

30 Long Road, Cambridge

An Archaeological Excavation



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An Archaeological Excavation**

Event Number ECB 3089

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September 2010
Report Number: 965

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Summary

An open area excavation was undertaken at 30 Long Road, Cambridge on 17th and 18th June 2010 by the Cambridge Archaeological Unit (CAU). The work was commissioned by Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and was situated north of a series of archaeological investigations carried out by the CAU, which revealed Iron Age and Romano-British enclosures and field systems (Whittaker 2002, Mackay 2004). An area of 235 square meters was excavated, which revealed a single linear feature on the same alignment as Late Iron Age/Early Roman features, field systems/enclosures, from the previous excavations to the south.

INTRODUCTION

Between the 17th June and the 18th June 2010 the Cambridge Archaeological Unit (CAU) undertook an open area excavation at 30 Long Road, Cambridge. The works were carried out in advance of the construction of a new Occupational Health (OH) Facility on behalf of Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation trust at Addenbrookes hospital. The site lies in the southern hinterland of Cambridge (TL46175549) situated on middle chalk (BGS sheet number 205). Previous works include an evaluation to the south in the grounds of the Day-Care centre (Whittaker 2002) and at a substation site to the south east (Mackay 2004). Due to the proximity and relatively low density of archaeology in the area these previous investigations acted as the evaluation phase for this site, which was agreed with Andy Thomas of Cambridge County Council. The excavations followed a specification set out by the CAU (Evans, 2008) in response to a design brief issued by the Cambridge Archaeology Planning and Countryside Advice (CAPCA) (Thomas, 2008).

Landscape and Topography

The investigation was located within the eastern corner of the development area, on the footprint of the proposed building, situated on the corner of Long Road and Robinson Way; to the north of the Day-Care Centre. The development area was approx 1400 square meters, whilst the excavation area was 234.67 square meters. To the north of the excavation area was a mature tree belt that extends along the front of 30 Long Road protected by a Tree Preservation Order. Geologically, the site was located on middle chalk (BGS sheet number 205) with surface natural of chalky marl patches within orange gravelly silt; the excavation area was at a height of between 16.09 and 15.8m OD (Ordnance Datum).

Methodology

The topsoil and subsoil overlying the excavation area was removed under constant archaeological supervision by a tracked 360° machine using a 1.8m wide toothless ditching bucket. All removed deposits were scanned by eye. The excavation measured approximately 20m by 13m, a total area of 234.67 square metres. A minimum of 50% of any discrete features was excavated and 1 meter slots through any linear features.

The excavation of all archaeological features was carried out by hand. The recording followed a CAU modified MoLAS system (Spence 1990), whereby numbers (fill), or [cut] were assigned to individual contexts and feature numbers, (F.) to stratigraphic events. Sections were drawn at 1:10 and base plans at 1:50. A digital photographic archive was compiled. This record has been assembled into a catalogued archive in line with MAP2 (English Heritage, 1991) and is being stored at the CAU offices. All work was carried out in strict accordance with statutory Health and Safety legislation and with the recommendations of SCAUM (Allen & Holt 2002).

The area was CAT scanned to identify the presence of any active services. An active drain was found to be running across the site from north to south and along the northern edge were active gas and electricity services. The areas with the live services were avoided.

Archaeological and Historical Background

The archaeological and historical background has been fully documented in a desktop survey (Evans 2002), and more recently in Borderlands (Evans et al 2008); the excavation area was situated just to the north of the main Borderlands site, the Hutchinson site. As a result only a brief summary will be given here:

A Late Iron Age sub rectangular enclosure was revealed nearby during excavations carried out by Cra'ster during the 1960's and the construction of Addenbrookes Hospital. In late 2002 the Hutchinson site was excavated and revealed evidence for activity dating from the Neolithic through to the Medieval period. The earliest archaeological activity in the area was low density Neolithic and Middle Bronze Age followed by Late Iron Age and conquest period settlement, a Middle Saxon settlement, followed by Medieval ridge and furrow agriculture. Further evaluations have been undertaken (Whittaker 2002 and Mackay 2004) where smaller continuations of the Late Iron Age/Early Roman activity were found.

RESULTS

The area excavated included the footprint of the previous building at 30 Long Road. The foundations and footings were therefore present within, and had disturbed a large part of the excavation area. The topsoil and subsoil covered the area to a depth of 0.61m. Parts of the concrete footings were removed at the time of stripping and were monitored: however, if they were near to any archaeological features, they were not removed.

A single linear ditch was recorded orientated NW/SE towards the south west corner of site with a posthole on its north east edge. The ditch (F. 1), aligned NW/SE, was 1.02m wide and 0.29m deep with a moderate sided and concaved base profile. The fill was a light mid orangey brown silty clay with rare flecks of charcoal.

The posthole (F. 2) was sub circular in plan with a diameter of 0.28m and depth of 0.13m with a U shaped profile and near vertical sides and flat base. The fill consisted of a mid to dark brown sandy silty topsoil derived deposit with stones. No material culture was recovered for either feature. Despite their close proximity, there was nothing to suggest that the two features were contemporary.

