

Grove Farm, Offord D'Arcy, Cambridgeshire

An Archaeological Evaluation



Matthew Collins

CAMBRIDGE ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE



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Matthew Collins

Illustrations by Andy Hall

Cambridge Archaeological Unit
University of Cambridge
Department of Archaeology

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Non-Technical Summary

Cambridge Archaeological Unit undertook an archaeological evaluation at Grove Farm, Offord D'arcy, Cambridgeshire, between the 22nd and 24th of November 2010. One trench contained an undated possible ditch, whilst the other trenches had been truncated to varying degrees by farmyard activities and an (infilled) post-medieval pond.

Introduction

An archaeological evaluation was carried out by Cambridge Archaeological Unit (CAU) between the 22nd and 24th of November 2010 at Grove Farm, Offord D'arcy, Cambridgeshire prior to the redevelopment of the farmyard and outbuildings. Commissioned by Thornhill Estates Ltd/PR Build, the evaluation aimed to establish the presence, date, state of preservation and significance of any archaeological remains. The evaluation was carried out and this report written in accordance with an archaeological specification written by the CAU (Beadsmoore 2010) in response to a brief by Cambridgeshire County Council's Historic Environment Team (HET). It was approved and monitored by an Archaeological Officer from HET.

Location, Topography and Geology

The development area centred on TL 221 663 and is located towards the north-eastern edge of the village of Offord D'arcy, off Graveley Road. It is bordered by open farmland to the east and north, a village green and housing to the west and further housing to the south. It covers c.0.56 ha and the height averaged 14m OD. The underlying geology is 1st Terrace river gravels (British Geological Survey 1993).

Archaeological Background

The development area is located c.350 east of the River Great Ouse, which is a river valley well known for its archaeological activity. Excavations along the western bank near to Offord D'arcy have revealed settlements dating from the prehistoric through to the Romano-British periods, whilst the higher gravel terraces on the eastern side of the river enabled the expansion Saxon and Medieval settlement.

Earthworks observed in the 1920's immediately to the west of Grove Farm indicate the presence of a medieval moated manorial site (CHER 02422), whilst an archaeological evaluation some 300m north of the development area revealed Saxon and medieval boundary and enclosure ditches and several pits suggesting settlement of that date. This site also contained a partially infilled pond constructed between 1902-1926 (Patten 2009).

Several late medieval/early post-medieval buildings are also located near to the development area and include a Manor House (CHER 02445) and St. Peters Church (CHER CB14897).

Methodology

The development area was evaluated by ten trenches totalling 116.5m in length (a 3.5% sample of the area) which were placed within accessible areas of the farmyard. All deposits were excavated under archaeological supervision with a wheeled JCB using a 1.70m wide toothless ditching bucket. A datasheet detailing the characteristics of each trench was generated and a photographic record taken. Excavation of exposed archaeological features was carried out using hand tools. The recording followed a CAU modified MoLAS system (Spence 1990) whereby feature numbers, F. were assigned to stratigraphic events and numbers [fill] or [cut] to individual contexts. The evaluation trenches were planned at 1:50 and individual sections drawn at 1:10. 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. The CAU assigned site code is ODY 10 and CHER number ECB3493.

Archive

Seven contexts from two features were excavated and recorded and artefacts including animal bone and pot were recovered. A data sheet recording the general information of each trench was generated and a digital photographic archive was compiled. The artefacts and records have been assembled into a catalogued archive in line with Appendix 1 of MAP2 (English Heritage 1991) and are being stored at the CAU offices.

Results

All of the trenches had been truncated to varying degrees by activity relating to the farm and the only archaeology identified was present in Trenches 8 and 9. The tables below give a brief description of each trench.

Trench 2 was the only trench with a surviving topsoil and subsoil, although no archaeological features or deposits were present. Trenches 1, 3-7 and 10 had no surviving topsoil or subsoil and generally consisted of made ground overlain by a thin layer of vegetation. The only features present within these trenches were either late post-medieval or modern, for instance a large pit was visible in both Trench 3 and 4 which had been backfilled with rubble, brick and other domestic rubbish including pot and glass.

