

Land at 11-15 Main Street, Little Thetford, Cambridgeshire

An Archaeological Evaluation



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Summary

A trial trench based archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cambridge Archaeological Unit (CAU) on land to the rear of 11-15 Main Street, Little Thetford, Cambridgeshire (TL 5324 7632) between 26th April and 3rd May 2016.

Archaeological remains comprised a series of ditches and probable quarry pits, largely dating to the period from the 12th to 15th centuries. Two main phases of medieval activity were recorded, with a third potentially represented by late medieval quarrying in the south-east of the site. The ditches appear to relate to former plot boundaries and internal plot divisions probably associated with contemporary properties located on Main Street. Having said that, no direct evidence of buildings associated with these properties was recorded at the site. A deposit of brick, tile and dressed building stone fragments was recovered from one quarry although there was no evidence within the excavated trenches to suggest that this material derives from structures within the development area, indeed fragments of dressed Barnack stone, for example, most likely derived from the nearby Church of St. George.

INTRODUCTION

A trial trench based archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cambridge Archaeological Unit (CAU) on land to the rear of 11-15 Main Street, Little Thetford, Cambridgeshire (TL 5324 7632) between 26th April and 3rd May 2016. The development area is currently gardens to the rear of three houses and covers an area totalling 0.45ha. The planned development comprises five houses with garages and associated works (Planning Ref: 15/01072/FUL and 15/00527/FUL).

Six trenches totalling 102m in length were excavated (Figure 1) revealing features ranging in date from the Roman to late medieval/early post-medieval period.

The project was undertaken in order to address a condition placed upon planning consent. Work was carried out in accordance with a project design specification (Beadsmoore 2016) produced by the CAU in response to a brief issued by the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Team (Stewart 2015).

The work was commissioned by Construct Reason Ltd. The site code was MST16.

Location, Topography and Geology

The development area is located in the centre of the village of Little Thetford, immediately to the rear of Main Street (Figure 1). The site currently comprises two gardens and is bounded to the north-west and south-east by neighbouring properties; to the north-east lie open fields whilst the Main Street forms the south-western boundary.

The development area is relatively flat and situated at approximately 2m AOD. The underlying geology comprises Kimmeridge Clay (www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex accessed 4.5.2016).

Archaeological Background and Previous Work

A large number of archaeological finds spots are recorded in the vicinity of the development area as well as a number of archaeological sites, which survive as earthworks and/or are visible as cropmarks. The excavation of a Late Iron Age and Roman settlement site has also taken place at Watson's Lane just 350m to the west of the development area (Lucas and Hinman 1996).

A large number of prehistoric finds are recorded particularly along the course of the River Great Ouse to the east of the development area. Here, individual finds such as flint artefacts (eg. CHER 08307) and metalwork such as bronze rapiers and a socketed axe (eg. CHER 06955, CHER 06959), as well as a Beaker period bone wrist guard, which was found with possible human bone whilst ditch cleaning (CHER 07020), all indicate prehistoric activity. In addition, more extensive remains have been recorded at a number of sites; these include flint scatters to the north-east and north-west of Little Thetford respectively (CHER MCB 16253 and CHER CB14676), a possible

ring ditch to the south-west (CHER 10273) and the site of a Bronze Age causeway excavated by Lethbridge in the 1930s, also to the south-west (CHER 06987).

A number of Roman and medieval sites are also recorded in the area. Aside from the site excavated at Watson's Lane (detailed below) a scatter of Roman-British pottery is recorded to the north-west of Little Thetford (CHER MCB16254) and a possible Roman ditch was recorded during excavations for a water pipeline to the west (CHER CB14677). A more significant Roman site, possibly a villa also lies *c.* 1km to the north of the development area at Braham Farm where painted wall plaster, tile, samian ware and two coins have been found (CHER MCB 16084). At the same site, the extensive earthwork remains of a deserted medieval village (CHER MCB 16083) also survive together with a moated site just to the north. A second possible deserted medieval settlement is also indicated by cropmarks *c.* 600m to the south of the development area (CHER 09226).

Little Thetford itself is recorded as a Berewick of Ely in the Domesday Survey and in the 13th century appears to have been regarded as part of the Manor of Stretham although references are made to the 'Hayfen' of Thetford in charters of this period (Wells 1953). It is first referred to as a manor in 1539 although still probably as a subsidiary of Stretham (*ibid.*). The Church of St. George (CHER 07125), which lies just across Main Street from the development area is believed to be 14th century in origin but was extensively rebuilt in the 19th century (Pevsner 1970). Other buildings of historical interest in the village largely date to the 17th/18th century although the *Roundhouse*, a thatched cottage on the neighbouring property of the development area is believed to be the stump of a Late Medieval windmill (CHER 06958).

The only major archaeological excavation to have taken place in the vicinity was the Late Iron Age and Roman settlement site at Watson's Lane just to the west of the development area (Lucas and Hinman 1996). The site comprised the remains of a series of roundhouses within an enclosure dating to the later Iron Age (CHER CB15676) overlain by a sequence of Romano-British settlement enclosures (CHER CB15675). The settlement site yielded a relatively large quantity of Iron Age and Roman pottery as well a large faunal assemblage; associated features included three human burials and a Roman tile kiln.

Methodology

The trial trenching programme consisted of six trenches, a total of 102m of trenching (Figure 1). Trial trenches were excavated using a tracked 360° nine tonne digger operating under direct archaeological supervision at all times. Trenches were located using an advanced Global Positioning System (GPS) with Ordnance Datum (OD) heights obtained, detailed 1:50 plans of trenches and features were also produced by hand. Potential archaeological features were sample excavated with all archaeological finds retained. A written record of archaeological features and soil sequences was created using the CAU recording system (see below). A digital photographic record of the trenching programme was also maintained.

The CAU recording system is an adaptation of the MoLAS system (Spence *et al*) designed to be more appropriate to 'extensive' rural settings and to facilitate effective organisation of stratigraphic data and

finds plotting. The system uses the Feature (ditch, pit, posthole etc.) as the main interpreted entity. Each feature is assigned an individual number with a context group number (eg. 100) also being assigned to each individual slot excavated in that feature; context numbers are derived from this context group number (eg. 100.01, 100.02 etc.). The context sheet forms the basis of the written archive but can be supplemented by Feature sheets (for complex features) as well as ‘specialist’ sheets such as skeleton and timber sheets. All sections are drawn at a scale of 1:10 or 1:20 as appropriate.

The work was carried out in full accordance with the CIFA’s *Standard Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations*.

RESULTS

Topsoil and subsoil sampling

Given that asbestos had been noted within the topsoil prior to the evaluation (and despite all visible asbestos having been subsequently removed by contractors), topsoil was not hand sorted/sampled for artefacts for health and safety reasons. However, large quantities of modern/post-medieval material including broken glass, bricks, tiles, concrete and items such as cutlery and a golf ball, as well as general refuse, were noted within the topsoil. The majority of the material appears likely to derive from a number of demolished outbuildings/sheds that formerly stood on the site. Similarly, the majority of underlying deposits were not sampled, particularly in Trenches 1, 2 and 3, where former yard surfaces and ‘made ground’ up to 0.6m thick were encountered (see below). Layers of subsoil were sampled where they survived to a sufficient depth in Trenches 2 and 4; a single sherd of abraded 15th century pottery was recovered from the south-east end of Trench 4a.

Metal detecting of all features (see Hall, below) and subsoil layers – where present – was undertaken as part of the investigation. Full metal detecting was not carried out over topsoil/spoil heaps due to the large amount of modern material present.

Trench 1 (Figure 2)

Trench 1 was machined to a depth of one metre, revealing three ditches as well as a single post hole cut into the underlying natural clay. The overlying deposits largely comprised ‘made ground’ consisting of rubble and redeposited topsoil beneath a former yard/road surface.

At the south-west end of the trench two intersecting ditches were recorded; ditch **F.16** was aligned NW-SE while ditch **F.17** appeared to ‘branch off’ ditch F.16 in a south-westerly direction. Consequently, although ditch F.16 was recorded as cutting F.17 it seems likely that they represent contemporary features. A single sherd of 12th century pottery (see Hall, below) was recovered from ditch F.17. Some 2.5m to the north-east of ditch F.16 a parallel NW-SE aligned ditch (**F.10**) was recorded. No finds – save for a fragment of animal bone – were recovered and as such the feature is undated, however, the fact that it truncated a thin subsoil layer, which sealed F.16 and F.17, suggest that it is post-medieval. Finally, a sub-circular post hole (**F.18**) was recorded, between ditches F.10 and F.16; no finds were recovered.

Trench 2 (Figures 2)

Trench 2 was machined to a depth of 0.55m and revealed five ditches, two gullies, one pit and two possible post holes. Overlying deposits comprised topsoil and subsoil, whilst in the south-east of the trench a 0.1m thick deposit of compacted chalk was recorded. A local resident informed us that this deposit was relatively extensive and was a former farm yard surface. Significantly, however, archaeological features did survive beneath it:

Two NE-SW aligned ditches (**F.03** and **F.04**), which curved towards the east and beyond extended beyond the edge of the trench seem likely to represent two phases of a boundary or enclosure ditch (see Figure 3). Ditch F.04 truncated F.03 and both produced sherds of 12th century pottery, whilst the former also produced animal bone (see Rajkovača, below) and an undated iron fragment, probably from a knife blade (see Hall, below). Immediately to the north-east a ditch terminus (**F.05**; see Figure 3), which cut an earlier shallower ditch (**F.12**) may represent further phases of the same boundary and produced seven sherds of 12th century pottery and animal bone. One further ditch/gully (**F.07**) was recorded at the north-east end of the trench, aligned NE-SW the feature yielded two sherds of 14th/15th century pottery, animal bone and a fragment/small sheet of iron.