DISCUSSION

The ditch was on the same alignment as the Late Iron Age/Conquest period ditches in the North West corner of the Hutchinson Site (Evans et al. 2004) and correlates with the Late Iron Age/ Early Roman features in the evaluation of the Day Care Centre (Whittaker 2002).

At the Hutchinson site F.927 appears to have been on the same alignment as the ditch (F.1) revealed during this excavation. A similar profile and paucity of material was

recorded. The Hutchinson site ditch was interpreted as a boundary ditch forming part of an enclosure and the ditch F.1 may have been a continuation of this system.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the limited evidence for archaeological activity revealed in the excavation area contributes to our understanding of the landscape around Addenbrookes Hospital. The density of archaeological activity exposed at the Hutchinson site does not extend northward into the excavation area; consequently the excavation at the Occupational Health (OH) Facility has potentially defined the limit of the settlement.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The archaeological work at 30 Long Road was commissioned on behalf of Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust at Addenbrookes Hospital through Frank Shaw Associates. Bob Jackson was the contractor who facilitated the works. The archaeology was excavated by Chris Hawksworth and the area was monitored by Andy Thomas of Cambridgeshire County Council. Emma Beadsmoore managed the excavation which was surveyed by Donald Horne and graphics were produced by Vicki Herring.

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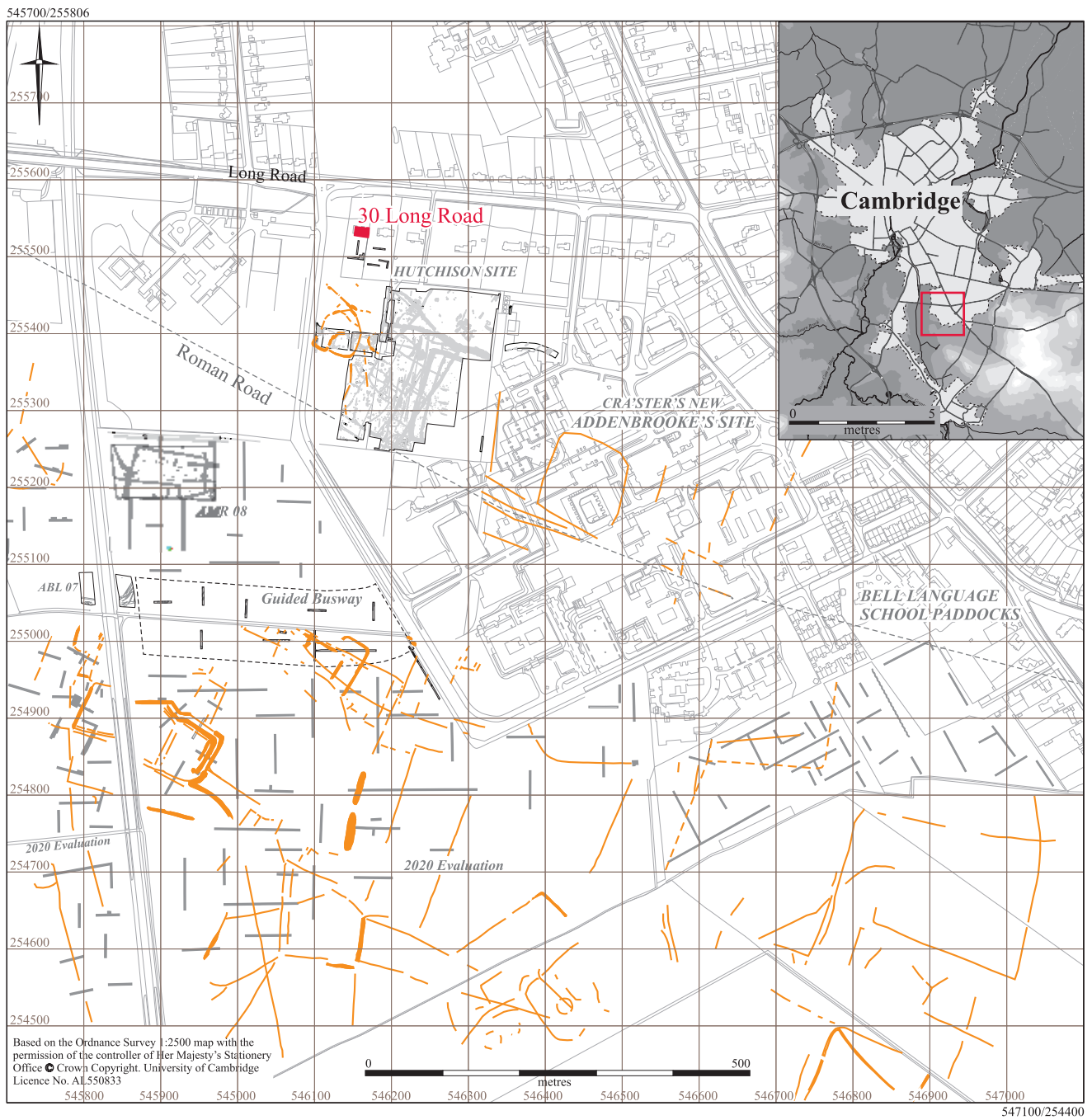


Figure 1. Location plan with cropmarks (shown in orange) and archaeological excavations within the vicinity.

