

Manor Farm, Stretham, Cambridgeshire

An Archaeological Evaluation



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Division of Archaeology

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NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Fourteen trenches totalling 513.7m combined with geophysical survey identified two areas of archaeology represented in the first by linears oriented north-south and comprising a small system of cultivation beds possibly adjacent to enclosed pasture, and, second, by either small postholes or the bases of truncated pits with a medium-sized pit containing a small quantity of burnt quartz and flint. No datable finds were recovered from these features, although Romano-British and Medieval pottery was collected from within the subsoil of three trenches near to the linears. Geophysical anomalies show the possibility that the pits/postholes may be part of a larger cluster. A post-Medieval pond was also identified, and a second of these is indicated by the geophysics and cartographic evidence. Trenches in the south and east of the development area, situated along the lower contour of the southerly landfall, confirmed the presence of a moderately thick colluvium with absent or very low-level archaeology.

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1. INTRODUCTION

This archaeological trench evaluation followed the desk based assessment commissioned Haysom Ward Miller on behalf of Stretham & Wilburton Community Land Trust and Laragh House Developments Ltd. Fourteen trenches totalling 513.7m (924.66sqm) were excavated by the Cambridge Archaeological Unit (CAU) between 29th August 2014 and 3rd September 2014. Evidence for archaeological activity was limited and a small quantity of artefactual material was recovered (see Tables 1 & 2).

1.1 Location, Topography, Geology

The site covers an area of 4.3ha and is centred at TL 5163 7452 (Figure 1), and is located to the east of the village of Stretham at the eastern end of a Lower Greensand and Gault ridge topped by glacial deposits of boulder clay. The site sits predominately on Lower Greensand and is located on the south facing slope of the ridge between c. 3 – 4m OD, dropping to around 2m OD beyond the southern extent. The River Great Ouse (Old West River) flows southwest to northeast approximately 1km to the south and is joined by the River Cam 1.8km to the east of the site.

The site has recently been used as an agricultural field to grow oil seed rape. It is bounded to the north by a concrete surfaced farm track and a drainage ditch to the south with the rear gardens of housing plots along the east.

1.2 Archaeological Background

A full account of the development area's archaeological background is detailed in the desk top assessment (Halls & Dickens 2013), from which only a summary is provided here.

During the Neolithic period (4000-2200 BC) this area of the southern fenland was relatively dry and most likely wooded. Into the Bronze Age (2200-800 BC), rising water tables and clogged natural drainage led to the formation of freshwater peats consuming low lying basins (Hall and Coles 1994). Within this changing landscape, Neolithic and Bronze Age finds are well documented (Fox 1923) and include Bronze Age metalwork, such as the Grunty Fen armlet and hoards at Wilburton (both 3 – 4km to the west of the site) and Barway (2.5km northeast of the site); individual finds of Bronze Age metalwork have also been recorded from within 1km of the development area (CHER 02075, 02078, 06909). Large scale field walking surveys (Hall and Coles 1994, Hall 1996) have identified numerous prehistoric settlement sites and monuments, often clustering around the fringes of the wetland basins, the fen-edge proper, and on 'dry' gravel and sand islands. Recent large scale archaeological projects such as the Haddenham and Over fieldwork programmes (10 – 15km to the west of the Manor Farm) have done much to illustrate the rich and locally intense diachronic archaeological resource within the southern fenland zone (Evans and Hodder 2006a). Pinpointing occupation sites on the heavier clay soils of the Isle of Ely has been more difficult; this is partly owing to the low visibility in aerial survey of archaeological features in these soils, but might also be reflective of the limited attraction of these soils for settlement. Whichever the case, associative contexts for the rich metalwork finds remain unresolved (Evans 2001). Fieldwalking

within the development area has identified a number of Neolithic and early Bronze Age finds clusters approximately 500-700m east of the development area on the southeast facing flank of the greensand ridge promontory (MCB16989, MCB17006, MCB19087), with scatters of worked flint also recorded 700m northeast (MCB17010) and 700m west (MCB16993, CHER 06876). A small number of prehistoric flint and pottery has also been recorded during archaeological evaluation in the grounds of Stretham Rectory, some 400m west of the development area (Hoyland 1991), and a small number of possible worked flints have been collected from within the western edge of the development area (Mike Young pers. comm.).

The Iron Age (800 BC - 43 AD) witnessed increasing peat formation in the Fens. In response, communities reacted by moving settlement foci to drier ground away from the wet fen edge. Enclosed settlement sites for this period have been identified locally on the Isle of Ely, at the Wardy Hill ring work (9km to the north-west; Evans 2003), Hurst Lane and West Fen Road (8km to the north; Evans *et al.* 2007) and at Little Thetford (2km to the northeast; *ibid.*). Further occupation is documented from the Haddenham (Evans & Hodder 2006b) and Colne fieldwork projects (Evans *et al.* 2013).

During the Roman period (43-410 AD) there was intensive exploitation of the southern fenland area with extensive cropmark complexes of this date along the southern fen edge within areas north of Willingham, Cottenham, Waterbeach and into the Ouse Valley (Phillips 1970). Many of these sites are most likely small farmsteads that exploited the fen-edge meadows, but several temple or shrine complexes have also been identified. On the Isle of Ely itself, occupation sites of this period have recently come to light with continuity of settlement into the Roman period at both Little Thetford and Hurst Lane. Discovered in the 19th century was a courtyard villa site, located on the opposite side of the Ouse on Lower Greensand, at Tiled House Farm, just outside the development area. Finds of a pewter hoard and a late Roman coin hoard are also reported from the site (Fox 1923), with recent fieldwalking locating additional pottery and tile finds (CHER MCB16998, MCB16999, MCB17017). The Roman road Akeman Street (Margary route 23b) runs through Stretham (whose name provides a clue to its origin; 'the town/farm on the street'), possibly along the line of the present day High Street. Its route to the south through Waterbeach is well established (Malim 2005), and it has been suggested that there may have been a mansio or way-station at Stretham (*ibid.*).

There is relatively little evidence for the early Saxon period (410-1066 AD) in the vicinity of the development area which may be a case of sites remaining unrecognised within later Roman complexes, or being obscured by later settlement. One firm candidate is the Roman and Early Saxon site at Bedwell Hay Farm 2.5km to the north of the Manor Farm (Lucy *et al.* 2009). The nearby 6th century cemetery site at Witchford Aerodrome may well be associated with this site, believed to be that of Cratendune, mentioned as an existing settlement on the Isle in 673 AD when the first monastery was established by Etheldreda at Ely. A small high status cemetery of this date was recently excavated by the CAU at Westfield Farm at the south-western edge of Ely town (*ibid.*). This may well be associated with the early monastic community. Further early settlement evidence is noted from Waterbeach, adjacent to the Car Dyke, and at Linton Hall, Haddenham (Hall and Coles 1994). Towards the

later Saxon period, environmental conditions worsened with yet more low lying land subsumed by fen.