Aside from the ditches, a pit (**F.06**) extending beyond the south-western edge of the trench – and which cut ditch F.12 – may also represent medieval period activity although only two fragments of animal bone were recovered from its fill. Two possible post holes were also recorded in Trench 2 (**F.13** and **F.14**) although neither produced any finds and both are consequently undated.

Two narrow gullies or drains (**F.02** and **F.11**) appear to represent slightly later post-medieval activity. Both were aligned SE-NW and were cut through the subsoil deposit, which sealed the aforementioned features. Gully F.11 yielded a large iron nail/hook and a single sherd of (possibly residual) 14th century pottery.

Trenches 3a and 3b (Figure 2)

Trench 3 was machined to a maximum depth of 0.8m through dense deposits of brick rubble and the same compacted chalk yard surface (c.0.1m thick) encountered in Trench 2. A series of large pits were revealed, which covered the majority of the area exposed within the trench and extended beyond its limit in all directions.

Pit **F.22**, at the south-west end of Trench 3a was recorded for a minimum length of 10m and extended beyond the edge of the trench to the south, east and west. A hand excavated slot at its north-eastern edge revealed it had steep edges whilst a machine excavated test pit within the ‘centre’ of the feature showed it to be greater than 1.5m (from ground level) in depth. Finds recovered from pit F.22 comprise five sherds of pottery the latest of which dates to the 15th century as well as five fragments of animal bone, two fragments of burnt clay and single fragment of tile. To the north-east a second large pit (**F.23**), measuring a minimum of 16m across was recorded. Apparently irregular in shape and extending beyond the edge of the trench to the north, west and east, two hand excavated slots along its south-eastern edge yielded a

fragment of 18th century glass bottle (see Herring, below) and two fragments of animal bone.

In order to more closely define the extent of the large pits Trench 3b was excavated at a right angle to Trench 3a towards its north-eastern end. The trench exposed the western edge of pit F.23 (recorded in this trench as **F.25**) extending some 8m from the edge of Trench 3a. A hand excavated slot, located in order to define the pit's edge revealed that it cut a slightly earlier feature, possibly a ditch terminus or pit (**F.24**), which yielded three sherds of 15th century pottery and fragments of animal bone. A machine excavated test pit within pit F.25 recorded a minimum depth of 1.8m (from ground level; see Figure 4). Only a single fragment of abraded brick was recovered from F.25. Finally, at the junction between Trenches 3a and 3b a circular pit (**F.26**) was recorded cutting through F.23/25, brick and willow pattern pottery were noted within its fill; the feature was not sample excavated.

Trenches 4a and 4b (Figure 2)

Trenches 4a and 4b were machined to a maximum depth of 0.65m and 0.55m respectively and revealed seven archaeological features largely comprising ditches. The overlying deposits consisted of topsoil over a subsoil deposit *c.* 0.2m thick.

Towards the north-western end of Trench 4a a series of four NE-SW aligned ditches (**F.09**, **F.10**, **F.19** and **F.27**), one of which (F.27; see Figure 3) had also clearly been re-cut (**F.20**), corresponded approximately to a partially extant (but largely in-filled) plot boundary ditch. The ditches produced few finds; three sherds of 14th century pottery were recovered from F.20, whilst F.10 and F.19 produced single fragments of animal bone and tile respectively. One further feature in this area comprised a small lozenge-shaped pit (**F.21**), which although undated cut medieval ditch F.20/27. The location of Trench 4b corresponded almost exactly with the line of ditch F.20/27 and consequently this was the only feature recorded in this trench.

At the south-eastern end of Trench 4a a further ditch was recorded although largely truncated by a ditch/pit (**F.15**). The N-S aligned ditch (**F.01**; see Figure 3) yielded a single sherd of 12th century pottery and fragments of animal bone. Turning to F.15, the shape and extent of the feature could not be determined within Trench 4a and consequently it could represent part of a ditch or potentially (and perhaps more likely) be a large pit similar to those recorded in Trenches 3a and 3b. The feature was found to be at least 0.75m deep (at which point the water table and confined space meant that further excavation was not possible; it had steep sides and yielded a relatively large finds assemblage including nine bricks (or brick fragments), one fragment of tile, four pieces of dressed building stone (see Timberlake, below and Figure 4). In addition nine sherds of 15th century pottery were also recovered together with a fragment of lead sheet and a small fragment of lead spill.

DISCUSSION

Archaeological activity at 11-15 Main Street is represented by a series of ditches and probable quarry pits, largely dating to the period from the 12th to 15th centuries. Two

main phases of medieval activity were recorded, with a third potentially represented by late medieval quarrying in the south-east of the site (see Figure 5). In addition, three probable post-medieval features were recorded as well as a series of undated features.

The earliest phase of activity represented by ditches F.01, F.03, F.04, F.05, F.16 and F.17 dates broadly to the 12th century. Four of these ditches are aligned on, or at right angles, to the existing plot boundaries extending off Main Street and appear to be medieval versions of the same. Given that F.03 was cut by F.04 it seems that there are at least two sub-phases of this 12th century activity. A third sub-phase appears to be indicated by ditches F.01 and F.05, which occupy a different (north-south) alignment to the aforementioned ditches and could therefore belong to an earlier phase of land division.

The second main phase of activity appears to belong broadly to the 14th/15th century and is represented by a series of ditches (F.09, F.10, F.19, F.20 and F.27), which appear to mark various phases of a former plot boundary, which was till partially extant at the time of evaluation. One further ditch, F.07 in Trench 2 also yielded 14th century pottery and appears to be broadly contemporary. Also, potentially belonging to this phase – although they could also represent a slightly later phase of activity – were a series of large and deep pits (F.22, F.23 and F.25) identified in Trenches 3a and 3b as well as F.15 in Trench 4a (although this feature was initially recorded as a ditch). All of the pits produced finds dating broadly to the 15th century as well as some slightly later material including an 18th century glass bottle fragment. Both the form of the pits, as well as their finds suggest these features are quarry pits that were probably dug in the late medieval period and filled gradually, hence the post-medieval material in their uppermost fills. During the evaluation it was noted that the ground in the south-eastern part of the development area was noticeably more undulating than the rest of the site; this could also be a result of quarrying for the underlying clay in the late medieval/post-medieval period and indicative that it may extend across much of the area.

Also, of note with regard to the quarry pits is the ceramic building material and building stone recovered from F.15. All appears to have been dumped within the backfill of the quarry and was clearly not *in situ*. Furthermore, no evidence was found to suggest that it relates to a structure within the development area. Perhaps the most likely source for the dressed fragments of Barnack limestone is the Church of St. George located just across Main Street, elements of the tracery of which are constructed of a similar limestone. The ceramic building material, which includes brick and tile has been identified as potentially deriving from a building associated with salt making by Timberlake (see below) due to the presence of a possible ‘salt patina’. No known medieval or post-medieval salt production sites are known from the area – although numerous Roman salt making sites are recorded at Littleport c.11km to the north – and by the medieval period salt making in the region appears to have been concentrated in the area around the Wash c.50km to the north (Hall and Coles 1994). Furthermore, certainly by the 16th century the regional salt industry had diminished considerably due to foreign imports and the development of ‘inland’ production (English Heritage 2011). Consequently, it seems highly unlikely that there is a direct link between the site and salt production and the ‘salt patina’ on the bricks could equally be the result of other incidental processes during firing/production.

Relatively recent activity within the development area is represented by ditch F.10 in Trench 1, which is thought to be post-medieval although it could feasibly be earlier, as well as a compacted chalk yard surface extending across the area to the rear of the properties 13 and 15 Main Street (see Figure 5) that is known to have been a farm yard within living memory. The remainder of the recorded features including four possible post holes and a small pit remain undated.

CONCLUSION

The medieval features at 11-15 Main Street appear to relate to former plot boundaries and internal plot divisions potentially associated with contemporary properties located on Main Street. Having said that, no direct evidence of buildings associated with these properties or indeed any other typically ‘domestic’ features were recorded at the site (although charred grains recovered from environmental samples probably represent domestic hearth waste; Simmons, see below). On the whole environmental preservation within the features sampled appears limited although the samples have provided basic information regarding the character of the site and the arable regimes practised in the area (*ibid.*).

Archaeological preservation appears to be better in the north-western half of the site where it should be noted that the depth at which archaeology occurs suggests archaeological features potentially survive beneath 11 Main Street, which is due to be demolished as part of the development. In the south-western half of the development area the site appears to have been extensively disturbed by Late Medieval/early post-medieval quarrying, which seems likely to have truncated any earlier archaeological remains.

Comparatively little is known about the early history of Little Thetford and this marks the first archaeological investigation that has identified medieval remains associated with the village itself. Consequently the site at 11-15 Main Street has the potential to address a number of research objectives (as identified in Medleycott 2011, 70) both in terms of the origins and development of medieval Little Thetford – and how it may relate to the deserted medieval settlements to the north and south – as well as the character of rural medieval settlement more generally across the region.

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SPECIALIST STUDIES

Pottery – David Hall

A total of 44 sherds (927g) of pottery ranging in date from the 10th/12th to the 15th/16th century were recovered from the evaluation. The assemblage is detailed in Table 1. The pottery from each context was visually identified to fabric and each fabric was then quantified by both count and weight. Given the relatively small size of the assemblage no other form of quantification is warranted. Where applicable additional notes concerning form etc. were made. The work followed the guidelines of the Medieval Pottery Research Group (1998; 2001).