Trenches 8-9 were partially sealed under the concrete and tarmac layer of a former tennis court. Underlying this was a substantial pond which almost entirely took up Trench 9 and the western half of Trench 8. Two machine excavated test-pits were dug into this feature which showed the pond having a depth greater than 1m, and modern pot and brick throughout the fill sequence. A possible ditch on a SW-NE orientation was also present in Trench 8, although this feature was undated.

| Trench 1 | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|------------|
| General Description | Orientation | S-N |
| Trench 1 contained no archaeological features or deposits. A deep layer of rubble and hardcore mixed with dark grey/black, possibly contaminated silt underlay a thin layer of vegetation. | Avg. Topsoil Depth (m) | 0.10 |
| | Avg. Subsoil Depth (m) | - |
| | Avg. Other deposits depth (m) | 1.00 |
| | Width (m) | 1.70 |
| | Length (m) | 6.50 |

| Trench 2 | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|------------|
| General Description | Orientation | S-N |
| Trench 2 contained no archaeological features or deposits. | Avg. Topsoil Depth (m) | 0.26 |
| | Avg. Subsoil Depth (m) | 0.15 |
| | Avg. Other deposits depth (m) | - |
| | Width (m) | 1.70 |
| | Length (m) | 10.00 |

| Trench 3 | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|-------|
| General Description | Orientation | E-W |
| Underlying the top and subsoil in the western half of Trench 3 was a deep post-medieval deposit containing building rubble and domestic rubbish including pot, glass and animal bone. | Avg. Topsoil Depth (m) | 0.25 |
| | Avg. Subsoil Depth (m) | 0.20 |
| | Avg. Other deposits depth (m) | 0.65 |
| | Width (m) | 1.70 |
| | Length (m) | 14.00 |

| Trench 4 | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|------|
| General Description | Orientation | E-W |
| Underlying the eastern half of Trench 4 was a continuation of the deep post-medieval deposit seen in Trench 3. The western half contained no archaeological features or deposits. | Avg. Topsoil Depth (m) | 0.15 |
| | Avg. Subsoil Depth (m) | - |
| | Avg. Other deposits depth (m) | 0.90 |
| | Width (m) | 1.70 |
| | Length (m) | 8.30 |

| Trench 5 | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|------|
| General Description | Orientation | S-N |
| Trench 5 contained a post-medieval/modern pit with grey/black possibly contaminated fill and two modern drains. | Avg. Topsoil Depth (m) | 0.10 |
| | Avg. Subsoil Depth (m) | - |
| | Avg. Other deposits depth (m) | 0.35 |
| | Width (m) | 1.70 |
| | Length (m) | 9.60 |

| Trench 6 | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|------|
| General Description | Orientation | S-N |
| Trench 6 contained a single modern linear feature and a drain and had been heavily disturbed by modern activity. | Avg. Topsoil Depth (m) | - |
| | Avg. Subsoil Depth (m) | - |
| | Avg. Other deposits depth (m) | 0.48 |
| | Width (m) | 1.70 |
| | Length (m) | 9.50 |

| Trench 7 | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|-------|
| General Description | Orientation | SE-NW |
| Trench 7 contained an infilled brick lined well, two modern services and modern wall foundations. No other archaeological or deposits were present. | Avg. Topsoil Depth (m) | 0.24 |
| | Avg. Subsoil Depth (m) | - |
| | Avg. Other deposits depth (m) | 0.25 |
| | Width (m) | 1.70 |
| | Length (m) | 14.00 |