Historic references to Stretham illustrate that there was no single 'grand' manor, although the presence of three guilds and a 14th-15th century stone cross suggests some degree of affluence. The Parish Church of St. James holds 14th century origins, and the Rectory is attached to a 14th century stone range, although excavation has also revealed Saxon pottery (Horton & Lucas 1990). A single sherd of Thetford ware pottery (late 9th – 11th century) was found during fieldwalking in the northwest of the development area (CHER 06907) which also illustrates limited early occupation. Assessment of Manor Farm (CHER 06922) in the 1950s noted that its structure was primarily from the 18th century (Pugh 1953: 152), and a coin of George I (1660-1727) was found during later restoration of its interior. Nevertheless, a possible earlier antecedent foundation has not been discounted.

1.3 Methodology

The work followed specifications previously outlined in a design Brief for archaeological evaluation issued by the office of Cambridgeshire Archaeology planning and Countryside Advice, and a Project Specification outlined by the CAU (Dickens 2014).

Geotechnical survey (EPS 2013) prior to archaeological trenching recorded an increase in the combined depth of ploughsoil and subsoil from the north of the development area (c. 0.4m) to the south (c. 0.8m). Gradiometer survey identified a number of geophysical anomalies (Figure 2); these included linears corresponding with field boundaries marked on 19th century OS maps as well as possible ponds depicted on maps from the 1890s to the 1920s (see Figure 6). Trenches were located to test these latter anomalies. In total, 14 trenches were excavated using a 360° excavator with a 1.8m wide toothless ditching bucket under the supervision of an experienced archaeologist. Trenches were excavated to a level where archaeological features were visible; these were planned and hand excavated. Data sheets were completed for all of the trenches to record section profiles and geological variances and were accompanied by scale plans of all archaeological features (at 1:50) and the recording of excavated features with sections drawn at a scale of 1:10, complimented by digital photography. The Unit-modified version of the Museum of London recording system was employed throughout with all excavated stratigraphic events assigned feature numbers (F.#) and all contexts assigned individual numbers ([context #]). The development area was fixed to the Ordnance Survey (OS) grid and a contour survey undertaken with a Global Positioning System (GPS).

1.4 Archive

Information detailing the character of the trenches (e.g. data sheets, digital photography and survey record) has been catalogued together within an archive following procedures outlined in MoRPHE (English Heritage 2006). This is being stored with the processed material record at the CAU offices, under the site code MFS14.

2. RESEARCH DESIGN

The principal objective of the evaluation process was to determine the presence or absence of archaeological remains and to establish their character (e.g. chronological range and quality of preservation) and the site's depositional history. Furthermore, the site's potential local, regional and national significance was assessed.

3. RESULTS

3.1 Trenching

Combined depths of the ploughsoil and subsoil ranged from a minimum of 0.46m along the north of the development area, falling to 0.95m in the south (Table 1). Whilst a slight undulation occurred in the depth registered between adjacent trenches, overall there was a consistent southerly landfall across which archaeological features were confined to a contour of 0.58m and higher.

Trench	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Depth (m)	0.8	0.85	0.68	0.95	0.85	0.65	0.46	0.46	0.56	0.65	0.58	0.58	0.52	0.46	0.46

Table 1: Average depth of ploughsoil/subsoil per trench

Archaeological features were identified in eight trenches: Tr6, Tr7, Tr8, Tr9, Tr11, Tr12, Tr13 and Tr14. The remaining seven trenches – predominantly situated in the southern, lower, half of the development area – were devoid of archaeology: Tr1-5, Tr10 and Tr15 (see Tables 2-3; Figure 3).

Number of:	Archaeological Feature	Other (e.g. Drains/ Top & Sub Soils)	Total
Features Recorded	15	12	27
Excavated Features	10	4	14
Excavated Contexts	26	9	35

Table 2: Feature totals.

Feature category	Total
Drain	12
Linear	7
Pit and Posthole	6
Modern test pit	2
Pond	1

Table 3: Feature frequency (including drains not allocated feature numbers)

A total of forty-two (1408g) artefacts were recovered from subsoil layers and cut features (Tables 4 and 5). Much of this was concentrated within F.2 which was identified as a pond dating to the 19th and early 20th centuries. Other pottery finds have been dated as Romano-British and Medieval, and it is possible that the burnt flint is prehistoric. The detail of these features is outlined below by order of feature category; a complete overview of each trench is provided in Section 6.3.

Material	Quantity	Weight (g)
Animal bone	1	2
Brick	2	676
Burnt stone	11	194
Pottery	13	395
Tile	15	141
<i>Total</i>	<i>42</i>	<i>1408</i>

Table 4: Total number of finds by category.

Material	Feature (g)	Subsoil (g)
Animal bone	0	2
Brick	676	0
Burnt stone	194	0
Pottery	301	94
Tile	141	0
<i>Total</i>	<i>1312</i>	<i>96</i>

Table 5. Total number of finds by context.

Drains

Twelve post-Medieval drains were identified in eight trenches: Tr1-3, Tr5-7, Tr9 and Tr14. Two were oriented east-west with the remaining ten arranged north-south with the landfall. The majority (10) consisted of a slight, vertical cut containing a series of cylindrical clay pipes that are typical of agricultural drainage from the 19th and early 20th centuries. Two drains consisted only of straight sided vertical cuts c. 0.2m wide and up to 0.5m deep. Four drains were assigned to a feature number: **F.1**, **F.6**, **F.12** and **F.13**.

Linears

Seven linear features were recoded across the development area, although with the exception of F.16 in Tr6, these were confined to trenches Tr11-13 on the west side of the development area (Table 6). All linears were oriented against the landfall upon a north-south axis and were found to cut into the sandy subsoil. Four linears were subject to excavation: **F.3**, **F.4**, **F.14** and **F.16**. These each contained a single fill of either dark greyish brown clayey silt (F.14), pale yellowish grey silt (F.16) or mid orangey brown clayey sand (F.3-4); rare charcoal flecks were noted within each of the fills (Figure 4). Linears identified in trenches Tr11-13 may be considered as a group on account of their spatial proximity and tight arrangement. F.3 was the only linear identified in more than one trench, and may represent an eastern limit for the group. In Tr11 this was accompanied by F.4 and **F.17-19** that were evenly spaced between 3-3.5m and cut to depths between 0.33m and 0.4m. No artefacts were recovered from any of the linears, and their possible date is discussed in Section 3.2.

Feature	Trench	Width	Depth	Orientation
16	6	0.38	0.07	N-S
3	11 & 12	1.0	0.4	N-S
4	11	0.88	0.33	N-S
17	11	-	-	N-S
18	11	-	-	N-S
19	11	-	-	N-S
14	13	0.45	0.09	N-S

Table 6: Summary of linear features

It is noteworthy here that F.16 was exceptionally pale in colour and was considerably truncated during machining. In plan, visibility of F.16 within the damp subsoil was poor; clarity was much greater in section and the recorded dimensions for this feature are nevertheless accurate, but with its shallow depth there is a possibility that similar features lower down the landfall contour may not have survived.