Feature No.	Context No.	No. of sherds	Weight(g)	Fabric	Date	Notes
1	1.01	1	37	Grey coarseware	C 12th	
3	3.01	6	26	Grey coarseware	C 12th	
4	4.01	2	13	Grey coarseware	C 12th	
	4.02	1	8	Grey coarseware	C 12th	
5	5.01	2	20	Grey coarseware	C 12th	Rim x1= jar
	5.02	4	57	St. Neots-type ware	C 10th–12th	Standard
	5.02	3	14	Sandy grey coarseware	C 12th	
7	7.01	1	6	Oxidised shelly coarseware	C 14/15th	
	7.01	1	7	Sandy grey coarseware	C 14th	
11	11.01	1	4	Pink shelly coarseware	C 14th	
15	15.02	1	26	Glazed red earthenware	C 15th–16th	
	15.03	8	291	Red coarseware	C 15th	2=jar rims
17	17.01	1	53	St. Neots-type ware	C 10th–12th	Hollowed rim, burnt
20	20.01	3	109	Sandy brown coarseware	C 14th	White grits, 1 green glaze
22	22.01	1	13	Sandy grey coarseware	C 13/14th	1=jar rim
	22.01	3	11	Red coarseware	C 15th	1=glaze
	22.01	1	87	Gritty sandy red coarseware	C 14/15th	Strap handle
24	25.01	1	65	Glazed red earthenware	C 15th–16th	Bowl rim
	25.01	2	68	Grey coarseware	C 15th	Jar rims=2, different vessels
Tr. 4a	Subsoil	1	29	Red coarseware	C 15th	Abraded

Table 1: Medieval pottery by feature

The earliest material present is St. Neots-type ware, this ware dates to the 10th–12th century and is one of the triumvirate of wares typically found in southern Cambridgeshire (Spoerry forthcoming). Given the small quantities and the fact that some of the St. Neots-type ware was found in association with 12th century wares there is no reason to assume that any of the material predates the 12th century. The other pottery dates to the 12th–15th/16th century and is typical of local coarsewares (Spoerry forthcoming), given the small size of the assemblage no attempt was made to precisely identify the sources of the various coarsewares. The latest material present was glazed red earthenware; whilst this fabric continues until the 19th century the material present all appears to be relatively early and is probably 15th–16th century. No finewares or locally produced Ely ware (Spoerry 2008) were identified; these absences are not particularly noteworthy given the small size of the assemblage.

Beyond broadly dating the activity at the site to the 10th/12th to the 15th/16th century the small size of the assemblage means that any further interpretation is unwarranted. It appears that no significant medieval ceramic assemblages have previously been recovered from Little Thetford. The small assemblage recovered from the evaluation indicates that larger scale investigations have the potential to produce a more substantial assemblage, of greater analytical value, from this previously un-investigated settlement.

Metalwork – *Andrew Hall*

Five metal finds (two lead and three iron) were recovered during metal detecting of the surfaces of features.

<35> SF 4. F.07 [07.01]. Irregular-shaped fragment of iron (?) sheet, heavily corroded. Dimensions = 30mm x 20mm x 3mm, weight 5g. Undated.

<36> SF 5. F..11 [11.01]. A large iron nail or pin forged into an L-shape with an oval-shaped head and a shank of square section tapering to a point. Of large size, measuring 80mm x 70mm x 10mm. Probably a piece of structural ironwork. Weight 48g. Later medieval or post-medieval.

<37> SF 1. F.15. A small irregular-shaped blob of lead spill. Dimensions = 13mm x 8mm x 4mm, weight 2g. Undated.

<38> SF. 2. F.15. A rectangular fragment of lead sheet *c.* 1mm thick. Dimensions = 30mm x 15mm x 1mm, weight 10g. Post-medieval.

<39> SF. 3. F.04. A heavily corroded iron fragment possibly from a small blade such as a knife. Dimensions = 30mm x 20mm x 3mm, weight 5g. Undated.

Glass – *Vicki Herring*

The only glass item from the site is the neck and rim of a Utility Bottle of ‘black glass’ (glass of a dark green, which appears black) recovered from pit F.23 (fill 23.01). Utility bottles were a versatile storage item for beers, wines and spirits, as well as oils and other liquid goods. The short neck with applied ring below the lip suggest an onion or flat sided onion-shaped bottle commonly in use from around 1680-1730.

Ceramic building material – Simon Timberlake

A total of 6.8kg (11 pieces) of brick and 0.7kg (four pieces) of flat roof tile were recovered from the evaluation, from four different features (see Table 2). The majority of the brick came from F.15 (6.6 kg) with just 0.19 kg from F.25. The small amount of tile was recovered from F.15 (0.33 kg), F.19 (0.35 kg) and F.22 (0.03kg).

Fabric descriptions:

<i>Fabric 2</i>	dark red clay/ silt fabric with few mineral or lithic inclusions, minor calcined shell (<1mm), occasional- moderate burnt-out veg stalk fragments (< 15mm), particularly on surface, appears to be <i>Phragmites</i> sp (?) or other reed debris
<i>Fabric 2a</i>	slight more pinkish-red and hard fired internally, but otherwise similar with reed debris on outside
<i>Fabric 3</i>	hard pink non-porous fabric with occasional shell debris inclusions - smooth upper and sand-moulded lower surfaces, with thin grey internal reduced horizon

Although no complete examples of the bricks were found, it would appear that these are typically flat and thin; most probably around 200mm in length, 120mm wide, and commonly between 40-50mm thick. The bricks were made of Fabrics 2 and 2a as detailed above. Vegetable debris can be seen impressed within the silt-clay, and this would appear to consist of chopped reeds. Where these hadn't been weathered or eroded by water, the faces of the bricks could be seen to have been cut, and as customary in rural brick kiln sites, for the bricks to have been laid one side against another, with a thin sand dusting in between to ease separation.

The bricks all showed various degrees of subsequent burning and the presence of possible salt patina; this ranging from a white-bleached surface, to a yellowish-white encrustation, to a yellow-green salt slag concretion in the form of 'spatter', covering the edge and sides of the bricks closest to the point of brine spillage. The combination of this, the dark red colouration of the brick fabric (similar to briquetage), the presence of impressed reed debris, and the shape of the bricks suggest they could once have been associated with a loose brick structure surrounding a hearth possibly made for the purpose of supporting a salt pan or boiling vessel(s). Hearth bricks such as these would have been typical of medieval – early post-medieval salt production sites, although it should be said that no examples of Medieval or later salt production are currently known this far inland.

The four flat roofing tile fragments resemble similar late Medieval- early Post-medieval types, and are clearly not Roman or modern, the adhering mortar at one end indicating its use to better secure the tiles in place on a steep-pitched roof. No trace of nail holes were seen in these few fragments.

The nature of the assemblage generally, consisting of both worn/weathered and fresh brick, suggests that it may have been brought from a site(s) nearby and dumped within these features.

Feature	Context	No. of pieces	Weight (g)	Dimensions (mm)	Fabric type	Description	Type
25	26.01	1	192	70x60x 42 (thick)	2	rough edge of brick – water roll/ redeposit	hearth brick
15	15.03	1	960	115 (broken) x 120 x 50	2	half a weathered brick – with reed stalk impression: score + cut marks and soot on one side	hearth brick
15	15.03	1	982	155 (broken) x 111 x 50-60	2a	half of a fresh cut brick – slightly larger: encrustation of whitish salt patina on underside and one edge where more heavily fired + thin salt slag deposit	hearth brick
15	15.03	1	892	120 (broken) x 120 x 50	2	fragment of a weathered brick – with reed stalk impressions	hearth brick
15	15.03	1	1466	190 (broken) x 120 x 45-50	2	well preserved but slight weathered brick -with sand impression on bottom and smooth top. Traces reed debris, but many cut marks incl finger nail	hearth brick
15	15.03	1	448	55 (broken) x 115 x 50	2	end of weathered and highly burnt brick with trace of pressed moulding on one side – one corner has yellow-green salt encrustation, and has been eaten away by flame	hearth brick
15	15.03	1	888	140 (broken) x 120 x 37	2a	end of heavily fired brick – has salt patina covering bottom(?), and on slight concave side the trace of a large brine spill and traces of iron (from contact with vessel)	hearth brick
15	15.03	1	6	45	2a	slinter from brick	hearth brick
15	15.03	1	110	80 (broken) x 40 x 40	2	fragment edge brick - unweathered	hearth brick
15	15.03	1	96	60 x 45 x 45	2a	fragment unweathered brick- with salt patina	hearth brick
15	15.03	1	762	100 (broken) x 110 x 50	2a	fragment unweathrd larger brick type with traces of reed debris on surface: significant pale yellow-green salt slag drips and coat on one side (upper and lower surfaces and edge)	hearth brick
15	15.03	1	326	110 x 120 (broken) x 12 (thick)	3	corner of tile with adhering mortar upon upper surface: for securing overlapping tile on pitch	flat roof tile
19	19.01	2	350	170 (re-fit pieces = full width) x 100 x 12	3	ditto	flat roof tile
22	22.01	1	28	50 x 40 (broken) x 12	3	ditto	flat roof tile

Table 2: Brick and tile by feature

Burnt clay – Simon Timberlake

Two small fragments (24g) of a considerably hardened fired clay were recovered from F.22 [22.01]. The fabric is quite typical for instance of daubs associated with houses and possibly kilns.