| Trench 8 | | | | | | | | |
|--|--------------|-------------------|-------------|--------------------------------------|-----------|-------|-----------|-----------------------|
| General Description | | | | Orientation | | SE-NW | | |
| Trench 8 contained a single, undated possible ditch and the eastern limit of a post-medieval pond. | | | | Avg. Topsoil Depth (m) | | 0.17 | | |
| | | | | Avg. Subsoil Depth (m) | | 0.20 | | |
| | | | | Avg. Other deposits depth (m) | | 0.25 | | |
| | | | | Width (m) | | 1.70 | | |
| | | | | Length (m) | | 18.00 | | |
| Feature No. | Feature Type | Shape/Orientation | Context No. | Cut/Fill | Width (m) | Depth | Artefacts | Archaeological Period |
| 101 | Ditch (?) | SW-NE | 100 | F | - | - | BN | Undated |
| | | | 101 | F | - | - | None | |
| | | | 102 | C | 2.90 | 0.95 | - | |

| Trench 9 | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--------------|-------------------|-------------|----------|-----------|-------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|-------|
| General Description | | | | | | | Orientation | | S-N |
| Trench 9 was almost entirely taken up by a post-medieval pond, which had a depth greater than 1m. | | | | | | | Avg. Topsoil Depth (m) | | 0.28 |
| | | | | | | | Avg. Subsoil Depth (m) | | - |
| | | | | | | | Avg. Other deposits depth (m) | | 0.25 |
| | | | | | | | Width (m) | | 1.70 |
| | | | | | | | Length (m) | | 17.60 |
| Feature No. | Feature Type | Shape/Orientation | Context No. | Cut/Fill | Width (m) | Depth | Artefacts | Archaeological Period | |
| 100 | Pond | Unknown | 103 | F | - | - | BN | Post-medieval | |
| | | | 104 | F | - | - | None | | |
| | | | 105 | F | - | - | PT, BR | | |
| | | | 106 | C | N/A | >0.90 | - | | |

| Trench 10 | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|-------------------------------|--|------|
| General Description | | | | | | | Orientation | | S-N |
| Trench 10 contained no archaeological deposits or features and had been heavily disturbed by modern activity. | | | | | | | Avg. Topsoil Depth (m) | | 0.10 |
| | | | | | | | Avg. Subsoil Depth (m) | | - |
| | | | | | | | Avg. Other deposits depth (m) | | 0.45 |
| | | | | | | | Width (m) | | 1.70 |
| | | | | | | | Length (m) | | 9.00 |