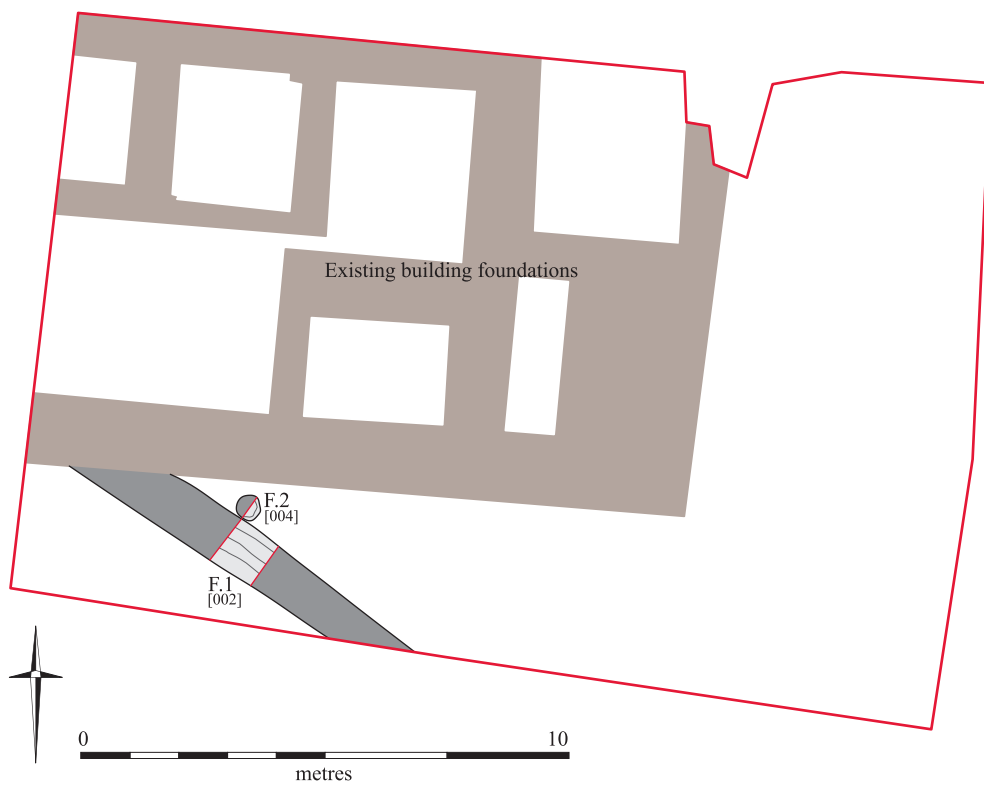


Figure 2. Site plan in relation to archaeology within the immediate vicinity (top) and detail of archaeological features within the development area (bottom).

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Project details

Project name	30 Long Road, Cambridge: An Archaeological Excavation
Short description of the project	An open area excavation was undertaken at 30 Long Road, Cambridge on 17th and 18th June 2010 by the Cambridge Archaeological Unit (CAU). The work was commissioned by Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and was situated north of a series of archaeological investigations carried out by the CAU which revealed Iron Age and Romano-British enclosures and field systems (Whittaker 2002, Mackay 2004). An area of 235 square meters was excavated and revealed a single linear feature that followed the same alignment as the Late Iron Age/Early Roman features...field system/enclosures... from the previous excavations to the north.
Project dates	Start: 17-06-2010 End: 18-06-2010
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	3089 - HER event no.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Industry and Commerce 2 - Offices
Monument type	FIELD SYSTEM Late Iron Age
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	'Full excavation'
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16

Project location

Country	England
Site location	CAMBRIDGESHIRE CAMBRIDGE CAMBRIDGE 30 Long road
Postcode	CB2 8PS
Study area	234.67 Square metres
Site coordinates	TL 4617 5549 52.1778429192 0.138000807258 52 10 40 N 000 08 16 E Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Cambridge Archaeological Unit
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Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	Christopher Evans
Project director/manager	Emma Beadsmoore
Project supervisor	Laura James
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Physical Archive recipient	Cambridge Archaeological Unit
Physical Archive ID	30 Long Rd
Digital Archive recipient	Cambridge Archaeological Unit
Digital Archive ID	30 Long Rd
Digital Media available	'GIS','Images raster / digital photography','Text'
Paper Archive recipient	Cambridge Archaeological Unit
Paper Archive ID	30 Long Rd
Paper Media available	'Context sheet','Drawing','Map','Photograph','Plan','Report','Section','Unpublished Text'
Entered by	Laura James (lcj30@cam.ac.uk)
Entered on	6 September 2010

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