Fabric 1: A buff-cream white to pink colour, hard fired, with a slightly streaky swirled clay internal mix, and with sub-millimetre inclusions of red ochreous grog

Building stone – Simon Timberlake

Some 12.3kg of cut and shaped building or architectural stone, all of it oolitic limestone, and most of it probably Barnack or other similar type of Lincolnshire Limestone (see Table 3). Some of the large pieces appears to represent stone taken after demolition from what was probably a medieval(?) building of moderate status. Much of the stone is of roughly the same size and shape (200-300mm long and c.100mm²).

Feature	Context No.	No of pieces	Weight (g)	Dimensions (mm)	Geology	Notes
15	15.03	1	3880	280 x 115 x 70 (thick)	Lincolns hire Limestone – probably Barnack	building stone (cut freestone)
15	15.03	1	2980	180(broke) x 100 x 100	ditto	incomplete – grooves cut in corners
15	15.03	1	1882	170 (broke) x 100 x 85	Lincolnshire Limestone – peletoidal limestone non loc. source	squared sawn sides and hemispherical concave moulding
15	15.03	1	3456	220 (broken) x 110 x 90	Lincolnshire Limestone – probably Barnack	rectangular freestone block with cut longitid corner grooves
7	(07.01)	1	20	35	Lincolnshire limestone – decomposed frag Barnack?	

Table 3: Building stone by feature

Some 12 pieces of rubble stone were also examined. All were of limestone, none had been worked. Only two appeared to be the same stone type as above, thus probably Barnack, although others were probably still Lincolnshire Limestone.

Faunal remains - *Vida Rajkovača*

The evaluation generated a small assemblage with a raw count of 53 fragments and a total weight of 1923g. Of this figure, some 46 assessable specimens were recorded, with 27 identified to species (Table 4)

Methods: Identification, quantification and ageing

The zooarchaeological investigation followed the system implemented by Bournemouth University with all identifiable elements recorded (NISP: Number of Identifiable Specimens) and diagnostic zoning (amended from Dobney & Reilly 1988) used to calculate MNE (Minimum Number of Elements) from which MNI (Minimum Number of Individuals) was derived. Identification of the assemblage was undertaken with the aid of Schmid (1972), and reference material from the Cambridge Archaeological Unit. Age at death was estimated for the main species using epiphyseal fusion (Silver 1969) and mandibular tooth wear (Grant 1982, Payne 1973). Where possible, the measurements were taken (Von den Driesch 1976). Sexing was only undertaken for pig canines, based on the bases of their size, shape and root morphology (Schmid 1972: 80). Withers height calculations follow the conversion factors published by Von den Driesch and Boessneck 1974. Taphonomic criteria including indications of butchery, pathology, gnawing activity and surface modifications as a result of weathering were also recorded when evident.

Exactly half of the assemblage came from 12th century features excavated in trenches 2 and 4a. Ditches F.1, 3 and 5 produced remains of cattle, ovicapra and pig, as well as a number of unidentifiable cattle-sized limb bone shafts. The only instance where it was possible to sex the material was the male pig canine recovered from F.5. From the same feature, a butchered cow tibia was recorded, the specimen clearly being split axially for marrow removal. The earlier material also showed somewhat better preservation compared to the rest of the assemblage, allowing for a greater proportion of bone to be assigned to species level.

Three further features, also in trenches 2 and 4a and 4a/b, dated to the 14th to 15th century, and contained remains of sheep/goat and pig.

Taxon	12th century			14th/15th century			15th/ 16th century					Undated
	Tr. 4a	Tr. 2	Tr. 2	Tr. 2	Tr. 4a	Tr. 4a/b	Tr. 4a	Tr. 4a	Tr. 3a	Tr. 3a	Tr. 3a	Tr. 2
	F.1	F.3	F.5	F.7	F.8	F.20	F.10	F.15	F.22	F.23	F.24	F.6
Cow	2	1	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Sheep/ goat	7	.	1	1	.	1	.	.	2	.	.	.
Pig	1	.	2	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Horse	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	2	.	1	.
Dog	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	.
Cat	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	2	.	.
Sub-total to species	10	1	5	2	.	1	.	.	4	2	2	.
Cattle-sized	1	1	2	3	.	.	1	.	.	.	1	.
Sheep-sized	.	.	.	.	1	.	.	2	2	.	.	2
Mammal n.f.i.	2	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Total	13	3	7	5	1	1	1	2	6	2	3	2

Table 4: Number of Identified Specimens for all species from all features – breakdown by phase; the abbreviation denotes that the specimen could not be further identified.

Late medieval/early post-medieval bone came mainly from trenches 3a and 4a, recovered from a number of quarry pits, though despite a good level of preservation, only a small amount of bone was identified to species. Three horse metatarsi were recorded, with one giving the shoulder height of 150cm. Ovicapra were also recorded, as well as a small dog and cat.

The reliance on domestic sources of meat during the period is widely recorded (e.g. Albarella and Davis 1994, Dobney *et al.* 1996) and the results from this small assemblage certainly confirm this notion. The presence of livestock species found alongside dog and cat, and the butchery recorded from F.5 all point to a typically domestic assemblage. While it is impossible to infer more about the site's economy, the good preservation, the quantity of recovered material and the minimal fragmentation certainly indicate that any further excavation will result in a much larger assemblage with a greater amount of economic data.

Assessment of charred plant macrofossils and wood charcoal – Ellen Simmons

Introduction

Five soil samples were taken from four ditch fills dated to the 12th century and one quarry or ditch fill dated to 15th or 16th century. The samples were processed for the recovery of charred plant remains and wood charcoal and assessed in order to determine the concentration, diversity, state of preservation and suitability for use in radiocarbon dating, of any archaeobotanical material present. A further aim of this assessment was to evaluate the potential of any archaeobotanical material present to provide evidence for the function of the contexts, the economy of the site or for the nature of the local environment.

Recovery, processing and laboratory methods

The flotation samples were processed for the recovery of charred plant remains and wood charcoal by The Cambridge Archaeological Unit using a water separation machine. Floating material was collected in a 300µm mesh, and the remaining heavy residue retained in a 1mm mesh. The flots and heavy residues were air dried.

The samples were assessed in accordance with English Heritage guidelines for environmental archaeology assessments (Jones, 2011). A preliminary assessment of the samples was made by scanning using a stereo-binocular microscope (x10 - x65) and recording the abundance of the main classes of material present. Identification of plant material was carried out by comparison with material in the reference collections at the Department of Archaeology, University of Sheffield and various reference works (e.g. Cappers *et al.*, 2006). Plant nomenclature follows Stace (2010). The composition of the samples is recorded below in Table 5.

Preservation

The preservation of the charred cereal grains present in the samples was relatively poor. A small proportion of the grains exhibited good preservation with minimal distortion and epidermis intact, however the majority of grains exhibited poor preservation with puffing, distortion and loss of epidermis.

The wood charcoal fragments present in the samples were relatively well preserved. However many of the charcoal fragments had been affected by mineralisation, whereby mineral deposits penetrate into the vessel cavities potentially obscuring morphological characteristics.

A low proportion of intrusive roots were present in the samples resulting in a reduced likelihood that any charred material will be intrusive.

Charred plant remains

Sample 1 from 12th century ditch fill 1.01 (F.01) contained six barley grains (*Hordeum* sp.), including one that could be identified as a hulled 'straight' grain, along with a free threshing wheat grain (*Triticum aestivum sensu lato*), two indeterminate wheat grains (*Triticum* indet.) and an indeterminate cereal grain. Also present was one cabbage family seed (Brassicaceae), one stinking mayweed seed (*Anthemis cotula*) and one rush seed (*Juncus* sp.)

Sample 2 from 12th century ditch fill 5.01 (F.05) contained five barley grains, five oat grains (*Avena* sp.), one probable oat grain, five probable free threshing wheat grains, three indeterminate wheat grains and six indeterminate cereal grains. Also present was one daisy family seed (Asteraceae), one scented mayweed seed (*Matricaria chamomilla*), two great fen sedge seeds (*Cladium mariscus*), and one small seeded grass seed (< 2mm Poaceae).

Sample 3 from 12th century ditch fill 7.01 (F.07) contained one barley grain, three probable barley grains, five free threshing wheat grains, one probable free threshing wheat grain and two indeterminate cereal grains. Also present were three stinking mayweed seeds, one great fen sedge seed, and two small seeded grass seeds.

Sample 4 from 12th century ditch fill 16.01 (F.16) contained three free threshing wheat grains, and two large seeded legume seeds. Also present was a small seeded grass seed.

Sample 5 from 15th / 16th century ditch or quarry fill 15.02 (F.15) contained a probable free threshing wheat grain a seed of medick / clover (*Medicago* / *Trifolium*) and a small seeded grass seed.

Wood charcoal

Sample 3 from 12th century ditch fill 7.01 contained twelve wood charcoal fragments greater than 2mm in size all of which were of diffuse porous taxa.

Sample 4 from 12th century ditch fill 16.01 contained two wood charcoal fragments greater than 2mm in size which were of diffuse and ring porous taxa.

Sample 5 from 15th / 16th century ditch or quarry fill 15.02 contained one wood charcoal fragment greater than 2mm in size which was of diffuse porous taxa.

Discussion

The crop types present in the archaeobotanical assemblage from Little Thetford include hulled barley (*Hordeum* sp.) and free threshing wheat (*Triticum aestivum sensu lato*), along with oat (*Avena* sp.) and a large seeded legume. It could not however be determined whether the oat grains represent wild or cultivated oat due to a lack of diagnostic chaff.