Pits and postholes

F.5 was the only feature that with any certainty could be classed as a pit (Figure 5). This was partially exposed (0.5m) against the south edge of Tr9, appearing in plan with a sub-circular form. The pit's straight sides formed a sharp, near vertical profile [12], 1.15m wide, with a flat base at a depth of 0.4m. A single fill of soft greyish brown clayey silt [11] also contained 194g of heat-affected stone (flint and quartz) that had clearly been imported to the site and subjected to considerable temperatures; there was no clear sign that any of this had undergone previous working.

F.15 represented the only definite posthole. This was recorded from within Tr14 and had a clear circular plan with a diameter of 0.26m and straight vertical sides, 0.08m deep, with a flat base [33]. This was filled with soft dark grey silt with occasional charcoal flecks [32], but no finds and no obvious association to other features.

Trenches Tr8 and Tr9 contained four morphologically irregular features: **F.7-10**. These reached a depth of between 0.04m and 0.1m with a flat base; only the deepest of these (F.7) gave indication of the nature its sides, which were straight and vertical with a slight concave break of slope (Figure 4). All, however, were indistinct in plan, with either a sub-rectangular or sub-oval form, and can only cautiously be defined as either postholes or the bases of truncated pits. Nevertheless, the spatial proximity of these features suggests that they represent a broad group.

Pond

Trench Tr7 was positioned in order to target one of the larger, magnetically responsive geophysical anomalies. This was recorded as **F.2** which was oval in plan, oriented north-south, with dimensions of 18.0m in length and 11.0m in width (Figure 4). Two slots were opened into F.2. The first was 1.0m by 2.5m and hand excavated. This revealed an undulating, irregular profile [4] gradually deepening before a more sudden and vertical drop exceeding 0.45m. The second was partially excavated by hand and then by machine to its base at a depth of 1.58m. This produced a sequence of five deposits, the uppermost of which was a reddish brown peaty silt [24] overlying increasingly saturated and dark clayey silts interspersed by occasional gravelly lenses. The basal deposit [28] was dark bluish grey silty clay. Small wood fragments were retrieved from each layer below [24], and fragments of tile were noted throughout the profile along with fragments of brick and a ceramic vessel clearly of a late 19th or early 20th century date.

3.2 Discussion

With the exception of both the field drains and the post-Medieval pond (F.2), dating of the archaeological features has been made difficult through the general absence of material finds or stratigraphic relationships. Nevertheless, two groups of features have been identified in the form of linears in the west of the development area, and pits and postholes north of its centre. The south and east have shown only limited activity through a small number of Romano-British pot sherds recovered from the

subsoil of trenches Tr2 and Tr5, a Medieval sherd in Tr14 and an undated linear in Tr6.

In light of the comparative density of worked flint and prehistoric pottery that has been documented through fieldwalking within 500-700m of the entire boundary of the development area it is surprising that this has not been forthcoming in the current programme. Alternatively, the burnt flint and quartz found within pit F.5 in trench Tr9 offers some indication of prehistoric activity. Of note here is the direct correspondence of F.5 with a magnetic geophysical anomaly, and the presence also of additional anomalies within 15m east of this. It is uncertain as to how the possible pits/postholes fit within this picture, but their proximity in trenches Tr8 and Tr9 also suggests the possibility of a prehistoric date.

On the west side of the development area, in trenches Tr11-13, the six linears oriented north-south form the second feature group. Whilst not registering a geophysical response, this 'system' is notable for its even spacing of 3-3.5m between linears observed in Tr11. Ridge and furrow cultivation was prevalent in Cambridgeshire throughout the Medieval and post-Medieval periods, although spacings usually occur over 8-10m. It may therefore be appropriate to consider the linears here as planting beds for the cultivation of a variety of possible crops. Spacings of 3-5m are common for planting beds in the region from at least the Romano-British era, and these are found in scales ranging from small-holdings to larger, more landscape-wide plots. F.3 was the only linear that continued from Tr11 northwards for at least 25m into Tr12; no features were present in Tr1, 25m to the south of Tr11. This illustrates the localised distribution of the planting beds, with possible signs of enclosed pasture to the north of this, as indicated by the southerly termination of linear F.14 in trench Tr13. Whilst no artefacts were recovered from the excavation of these features, the subsoil of three trenches to the east produced Romano-British (Tr2 and Tr5) and Medieval (Tr14) pottery which at least indicates the possibility of their antiquity, although not a clear date.

Excavation of F.2 confirms the late 19th and early 20th century cartographic depiction of two ponds in the development area, as suggested also by the geophysical data. The second of these lies in the northwest corner immediately south of a contemporary field boundary (Figure 6).

4. CONCLUSION

The programme of trenching at Manor Farm has identified two areas of some archaeological potential, respectively focused along the north and west of the development area. Overall, this appears to be of low density. Dating of the archaeology in these areas has remained elusive, although in the north a prehistoric date may be proposed for pits and postholes within trenches Tr8-9 with a distribution that may extend into geophysical anomalies to the northeast of these trenches. A Romano-British or Medieval date for a 'system' of linear features in trenches Tr11-13 may also be postulated and these are likely to be related to agricultural activities. Archaeological features were absent in trenches along the south and east of the development area where at c. 0.65-0.95m the subsoil deposits are at their thickest, and overlie a north to south gradient.

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6. APPENDICES

6.1 Specialist Reports

6.1.1 Pottery (with David Hall)

Eighteen sherds of pottery were recovered totalling 395g and representing six vessels, of which four are Romano-British, one Medieval and one post-Medieval. Only the latter of these was recovered from a secure context with the remaining sherds found within the subsoil.

<001> Subsoil, Tr2. 4 sherds from 3 vessels. Two greyware sherds and two sherds from a large jar, possibly Horingsea ware. Romano-British 2nd-4th century AD. Combined weight of 55g.

<003> Subsoil, Tr5. 2 refitting sherds of heavily worn hard pottery of pinkish colour. Romano-British 3rd-4th century AD colour-coated imitation samian ware. Weight 28g.

<005> F.2 [5], Tr7. 11 fragments of a single stoneware vessel. Base and lower body represented. 19th / 20th century. Weight 307g.

<008> Subsoil, Tr14. A single sherd of coarse dark grey sandy Medieval pottery, c.14th-15th century AD. Weight 5g.

6.1.2 Animal Bone

A single bone was recovered from the subsoil of trench Tr2 during machine excavation.

<002> Tr2. Single small worn fragment of lower limb (?tibia) of cattle-sized animal. Weight 2g. No signs of butchery.

6.1.3 Burnt Stone

A small quantity of burnt stone (flint and quartz) was found only in a single pit in trench Tr9 for which a prehistoric date has been postulated. There was no evidence for any prior working of the stone.

<006> F.5 [11], Tr9. 11 small fire-shattered stones totalling 194g. Flint and quartz.

6.1.4 Ceramic Building Material

Ceramic building material amounted to 906g of brick, tile and fired clay, all recovered from two cut features, although the bulk of this relates to a 19th / 20th century pond, F.2.

