

Land on the former Snowcap Mushroom and Silvan Mushroom Site Broadway, Yaxley

An Archaeological Evaluation



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**Land on the Former Snowcap Mushroom and Silvan Mushroom Site,
Broadway, Yaxley, Cambridgeshire.**
An Archaeological Evaluation Assessment

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Summary

Cambridge Archaeological Unit (CAU) undertook a trenched evaluation of land on the Former Snowcap Mushroom and Silvan Mushroom Site, Broadway, Yaxley, Cambridgeshire (TL 1952 9319) to assess the archaeological potential of the site prior to a proposed development. The evaluation was carried out between the 10th and 19th January 2022. The evaluation identified an area of late IronAge and Roman activity consisting solely of ditches.

Introduction and Background

The Cambridge Archaeological Unit (CAU) were commissioned by Barnack Estates Ltd to undertake a trenched archaeological evaluation of land on the Former Snowcap Mushroom and Silvan Mushroom Site, Broadway, Yaxley, Cambridgeshire, ahead of a proposed development of commercial floorspace in Use Classes E (commercial, business and service), B2 (general industrial) and B8 (storage or distribution). (Huntingdon District Council Planning Application No. 20/01855/FUL). The evaluation took place between 10th and 19th January 2021. A CAU written scheme for investigation (Wiseman 2021) was issued in response to a brief by the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Team (Robinson Zeki 2021), who also approved and monitored the works. The CAU assigned Site Code is BDY22 and the Reference Number is: ECB6816.

Location, Topography and Geology

The Proposed Development Area (PDA) is located on land of the Former Snowcap Mushroom and Silvan Mushroom Site, Broadway, Yaxley, Cambridgeshire. It is situated immediately to the east of the railway line and on the eastern end of Yaxley.

The PDA centres on (TL 1952 9319) and extends over approximately 4.96 hectares, which at the time of evaluation was in use as a concrete crushing operation, processing the demolition material from the buildings that were previously on the site. The topography of the PDA is sloping from 15m OD in the northwest (Trench 23) to 7.20m OD in the southeast (Trench 9). The natural slope had been considerably altered during the construction of previous buildings with much of the site being denuded or terraced to, presumably, provide a level surface for the construction of buildings. The underlying geology is a bedrock comprising mudstone of the Oxford Clay Formation with no superficial deposits recorded; although a band of glacial diamicton (Oatby Member) runs immediately north of Broadway, and there are peat deposits c.500m to the southeast beyond Pig Water drain (British Geological Survey; <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>; accessed 28 October 2021). The natural geology that the features were cut into in the evaluation trenches was a deposit of Oxford Clay Mudstone formation.

Archaeological Background

The PDA

There have been no previous archaeological investigations within the PDA. Immediately west of the PDA, beyond the railway line, an evaluation with 12 trenches at Mere View (ECB4140) revealed only medieval colluvium and modern disturbance. Geophysical surveys (ECB1898, ECB 2586) followed by 51 trenches (ECB1943) and open area excavation (ECB1978) identified Iron Age and Roman settlements with ditched enclosures approximately 500m to the west of the PDA.

Trenching (ECB3620, ECB5299) and open area excavation (ECB5457) were carried out at Eagle Business Park to the east and northeast of the PDA. Excavation revealed

Bronze Age and Iron Age occupation, features identified included burnt-mounds, post-built structures, boundary ditches and a paleochannel (Barrett 2019).

Area Surrounding the PDA

Prehistoric

There is little prehistoric activity in the area around the PDA prior to the Bronze Age, with no activity reported within 1km. In Yaxley more widely, one Palaeolithic hand axe was reported in Yaxley Yard (CHER01419) 1.5km to the southwest, and pit with worked flints and animal bone 2km to the southwest at Vicarage Farm (CHER 11336A).

The wider area attests to some significant Bronze Age activity, including the post-built causeways at Flag Fen, Must Farm and Horsey Fen, along with settlements at Must Farm, Bradley Fen and Stanground South.

Iron Age and Roman

The higher parts of the 'Yaxley Ridge' were occupied in the later Iron Age. A major boundary ditch orientated along the ridge (MCB16368) was excavated 400m to the west of the PDA. It had smaller ditches forming enclosures off it to the north and the south as well as evidence for four complete roundhouse gullies and a fragmented fifth. Settlement activity continued into the Roman period up until the 3rd century AD with evidence of additional enclosures, field systems, and a kiln.

Early Medieval

There is no evidence for early medieval activity in the area immediately surrounding the PDA.

Medieval

The medieval village of Yaxley developed around St Peter's Church and at what is now the south-western end of the modern village, 2.5km to the southwest of the PDA. Some stray medieval finds have been recorded around the village (CHER 07851, MCB16368, MCB28700) as well as some medieval ridge and furrow (MCB16368, MCB28701). During the Middle Ages Conquest Lode was first dug from Whittlesey Mere to the former course of the River Nene (now Pig Water drain).

Post-Medieval

Housing in Yaxley extended eastward in the post-medieval period along Main Street and Mere view almost up to the site of the PDA, which is now on the eastern end of the settlement.

Project Aims and Methodology

The work was carried out in accordance of the Written Brief prepared by Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Team (Robinson Zeki 2021), ClfA's *Code of Conduct* (2014), *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (ClfA 2014), *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England (ALGAO East of England Region)* (Gurney 2003) and our Written Scheme of Investigation (Wiseman 2021).

The trenched evaluation of the PDA aimed to '*identify, assess and record*', any archaeological features, remains and deposits within the Proposed Development Area. To achieve this, 22 trenches were machined totalling 882m in length (see fig.2).

The trenches were cut using a 16-ton tracked excavator using a 2m wide toothless ditching bucket. Topsoil and underlying deposits were removed under the direct supervision of an experienced archaeologist and the removed overburden was placed in separate stacks on either side of the trench.

After machining, each trench was planned digitally using GPS, and all spoil heaps (where possible) and identified features were scanned with a metal-detector and bucket sampled. Excavation of all features was carried out using hand-tools, with one-metre slots excavated in linears at suitable intervals, pits and post-holes half-sectioned and natural/ambiguous features tested. All work was carried out in strict accordance with statutory Health and Safety legislation and with the recommendations of FAME (Allen & Holt 2010) and in accordance with a site-specific risk assessment and the CAU Health and Safety policy.

Recording System

Recording of archaeological Features and Deposits followed a CAU designed system that was developed for extensive rural projects. The system assigns feature numbers, **F.**, to stratigraphic events such as ditches, pits and postholes (100+); Whereas Slot numbers [200+] were assigned to each 'event' (ditch slot, half-section of pit etc.) carried out by an archaeologist; and all cuts and deposits associated with a Slot were assigned a *context* number [200.01+]. All sections were drawn at either 1:10 or 1:20 scale; bulk environmental samples were taken where appropriate; and a digital photographic archive was assembled.

Archive

This trenched evaluation produced varying quantities of archival material as outlined in Tables 1 and 2. All documentary records and accompanying artefacts have been assembled into a catalogued archive in line with Appendix 6 of MoRPHE (Lee, 2015) and, at the time of writing, are being stored at the CAU offices.