The low density of relatively poorly preserved charred cereal grains associated with wild or weed plant seeds and wood charcoal present in the samples is consistent with domestic hearth waste which had become deposited in the fills of features across the site over time. It is likely that the cereal grains were charred accidentally during parching or food preparation. Parching enables easier removal of the chaff of hulled barley during crop processing, resulting in an increased likelihood of grains accidentally coming into contact with fire (Hillman 1981, 153-154). Parching also enables more efficient milling particularly in the case of free threshing wheat, is used to dry crops prior to storage following a damp harvest, to fumigate crops for insect pests and in the production of malt for brewing (Monk 1981, 217-218). Charred material cleaned out from a drying kiln or cooking hearth may therefore include a mixture of different crop types.

The presence of seeds from typical weeds of crops such as medicks / clovers (*Medicago* sp. / *Trifolium* sp.) stinking mayweed (*Anthemis cotula*) and scented mayweed (*Matricaria chamomilla*), in association with crop material indicates that the wild or weed plant seeds are likely to have been harvested along with the crops and charred as crop processing waste. The presence of seeds of rush (*Juncus* sp.) and great fen sedge (*Cladium mariscus*) may therefore indicate the cultivation of damp soils or wet field ditches. Other sources of charred plant remains however include waste roofing or flooring material, turves, kindling and animal fodder and as such the seeds of rush and great fen sedge may not represent crop weeds. Archaeobotanical assemblages from other sites in the region indicate that great fen sedge is likely to have been used as a fuel in the medieval period (Ballantyne 2004, 192)

The charred plant assemblage from Little Thetford is typical of the crop types generally present in medieval archaeobotanical assemblages from England. Free threshing wheat is the most common wheat present at medieval sites in England, with barley, oats and legumes also frequently recovered (Moffett 2006, 47-50). More locally, at the nearby site of Ashwell, West Fen Road, Ely the charred plant assemblage from the High Medieval phases was dominated by free threshing wheat with hulled barley and oats also present (Ballantyne 2004, 192). The wild or weed seed assemblage from Ashwell also included crop weeds such as stinking mayweed and clovers along with taxa commonly associated with damp soils such as rushes and

sedges (Ballantyne 2004, 192).

It has been argued that the adoption of bread wheat as a principle crop during the Anglo Saxon period onwards may be related to agricultural intensification (Jones 1981, 107). Bread wheat requires a greater input of fertiliser than other wheat and is less tolerant of competition by weeds. The wild or weed plant taxa represented in the samples from Little Thetford are also typical of those present in Saxon and Medieval charred plant assemblages. The presence of stinking mayweed in particular is characteristic of Roman and later charred plant assemblages and the increased presence of this species has also been related to the expansion of agriculture on to heavier clay soils, as has the presence of taxa commonly associated with damp soils such as rushes and sedges (Jones 1981, 111).

The wood charcoal assemblage included both ring porous and diffuse porous taxa indicating the use of a mixture of woody plant taxa as fuel.

Recommendations for further work

No further analysis of the charred plant remains assemblage would be recommended due to the paucity of material present. Charred material suitable for use in radiocarbon dating was present in the samples in the form of charred cereal grains.

No further analysis of the wood charcoal assemblage would be recommended due to the paucity of wood charcoal fragments greater than 2mm in size. No round wood, suitable for use in radiocarbon dating was present.

Table 5 – Archaeobotanical sample scanning table – charred plant material and wood charcoal

CONTEXT NUMBER	1.01	5.01	7.01	16.01	15.02
FEATURE NUMBER	01	05	07	16	15
FLOTATION SAMPLE NUMBER	1	2	3	4	5
FEATURE TYPE	Ditch	Ditch	Ditch	Ditch	Ditch or quarry
PROVISIONAL DATE	12 th century	12 th century	12 th century	12 th century	15 th / 16 th century
SAMPLE VOLUME (litres)	10	14	10	10	10
FLOT VOLUME (ml)	3	4	3	1	2
CROP MATERIAL					
<i>Hordeum sp.</i> (barley)					
hulled straight grains	1				
hulled indeterminate grains	4	3	1		
indeterminate grains	1	2			
cf. <i>Hordeum</i> indet (probable barley) grains			3		
<i>Avena sp.</i> (oat) grains		5			
cf. <i>Avena sp.</i> (probable oat) grains		1			
<i>Triticum aestivum sensu lato</i> (free threshing wheat) grains	1		5	3	
cf. <i>Triticum aestivum sensu lato</i> (probable free threshing wheat) grains		5	1		1
<i>Triticum</i> indet (indeterminate wheat) grains	2	3			
Cereal indeterminate grains	1	6	2		
Large seeded legume				2	
Total identifiable crop material	10	25	12	5	1
WILD / WEED PLANT SEEDS					
<i>Medicago / Trifolium</i> (medick / clover)					1
Brassicaceae (cabbage family)	1				
Asteraceae (daisy family)		1			
<i>Anthemis cotula</i> (Stinking mayweed)	1		3		
<i>Matricaria chamomilla</i> (scented mayweed)		1			
<i>Juncus sp.</i> (rush)	1				
<i>Cladium mariscus</i> (great fen sedge)		2	1		
< 2mm Poaceae (small seeded grass)		1	2	1	1
Total identifiable wild / weed plant material	3	5	6	1	2
NON SEED PLANT MATERIAL*					
> 4mm wood charcoal fragments			3	1	
> 2mm wood charcoal fragments			9	1	1
Charcoal (DP = predominantly diffuse porous. RP = predominantly ring porous)			RP	RP & DP	DP
Intrusive plant material / non-plant material (- = < 5 items, + = > 5 items, ++ = > 10 items, +++ = > 30 items, ++++ = > 50 items, +++++ = > 100 items.)					
% Intrusive roots	5	2	2	2	2
Mollusca	++++	+++	-	+	+++
Sample summary information					
Sample suitable for further analysis of charred plant material	x	x	x	x	x
Sample suitable for further analysis of wood charcoal	x	x	x	x	x
Charred material suitable for C14 dating	✓	✓	✓	✓	x
Retain flots	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

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APPENDIX 1


Trench Descriptions


Trench 1		
	Orientation	SW-NE
	Max. Topsoil Depth (m)	0.3
	Max. Depth of subsoil/ made ground (m)	0.8
	Max. Trench Depth (m)	1
	Width (m)	2
	Length (m)	10
	<p>General Description:</p> <p>Deposits comprised a former road/track surface and made ground deposits overlying orange brown clay natural. A thin layer of silty subsoil, overlying the natural clay, was also encountered in places. Three ditches (Fs.10, 16 and 17) as well as a possible posthole (F.18) were exposed.</p>	

Trench 2		
	Orientation	SW-NE
	Max. Topsoil Depth (m)	0.2
	Max. Depth of subsoil/ made ground (m)	0.5
	Max. Trench Depth (m)	0.55
	Width (m)	2
	Length (m)	15
	<p>General Description:</p> <p>Deposits comprised topsoil, overlying a silty subsoil at the north-east end of the trench, at the south end a compacted chalk deposit representing a farmer farm yard surface was also encountered. The underlying natural comprised orange brown clay. Features exposed comprised seven ditches/gullies (Fs.02, 03, 04, 05, 07, 11 and 12) two possible post holes (Fs.13 and 14) and a pit (F.06).</p>	

Trench 3a		
	Orientation	SW-NE
	Max. Topsoil Depth (m)	0.35
	Max. Depth of subsoil/ made ground (m)	0.5
	Max. Trench Depth (m)	0.8
	Width (m)	2
	Length (m)	29
	General Description:	
<p>Deposits comprised a topsoil layer (which was very thin towards the SW end of the trench) overlying the same compacted chalk deposit/former yard surface as recorded in Tr.2 and made ground (largely brick rubble). This sealed two large quarry pits (F.22 and F.23), which extended beyond the limits of the trench. Only a small patch of undisturbed natural clay was encountered towards the middle of the trench. A machine dug test pits indicated that one of the quarries (F.22) was at least 1.5m deep.</p>		

Trench 3b		
	Orientation	SE-NW
	Max. Topsoil Depth (m)	0.45
	Max. Depth of subsoil/ made ground (m)	N/A
	Max. Trench Depth (m)	0.8
	Width (m)	2
	Length (m)	8.5
	General Description:	
<p>Deposits comprised topsoil overlying a thin subsoil layer. The underlying natural consisted of orange brown clay. The trench was excavated in order to determine the extent of quarry F.23 (recorded in this trench as F.25), the edge of which was found at the NW end of the trench. A slot excavated at the north-western edge of F.25 also encountered the remnants of a truncated feature, possibly a pit or ditch terminus (F.24). A machine-dug test pit revealed F.25 to be at least 1.8m in depth. A post-medieval/modern pit (F.26) was also encountered at the junction between Tr. 3a and 3b, which was not sample excavated.</p>		

Trench 4a		
	Orientation	SE-NW
	Max. Topsoil Depth (m)	0.4
	Max. Depth of subsoil/ made ground (m)	0.35
	Max. Trench Depth	0.65
	Width (m)	2
	Length (m)	21.5
<p>General Description:</p> <p>Deposits comprised topsoil overlying a thin subsoil layer, which in turn overlay orange brown natural clay. A series of five parallel ditches (Fs. 09, 10, 19, 20 and 27) representing multiple phases of activity were exposed towards the NW end of the trench. At the SE end a single ditch (F.01) was truncated by later feature F.15 (a probable quarry pit originally recorded as a ditch).</p>		

Trench 4b		
	Orientation	SW-NE
	Max. Topsoil Depth (m)	0.4
	Max. Depth of subsoil/ made ground (m)	0.15
	Max. Trench Depth	0.55
	Width (m)	2
	Length (m)	18
<p>General Description:</p> <p>Deposits comprised topsoil over a thin subsoil layer overlying orange brown clay natural. The alignment of the trench coincided almost exactly with the line of ditch F.20/27 (recorded in Trench 4a), which was consequently the only feature exposed within the trench.</p>		