<004> F.2 [5], Tr7. A single fragment of handmade tile of mixed yellow/pinkish colour and vesicular profile. Weight 79g.

<007> F.7 [15], Tr9. A small lump of fired clay with worn, rounded edges; pinkish-brown colour with fine, coarse sandy clay body and mica. Weight 5g.

<009> F.2 [5], Tr7. 11 small fragments of handmade tile of mixed yellow/pinkish colour and vesicular profile. Total weight 141g.

<010> F.2 [5], Tr7. 2 partial and worn handmade bricks, one of mixed yellow/pinkish colour and vesicular profile, and the other of coarse sandy texture and dark pinkish orange colour – probably the result of burning or refiring. Total weight 681g.

6.2 Figures

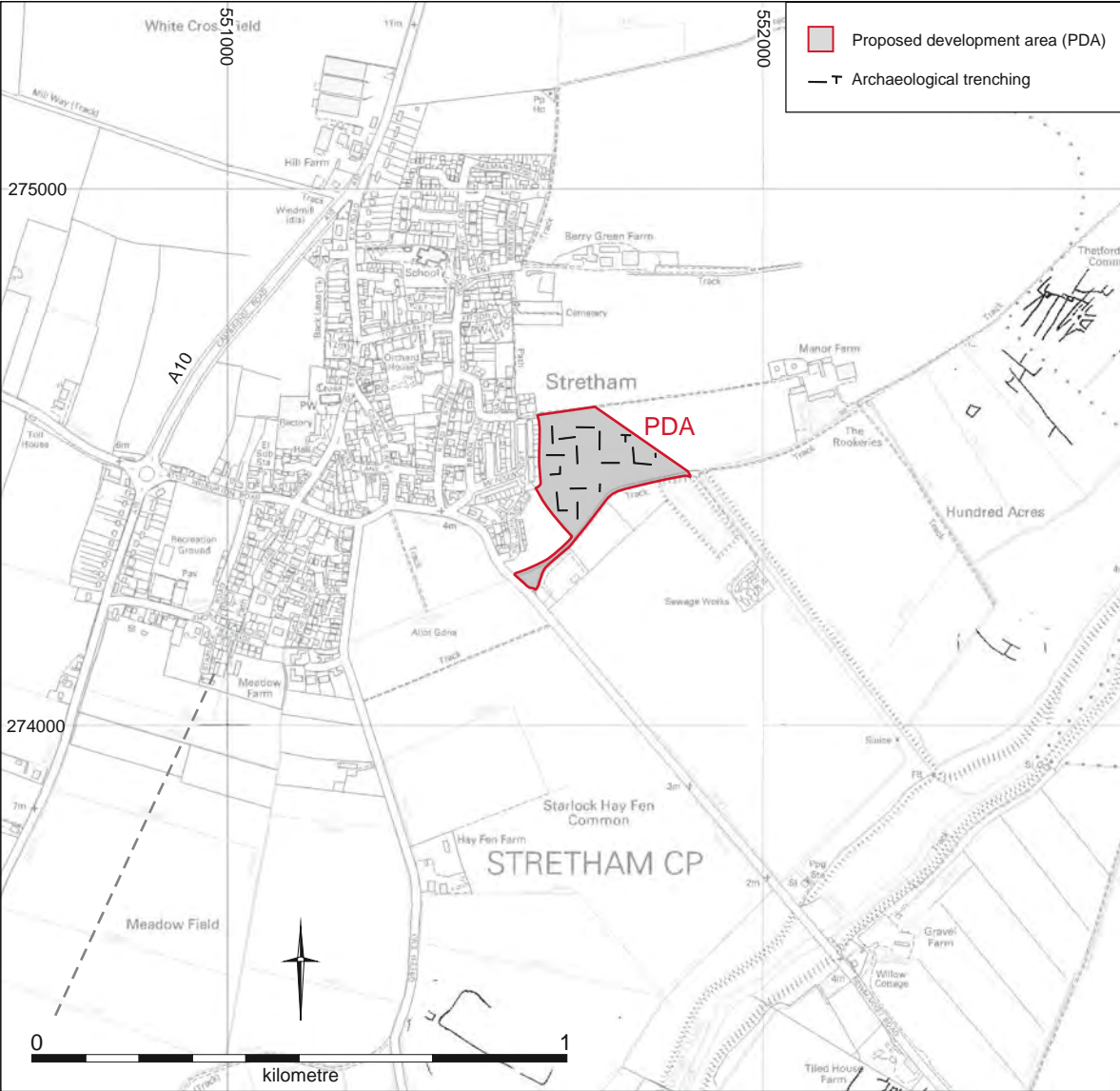
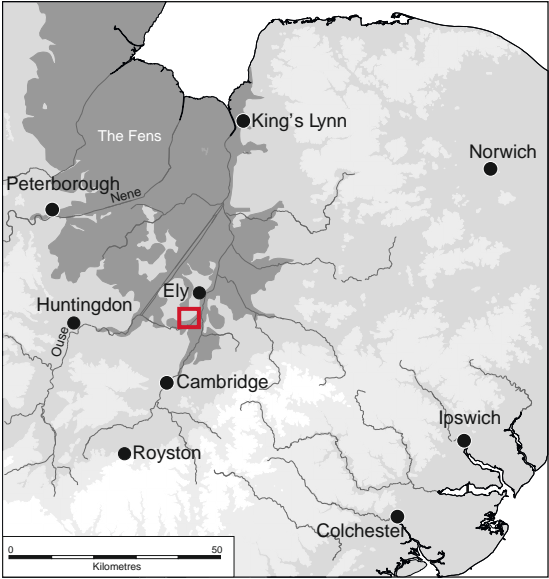


