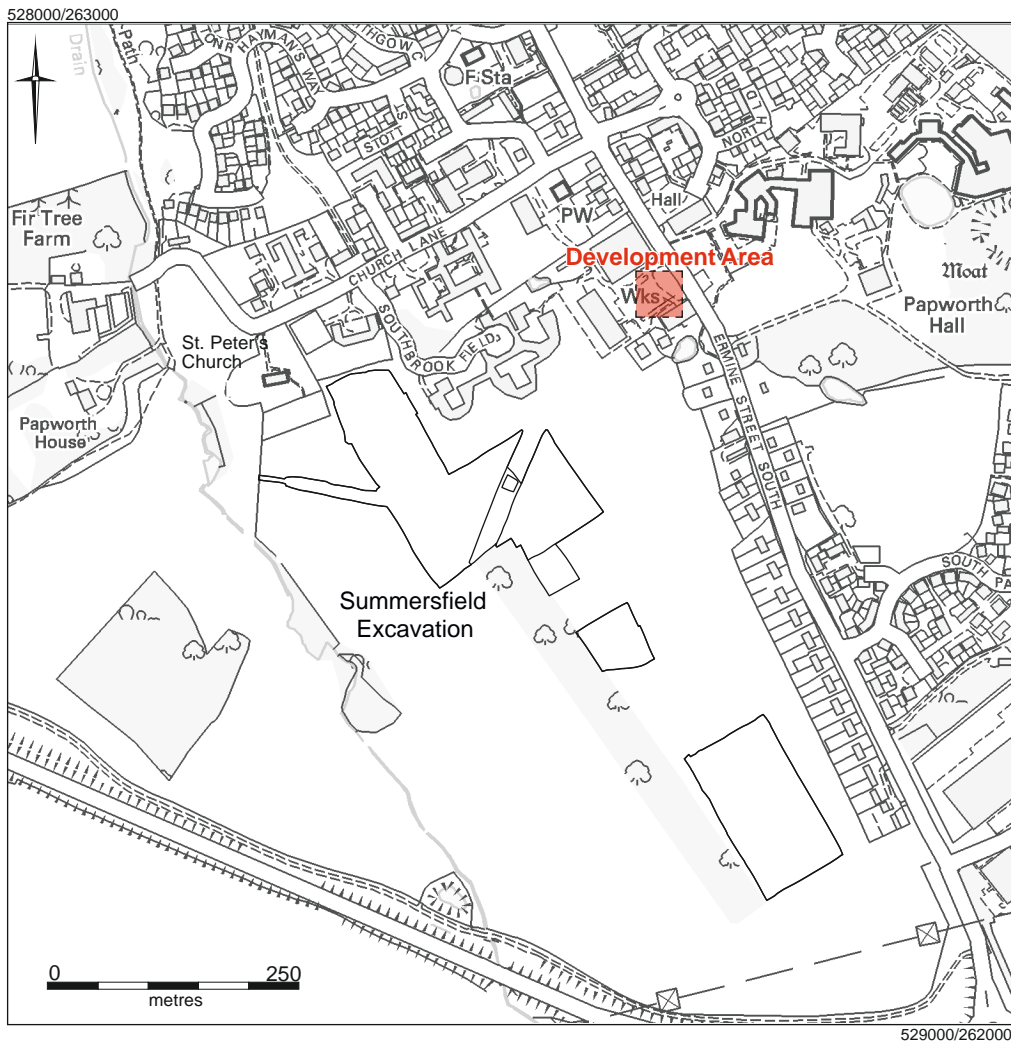
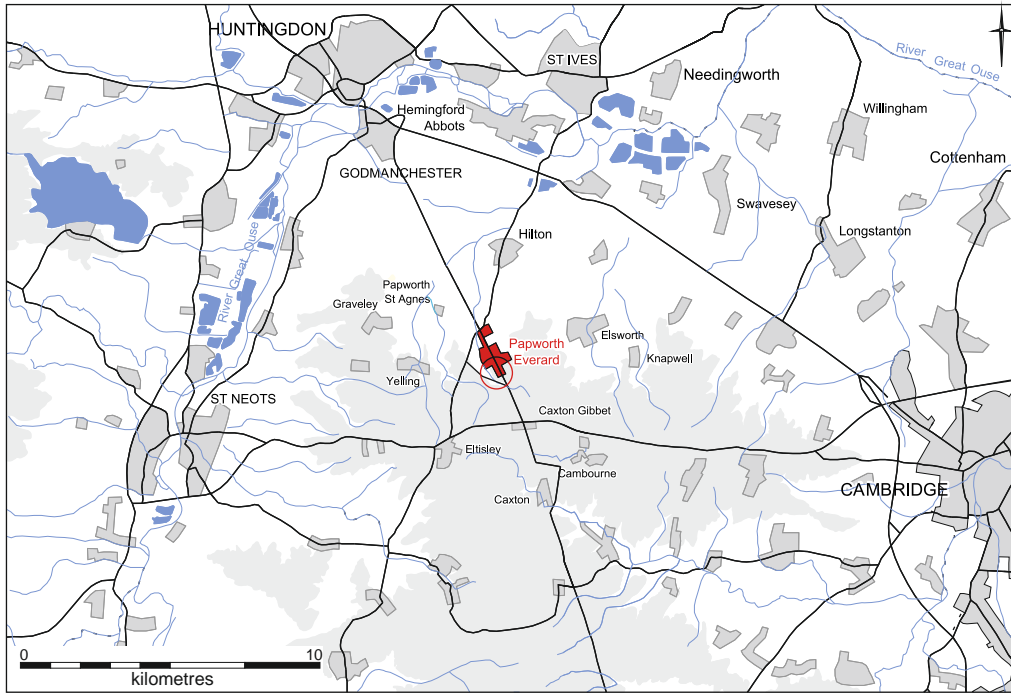