APPENDIX 2

Feature List

Feature No.	Trench No.	Feature Type	Context Group	No. of fills	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Spot date / Comments
1	4a	Ditch	1	3	N/A	0.65	0.3	N-S linear ditch.	Pottery, animal bone	12th century
2	2	Gully/drain	2	1	N/A	0.26	0.23	NW-SE linear gully	None	Post-medieval? Cuts thin subsoil layer
3	2	Ditch	3	1	N/A	0.86	0.27	NE-SW turning E-W linear ditch	Pottery	12th century
4	2	Ditch	4	1	N/A	0.85	0.2	NE-SW turning E-W linear ditch.	Pottery, animal bone	12th century
5	2	Ditch	5	2	N/A	0.87	0.44	E-W linear ditch	Pottery, animal bone	12th century
6	2	Pit?	6	1	N/A	>0.36	0.31	Probable pit	Animal bone	Undated. Extends beyond trench to NW
7	2	Ditch	7	1	N/A	0.35	0.12	N-S linear ditch/gully	Pottery, animal bone	14/15th century
8	4a	Ditch	8	1	N/A	1.3	0.1	NE-SW linear ditch	Animal bone	Medieval?
9	4a	Ditch	9	1	N/A	0.5	0.05	NE-SW linear ditch terminus	None	Undated
10	1	Ditch	10	1	N/A	0.8	0.23	NW-SE linear ditch	Animal bone	Post-medieval?
11	2	Gully/drain	11	1	N/A	0.16	0.2	NW-SE linear gully	Fe hook (?), pottery	14th century.
12	2	Ditch/gully	12, 27	1	N/A	0.35	0.11	NE-SW linear ditch/gully	None	Medieval
13	2	Post hole?	13	1	N/A	N/A	0.14	Circular post hole?	None	Undated
14	2	Post hole?	14	1	N/A	N/A	0.2	Circular post hole?	None	Undated
15	4a	Ditch / Quarry pit?	15	2	N/A	>1.45	>0.75	NW-SE linear ditch	Brick/tile, building stone, pottery	15th century. Recorded as ditch but more likely to be a quarry

Feature No.	Trench No.	Feature Type	Context Group	No. of fills	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Spot date / Comments
16	1	Ditch	16	2	N/A	0.7	0.4	NW-SE linear ditch	None	12th century?
17	1	Ditch	17	2	N/A	>1	0.47	NE-SW linear ditch	Pottery	12th century
18	1	Post hole	18	1	N/A	0.27	0.05	Circular post hole	None	Undated
19	4a	Ditch	19	1	N/A	>0.65	0.2	NE-SW linear ditch	Tile	Undated. Cut by modern field drain
20	4a/b	Ditch	20	1	N/A	1.4	0.4	NE-SW linear ditch	Pottery	14th century – re-cut of F.27
21	4a	Pit	21		N/A	0.35	0.23	Lozenge-shaped pit	None	Undated
22	3a	Quarry Pit	22	2	N/A	N/A	>1.5	Large quarry(?) pit	Pottery, tile, burnt clay, animal bone	15th century. Shape/extent not determined - extends beyond trench
23	3a	Quarry Pit	23, 24	1	N/A	N/A	>0.5	Large quarry(?) pit	Glass, animal bone	Late medieval/ post-medieval? Shape/extent not determined - extends beyond trench
24	3b	Ditch / pit?	25	1	N/A	>1	0.56	NE-SW linear ditch terminus (?)	Pottery, animal bone	15th century. Unclear in plan as truncated by F.25
25	3b	Quarry Pit	26	1	N/A	N/A	>1.8	Large quarry(?) pit	CBM (?) fragment	Probably the same as F.23
26	3a/b	Pit	N/A	N/A	N/A	1.75	N/A	Circular pit	Willow pattern pottery, brick	Post-medieval/modern pit – not excavated
27	4a	Ditch	28	1	N/A	2.85	0.36	NE-SW linear ditch	None	Earlier cut of F.20

APPENDIX 3

Context Descriptions

Context No.	Feature No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Profile
1.01	1	Ditch fill	Mid grey silty clay				
1.02	1	Ditch fill	Mid yellow brown silty clay				
1.03	1	Ditch fill	Mid grey silty clay				
1.04	1	Ditch cut		N/A	0.65	0.3	Steep sides, flat base
2.01	2	Gully fill	Dark grey brown clayey silt		0.26	0.23	
2.02	2	Gully cut		N/A	0.26	0.23	Near vertical sides, flat base
3.01	3	Ditch fill	Mid-dark grey brown clayey silt		0.85	0.2	
3.02	3	Ditch cut		N/A	0.26	0.27	Moderate sides, rounded base
4.01	4	Ditch fill	Mid grey brown silty clay		>0.36	0.31	
4.02	4	Ditch cut		N/A	0.85	0.2	Moderate sides, flat base
5.01	5	Ditch fill	Dark grey brown clayey silt		1.3	0.1	
5.02	5	Ditch fill	Mid grey brown silty clay		0.5	0.05	
5.03	5	Ditch cut		N/A	0.87	0.44	Steep sided to the north, moderate to the south. Flat base - undercutting slightly on north side
6.01	6	Ditch fill	Dark grey brown clayey silt				
6.02	6	Ditch cut		N/A	>0.36	0.31	Steep sides, flat base
7.01	7	Ditch fill	Dark grey brown silty clay		N/A	0.14	
7.02	7	Ditch cut		N/A	0.35	0.12	Shallow U-shaped
8.01	8	Ditch fill	Mid grey silty clay		>1.45	>0.75	
8.02	8	Ditch cut		N/A	1.3	0.1	Moderate sides, flat base
9.01	9	Ditch fill	Mid-dark grey brown silty clay		>1	0.47	
9.02	9	Ditch cut		N/A	0.5	0.05	Very shallow U-shaped
10.01	10	Ditch fill	Dark grey brown clayey silt		>0.65	0.2	
10.02	10	Ditch cut		N/A	0.8	0.23	Steep sides, flat base
11.01	11	Gully fill	Dark brown clayey silt		0.35	0.23	
11.02	11	Gully cut		N/A	0.16	0.2	Vertical sides, flat base
12.01	12	Ditch fill	Mid grey brown silty clay		N/A	>0.5	
12.02	12	Ditch cut		N/A	0.35	0.11	Shallow U-shaped
13.01	13	Posthole fill	Dark brown clayey silt		>1	0.56	
13.02	13	Posthole cut		N/A	N/A	0.14	Shallow U-shaped
14.01	14	Posthole fill	Dark brown clayey silt				
14.02	14	Posthole cut		N/A	N/A	0.2	Shallow U-shaped
15.01	15	Ditch/pit fill	Mid yellow/orange grey brown clayey silt				
15.02	15	Ditch/pit fill	Rubble limestone and brick dump within clayey silt matrix				
15.03	15	Ditch/pit cut		N/A	>1.45	>0.75	Steep sided (not bottomed)
16.01	16	Ditch fill	Mid-dark yellow brown silty clay				
16.02	16	Ditch fill	Dark grey silty clay				
16.03	16	Ditch cut		N/A	0.7	0.4	U-shaped
17.01	17	Ditch fill	Mid-dark yellow brown silty clay				
17.02	17	Ditch fill	Dark grey silty clay				
17.03	17	Ditch cut		N/A	>1	0.47	U-shaped
18.01	18	Posthole fill	Dark grey silty clay				
18.02	18	Posthole		N/A	0.27	0.05	U-shaped

Context No.	Feature No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Profile
		cut					
19.01	19	Ditch fill	Dark brownish grey silty clay				
19.02	19	Ditch cut		N/A	>0.65	0.2	U-shaped - uneven base
20.01	20	Ditch fill	Pale-mid grey brown silty clay				
20.01	20	Ditch cut		N/A	1.4	0.4	Moderate sides, flat base
21.01	21	Pit fill	Mid-dark grey brown silty clay				
21.02	21	Pit cut		N/A	0.35	0.23	Near vertical sides, flat base
22.01	22	Pit fill	Mid-dark grey brown silty clay				
22.02	22	Pit fill	Dark grey brown clayey silt				
22.03	22	Pit cut		N/A	N/A	>1.5	Steep sides - not bottomed
23.01	23	Pit fill	Mid grey brown clayey silt				
23.02	23	Pit cut		N/A	N/A	>0.5	Moderate sides - not bottomed
24.01	23	Pit fill	Mid grey brown clayey silt				
24.03	23	Pit cut		N/A	N/A	>0.25	Gradual sides, flat base
25.01	24	Pit fill	Pale-mid grey brown silty clay				
25.02	24	Pit cut		N/A	>1	0.56	Moderate-steep sides, rounded base
26.01	25	Pit fill	Mid grey brown silty clay				
26.02	25	Pit cut		N/A	N/A	>1.8	Moderate-steep sides - not bottomed
27.01	12	Ditch fill	Mid grey brown silty clay				
27.02	12	Ditch cut		N/A	N/A	0.2	Shallow U-shaped
28.01	27	Ditch fill	Mid grey brown silty clay				
28.02	27	Ditch cut		N/A	2.85	0.36	Gradual sides, shallow rounded base