Figure 1. Site location



Figure 2. Trench plan with geophysical survey results

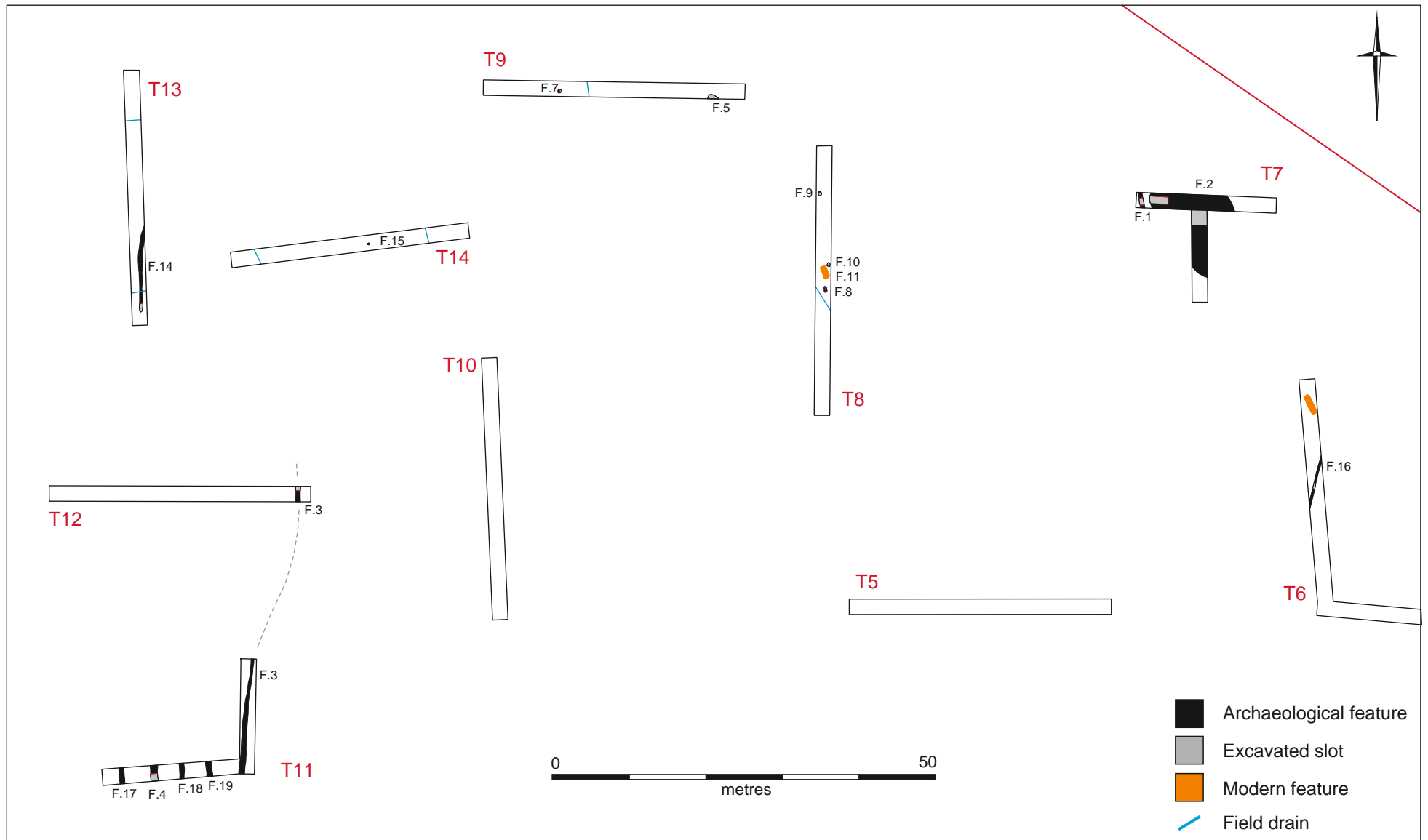


Figure 3. Trench plan detail

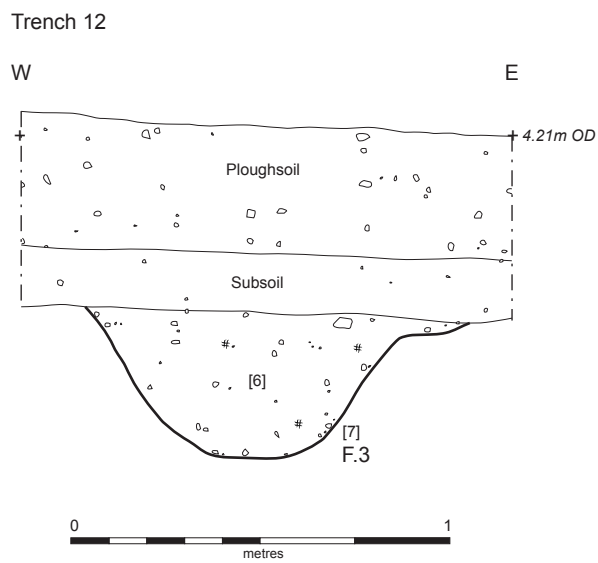
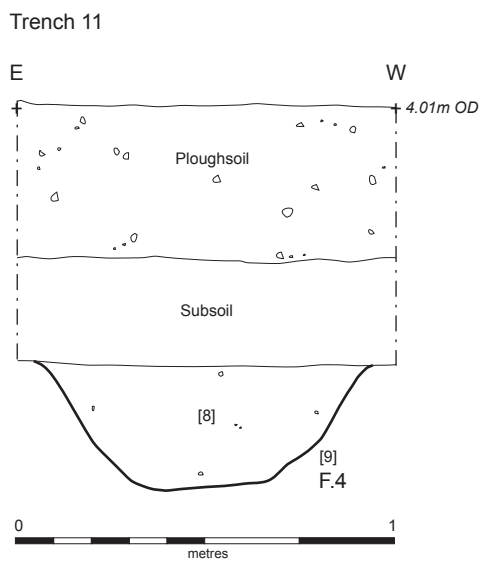
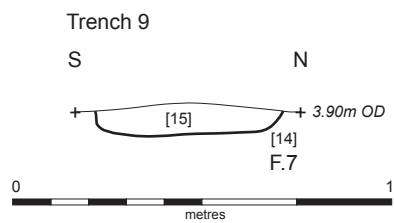
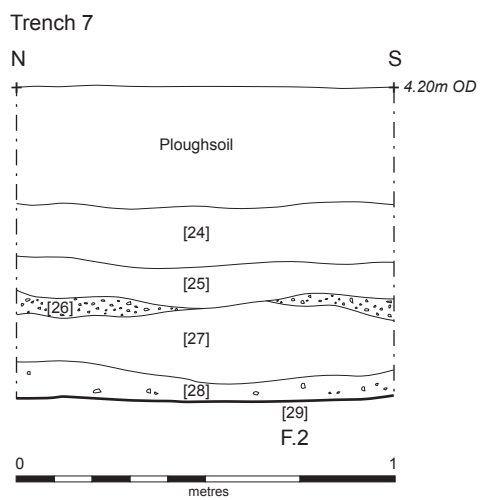
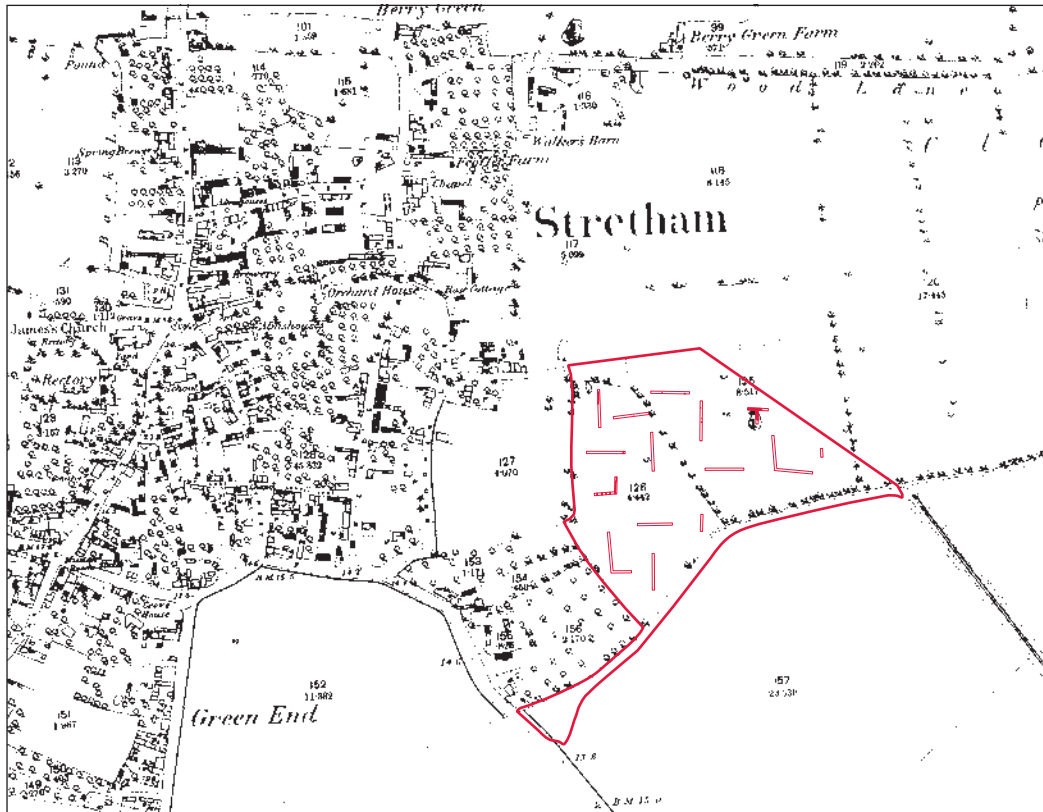