Discussion

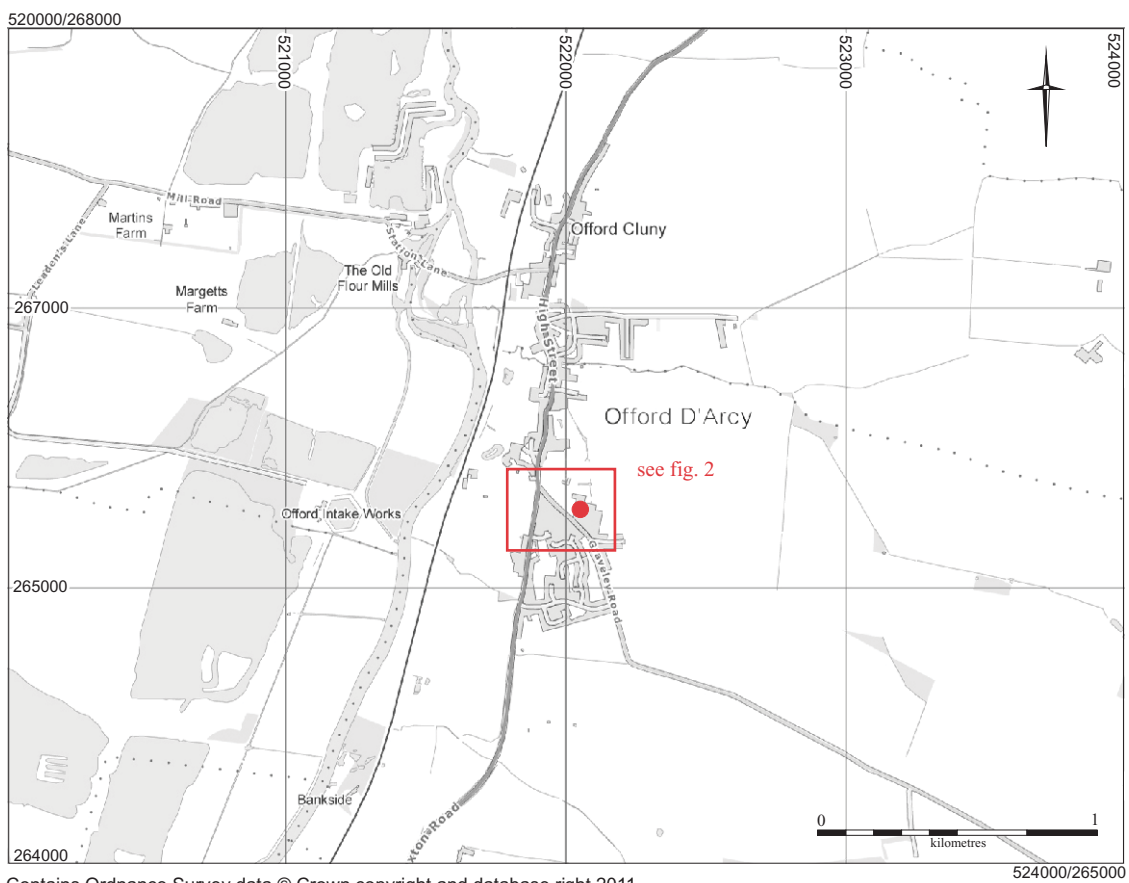
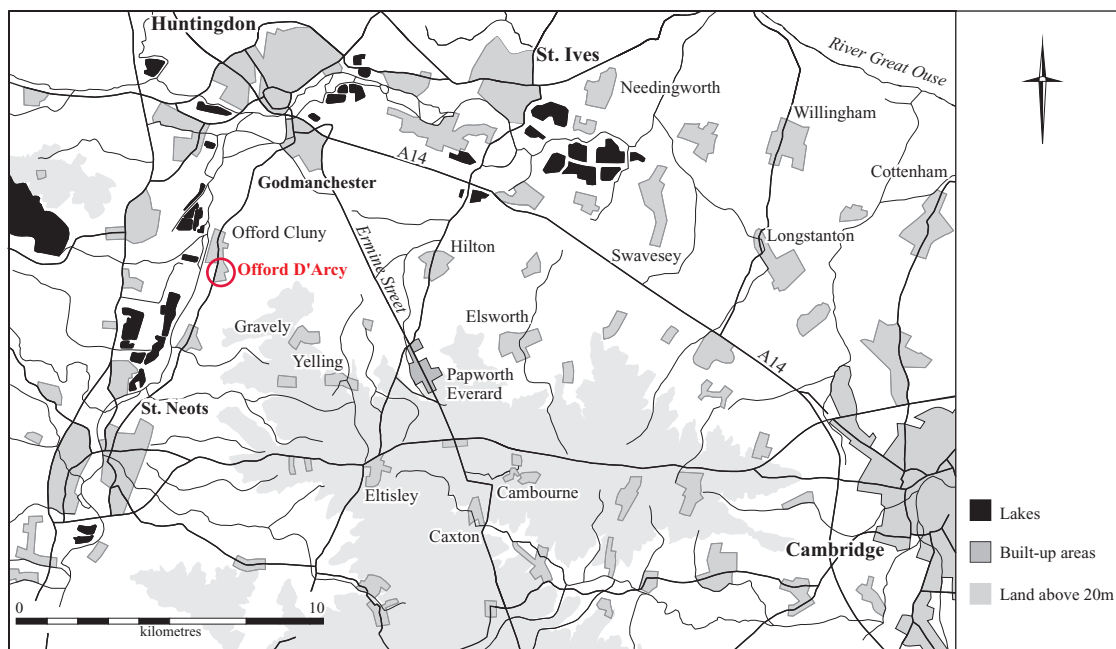
Much of the site has clearly been heavily truncated by activity relating to the farm and it is unlikely any archaeological activity, if was any was present, has survived. The exception to this is the possible ditch in Trench 8, which could potentially be related to the adjacent moated manorial complex (CHER 02422) or to the Saxon and medieval activity identified to the north (Patten 2009), although without dating evidence this is difficult to ascertain for certain.