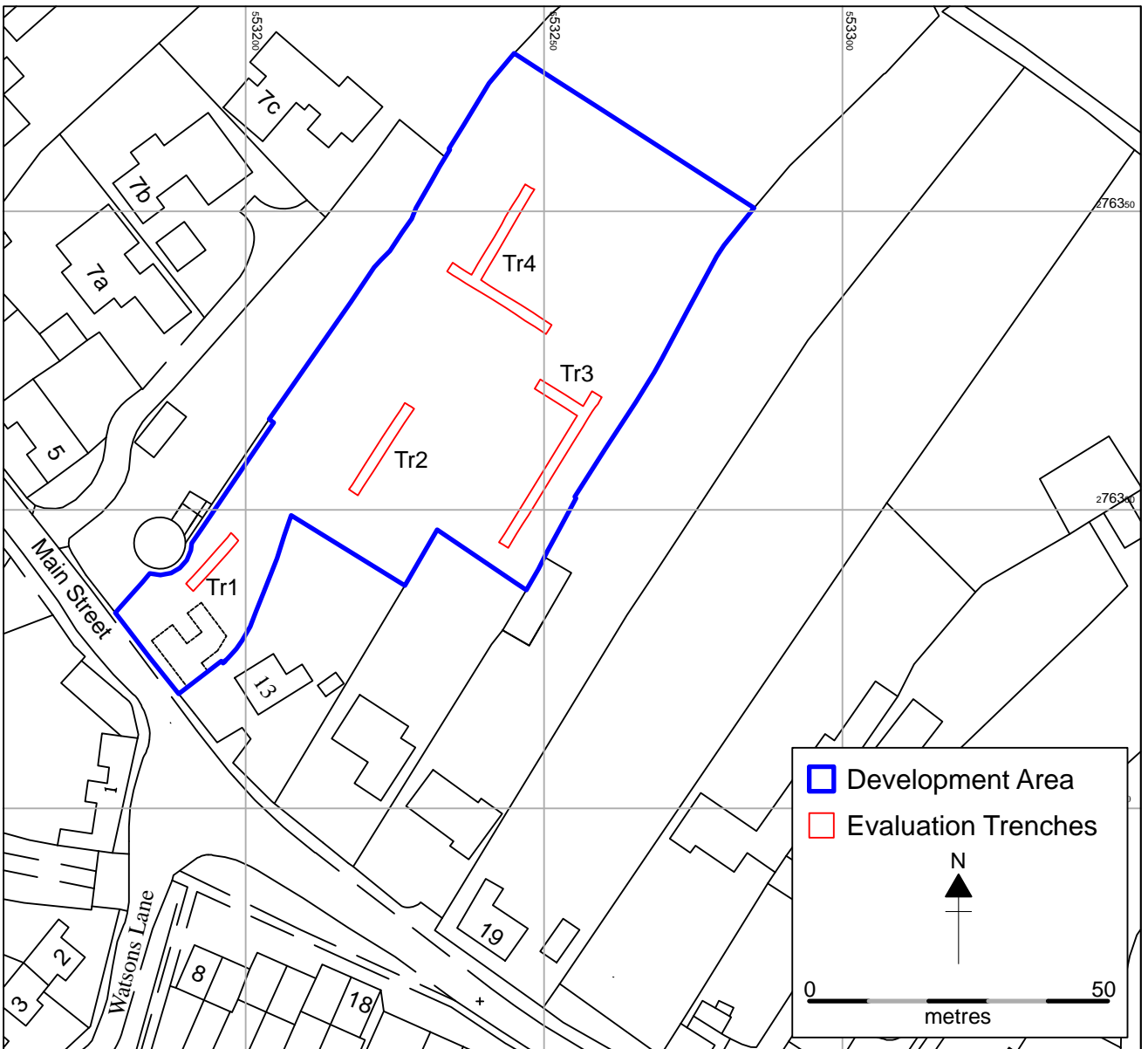
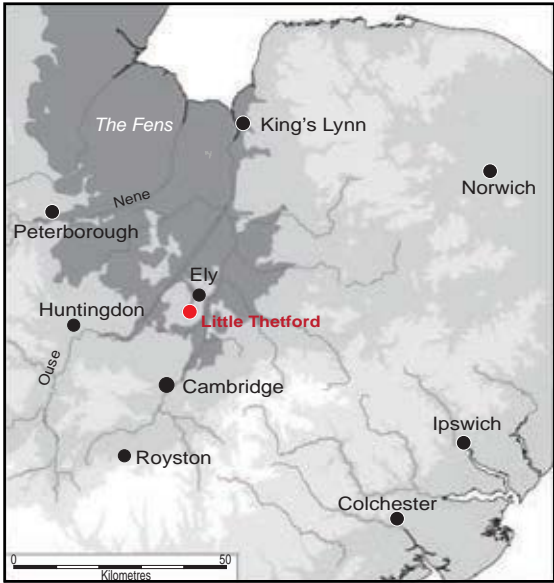


