# Wiggin Hill Farm, St. Ives, Cambridgeshire



Archaeological Evaluation Report



**Client: Street Energy** 

OA East Report No: 1488 OASIS No: oxfordar3-154210

NGR: TL 3100 7480



## Wiggin Hill Farm, St. Ives, Cambridgeshire

Archaeological Evaluation

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Report Date: July 2013

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Report Number: 1488

Site Name: Wiggin Hill Farm, St. Ives, Cambridgeshire

HER Event No: ECB 3874

Date of Works: June 2013

Client Name: Street Energy

Client Ref: 15776

Planning Ref: 1201911FUL

**Grid Ref:** TL 3100 7480

Site Code: STI WHF13

Finance Code: STI WHF13

Receiving Body: CCC Stores, Landbeach

Accession No: 5

Prepared by: Gareth Rees
Position: Project Supervisor

Date: 8/7/13

Checked by: Stephen Macaulay
Position: Senior Project Manager

Date: 8/7/13

Signed:

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#### Summary

Between the 24th and 27th of June 2013 Oxford Archaeology East conducted an archaeological evaluation at Wiggin Hill Farm, St Ives, Cambridgeshire (TL3100 7480) in advance of the proposed development of a solar farm with attendant substations and ancillary structures and services.

Following an aerial photographic survey of the proposed development area and surrounding fields twenty three trenches were excavated, totalling 1270m, to ascertain whether any archaeological remains survived. These trenches were targeted in areas proposed for access roads and service trenches between the arrays.

A single undated ditch was uncovered to the east of the proposed development area whilst two lithic tools were the only finds recovered from the site. Evidence of ridge and furrow cultivation was also located in several trenches.

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#### 1 Introduction

#### 1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 An archaeological evaluation was conducted at Wiggin Hill Farm, St Ives, Cambridgeshire (Figure 1; TL3100 7480).
- 1.1.2 This archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a Brief issued by Kasia Gdaniec of Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC; 1201911FUL), supplemented by a Specifications prepared by OA East and RPS (Macaulay 2013; RPS 2013). the investigation was undertaken on behalf of Street Energy Ltd (Nigel Street).
- 1.1.3 The work was designed to assist in defining the character and extent of any archaeological remains within the proposed redevelopment area, in accordance with the guidelines set out in *National Planning Policy Framework* (Department for Communities and Local Government March 2012). The results will enable decisions to be made by CCC, on behalf of the Local Planning Authority, with regard to the treatment of any archaeological remains found.
- 1.1.4 The site archive is currently held by OA East and will be deposited with the appropriate county stores in due course.

## 1.2 Geology and topography

1.2.1 The site lies on Amptil Clay and Boulder Clay, overlain by alluvium and terrace gravels at the bottom of the slope (B.G.S. 1975). The land slopes from 28m in the north-west to 16.8m at the south-east. A stream located to the south of the site joins the River Great Ouse 3km to the south.

#### 1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 A thorough and detailed report of all relevant HER material has been produced previously by R.P.S. (2013). Only information relevant to the current works is summarised here.
- 1.3.2 There have been very few archaeological remains recorded within the vicinity of the current site however, the Ouse Valley in which St Ives is situated is rich in remains from all periods. The gravel terraces of the Ouse Valley were a particular focus of prehistoric activity. Flint tools dating to the Neolithic (CHER 03458; CHER 03552; CHER 02114a) as well as a Bronze Age arrowhead and spear head (CHER 02114; CHER 02030) have been recovered to the south of the site.
- 1.3.3 In the Roman period it is likely that activity in this area was influenced by the development of the town of Durovigutum (Godmanchester) 7km to the south-west. The discovery of Roman burials in the 19th century, approximately located 100m to the north of the proposed development area (MCB4425) attests to known Roman activity in this area. Roman finds spots are relatively common within the wider landscape.
- 1.3.4 Wiggin Hill Farm lies less than 1km north of the historic medieval town of St Ives. The town had it's origins in the Anglo-Saxon period, later, in the 10th century coming under the control of Ramsey Abbey.
- 1.3.5 A medieval moated site, known as 'The Grange', is at Woodhurst (MCB 1885). There is documentary evidence for a number of medieval remains, Abbots Chair cross

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- (MCB2024), Woodhurst/St Ives Boundary Stone (MCB 1868), St Johns Cross (MCB 1893) close by.
- 1.3.6 Extensive crop and soil marks of ridge and furrow and headlands (MCB16732) seen on aerial photographs in and around the proposed development area (see below) indicate that this landscape was of particular economic importance during the medieval and post-medieval periods.