Acknowledgements

The work was commissioned by Thornhill Estates Ltd/PR Build and the site was monitored by Dan McConnell (HET). Emma Beadsmore was the project manager and thanks go to Will Punched for assisting the author on site and Bryan Crossan for surveying the trenches and test-pits.

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524000/265000

Figure 1. Site location

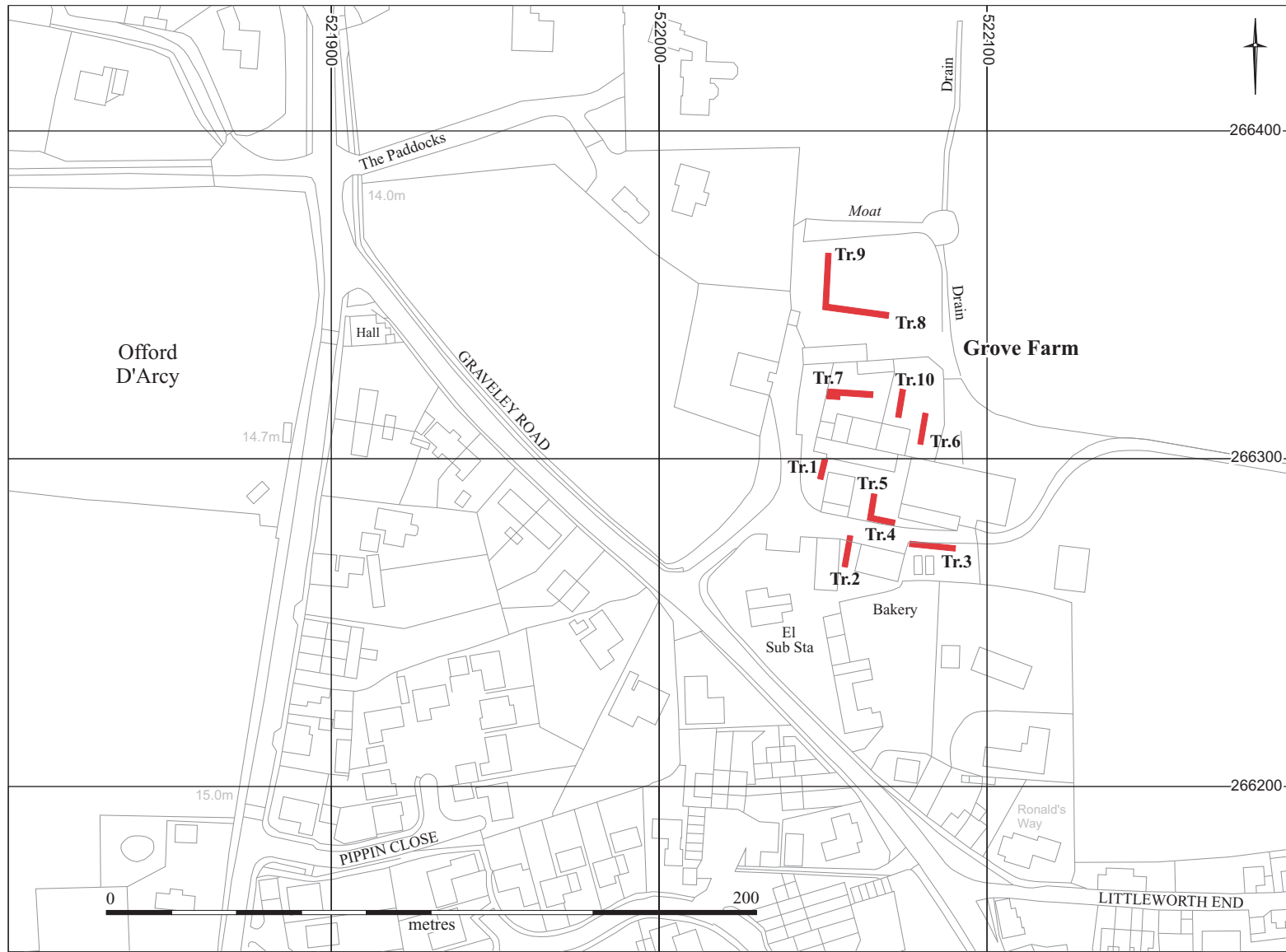


Figure 2. Trench Location



Key




- | | | | |
|---|------------------------|---|------------------------------|
|  | Standing Buildings |  | Excavated slot |
|  | Evaluation trench |  | Modern feature / disturbance |
|  | Archaeological feature | | |

Figure 3. Trench Plan



Figure 4. Photograph of F.101 (probable ditch)

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Project details

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Project name | Grove Farm, Offord D'arcy: An Archaeological Evaluation |
| Short description of the project | Cambridge Archaeological Unit undertook an archaeological evaluation at Grove Farm, Offord D'arcy, Cambridgeshire, between the 22nd and 24th of November 2010. One trench contained an undated possible ditch, whilst the other trenches had been truncated to varying degrees by farmyard activities and an (infilled) post-medieval pond. |
| Project dates | Start: 22-11-2010 End: 24-11-2010 |
| Previous/future work | No / No |
| Type of project | Field evaluation |
| Site status | Local Authority Designated Archaeological Area |
| Current Land use | Vacant Land 1 - Vacant land previously developed |
| Monument type | DITCH Uncertain |
| Monument type | POND Modern |
| Significant Finds | POT Post Medieval |
| Significant Finds | BONE Uncertain |
| Methods & techniques | 'Sample Trenches' |
| Development type | Rural residential |