Archive Item	Total Number
Archaeological Features	9
Archaeological Slots	8
Environmental Samples	24
Graphic Sheets	1
Archive Files	1

Table 1: Archive

Artefact Type	Number	Weight (g)
Pottery Sherds	18	224
CBM	0	0
Mortar	0	0
Tobacco Pipe	0	0
Animal Bone	38	538
Worked Stone	0	0
Burnt Stone	0	0
Coins	0	0
Metalwork	0	0
Slag	0	0
Burnt flint	0	0
Total	25	812

Table 2: Artefact Totals

Results

The PDA was evaluated by 22 trenches that totalled 882m in length (at 2.0m wide, unless otherwise stated), which equated to approximately 5% of the 4.96 hectares site. The evaluation showed considerable disturbance by the construction and consequent demolition of post-medieval farm buildings, as well as significant destruction by the terracing of large areas of the site. The results show a concentration of late Iron-Age features in the north-west of the PDA with only post-medieval features present elsewhere. The following sections outline the results from various components of the evaluation, including the results from bucket sampling, metal detecting and the trenches themselves.

Metal Detecting Survey

Metal detecting was carried out on the surface of the features and topsoil/subsoil heaps (where possible); no material was recovered. Most topsoil/subsoil heaps were not metal detected as they had been disturbed by the construction and demolition of the post-medieval farm buildings as well as the terracing of the site. A visual inspection saw a substantial amount of 20th century refuse within the topsoil/subsoil; this was not retained.

Bucket Sampling

Bucket sampling was not carried out due to the high instance of modern material in the topsoil/subsoil heaps and the known presence of asbestos in the buildings that had been demolished. A visual inspection was made of the surface of the spoil heaps, but no pre-modern material culture was identified.

Trenches (See Figure.2)

The following sections give an overview of the results from the individual trenches, and the archaeological features identified within them. A tabulated overview of the results is also presented in Appendix 1. The machining of the trenches demonstrated areas of made ground (bricks and crushed concrete) across the whole of the PDA (see figure.4) with no undisturbed topsoil or subsoil surviving, except for in trenches 18, 19 and 22.

The western area of the PDA, including trenches 1 to 6, was heavily disturbed by the foundations of post-medieval farm buildings. It was these buildings demolition that created the made ground through which the trenches were dug. Although the construction and demolition of buildings did heavily disturb this area, archaeological features did survive.

The area to the southern end of the PDA, including trenches 7 to 11, appears to have been denuded with the material (topsoil, subsoil and clay) deposited to the north (over trenches 12, 14 and 15) and the natural ground level becoming artificially lowered in places to level the ground. The only features uncovered were post-medieval in date

and there is a strong possibility the levelling of the ground would have destroyed anything earlier if present.

A large man-made mound, up to 2.5m above natural ground level, was constructed in the area that covered trench 12 and the southern end of trenches 14 and 15. It was constructed from building demolition material (bricks and crushed concrete), with layers of topsoil, subsoil, and clay above it. It appears there had been more than one phase of post-medieval construction and demolition on the site. Below the man-made mound in trench 12 were modern building foundations, this was then demolished and covered with redeposited topsoil, subsoil, and clay. This suggests that the levelling of the area around trenches 7 to 11 was done subsequently to the construction and demolition of these post-medieval structures.

The northern half of the PDA was largely covered in a concrete slab (max depth 0.4m,) on top of a made ground of crushed concrete and bricks.

The results from the evaluation of the PDA demonstrated a lack of prehistoric activity prior to the late Iron Age, with no other activity then present until the post-medieval period. No features dated to these periods and no worked flint, pottery or other dateable artefacts were recovered, even as residual finds in later features. However, the north-west edge of the PDA (Trenches 3 to 6) clearly attested to activity in the late Iron Age with a series of ditches aligned roughly either north-south or east-west, that perhaps created rectilinear enclosures or plots. There were no discrete features recorded, perhaps suggesting the outer edges of a settlement or field systems/paddocks. The pottery evidence suggests the area may have been in use between 50BC to 50AD. There is no evidence of activity on the PDA until the construction and subsequent demolition of farm buildings in the post-medieval period. This fits a wider pattern in Yaxley, with a shift of settlement focus towards the east after the medieval period.

Results

Trench 3 (Figures 2, 3 and 5)

Trench 3 was 15m in length and orientated east-west. It was machined to a maximum depth of 0.45m revealing one ditch (Feature 1) cut into a geology of orange-grey clay. The overlying deposit was very disturbed and largely made ground.

F. 1 [1.04] A north-south Late Iron Age ditch. It had a width of 2.39m and was 0.87m deep. Its sides were moderately sloped and straight and its base was concave. Its fills were largely brown or grey clay-silts with infrequent small irregular stone inclusions. (1.01) had a small number of fragmentary animal bones and 7 sherds of pot. (1.02) had 1 sherd of pottery.

Trench 4 (Figures 2 3, and 5)

Trench 4 was 75m in length and orientated north-south. It was machined to a maximum depth of 0.45m revealing two ditches (Features 2 and 3) and modern

disturbance cut into a geology of orange-grey sandy-clay. The overlying deposit was very disturbed and largely made ground.

F. 2 [2.02] An east-west late Iron Age ditch. It had a width of 1.64m and was 0.53m deep. Its sides were moderately sloped and straight and its base was concave. Its fills were largely brown or grey clay-silts with infrequent small irregular stone inclusions. (2.01) had 2 sherds of pottery.

F. 3 [3.02] A northeast-southwest late Iron Age ditch. It had a width of 1.45m and was 0.31m deep. Its sides were moderately sloped and straight and its base was concave. Its fills were largely brown or grey clay-silts with small irregular stone inclusions. (3.01) had a small assemblage of fragmentary animal bone and 2 sherds of pottery.

Trench 5 (Figures 2, 3 and 5)

Trench 5 was 15m in length and orientated east-west. It was machined to a maximum depth of 0.43m revealing 1 ditch (Feature 4) cut into a geology of blue-grey sandy-clay. The overlying deposit was very disturbed and largely made ground.

F. 4 [4.02] A north-south late Iron Age ditch. It had a width of 1.17m and was 0.26m deep. Its sides were moderately sloped and straight and its base was concave. Its fills were largely brown or grey clay-silts with infrequent small and medium irregular stone inclusions. (4.01) had 3 sherds of pottery.

Trench 6 (Figures 2, 3 and 5)

Trench 6 was 25m in length and formed an L-shape orientated east-west/north-south. It was machined to a maximum depth of 0.41m revealing 2 ditches (Features 8 and 9) and modern disturbance cut into a geology of yellow-grey sandy-clay. The overlying deposit was very disturbed and largely made ground.

F. 8 [8.02] A north-south ditch. It had a minimum width of 0.48m (cut by F.9) and was 0.30m deep. Its sides were moderately sloped and straight and its base was concave. Its fills were largely brown or grey clay-silts with infrequent small irregular stone inclusions. No finds were recovered.

F. 9 [9.03] A north-south late Iron Age ditch. It had a width of 2.39m and was 0.73m deep. Its sides were steep and irregular, and it had a flat base. Its fills were largely yellow/brown or grey clay-silts with infrequent small irregular stone inclusions. (9.01) had a small fragmentary assemblage of animal bone and 2 sherds of pot.

Trench 8 (Figures 2 and 6)

Trench 8 was 48m in length and orientated east-west. It was machined to a maximum depth of 0.40m revealing 2 ditches (Features 5 and 6) cut into a blue-grey clay. The overlying deposit was very disturbed and entirely comprising of made ground.

F. 5 [5.02] A northwest-southeast ditch. It had a width of 0.62m and was 0.05m deep. Its sides were shallow and straight, and its base was flat. Its fills were grey-brown clay-silts with infrequent small irregular stone inclusions. No finds were recovered.