#### 1.4 Aerial photographic survey

- 1.4.1 An examination of aerial photographs from within 750m of the proposed development area was carried out (Figure 3; Deegan 2012). The results are summarise below.
- 1.4.2 Ridge and furrow cultivation was identified within the proposed development area and in the surrounding fields to the north, east and south. A single ditch-type feature, running north to south in the eastern part of the site is probably in the location of the former field boundary.
- 1.4.3 Medieval and post-medieval earthworks were identified to the south of the site. A series cropmarks identified 300m to the west of the site are similar in form to that expected of Roman or Iron Age settlement enclosures. Several cropmarks to the south were circular in form and may represent ring-ditches dating to the earlier prehistoric period.

#### 1.5 Acknowledgements

1.5.1 The author would like to thank Nigel Street of Street Energy, who commissioned and funded the work and the landowner Tim Ransom. The project was managed by Stephen Macaulay and monitored by Kasia Gdaniec, who also wrote the brief. The works were directed by Gareth Rees with excavation assistance was provided by Pat Moan. Specialist analysis was carried out by Michael Green. The site survey was carried out by Stuart Ladd and Lucy Offord produced the illustrations.

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#### 2 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

#### 2.1 Aims

- 2.1.1 The objective of this evaluation was to determine as far as reasonably possible the presence/absence, location, nature, extent, date, quality, condition and significance of any surviving archaeological deposits within the development area.
- 2.1.2 The trenching was designed to test the results of the aerial photographic survey as well as to clarify a paucity of responses in the Historic Environment Record (HER). Aerial photographs suggested that the site lay within an area with prehistoric settlement whilst the HER indicated that Roman burials had been found in the vicinity of a grid reference location 100m to the north. Given that ridge and furrow was seen to exist on the site there was a possibility that it was masking prehistoric or Roman remains below.
- 2.1.3 Due to the lack of known archaeology on the site a low density evaluation was conducted focusing on the linear impact areas of the solar farm development, specifically cable trenches, sub-station locations and access tracks. The land beneath the arrays was not evaluated due to the moderate impact of the piling and the lack of significant known sites in the area.

#### 2.2 Methodology

- 2.2.1 The Brief required that an adequate sample of the threatened available area was investigated by linear trial trenching. Trenches were located along areas where cable routes, substations and access tracks were to be constructed. This allowed for an adequate sample of the site whilst avoiding areas where arrays where to be erected.
- 2.2.2 Machine excavation was carried out under constant archaeological supervision with a tracked 360 type excavator using a toothless ditching bucket 2.10m wide.
- 2.2.3 The site survey was carried out by Stuart Ladd using Leica dGPS 1200.
- 2.2.4 Spoil, exposed surfaces and features were visually scanned, hand-collected finds were retained for inspection, other than those which were obviously modern.
- 2.2.5 All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using OA East's *pro-forma* sheets. Trench locations, plans and sections were recorded at appropriate scales and colour and monochrome photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits.
- 2.2.6 The site was covered with a crop of wheat at the time of evaluation and so the methodology was affected by concerns to minimise crop damage.

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#### 3 Results

#### 3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 The results of the evaluation are presented below on a trench-by-trench basis. All trenches measured 2.10m wide and varied between 20m and 100m in length (Figure 2). Where geology and archaeological findings were similar, several trench descriptions are discussed together. A full listing of trench depths, orientations, descriptions and related context data can be found in Appendix A.

#### 3.2 Trenches 1, 2, 3 and 4

- 3.2.1 Excavation of these trenches revealed a soil profile along the western edge of the proposed development area running from the base of the slope in Trench 1 to the top in Trench 4 (Plate 1). The topsoil was a maximum depth of 0.35m at the bottom of the slope and measured 0.25m on average across the profile. No subsoil was present.
- 3.2.2 A modern drainage feature was uncovered in Trench 1 at the bottom of the slope. Two later prehistoric flint tools were recovered from the topsoil, one from Trench 2 and one from Trench 3 (Appendix B).