Figure 1. Site Location.

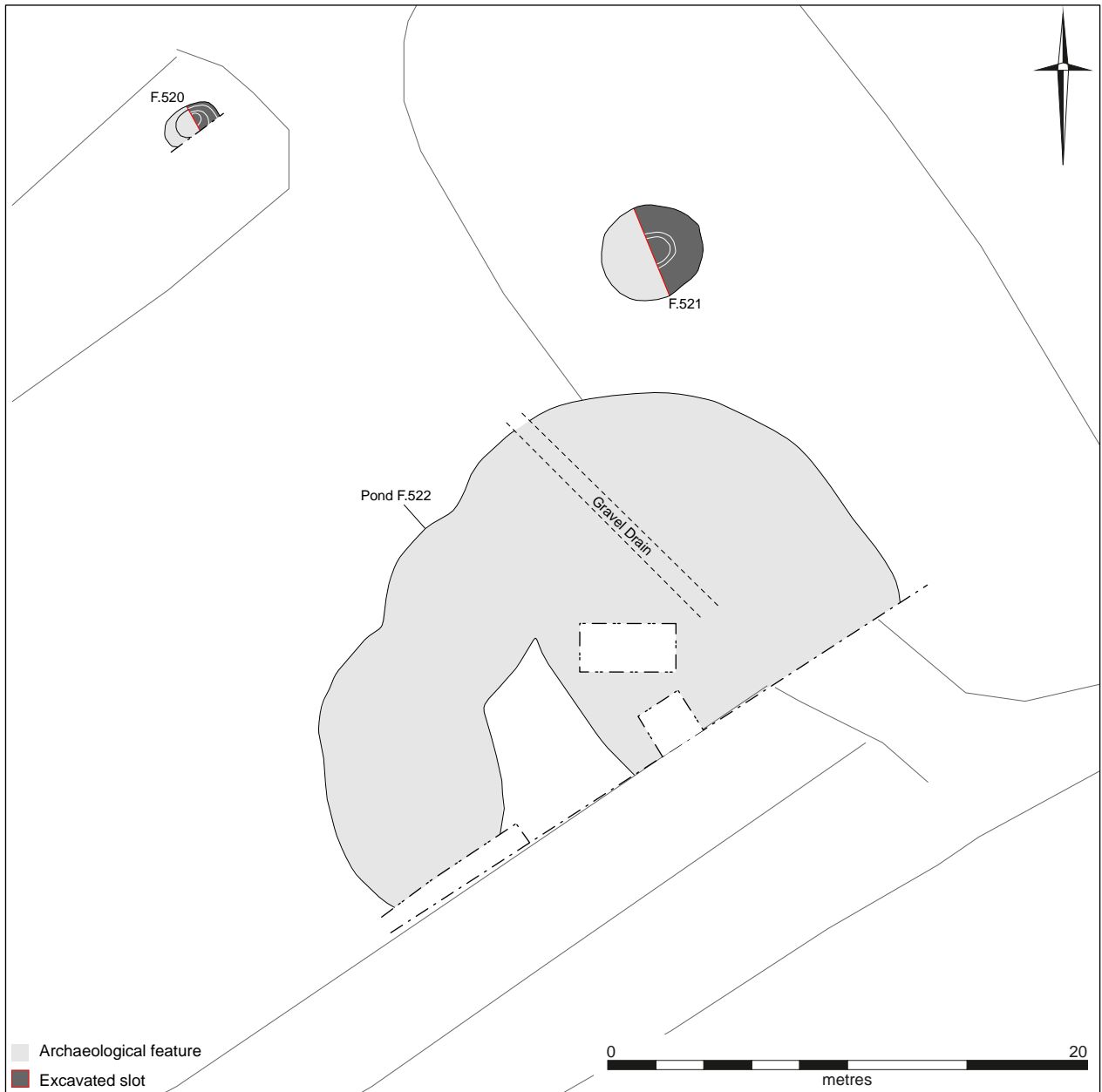


Figure 2. Plan of archaeological features