F. 6 [6.02] A northwest-southeast post-medieval ditch. It had a width of 0.84m and was 0.26m deep. Its sides were moderate and straight, and it had a flat base. Its fills were grey-brown clay-silts with infrequent small irregular stone inclusions. (6.01) had 1 sherd of pottery

Trench 21 (Figures 2 and 7)

Trench 21 was 48m in length and orientated east-west. It was machined to a maximum depth of 0.60m revealing 1 ditch (Features 7) cut into a blue-grey clay. The overlying deposit was very disturbed and entirely comprising of made ground.

F. 7 [7.04] A north-south ditch. It had a width of 1.80m and was 0.42m deep. Its sides were moderate and concave, and its base was also concave. Its fills were grey-brown clay-silts with infrequent small irregular stone inclusions. No finds were recovered.

Discussion

To date, there have been several archaeological evaluations around the PDA and Yaxley that have demonstrated how the area has been inhabited over time. We know that the western fen edge around Peterborough has significant prehistoric activity in the Bronze Age (Flag Fen, Bradley Fen, Stanground South) and that later activity from the Iron Age and Roman periods tends to be focused further up the gradient away from the Fen edge. Evaluation and Open Area excavations at Eagle Business Park, immediately adjacent to the PDA, revealed Bronze and Iron Age features, including burnt mounds, post-built structures, and boundary ditches. Later Iron Age and Roman activity has been attested to from excavations higher up the gradient from the PDA on the 'Yaxley Ridge', including boundary ditches and enclosures dating up until the 3rd century AD. There are low numbers of spot finds around Yaxley indicating some activity prior to the Bronze Age and there is also a scarcity of post-Roman archaeology with little activity recorded prior to the cutting of Conquest Lode during the Middle Ages.

All the evidence gained from within the PDA, except for two parallel post-medieval ditches (Features 5 and 6), that probably formed a trackway, were that of late Iron Age/Roman in date. This consisted solely of ditches on the north-west limits of the PDA, with no discrete features (pits or post-holes) present, perhaps suggesting the edge of settlement and/or truncation. The ditches were all, except for one (Feature 3), aligned north-south or east-west and suggest the possibility of a rectilinear enclosure system. The pottery assemblage is typical of the area around Peterborough in the late Iron-Age and dates quite tightly from 50BC until 50AD. The narrow date range of the pottery may indicate a short-lived occupation of the site, however, the CBM (Ceramic Building Material) suggests some continuation into the Roman period but it is unclear for how long this extends. The animal bone assemblage demonstrates typical domestic activity similar to other late Iron Age settlements in the area. The lack of environmental remains also suggests that perhaps these features were at the periphery of any settlement, away from the main focus of activity.

There is no evidence of post Iron Age activity within the PDA until the construction of the post-medieval farm buildings on the site. The only features other than building foundations present within the PDA dating to after the Iron Age were two ditches (Features 5 and 6). These parallel ditches produced one sherd of post-medieval pottery and possibly formed part of a trackway.

Conclusion

The PDA revealed only sparse late Iron Age/Roman features limited to the north-west edge of the area. These ditches potentially form rectilinear enclosures on the outer edges of a settlement with no discrete features being recorded. It is very probable that any settlement extends off the western edge of the PDA and is therefore likely destroyed by the cutting of the railway line directly to the west of it. The southern and

eastern end of the PDA provided no archaeological features or material and so the Bronze Age and Iron Age activity recorded at Eagle Business Park do not extend into the PDA.