#### 3.3 Trenches 5, 6, 7 and 8

- 3.3.1 The profile running up the slope, from Trench 5 to Trench 8, varied in depth from 0.65m at the base to 0.27m at the top. The geology in Trench 5 comprised a periglacial feature, probably a channel, overlying terrace gravels. This periglacial deposit was only present in Trench 5, the boulder clay becoming prominent again in Trench 6 and onwards up the slope.
- 3.3.2 Three heavily truncated plough furrows, orientated north to south were uncovered in Trench 8. No other archaeological features were present.

#### 3.4 Trenches 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13

- 3.4.1 As with the other profiles, no subsoil was uncovered along this profile. The topsoil varied in depth from 0.19m in Trench 9 at the top of the slope to 0.27m in Trench 12 at the base.
- 3.4.2 Trench 9 contained five furrows, measuring 0.6m wide and 0.1m deep, which were spaced between 2m and 6m apart. No other archaeological features were uncovered.

#### 3.5 Trenches 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 and 20

- 3.5.1 These trenches were located to the east of the proposed development area on a southeast facing slope. The topsoil varied in depth from 0.34m at the base of the slope in Trench 14 to 0.21m at the northern end of Trench 17 at the top of the slope (Plate 2). A colluvial subsoil deposit measuring 0.08m in depth was present in Trench 20.
- 3.5.2 A single archaeological feature was uncovered at the southern end of Trench 17 (Figure 4). This feature was a ditch, measuring 0.3m wide and 2.3m in length, truncated to a depth of 0.15m. It contained a mid brown grey silty clay fill and no artefacts. It may have been part of a hedged or fenced boundary or a terminus of a ring-gully.

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#### 3.6 Trenches 21, 22 and 23

- 3.6.1 Excavation of these trenches revealed an east-west profile across the mid-slope area. Topsoil depth in these trenches varied between 0.24m and 0.30m. No subsoil was present.
- 3.6.2 A single furrow, measuring 1.3m wide and 0.18m deep was uncovered in Trench 22. It was orientated north to south.

#### 3.7 Finds Summary

3.7.1 Two lithics were recovered from topsoil contexts to the west of the proposed development area. No other artefacts were collected.

#### 3.8 Environmental Summary

3.8.1 No features were uncovered that warranted environmental sampling.

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#### 4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

#### 4.1 Discussion

- 4.1.1 The evaluation of land at Wiggin Hill Farm, St. Ives has uncovered a low density of archaeological features and material. The only features uncovered were what appeared to be the remains of ridge and furrow and a small undated ditch which may have been part of a settlement or field boundary, or a terminus of a ring-gully. The alignment of this ditch, at forty five degrees to the modern field boundaries, suggests that it may pre-date the current alignment and is likely to be prehistoric or Roman in origin. The lack of residual Roman material in the topsoil tends to suggests that there was no Roman domestic activity on the site despite the presence of burials from that period in the vicinity.
- 4.1.2 Aerial photographs have shown that the proposed development area is located in a landscape that was of significance to both prehistoric and Roman populations. In this regard the lack of evidence from the current works is of interest due to the information that can be gleaned regarding the land-use in these periods.
- 4.1.3 Areas located close to domestic and agricultural landscape but lacking in domestic evidence such pottery and butchery remains have often been interpreted as lying within 'ritual landscapes' (Bradley 1998; Tilley 1994). These areas, peripheral to settlement tend to have sparse but significant archaeological remains. The location of possible Bronze Age ring-ditches near by is an indication that Bronze Age society in this region was using parts of this landscape for burial, a practice found often along the Ouse Valley, which may have been a major routeway in prehistory (Malim 2000).
- 4.1.4 In the Roman period the presence of burials close to the proposed development area indicates that Roman settlement was located in the vicinity. Inhumations in rural areas are often associated with managed agricultural landscapes and occasionally villas. Given the lack of Roman remains on the current site it is likely that field boundaries and settlement enclosures lie near by.
- 4.1.5 The furrows uncovered can be associated with those seen on the aerial photographs. It has been demonstrated that they are particularly shallow and do not mask underlying archaeology.

#### 4.2 Significance

- 4.2.1 If prehistoric or Roman activity was located in this area, it would be of local and perhaps regional significance, however, any settlement remains lie beyond the investigated area.
- 4.2.2 The land-use has almost certainly been pasture consistently up until agricultural practice developed in the 19th century which allowed it to be cultivated. Evidence of ridge and furrow, probably surviving into the 19th and perhaps the early 20th century, does indicate that this land had a growing economic significance in the modern era.