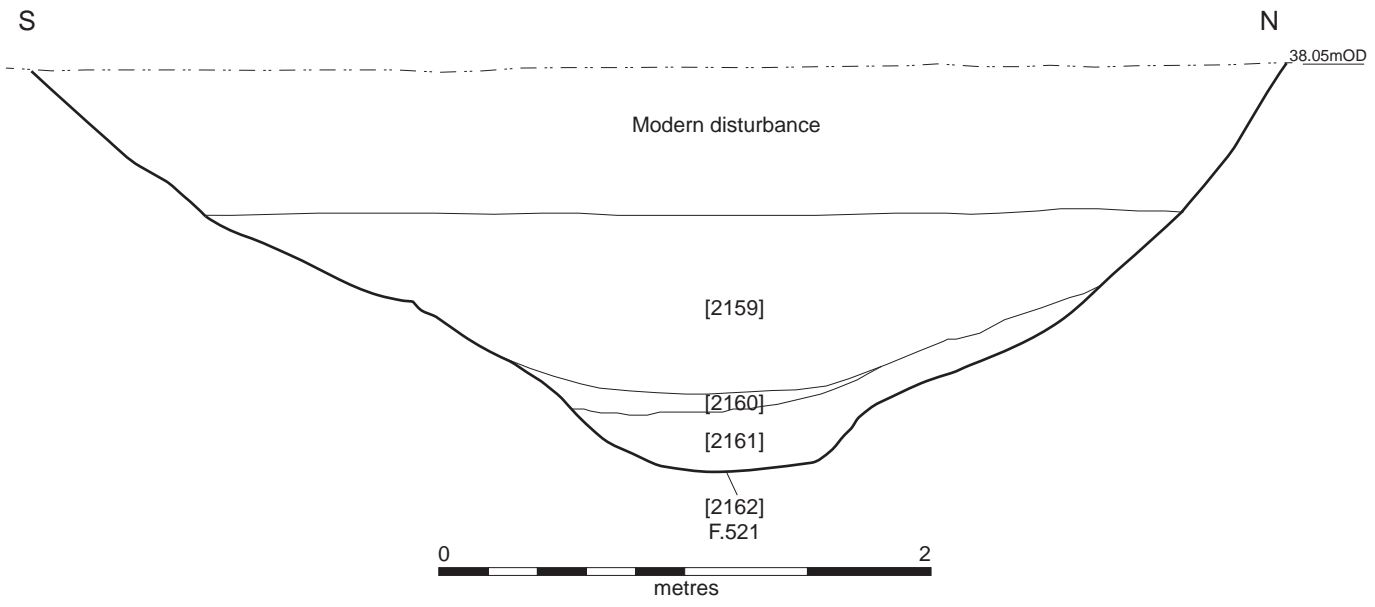
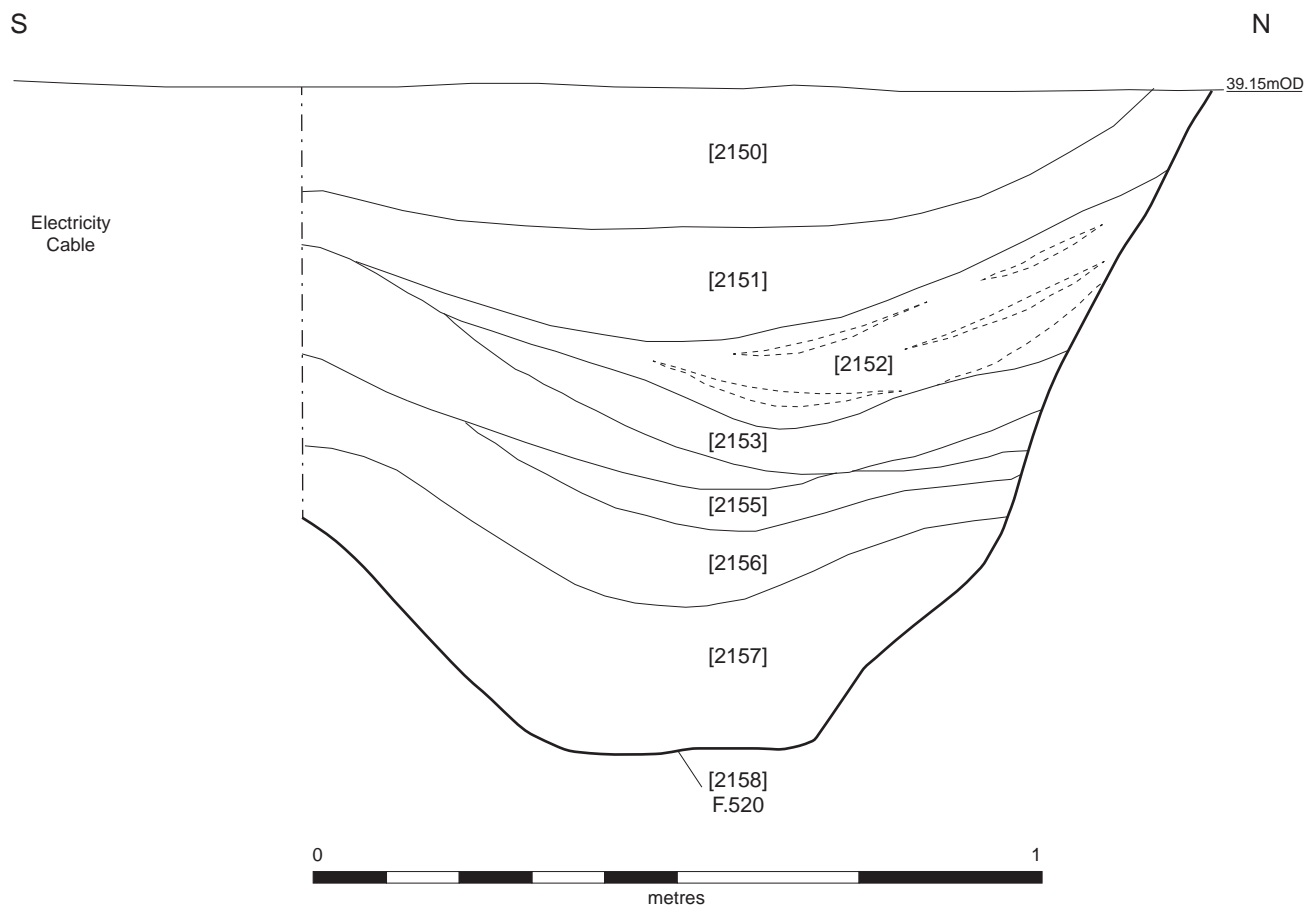