Figures

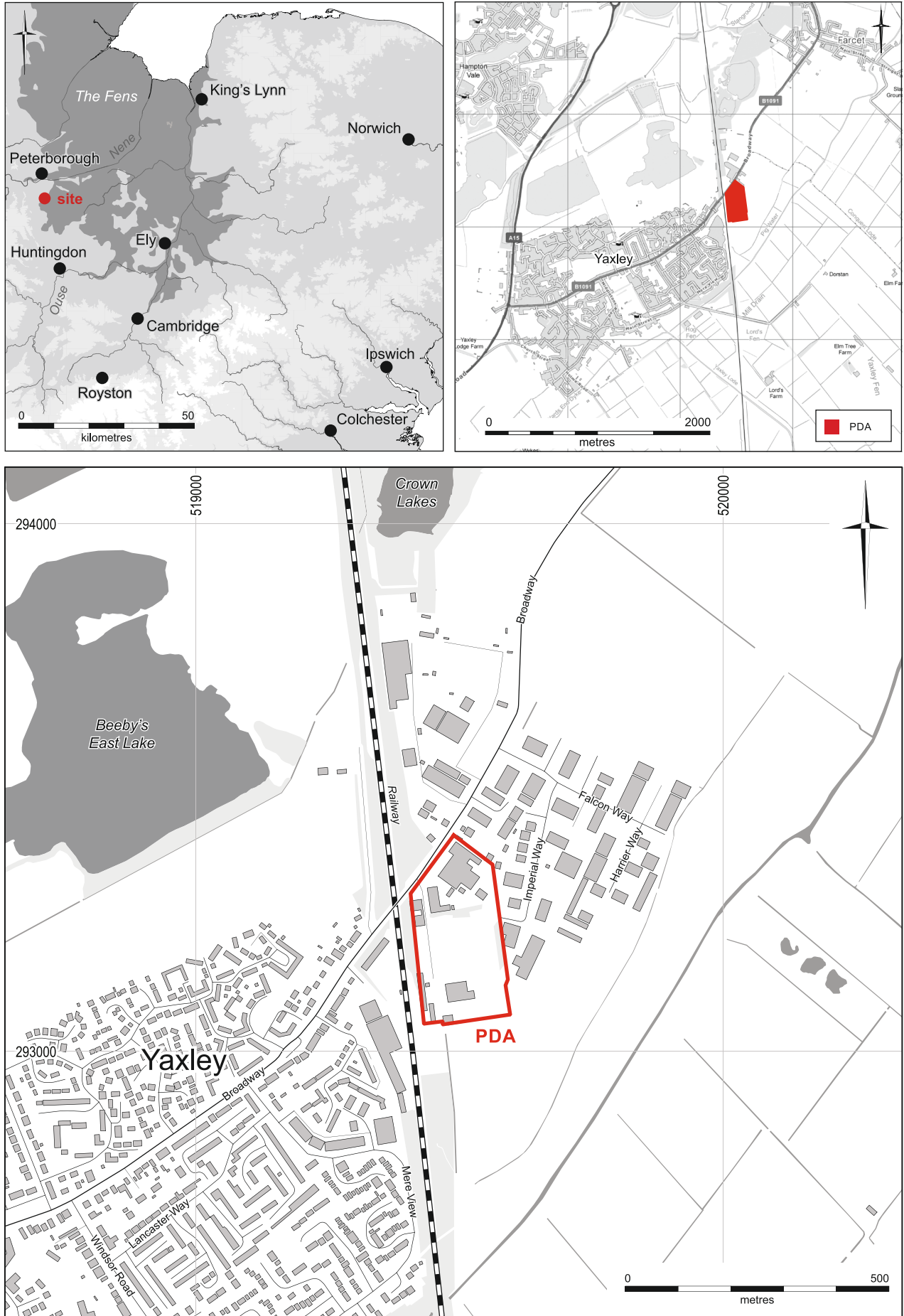


Figure 1 Site location

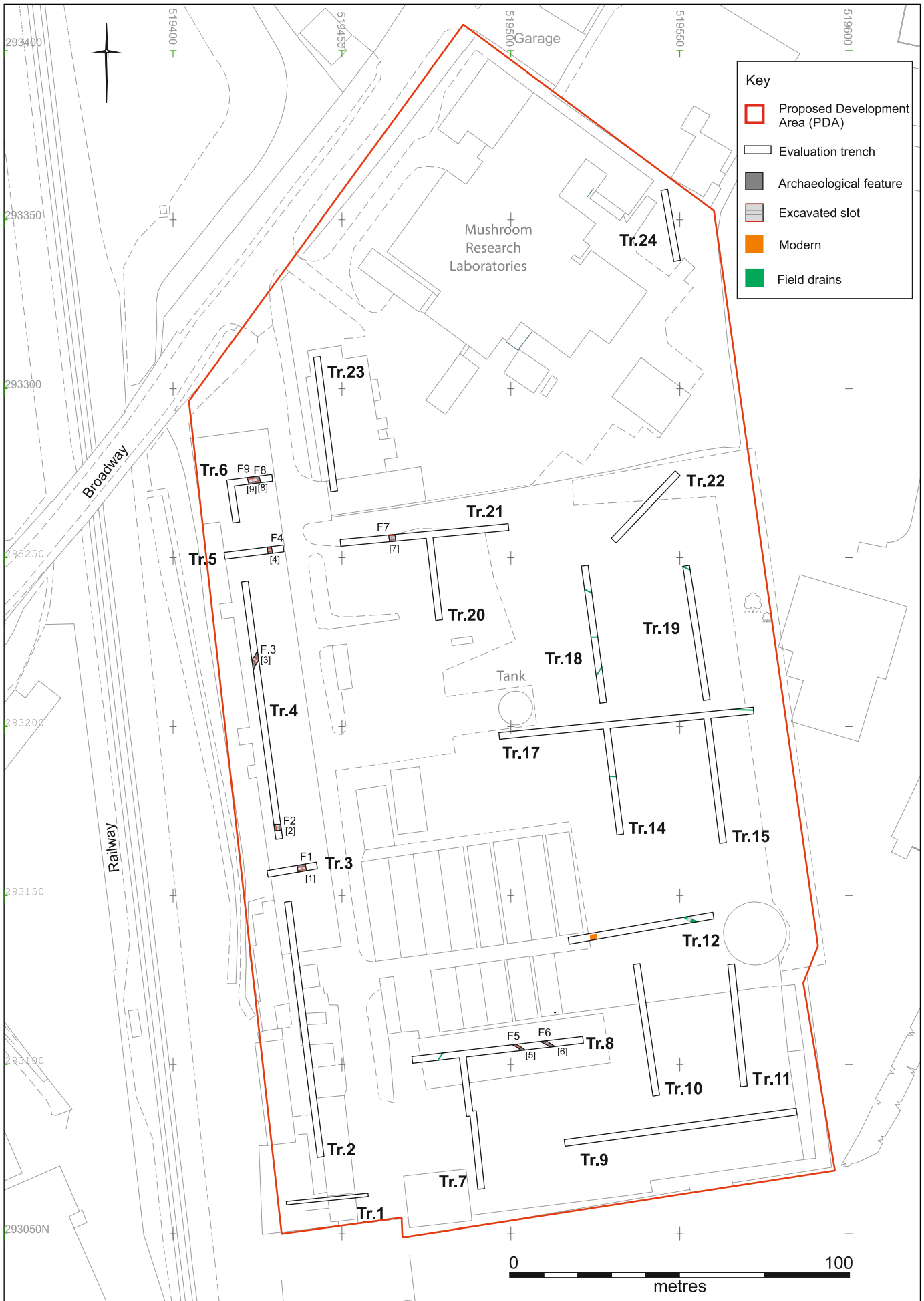
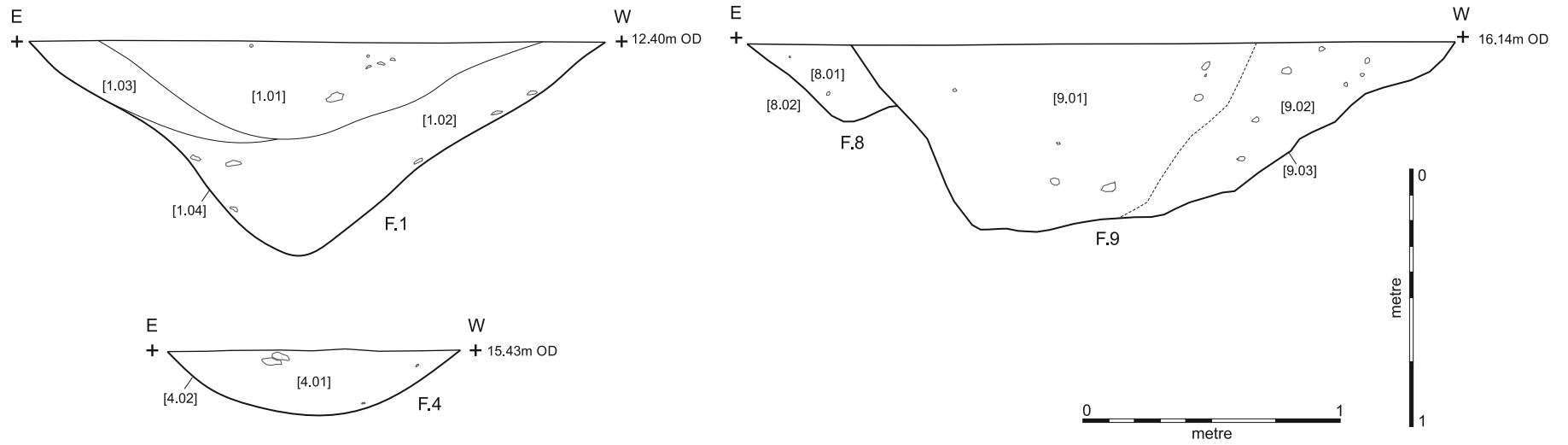