Figure 1: Site Location Plan

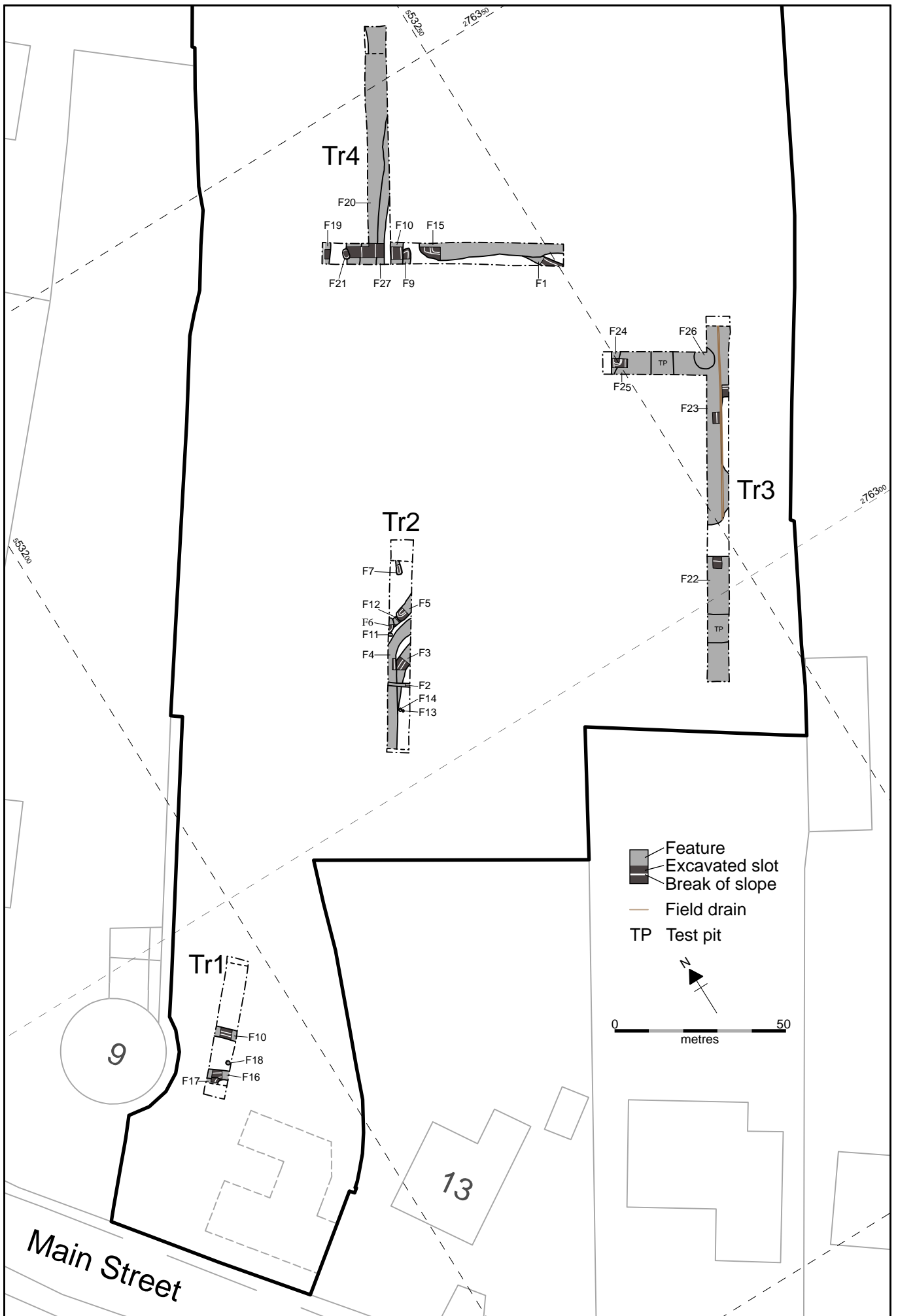


Figure 2: Plan of trenches and archaeological features

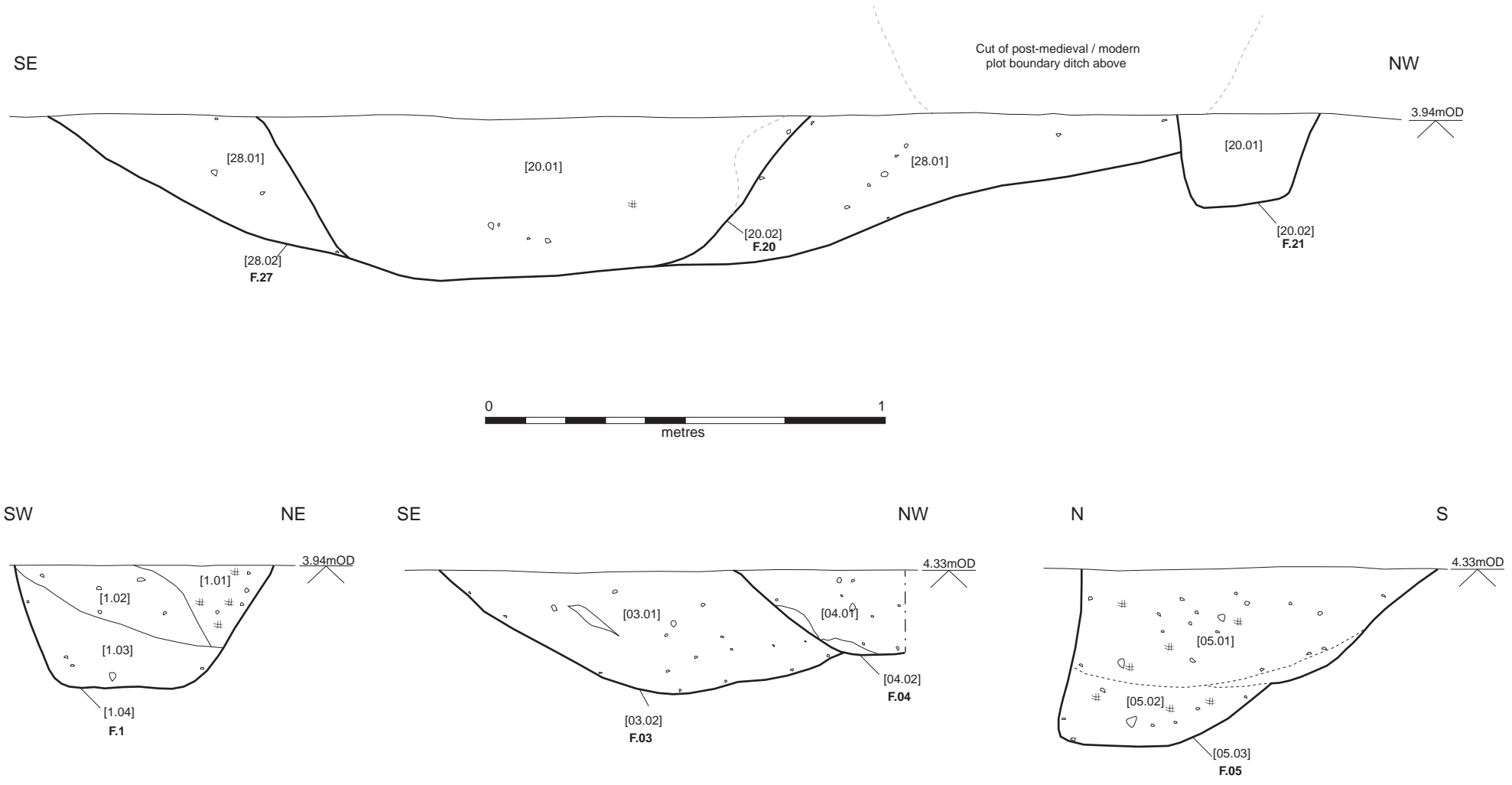


Figure 3: Selected sections



Figure 4: Deposit of brick and building stone in F.15, Trench 4a (top). Machine-dug test-pit in Quarry F.25, Trench 3b (bottom).

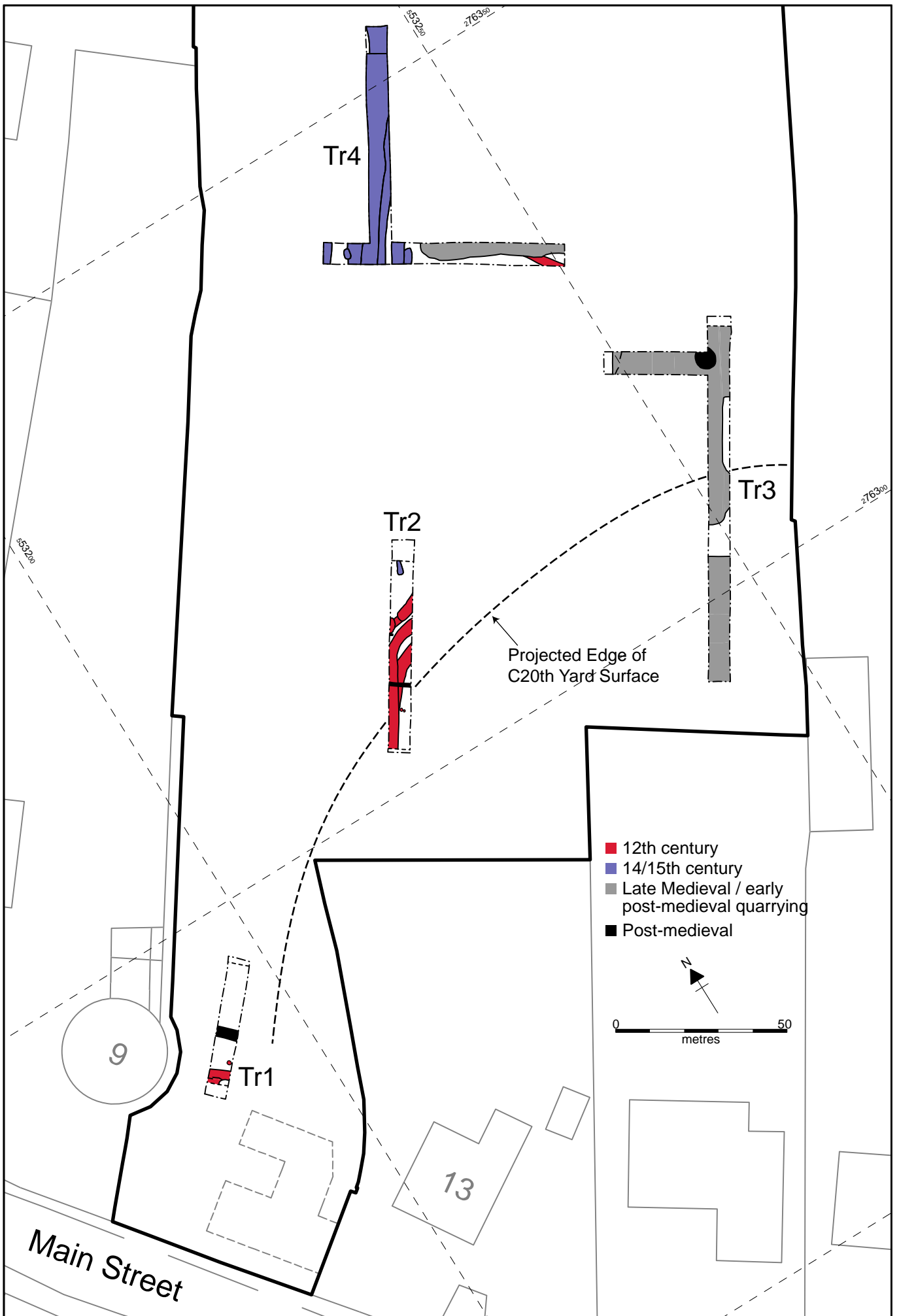


Figure 5: Phase Plan

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OASIS ID: cambridg3-251621

Project details

Project name	11-15 Main Street, Little Thetford
Short description of the project	A trial trench based archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cambridge Archaeological Unit (CAU) on land to the rear of 11-15 Main Street, Little Thetford, Cambridgeshire (TL 5324 7632) between 26th April and 3rd May 2016. Archaeological remains comprised a series of ditches and probable quarry pits, largely dating to the period from the 12th to 15th centuries. Two main phases of medieval activity were recorded, with a third potentially represented by late medieval quarrying in the south-east of the site. The ditches appear to relate to former plot boundaries and internal plot divisions probably associated with contemporary properties located on Main Street. Having said that, no direct evidence of buildings associated with these properties was recorded at the site. A deposit of brick, tile and dressed building stone fragments was recovered from one quarry although there was no evidence within the excavated trenches to suggest that this material derives from structures within the development area, indeed fragments of dressed Barnack stone, for example, most likely derived from the nearby Church of St. George.
Project dates	Start: 26-04-2016 End: 03-05-2016
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	MST16 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	ECB4632 - HER event no.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Monument type	DITCH Medieval
Monument type	QUARRY Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Medieval
Significant Finds	ANIMAL BONE Medieval
Significant Finds	CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL Medieval
Methods & techniques	""Sample Trenches""
Development type	Housing estate

Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country	England
Site location	CAMBRIDGESHIRE EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE THETFORD 11-15 Main Street, Little Thetford
Postcode	CB6 3HA
Study area	0.45 Hectares
Site coordinates	TL 5324 7632 52.363063836556 0.250791446722 52 21 47 N 000 15 02 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 2m Max: 2m

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	Jonathan Tabor
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Construct Reason Ltd.

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Cambridgeshire County Archaeology Store
Physical Archive ID	MST16
Physical Contents	"Animal Bones","Ceramics","Environmental","Glass","Metal"
Digital Archive recipient	Cambridgeshire County Archaeology Store
Digital Archive ID	MST16
Digital Contents	"Animal Bones","Ceramics","Environmental","Glass","Survey"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Spreadsheets","Survey","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Cambridgeshire County Archaeology Store
Paper Archive ID	MST16

Paper Contents "Stratigraphic"
Paper Media available "Context sheet", "Plan", "Report", "Section"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title Land at 11-15 Main Street, Little Thetford, Cambridgeshire. An Archaeological Evaluation
Author(s)/Editor(s) Tabor, J.
Other bibliographic details Report No. 1338
Date 2016
Issuer or publisher Cambridge Archaeological Unit
Place of issue or publication Cambridge
Description 27 page wire bound report with plastic laminate front cover. Four figures.

Entered by Jonathan Tabor (jlt42@cam.ac.uk)
Entered on 18 May 2016

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