Figure 3. Sections of pit F.520 and well F.521

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Project details

Project name	Summersfield, Papworth Everard, Cambridgeshire Archaeological Monitoring and Recording
Short description of the project	Between 23rd and 31st of January 2014 a program of archaeological monitoring and recording was undertaken alongside the construction of a new access road for a housing development at Summersfield and the Papworth Trust, at Papworth Everard, Cambridgeshire (NGR 528650 262730). The site was situated alongside Ermine Street, the supposed route of a Roman Road, and within close proximity to a Romano-British Farmstead. The site was previously occupied by a car park, which had replaced an earlier building constructed on a terrace alongside the road, and as a result the area had been heavily truncated. Two pits and a large amorphous feature of post-Medieval date were recorded. The large amorphous feature was a probable pond recorded in the immediate area on a 1880s map. The two pits may have been associated with St. Johns Hostel.
Project dates	Start: 23-01-2014 End: 31-01-2014
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	ECB3879 - HER event no.
Any associated project reference codes	SPA13 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Industry and Commerce 2 - Offices
Monument type	PITS Modern
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS

Project location

Country	England
Site location	CAMBRIDGESHIRE SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE PAPWORTH EVERARD Summersfield
Postcode	CB23 3UW
Study area	0 Hectares
Site coordinates	TL 286 627 52.2470221479 -0.11609205296 52 14 49 N 000 06 57 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 37.00m Max: 40.00m
Project creators	
Name of Organisation	Cambridge Archaeological Unit
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	Emma Beadsmoore
Project director/manager	Emma Beadsmoore
Project supervisor	Ricky Patten
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Project archives	
Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Cambridgeshire County Archaeology Store
Digital Contents	"none"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Spreadsheets","Survey","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Cambridgeshire County Archaeology Store
Paper Contents	"none"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Plan","Report","Section","Unpublished Text"
Project bibliography 1	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Summersfield, Papworth Everard, Cambridgeshire Archaeological Monitoring and Recording
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Other	

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