Figure 2. Trench plan

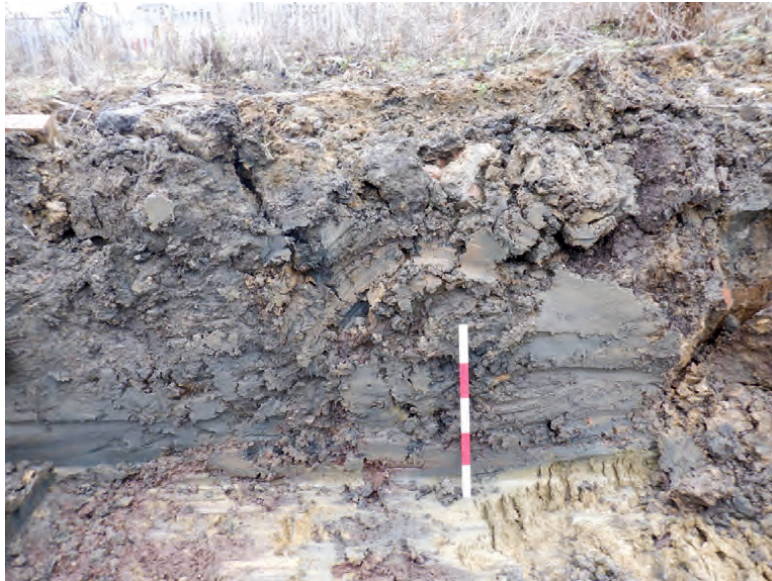


Trench 4, F.2

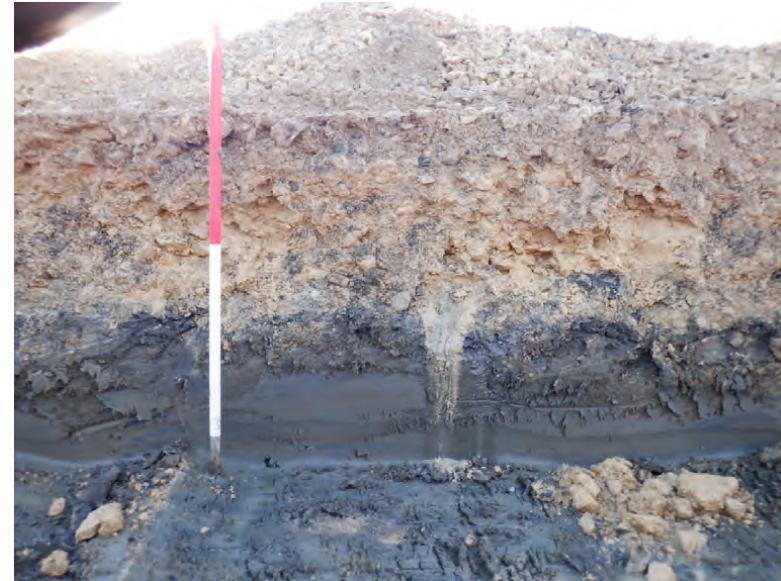


Trench 21, F.7

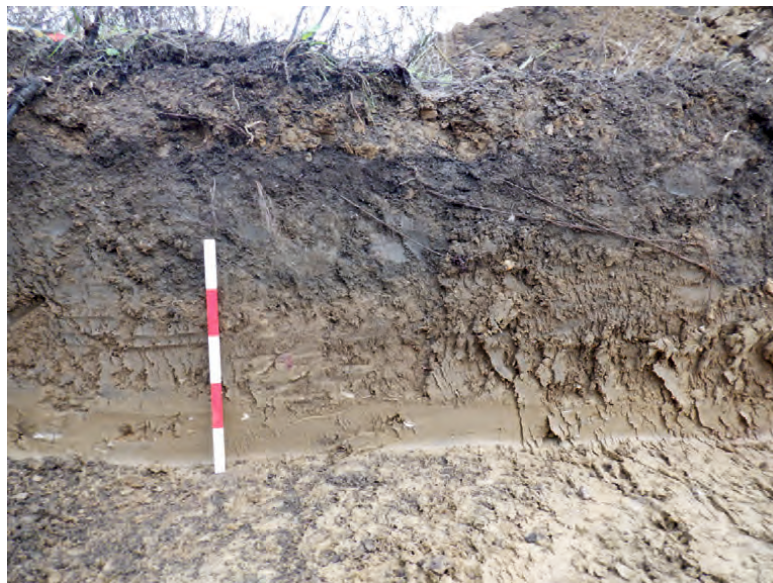
Figure 3. Selected sections



Tr.2 East facing



Tr.9 North facing



Tr.19 West facing



Tr.24 East facing

Figure 4. Sample trench section photos showing disturbance



Tr.1 looking west



Tr.2 looking south



Tr.3 looking west



Tr.4 looking north



Tr.5 looking east



Tr.6 looking south



Tr.6 looking west



Tr.7 looking south

Figure 5. Trench photos



Tr.8 looking east



Tr.10 looking north



Tr.12 looking east



Tr.9 looking east



Tr.11 looking north



Tr.14 looking south



Tr.15 looking south



Tr.17 looking east

Figure 6. Trench photos



Tr.18 looking north



Tr.19 looking south



Tr.22 looking north-east



Tr.20 looking north



Tr.21 looking east



Tr.23 looking north



Tr.24 looking south

Figure 7. Trench photos

Specialist reports

Appendix 1 Pottery

By Matt Brudenell

Introduction

The evaluation yielded 18 sherds of pottery (224g) with a mean sherd weight (MSW) of 12.4g. The pottery was recovered from seven contexts relating to six ditches across Trenches 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8 (Table 1).

With the exception of a brown-glazed stoneware sherd (13g) of 19th century date (ditch F.6, Trench 8, not described further), all the pottery from the evaluation is of later Iron Age origin. This material is handmade but includes a few diagnostic Late Iron Age sherds dating c. 50 BC to AD 50. It is likely that all the Iron Age pottery falls within this chronological bracket.

The pottery is in a stable condition, with a MSW typical of later Iron Age assemblages from Cambridgeshire.

Trench	Feature	Feature Type	Context	No. sherds	Wt. (g)	Comment/notes
3	1	Ditch	1.01	7	50	Combed sherd. One base and one rim sherd.
			1.02	1	24	Burnished rim sherds (mouth diameter 16cm)
4	2	Ditch	2.01	2	36	Combed body sherds
	3	Ditch	3.01	2	19	Plain sherds. One shoulder sherd
5	4	Ditch	4.01	3	66	Two scored sherds. One vessel rim.
6	9	Ditch	9.01	2	16	Plain body sherds
8	6	Ditch	6.01	1	13	19 th century stoneware sherd
TOTAL	-	-	-	18	224	-

Table 1. Quantification of pottery

Methodology

All the Iron Age pottery has been fully recorded following the recommendations laid out by the Prehistoric Ceramic Research Group (2011). After a full inspection of the assemblage, fabric groups were devised on the basis of dominant inclusion types, their density and modal size. Sherds from all contexts were counted, weighed (to the nearest whole gram) and assigned to a fabric group. Sherd type was recorded, along with evidence for surface treatment, decoration, and the presence of soot and/or residue. Rim and base forms were described using a codified system recorded in the catalogue and were assigned vessel numbers.

All pottery was subject to sherd size analysis. Sherds less than 4cm in diameter were classified as 'small' (10 sherds), sherds measuring 4-8cm were classified as 'medium'

(seven sherds), and sherds over 8cm in diameter were classified as 'large' (no sherds). The quantified data is presented on an Excel data sheet held with the site archive.

Fabrics

S1: Moderate to common coarse shell (mainly 2-4mm in size). 12 sherds, 150g

S2: Moderate to common medium shell (mainly 1-2mm in size). Two sherds, 17g

G1: Moderate fine grog (<1mm in size) and rare to sparse sand. One sherd, 7g

SG1: Moderate medium shell (mainly 1-2mm in size) and sparse fine grog (<1mm in size). One sherd, 24g

CHQ1: Moderate medium sub-angular chalk (mainly 1-2mm in size) in a sandy clay matrix. One sherd, 13g (possibly fired clay).

Assemblage characteristics

The fabrics are broadly typical of pottery groups dating to the later Iron Age in the Peterborough region. They include a mix of wares with shell, grog, sand and calcareous grits, with coarse shelly wares dominating (fabric S1). The group includes the rims of three different vessels and two flat-footed bases. Two of the vessel rims are flat-topped; one from ditch F.4 being expanded on the exterior. The third has an everted rounded lip. This belongs to a lightly burnished vessel in fabric SG1 with a mouth diameter of 16cm. This possibly belongs to an S-shaped bowl or jar, more commonly found in Late Iron Age assemblages.

Decoration is present on five sherds (113g) and comprises combing (three sherd, 53g) and scoring (two sherd, 60g); the latter in the Scored Ware tradition (Elsden 1992). Combing is diagnostic of Late Iron Age groups, with combed sherds recovered from ditches F.1 and F.2.

Discussion

Aside from a brown-glazed stoneware sherd of 19th century date, all the pottery from the evaluation is of later Iron Age origin. This material is handmade but includes a few grog tempered sherds and combed sherds diagnostic of Late Iron Age assemblages dating c. 50 BC to AD 50. It is likely that all the Iron Age pottery falls within this chronological range.