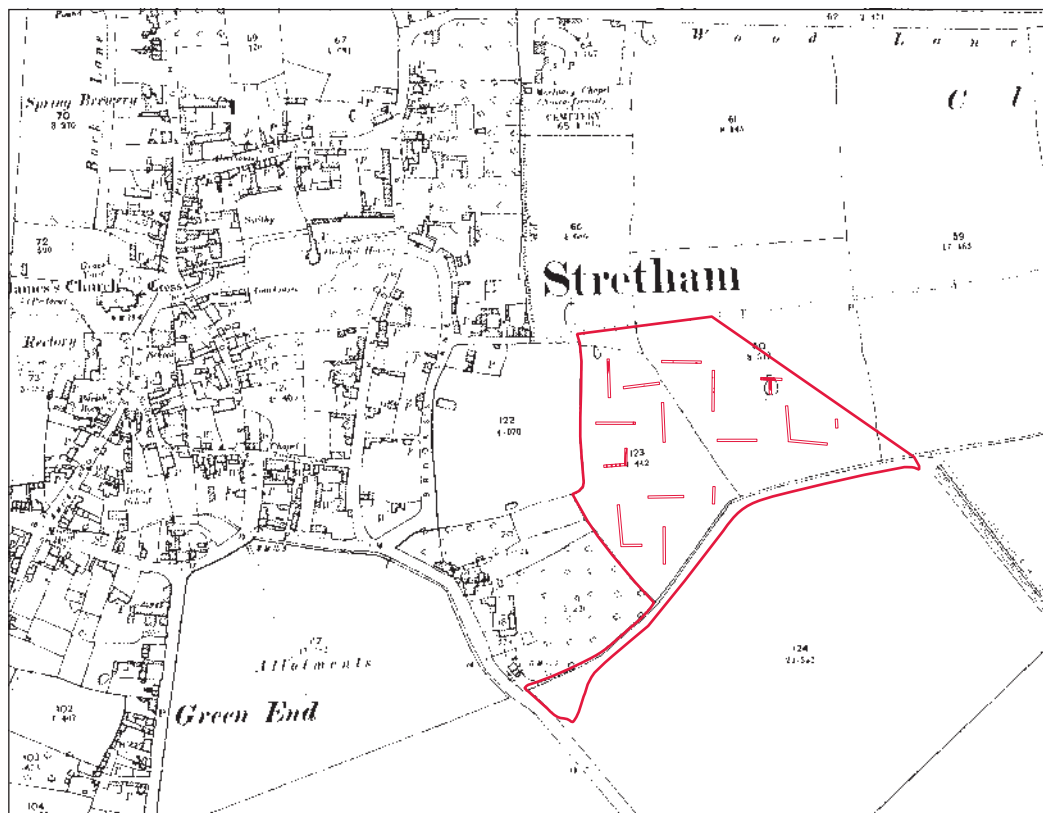
Figure 4. Selected sections



Figure 5. General view of the test trenching looking west (top), and Feature 5 in Trench 9 (below)




1887 1st edition Ordnance Survey map




1902 Ordnance Survey map

Figure 6. Cartographic evidence (Ordnance Survey)

6.3 Detailed Trench Descriptions

Trench 1											
	<p style="text-align: right;">Summary description</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Avg. Topsoil Depth (m)</td> <td>0.4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Avg. Subsoil Depth (m)</td> <td>0.4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Orientation of Trench</td> <td>NS-EW</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Width of Trench (m)</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Length of Trench (m)</td> <td>54</td> </tr> </table>	Avg. Topsoil Depth (m)	0.4	Avg. Subsoil Depth (m)	0.4	Orientation of Trench	NS-EW	Width of Trench (m)	2	Length of Trench (m)	54
	Avg. Topsoil Depth (m)	0.4									
Avg. Subsoil Depth (m)	0.4										
Orientation of Trench	NS-EW										
Width of Trench (m)	2										
Length of Trench (m)	54										
<p>No Archaeology. One east-west ceramic field drain at north end of trench.</p>											

Trench 2											
	<p style="text-align: right;">Summary description</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Avg. Topsoil Depth (m)</td> <td>0.4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Avg. Subsoil Depth (m)</td> <td>0.45</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Orientation of Trench</td> <td>N-S</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Width of Trench (m)</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Length of Trench (m)</td> <td>32.5</td> </tr> </table>	Avg. Topsoil Depth (m)	0.4	Avg. Subsoil Depth (m)	0.45	Orientation of Trench	N-S	Width of Trench (m)	2	Length of Trench (m)	32.5
	Avg. Topsoil Depth (m)	0.4									
Avg. Subsoil Depth (m)	0.45										
Orientation of Trench	N-S										
Width of Trench (m)	2										
Length of Trench (m)	32.5										
<p>No Archaeology. One east-west field drain or machine sub-soiling scar recorded as F.12.</p>											

Contexts						
F.No.	F.Type	Context	Cut/Fill	Dimensions (m)	Description	Comments
12	Drain	20	F	0.22 (W) 0.46 (D)	Mixed mid brown and yellow clayey silt (i.e. topsoil and subsoil); cuts through lower profile of topsoil and full subsoil profile	Post-Medieval
		21	C		E-W slot with straight vertical sides and irregular base; no ceramic drain	

Trench 3



Summary description

Avg. Topsoil Depth (m)	0.3
Avg. Subsoil Depth (m)	0.38
Orientation of Trench	E-W
Width of Trench (m)	2
Length of Trench (m)	31

No Archaeology. Two north-south ceramic field drains.