| Prompt | Planning condition |
| Position in the planning process | After full determination (eg. As a condition) |

Project location

| | |
|---------------|---|
| Country | England |
| Site location | CAMBRIDGESHIRE HUNTINGDONSHIRE OFFORD DARCY Grove Farm, Offord D'arcy |

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Postcode | PE19 5RB |
| Study area | 0.56 Hectares |
| Site coordinates | TL 221 663 52.2808587267 -0.209958514530 52 16 51 N 000 12 35 W Point |
| Height OD / Depth | Min: 14.00m Max: 14.00m |

Project creators

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Name of Organisation | Cambridge Archaeological Unit |
| Project brief originator | Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body |
| Project design originator | Emma Beadsmoore |
| Project director/manager | Emma Beadsmoore |
| Project supervisor | Matthew Collins |
| Type of sponsor/funding body | Developer |
| Name of sponsor/funding body | Thornhill Estates Ltd/PR Build |

Project archives

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Physical Archive recipient | Cambridge Archaeological Unit |
| Physical Archive ID | ODY 10 |
| Physical Contents | 'Animal Bones','Ceramics' |
| Digital Archive recipient | Cambridge Archaeological Unit |
| Digital Archive ID | ODY 10 |
| Digital Contents | 'none' |
| Digital Media available | 'Images raster / digital photography','Survey' |
| Paper Archive recipient | Cambridge Archaeological Unit |
| Paper Archive ID | ODY 10 |
| Paper Contents | 'none' |
| Paper Media available | 'Context sheet','Correspondence','Drawing','Map','Notebook - Excavation','Research',' General Notes','Photograph','Plan','Report','Section','Survey','Unpublished Text' |

Project bibliography

1

| | |
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