The character of this assemblage compares well with other published local Late Iron Age groups, namely the Period 1 assemblage from Monument 97, Orton Longueville (Rollo with Felicity 2001), Longthorpe II (Wild 1987), the Period 1 assemblage from Haddon (Evans et al. 2003), the Period I assemblage from Werrington (Rollo 1988), and the Group 2/3 material from Cat's Water (Pryor 1984).

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Appendix 2 Faunal Remains

By Vida Rajkovača

The evaluation produced a small assemblage with a count of 38 fragments and a weight of 538g. Made up of the typical domestic species, animal bone was recovered from four features, excavated across three trenches (Table 3). According to the associated ceramic evidence, animal bone was of Late Iron Age date and it was considered as a single assemblage. The overall preservation of the material was moderate to quite good, though canine gnawing was common. The general preference for livestock is typical for the period, confirming the assemblage's domestic character.

Taxon	F.1/ Trench 3	F.2/ Trench 4	F. 3/ Trench 4	F.9/ Trench 6B
Cow	3	.	4	.
Sheep/ goat	1	.	.	2
Dog	1	.	1	.
Sub-total to species	5	.	5	2
Cattle-sized	.	1	1	.
Sheep-sized	.	.	1	.
Total	5	1	7	2

Table 3. Number of Identified Specimens for all species from all contexts; breakdown by feature and trench.

Appendix 3 Environmental Remains

By Val Fryer

Introduction and method statement

Evaluation excavations at Yaxley, undertaken by the Cambridge Archaeological Unit (CAU), recorded a number of ditches of probable Later Iron Age or later date. Samples for the evaluation of the content and preservation of the plant macrofossil assemblages were taken from ditch fills within trenches 3, 4, 5, 6, 8 and 21, and seven were submitted for assessment.

The samples were bulk floated by CAU and the flots were collected in a 300 micron mesh sieve. The dried flots were scanned under a binocular microscope at magnifications up to x 16 and the plant macrofossils and other remains noted are listed in Table 1. Nomenclature within the table follows Stace (2010). All plant remains were charred. Modern roots, seeds and arthropod remains were also noted but are not listed within the table.

Results

Sample No.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Context No.	7.03	6.01	4.01	3.01	2.01	1.02	9.01
Feature No.	F7	F6	F4	F3	F2	F1	F9
Trench No.	TR21	TR8	TR5	TR4	TR4	TR3	TR6
Date	U/D	P.Med	LIA	LIA	LIA	LIA	LIA
Plant macrofossils							
<i>Triticum spelta</i> L. (glume base)	X						
Charcoal <2mm	X	x	x	x	x	x	xx
Charcoal >2mm	X		x	x		x	xxx
Charcoal >5mm	X		x	x		x	x
Indet. seed				x			
Other remains							
Bone						x	
Small coal frags.		x					
Small mammal/amphibian bone				x			
Mollusc shells							
Woodland/shade loving species							
<i>Aegopinella</i> sp.				x		x	
<i>Carychium</i> sp.			x				
<i>Ena</i> sp.					x		
Open country species							
<i>Vallonia</i> sp.	x		x	xx	x	x	
<i>V. costata</i>	x		x	xx	x		
<i>V. excentrica</i>	x						
<i>Vertigo pygmaea</i>				x	x		
Catholic species							
<i>Cochlicopa</i> sp.				x		x	
<i>Trichia hispida</i> group	x			x	x	x	
Marsh/freshwater slum species							
<i>Lymnaea</i> sp.			x	xx	x		
Sample volume (litres)							
Volume of flot (litres)	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1
% flot sorted	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Fragmented and abraded charcoal/charred wood fragments are present throughout at a low to moderate density, but other plant remains are exceedingly scarce. Sample 1 from un-dated ditch F7 includes a single spelt wheat (*T. spelta*) glume base and sample 4 from ditch F3 includes a very poorly preserved indeterminate seed. Other remains are equally scarce but do include a single fragment of bone (possibly burnt), small pieces of coal and an indeterminate amphibian bone. Shells of terrestrial molluscs are present within all but sample 7. However, most are reasonably well preserved and it is currently unclear whether they are contemporary with the sampled features, or later contaminants. Open country species, particularly those found in short-turfed grassland habitats, occur most frequently, although it would appear that ditches F2, F3 and F4 were possibly seasonally damp/water-filled and slightly overgrown.

Conclusions

In summary, all seven assemblages are small (i.e. <0.1 litres in volume) and very limited in composition. It would appear most likely that the few remains which are recorded are entirely derived from scattered or wind-dispersed detritus of unknown origin. This paucity of material may suggest that the ditches were entirely peripheral to any main foci of either domestic or agricultural activity, and were possibly enclosing stock pens or paddocks along the fen edge.

As plant remains are so scarce, it is difficult to suggest a future sampling strategy should further excavations be planned within the immediate area. However, if such work is undertaken, it is recommended that additional samples of circa 40 litres in volume should be taken from any recorded pits or post-holes, with further ditch samples being taken from strategic points including corners and entrance-ways. Analysis of these samples may either pinpoint specific areas of activity or confirm that the enclosures were probably pastoral in nature.

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Key to Table

x = 1 – 10 specimens xx = 11 – 50 specimens xxx = 51 – 100 specimens
U/D = un-dated P.Med = Post-medieval LIA = Late Iron Age

Appendix 4: CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL

By Rosalind Quick

Summary

Two small fragments of ceramic building material (CBM) weighing 95g were recovered from Trench 4 and Trench 6B.

Introduction and Methodology

The two fragments have been fully assessed with details of form, fabric type and weight recorded.

This report contains quantification and a summary of the CBM assemblage by Trench.

Contextual Summary

Two small abraded fragments of undiagnostic tile weighing 95g were collected from Trench 4 (F.3) and Trench 6B (F.9), one in a shelly and one in a sandy fabric; see

Trench No.	Ft.	Context	Qty.	Wt. (g)	Feature Type	Fabric	Description	Date
4	3	3.01	1	44	Ditch	Shelly fabric; oxidised orange surface with dark grey reduced core.	Undiagnostic, abraded fragment of tile.	Roman
6B	9	9.01	1	51	Ditch	Coarse sandy fabric; oxidised throughout with flint up to 12mm long.	Undiagnostic, abraded fragment of tile.	Roman

Table 4.

Trench No.	Ft.	Context	Qty.	Wt. (g)	Feature Type	Fabric	Description	Date
4	3	3.01	1	44	Ditch	Shelly fabric; oxidised orange surface with dark grey reduced core.	Undiagnostic, abraded fragment of tile.	Roman
6B	9	9.01	1	51	Ditch	Coarse sandy fabric; oxidised throughout with flint up to 12mm long.	Undiagnostic, abraded fragment of tile.	Roman

Table 4: Summary Catalogue of Ceramic Building Material

Discussion

Based on the visual appearance of the fabrics, and their similarity to other dated CBM assemblages it is likely that the tile is Roman in date.

The material does not derive from an in situ structure and their small size and level of abrasion suggests that this is redeposited material from elsewhere.

Appendix 5 – Trench and Feature Tables

Nb: The feature Primary Fill Type and Profile codes are listed at the end of this Appendix.