#### 4.3 Recommendations

4.3.1 Recommendations for any future work based upon this report will be made by the County Archaeology Office.

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# APPENDIX A. TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench 1						
General d	escriptio	n			Orientation	N-S
Trench de	void of are	chaeology	Topsoil m	aximum 0.35m deep. No	Avg. depth (m)	0.25
subsoil. He	eavy clay	natural tru	ncated by	field drains. A large modern	Width (m)	2.10
drainage f	eature ha	d been du	g to the so	uth of the trench.	Length (m)	50
Contexts						·
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
-	-	_	-	-	-	-
Trench 2						
General d	escriptio	n		Orientation	N-S	
Trench de	void of are	chaeologic	al feature	s. Topsoil maximum 0.31m	Avg. depth (m)	0.3
deep. No s	subsoil. H	eavy clay ı		single flint artefact was	Width (m)	2.1
recovered	from the	topsoil.			Length (m)	50
Contexts						-
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Trench 3						
General d	escriptio	n			Orientation	N-S
Trench de	void of are	chaeologic	al features	s. Topsoil maximum 0.27m	Avg. depth (m)	0.26
deep. No s	subsoil. H	eavy clay ı		single flint artefact was	Width (m)	2.1
recovered	from the	topsoil.			Length (m)	50
Contexts						
context	type	Width	Depth	comment	finds	date
no	3,100	(m)	(m)			

Trench 4							
General d	lescriptio	n	Orientation	E-W			
			Avg. depth (	(m) 0.25			
		chaeologica eavy clay r		. Topsoil maximum 0.31m	Width (m)	2.1	
ucep. No .	30030II. T II	cavy clay i	iaturai.		Length (m)	50	
Contexts						,	
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date	
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	

## Trench 5

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General d	escriptio	n			Orientation	E-W & N-S	
Trench de			Avg. depth	(m)	0.44		
deep. No s			Width (m)		2.1		
	ered in th	e N-S seg	e trench and the western	I onath (m)		50m N-S 100m E-W	
Contexts							
context no	type	finds	da	ate			
-	-	-	-		-		

Trench 6							
General o	descriptio	n		Orientation		N-S	
			0 1 ( )		0.23		
		chaeologic eavy clay r			2.1		
асер. 140	50550II. 11	cary clay i	iatarar.		Length (m)		50
Contexts							
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date	
-	-	-	-	-	-		-

Trench 7							
General d	lescriptio	n		Orientation		N-S	
			Avg. depth (m)		0.27		
		chaeologic eavy clay r	s. Topsoil maximum 0.3m	Width (m)		2.1	
асер. 140 .	3003011. 11	cavy clay i	iaturai.		Length (m)		50
Contexts							
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date	
-	-	-	-	-	-		-

Trench 8							
General c	descriptio	n			Orientation		E-W
					Avg. depth (m) 0		0.26
			covered in this trench. il. Heavy clay natural.	Width (m)		2.1	
TOPOON TIN	aximum o.	Zim deep.	140 30030	m. Heavy day Hataran.	Length (m)		50
Contexts							
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date	
-	-	-	-	-	-		-

## Trench 9

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General c	descriptio	n		Orientation		E-W	
			Avg. depth	(m)	0.21		
		ed betweer soil. Heav	Width (m)		2.1		
0.2011 00	ор. 1 <b>10</b> 30.	Jon. Heav	y clay hatt	arai.	Length (m)		50
Contexts							
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date	
-	-	-	-	-	-		-

Trench 10	)						
General c	lescriptio	n	Orientation		N-S		
			Avg. depth (m)		0.22		
		chaeologica eavy clay n	. Topsoil maximum 0.23m	Width (m)		2.1	
accp. No	54550II. T I	bary olay II	atarar.		Length (m)		50
Contexts					•		
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date	
-	-	-	-	-	-		-

Trench 11							
General d	lescriptio	n	Orientation	N-S			
			<b>Avg. depth (m)</b> 0.19				
Trench de deep. No		chaeologica eavy clay r	Width (m)	2.1			
чеср. 140	30000III. T II	cavy day i	iatarar.		Length (m)	50	
Contexts						·	
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date	
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	