Trench 4




Summary description

Avg. Topsoil Depth (m)	0.4
Avg. Subsoil Depth (m)	0.55
Orientation of Trench	N-S
Width of Trench (m)	2
Length of Trench (m)	15


No Archaeology.

Trench 5										
	Summary description									
	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Avg. Topsoil Depth (m)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0.4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Avg. Subsoil Depth (m)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0.45</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Orientation of Trench</td> <td style="text-align: right;">E-W</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Width of Trench (m)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Length of Trench (m)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">34</td> </tr> </table> <p>No Archaeology. Two ceramic field drains, one oriented north-south and the other northwest-southeast.</p>	Avg. Topsoil Depth (m)	0.4	Avg. Subsoil Depth (m)	0.45	Orientation of Trench	E-W	Width of Trench (m)	2	Length of Trench (m)
Avg. Topsoil Depth (m)	0.4									
Avg. Subsoil Depth (m)	0.45									
Orientation of Trench	E-W									
Width of Trench (m)	2									
Length of Trench (m)	34									

Trench 6										
	Summary description									
	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Avg. Topsoil Depth (m)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0.4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Avg. Subsoil Depth (m)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0.25</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Orientation of Trench</td> <td style="text-align: right;">NS-EW</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Width of Trench (m)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Length of Trench (m)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">62.5</td> </tr> </table> <p>A possible but highly truncated and pale ditch oriented north-south of uncertain date; may represent the base of a furrow? Two field drains oriented north-south, one with a ceramic drain and the other, F.13, a possible sub-soiling scar. A modern geotechnical test pit was also identified to the north end of the trench.</p>	Avg. Topsoil Depth (m)	0.4	Avg. Subsoil Depth (m)	0.25	Orientation of Trench	NS-EW	Width of Trench (m)	2	Length of Trench (m)
Avg. Topsoil Depth (m)	0.4									
Avg. Subsoil Depth (m)	0.25									
Orientation of Trench	NS-EW									
Width of Trench (m)	2									
Length of Trench (m)	62.5									

Contexts						
F.No.	F.Type	Context	Cut/Fill	Dimensions (m)	Description	Comments
13	Drain	22	F	0.45 (W) 0.5 (D)	Mixed mid brown and yellow clayey silt (i.e. topsoil and subsoil); cuts through lower profile of topsoil and full subsoil profile	Post-Medieval
		23	C		N-S box-cut slot with straight vertical sides and flat base, deepened with drain slot of irregular profile; no ceramic drain	
16	Linear?	34	F	0.38 (W)	Very pale yellowish brown soft silt	nd

	35	C	0.07 (D)	Oriented N-S with concave sides and flat base
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Trench 7						
	Summary description					
	Avg. Topsoil Depth (m)	0.31				
Avg. Subsoil Depth (m)	0.15					
Orientation of Trench	NS-EW					
Width of Trench (m)	2					
Length of Trench (m)	32.2					
<p>A large dark peat-filled feature, F.2, was identified as a pond, containing 19th or 20th century pottery, brick and tile. A linear, F.1, oriented north-south was located to the west of F.2 and contained two ceramic field drains within the same cut.</p>						
Contexts						
F.No.	F.Type	Context	Cut/Fill	Dimensions (m)	Description	Comments
1	Field Drain	1	F	0.45 (W) 0.35 (D)	Fairly soft dark orange brown clay-silt	Post-Medieval
		2	F		Two ribbed ceramic field drains	
		3	C		Straight sides slightly inverted with flat base	
2	Pond	4	F	18.0 (L) 11.0 (W) 1.58 (D)	Soft mid blackish brown clay-silt with rare small stones	Post-Medieval
		5	C		Irregular shallow profile with sharp vertical drop towards centre; 2.5m slot from feature edge	
		24	F		Dark soft reddish brown soft peaty silt	
		25	F		Mid to dark grey soft peaty clay silt with waterlogged organic material	
		26	F		Mid yellowish brown friable pebbly sand	
		27	F		Mid grey grown soft organic clayey silt	
		28	F		Dark bluish grey silty clay with stagnant organic content	
29	C	Machine excavated slot into centre of pond				

Trench 8



Summary description

Avg. Topsoil Depth (m)	0.33
Avg. Subsoil Depth (m)	0.13
Orientation of Trench	N-S
Width of Trench (m)	2
Length of Trench (m)	35

Three possible postholes were recorded, two of which were investigated. These were irregularly shaped features of shallow depth, absent of finds, but appear to represent a group of similar features. A modern geotechnical test pit was also observed but not re-excavated.

Contexts

F.No.	F.Type	Context	Cut/Fill	Dimensions (m)	Description	Comments
8	Posthole?	16	F	0.52 (L) 0.41 (W) 0.05 (D)	Mid to light grey soft clayey silt	nd
		17	C		Rectangular in plan with rounded corners and shallow profile of inverted (concave?) sides and flat base	
9	Posthole?	18	F	0.6 (L) 0.3(W) 0.04 (D)	Mid to light grey soft clayey silt	nd
		19	C		Oval in plan (N-S) with shallow profile of inverted (concave?) sides and flat base	
10	Posthole?	n/a	n/a	0.5 (L) 0.4 (W)	Unexcavated; sub-rectangular in plan	nd
11	Test Pit	n/a	n/a	n/a	Modern geotechnical test pit	Modern

Trench 9



Summary description

Avg. Topsoil Depth (m)	0.31
Avg. Subsoil Depth (m)	0.25
Orientation of Trench	E-W
Width of Trench (m)	2
Length of Trench (m)	34

A small shallow feature was excavated, representing the only definite pit within the PDA. Its date is uncertain, but the recovery of burnt stone, including burnt flint, is suggestive of some antiquity. A small possible posthole was also identified, and its pale fill and irregular morphology is comparable to similar features in Tr8. A single ceramic drain was also noted.

Contexts

F.No.	F.Type	Context	Cut/Fill	Dimensions (m)	Description	Comments
5	Pit	10	C	1.15 (L) 0.5 (W) 0.4 (D)	Part-exposed against trench edge; sub-circular in plan with near straight, near vertical sides and rounded lower break of slope to a flat base	Prehistoric?
		11	F		Greyish brown moderately soft clayey silt with occasional burnt stone and charcoal flecks	
6	Drain	12	C	0.25 (W) 0.4 (D)	Narrow cut with straight vertical sides	Post-Medieval
		13	F		Moderately soft dark greyish brown clayey silt with a ribbed ceramic drain	
7	Posthole?	14	C	0.45 (L) 0.35 (W) 0.1 (D)	Irregular in plan – sub-rectangular – with straight vertical sides and flat base	nd
		15	F		Moderately soft greyish brown clayey silt	

Trench 10



Summary description

Avg. Topsoil Depth (m)	0.35
Avg. Subsoil Depth (m)	0.3
Orientation of Trench	N-S
Width of Trench (m)	2
Length of Trench (m)	34.5

No Archaeology.