Trench 1		
Trench 1 contained no archaeological features.	Trench Orientation	E-W
	Height (m) OD at Base of Trench	9.43
	Trench Width (m)	1.0
	Trench Length (m)	22.0
	Average Topsoil Depth (m)	N/A
	Average Subsoil Depth (m)	N/A
	Average Made Ground Depth (m)	0.75
	Overall Depth (m)	0.75

Trench 2		
Trench 2 contained modern disturbance and no archaeological features.	Trench Orientation	N-S
	Height (m) OD at Base of Trench	N = 12.7 S = 9.53
	Trench Width (m)	2.0
	Trench Length (m)	75.0
	Average Topsoil Depth (m)	N/A
	Average Subsoil Depth (m)	N/A
	Average Made Ground Depth (m)	0.65
	Overall Depth (m)	0.65

Trench 3											
Trench 3 contained one ditch (Feature 1)							Trench Orientation				E-W
							Height (m) OD at Base of Trench				12.4
							Trench Width (m)				2.0
							Trench Length (m)				15.0
							Average Topsoil Depth (m)				N/A
							Average Subsoil Depth (m)				N/A
							Average Made Ground Depth (m)				0.45
							Overall Depth (m)				0.45
Feature No.	Feature Type	Slot No.	Shape/Orientation	No. of Contexts	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Primary Fill Type	Profile	Artefacts	Archaeological Period
1	Ditch	1	N-S	4	1.0	2.39	0.87	3.2.4	2.2	BN, PT	Late Iron Age

Trench 4											
Trench 4 contained two ditches (Features 2 and 3) and modern disturbance.							Trench Orientation				N-S
							Height (m) OD at Base of Trench				N = 15.7 S = 12.77
							Trench Width (m)				2.0
							Trench Length (m)				75.0
							Average Topsoil Depth (m)				N/A
							Average Subsoil Depth (m)				N/A
							Average Made Ground Depth (m)				0.45
							Overall Depth (m)				0.45
Feature No.	Feature Type	Slot No.	Shape/Orientation	No. of Contexts	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Primary Fill Type	Profile	Artefacts	Archaeological Period
2	Ditch	2	E-W	2	1.0	1.64	0.53	3.3.4	2.2	BN, PT	Late Iron Age
3	Ditch	3	NE-SW	2	1.0	1.45	0.31	3.2.4	2.2	BN, PT	Late Iron Age

Trench 5											
Trench 5 contained one ditch (Feature 4).							Trench Orientation				E-W
							Height (m) OD at Base of Trench				15.63
							Trench Width (m)				2.0
							Trench Length (m)				15.0
							Average Topsoil Depth (m)				N/A
							Average Subsoil Depth (m)				N/A
							Average Made Ground Depth (m)				0.43
							Overall Depth (m)				0.43
Feature No.	Feature Type	Slot No.	Shape/Orientation	No. of Contexts	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Primary Fill Type	Profile	Artefacts	Archaeological Period
4	Ditch	4	N-S	2	1.0	1.17	0.26	3.3.4	2.2	PT	Late Iron Age

Trench 6											
Trench 6 contained two ditches (Features 8 and 9).							Trench Orientation				L-Shaped N-S/E-W
							Height (m) OD at Base of Trench				N = 16.2 S = 15.85
							Trench Width (m)				2.0
							Trench Length (m)				25.0
							Average Topsoil Depth (m)				N/A
							Average Subsoil Depth (m)				N/A
							Average Made Ground Depth (m)				0.41
							Overall Depth (m)				0.41
Feature No.	Feature Type	Slot No.	Shape/Orientation	No. of Contexts	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Primary Fill Type	Profile	Artefacts	Archaeological Period
8	Ditch	8	N-S	2	1.0	>0.48	0.30	3.3.4	2.2	N/A	
9	Ditch	9	N-S	3	1.0	2.39	0.73	3.3.4	3.4	PT, BN	Late Iron Age

Trench 7											
Trench 7 contained modern disturbance and no archaeological features.							Trench Orientation				N-S
							Height (m) OD at Base of Trench				9.50
							Trench Width (m)				2.0
							Trench Length (m)				27.0
							Average Topsoil Depth (m)				N/A
							Average Subsoil Depth (m)				N/A
							Average Made Ground Depth (m)				0.44
							Overall Depth (m)				0.44

Trench 8											
Trench 8 contained 2 ditches (Features 5 and 6), a ceramic land drain and modern disturbance.							Trench Orientation				E-W
							Height (m) OD at Base of Trench				W = 9.5 E = 9.2
							Trench Width (m)				2.0
							Trench Length (m)				48.0
							Average Topsoil Depth (m)				N/A
							Average Subsoil Depth (m)				N/A
							Average Made Ground Depth (m)				0.40
							Overall Depth (m)				0.40
Feature No.	Feature Type	Slot No.	Shape/Orientation	No. of Contexts	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Primary Fill Type	Profile	Artefacts	Archaeological Period
5	Ditch	5	NW-SE	2	1.0	0.62	0.05	3.2.4	1.1	N/A	
6	Ditch	6	NW-SE	2	1.0	0.84	0.26	3.2.4	2.1	PT	Post-Medieval

Trench 9											
Trench 9 contained modern disturbance and no archaeological features.							Trench Orientation				E-W
							Height (m) OD at Base of Trench				W = 8.7 E = 6.9
							Trench Width (m)				2.0
							Trench Length (m)				68.0
							Average Topsoil Depth (m)				N/A
							Average Subsoil Depth (m)				N/A
							Average Made Ground Depth (m)				0.8
							Overall Depth (m)				0.8

Trench 10		
Trench 10 contained modern disturbance and no archaeological features.	Trench Orientation	N-S
	Height (m) OD at Base of Trench	N = 8.6 S = 8.4
	Trench Width (m)	2.0
	Trench Length (m)	37.0
	Average Topsoil Depth (m)	N/A
	Average Subsoil Depth (m)	N/A
	Average Made Ground Depth (m)	0.45
	Overall Depth (m)	0.45

Trench 11		
Trench 11 contained modern disturbance and no archaeological features.	Trench Orientation	N-S
	Height (m) OD at Base of Trench	7.3
	Trench Width (m)	2.0
	Trench Length (m)	34.0
	Average Topsoil Depth (m)	N/A
	Average Subsoil Depth (m)	N/A
	Average Made Ground Depth (m)	0.48
	Overall Depth (m)	0.48

Trench 12		
Trench 12 contained modern disturbance, a ceramic land drain and no archaeological features.	Trench Orientation	E-W
	Height (m) OD at Base of Trench	W = 9.3 E = 8.4
	Trench Width (m)	2.0
	Trench Length (m)	40.0
	Average Topsoil Depth (m)	N/A
	Average Subsoil Depth (m)	N/A
	Average Made Ground Depth (m)	2.1
	Overall Depth (m)	2.3

Trench 14		
Trench 14 contained no archaeological features.	Trench Orientation	N-S
	Height (m) OD at Base of Trench	N = 10.8 S = 9.65
	Trench Width (m)	2.0
	Trench Length (m)	30.0
	Average Topsoil Depth (m)	0.15
	Average Subsoil Depth (m)	0.50
	Average Made Ground Depth (m)	1.8
	Overall Depth (m)	2.2

Trench 15		
Trench 15 contained no archaeological features.	Trench Orientation	N-S
	Height (m) OD at Base of Trench	N = 9.54 S = 8.5
	Trench Width (m)	2.0
	Trench Length (m)	36.0
	Average Topsoil Depth (m)	0.25
	Average Subsoil Depth (m)	0.45
	Average Made Ground Depth (m)	1.6
	Overall Depth (m)	2.1

Trench 17		
Trench 17 contained no archaeological features, modern disturbance, and a ceramic land drain.	Trench Orientation	E-W
	Height (m) OD at Base of Trench	W = 11.47 E = 9.3
	Trench Width (m)	2.0
	Trench Length (m)	90.0
	Average Topsoil Depth (m)	0.3
	Average Subsoil Depth (m)	0.4
	Average Made Ground Depth (m)	0.4
	Overall Depth (m)	0.9

Trench 18		
Trench 18 contained no archaeological features and 3 ceramic land drains.	Trench Orientation	N-S
	Height (m) OD at Base of Trench	11.7
	Trench Width (m)	2.0
	Trench Length (m)	40.0
	Average Topsoil Depth (m)	0.25
	Average Subsoil Depth (m)	0.3
	Average Made Ground Depth (m)	0.20
	Overall Depth (m)	0.7

Trench 19		
Trench 19 contained no archaeological features and 3 ceramic land drains.	Trench Orientation	N-S
	Height (m) OD at Base of Trench	N = 11.3 S = 9.8
	Trench Width (m)	2.0
	Trench Length (m)	38.0
	Average Topsoil Depth (m)	0.2
	Average Subsoil Depth (m)	0.5
	Average Made Ground Depth (m)	0.40
	Overall Depth (m)	1.25

Trench 20		
Trench 20 contained modern disturbance and no archaeological features.	Trench Orientation	N-S
	Height (m) OD at Base of Trench	N = 13.8 S = 13.0
	Trench Width (m)	2.0
	Trench Length (m)	25.0
	Average Topsoil Depth (m)	N/A
	Average Subsoil Depth (m)	N/A
	Average Made Ground Depth (m)	0.50
	Overall Depth (m)	0.50

Trench 21											
Trench 21 contained one ditch (Feature 7).							Trench Orientation				E-W
							Height (m) OD at Base of Trench				W = 14.9 E = 13.1
							Trench Width (m)				2.0
							Trench Length (m)				48.0
							Average Topsoil Depth (m)				N/A
							Average Subsoil Depth (m)				N/A
							Average Made Ground Depth (m)				0.6
							Overall Depth (m)				0.6
Feature No.	Feature Type	Slot No.	Shape/Orientation	No. of Contexts	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Primary Fill Type	Profile	Artefacts	Archaeological Period
7	Ditch	7	N-S	4	1.0	1.80	0.42	3.3.4	2.2	N/A	

Trench 22											
Trench 22 contained modern disturbance and no archaeological features.							Trench Orientation				NE-SW
							Height (m) OD at Base of Trench				11.8
							Trench Width (m)				2.0
							Trench Length (m)				25.0
							Average Topsoil Depth (m)				0.2
							Average Subsoil Depth (m)				0.3
							Average Made Ground Depth (m)				N/A
							Overall Depth (m)				0.55

Trench 23											
Trench 23 contained modern disturbance and no archaeological features.							Trench Orientation				N-S
							Height (m) OD at Base of Trench				N = 15.8 S = 15.1
							Trench Width (m)				2.0
							Trench Length (m)				39.0
							Average Topsoil Depth (m)				N/A
							Average Subsoil Depth (m)				N/A
							Average Made Ground Depth (m)				0.60
							Overall Depth (m)				0.60

Trench 24		
Trench 24 contained modern disturbance and no archaeological features.	Trench Orientation	N-S
	Height (m) OD at Base of Trench	13.5
	Trench Width (m)	2.0
	Trench Length (m)	20
	Average Topsoil Depth (m)	N/A
	Average Subsoil Depth (m)	N/A
	Average Made Ground Depth (m)	1.15
	Overall Depth (m)	1.15

Primary Fill types:

Shade	No.	Colour	No.	Composition	No.
Pale	1	Orange	1	Sand	1
Pale/Mid	2	Brown	2	Silty Sand	2
Mid	3	Grey	3	Sandy Silt	3
Mid/Dark	4	Black	4	Silt	4
Dark	5			Clay Silt	5
Very Dark	6			Silty Clay	6
				Sandy Clay	7
				Clay	8

Slot Profile types:

Sides	No.	Base	No.
Shallow	1	Flat	1
Moderate	2	Rounded/Concave	2
Steep	3	V-shaped/pointed	3
Vertical	4	Irregular	4

Acknowledgements

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Groundworks Contractor: Lattenbury Services Ltd

The excavation was monitored on behalf of Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Team by Leanne Robinson Zeki

CAU Site Team

Project Manager: David Gibson
Project Supervisor: Len Middleton
Site Survey: Jon Moller
Excavation Team: Petra Jones

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Summary for cambridg3-505678

OASIS ID (UID)	cambridg3-505678
Project Name	Evaluation at Land on the Former Snowcap Mushroom and Silvan Mushroom Site, Broadway, Yaxley, Cambridgeshire
Sitename	
Activity type	Evaluation
Project Identifier(s)	BDY22
Planning Id	
Reason For Investigation	Planning: Between application and determination
Organisation Responsible for work	Cambridge Archaeological Unit
Project Dates	10-Jan-2022 - 19-Jan-2022
Location	Land on the Former Snowcap Mushroom and Silvan Mushroom Site, Broadway, Yaxley, Cambridgeshire NGR : TL 19520 93190 LL : 52.5234864964457, -0.239797117601123 12 Fig : 519520,293190
Administrative Areas	Country : England County : Cambridgeshire District : Huntingdonshire Parish : Yaxley
Project Methodology	<p>The work was carried out in accordance of the Written Brief prepared by Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Team (Robinson Zeki 2021), ClfA's Code of Conduct (2014), Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation (ClfA 2014), Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England (ALGAO East of England Region) (Gurney 2003) and our Written Scheme of Investigation (Wiseman 2021).</p> <p>The trenched evaluation of the PDA aimed to 'identify, assess and record', any archaeological features, remains and deposits within the Proposed Development Area. To achieve this, 22 trenches were machined totalling 882m in length (see fig.2).</p> <p>The trenches were cut using a 16-ton tracked excavator using a 2m wide toothless ditching bucket. Topsoil and underlying deposits were removed under the direct supervision of an experienced archaeologist and the removed overburden was placed in separate stacks on either side of the trench.</p> <p>After machining, each trench was planned digitally using GPS, and all spoil heaps (where possible) and identified features were scanned with a metal-detector and bucket sampled. Excavation of all features was carried out using hand-tools, with one-metre slots excavated in linears at suitable intervals, pits and post-holes half-sectioned and natural/ambiguous features tested. All work was carried out in strict accordance with statutory Health and Safety legislation and with the recommendations of FAME (Allen & Holt 2010) and in accordance with a site-specific risk assessment and the CAU Health and Safety policy.</p>

Project Results	The PDA revealed only sparse late Iron Age/Roman features limited to the north-west edge of the area. These ditches potentially form rectilinear enclosures on the outer edges of a settlement with no discrete features being recorded. It is very probable that any settlement extends off the western edge of the PDA and is therefore likely destroyed by the cutting of the railway line directly to the west of it. The southern and eastern end of the PDA provided no archaeological features or material and so the Bronze Age and Iron Age activity recorded at Eagle Business Park do not extend into the PDA.
Keywords	Animal Remains - MIDDLE IRON AGE - FISH Archaeological Objects Thesaurus Field Boundary - LATE IRON AGE - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types Field Boundary - ROMAN - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types Ceramic - POST MEDIEVAL - FISH Archaeological Objects Thesaurus Field System - POST MEDIEVAL - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types Ceramic - ROMAN - FISH Archaeological Objects Thesaurus Sherd - LATE IRON AGE - FISH Archaeological Objects Thesaurus Sherd - POST MEDIEVAL - FISH Archaeological Objects Thesaurus
Funder	
HER	Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record - unRev - STANDARD
Person Responsible for work	
HER Identifiers	HER Event No - ECB6816
Archives	Physical Archive, Documentary Archive - to be deposited with Cambridgeshire County Council County Archaeological Store Digital Archive - to be deposited with Archaeology Data Service Archive