Trench 11



Summary description

Avg. Topsoil Depth (m)	0.28
Avg. Subsoil Depth (m)	0.3
Orientation of Trench	NS-EW
Width of Trench (m)	2
Length of Trench (m)	36

Four linears oriented north-south, bounded by ditch F.3. Other than F.3 these did not appear to continue northwards into Tr12, suggesting a localised orderly presence. No finds were recovered.

Contexts

F.No.	F.Type	Context	Cut/Fill	Dimensions (m)	Description	Comments
3	Linear	n/a	n/a	n/a	Unexcavated; continues into Tr12	nd
4	Linear	8	F	0.88 (W) 0.33 (D)	Mid to dark greyish brown moderately firm clayey silt	nd
		9	C		Oriented north-south with near straight inverted sides and rounded lower break of slope to a flat base	
17	Linear	n/a	n/a	n/a	Unexcavated. See F.4.	nd
18	Linear	n/a	n/a	n/a	Unexcavated. See F.4.	nd
19	Linear	n/a	n/a	n/a	Unexcavated. See F.4.	nd

Trench 12



Summary description

Avg. Topsoil Depth (m)	0.28
Avg. Subsoil Depth (m)	0.3
Orientation of Trench	E-W
Width of Trench (m)	2
Length of Trench (m)	34

The continuation of F.3 from Tr11 was investigated here. No other features were identified.

Contexts

F.No.	F.Type	Context	Cut/Fill	Dimensions (m)	Description	Comments
3	Linear	6	F	1.0 (W) 0.4 (D)	Mid orange brown moderately firm clayey sand with occasional small sub-angular stones and rare charcoal flecks; diffuse basal boundary	nd
		7	C		Oriented north-south with near straight inverted sides and rounded lower break of slope to a flat base	

Trench 13



Summary description

Avg. Topsoil Depth (m)	0.27
Avg. Subsoil Depth (m)	0.25
Orientation of Trench	N-S
Width of Trench (m)	2
Length of Trench (m)	33

The southern terminal of a linear oriented north-south was uncovered, and may be part of the ditched system noted in Tr11 and Tr12. No finds were recovered.

Contexts

F.No.	F.Type	Context	Cut/Fill	Dimensions (m)	Description	Comments
14	Linear	30	F	0.45 (W) 0.09 (D)	Mid to dark greyish brown moderately firm clayey silt	nd
		32	C		Oriented north-south with near straight inverted sides and rounded lower break of slope to a flat base; rounded south terminus	

Trench 14



Summary description

Avg. Topsoil Depth (m)	0.28
Avg. Subsoil Depth (m)	0.18
Orientation of Trench	E-W
Width of Trench (m)	2
Length of Trench (m)	31

Archaeology was represented by a single posthole of uncertain date and two ceramic field drains oriented north-south.

Contexts

F.No.	F.Type	Context	Cut/Fill	Dimensions (m)	Description	Comments
15	Posthole	32	F	0.26 (W)	Dark grey soft silt with occasional charcoal flecks	nd
		33	C	0.08 (D)	Circular plan with straight vertical sides and flat base	

Trench 15

Summary description

Avg. Topsoil Depth (m)	0.30	No archaeology.
Avg. Subsoil Depth (m)	0.16	
Orientation of Trench	N-S	
Width of Trench (m)	2	
Length of Trench (m)	15	

7. OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: cambridg3-191933

Project details

Project name: Manor Farm, Stretham, Cambridgeshire. An Archaeological Evaluation

Short description of the project: Fourteen trenches totalling 513.7m combined with geophysical survey identified two areas of archaeology represented in the first by linears oriented north-south and comprising a small system of cultivation beds possibly adjacent to enclosed pasture, and, second, by either small postholes or the bases of truncated pits with a medium-sized pit containing a small quantity of burnt quartz and flint. No datable finds were recovered from these features, although Romano-British and Medieval pottery was collected from within the subsoil of three trenches near to the linears. Geophysical anomalies show the possibility that the pits/postholes may be part of a larger cluster. A post-Medieval pond was also identified, and a second of these is indicated by the geophysics and cartographic evidence. Trenches in the south and east of the development area, situated along the lower contour of the southerly landfall, confirmed the presence of a moderately thick colluvium with absent or very low-level archaeology.

Project dates: Start: 29-08-2014 End: 03-09-2014

Previous/future work: No / Not known

Any associated project reference codes: MFS14 - Sitecode

Any associated project reference codes: ECB4295 - HER event no.

Type of project: Field evaluation

Site status: None

Current Land use: Cultivated Land 2 - Operations to a depth less than 0.25m

Monument type: LINEARS Uncertain

Monument type: PITS Uncertain

Monument type: POSTHOLES Uncertain

Significant Finds: POTTERY Roman

Significant Finds: POTTERY Medieval

Significant Finds: POTTERY Post Medieval

Significant Finds: BURNT STONE Uncertain

Methods & techniques: "Documentary Search","Targeted Trenches"

Development type: Housing estate

Prompt: Planning condition

Position in the planning process: Pre-application

Project location

Country: England

Site location: CAMBRIDGESHIRE, EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE, STRETHAM, Manor Farm

Postcode: CB6 3JY

Study area: 4.30 Hectares

Site coordinates: TL 51637452 (52.3473410992 0.226350015086) (52 20 50 N 000 13 34 E)

Lat/Long Datum: Unknown

Height OD / Depth: Min: 2.00m Max: 4.00m

Project creators

Name of Organisation: Cambridge Archaeological Unit
Project brief originator: Unitary Authority Archaeologist
Project design originator: Alison Dickens
Project director/manager: Alison Dickens
Project supervisor: Marcus Brittain
Type of sponsor/funding body: Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body: Laragh House Developments Ltd

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient: Cambridge Archaeological Unit
Physical Archive ID: MFS14
Physical Contents: "Animal Bones","Ceramics","other"
Digital Archive recipient: Cambridge Archaeological Unit
Digital Archive ID: MFS14
Digital Contents: "Survey"
Digital Media available: "Geophysics","Spreadsheets","Survey","Text"
Paper Archive recipient: Cambridge Archaeological Unit
Paper Archive ID: MFS14
Paper Contents: "Stratigraphic"
Paper Media available: "Context sheet", "Photograph", "Plan", "Report", "Section",
"Survey", "Unpublished Text"

Project bibliography

Publication type: Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title: Manor Farm, Stretham, Cambridgeshire. An Archaeological Evaluation
Author(s)/Editor(s): Brittain, M
Other bibliographic details: CAU Report No. 1260
Date: 2014
Issuer or publisher: Cambridge Archaeological Unit
Place of issue or publication: Cambridge
Description: Softcover, 32pp, 6 B/W and Colour figures, 6 tables. Chapters: 1. Introduction;
2. Research design; 3. Results; 4. Conclusion; 5. References; 6. Appendices; 7. OASIS

Entered by Marcus Brittain (mb654@cam.ac.uk)
Entered on 7 October 2014