Trench 12	2					
General c	description	n	Orientation	n N-S		
			Avg. depth (m) 0.24			
	evoid of arc subsoil. He		. Topsoil maximum 0.27m	Width (m)	2.1	
асср. 140	30030II. 1 K	cavy clay i	iaturai.		Length (m)	50
Contexts						·
context no type Width Depth comment finds da				date		
-	-	-	-	-		

Trench 13		
General description	Orientation	E-W

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Trench de deep. No			Avg. depth (n Width (m)	0.18 2.1		
Contexts		eavy clay i	iaturai.		Length (m)	50
context	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Trench 14	4						
General c	descriptio	n	Orientation	1	NNE-SSW		
			Avg. depth	0.3			
		chaeologic eavy clay ı	Width (m)	2.1			
uccp. No	3003011. 11	cavy clay i	Length (m)		50		
Contexts							'
context no	type				finds date		ate
-	_	-	-	-	-		-

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#### APPENDIX B. FINDS REPORTS

#### **B.1 Lithics**

By Michael Green

- 4.3.2 Two pieces of struck flint were recovered from the evaluation at Wiggin Hill Farm.
- 4.3.3 Trench two contained one struck flint. A dark grey brown glassy fine flint with a thin cortex. This flint shows multiple strikes and forms a rough core. Due to the obtuse angle and platform used this probably dates to the later prehistoric. The use of such a small relatively poor quality flint represents either a scarce resource in the area or passing use of thermally fractured flint from surface materials.
- 4.3.4 Trench three contained one struck flint. A light orangey brown flint with a fine cortex. This flint is most likely a neolithic- early bronze age thumbnail scrapper. It has been created from a thermally fractured piece of poor quality flint. Heavy re-touch can be seen on 90percent of the transverse edge with no signs of bi-facial working.

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# APPENDIX C. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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# APPENDIX D. OASIS REPORT FORM

All fields are required unless they are not applicable.

Project De	etails										
OASIS Number oxfordar3-154210				)							
Project Name Wiggin Hill Farm, S				St Ives							
Project Dates (fieldwork) Start				24-06-2013 Finish			27-0	27-06-2013			
Previous Work (by OA East)			No Future V			Wor	k No				
Project Refe	erence	Code	s				:				
Site Code	STIWHE	STIWHF13			Planning App. No.				1201	911FUL	
HER No.	ECB 3874				Related HER/OASIS No			lo.			
Type of Pro	ject/Tec	hniq	ues Use	d	-						
Prompt				Local Plannin	g Authori	ty - PPS	5				
Developmen	t Type	Se	rvice Infras	tructure							
Please sel	ect all	tech	niques	used:							
X Aerial Photo	ography -	interpr	etation	☐ Grab-Sa	mpling				Rem	ote Operated Vehicle Survey	
Aerial Photo	ography -	new		☐ Gravity-0		<u> </u>			x Sample Trenches		
Annotated S	Sketch			Laser Scanning				☐ Survey/Recording Of Fabric/Structure			
☐ Augering				☐ Measured Survey					☐ Targeted Trenches		
☐ Dendrochro	nological	Survey	/	Metal Detectors					☐ Test Pits		
☐ Documenta	ry Search	1		☐ Phosphate Survey				☐ Topographic Survey			
☐ Environmer	ntal Samp	ling		☐ Photogrammetric Survey				Vibro	o-core		
☐ Fieldwalking	g			☐ Photographic Survey			×	Visua	al Inspection (Initial Site Visit)		
☐ Geophysica	al Survey			Rectified Photography							
Monument List feature typ together with th Monument	es using t	the NM	R Monume	nt Type Thesa	urus and	significar	se state "no		MDA	A Object type Thesaurus	
Ditch			Uncertain			Flint			Bronze Age -2.5k to -700		
Furrows Post Medie			eval 1540 to 190°	1				Select period			
Select period			od						Select period		
Project Lo	ocatio	n									
County Cambridgeshire				Site Add			ddress (including postcode if possible)				
District	South					Wiggin Hill Farm St Ives					
Parish	Woodh	Woodhurst			Cambs DE27 31 I						
HER	Cambri	dgeshi	re								
Study Area	10ha					National Grid Reference TL3100 7480					



## Project Originators

Organisation		OA EAST								
Project Brief Originator		Kasia Gdaniec								
Project Design Originator		Stephen Macaulay\RPS								
Project Manager		Stephen	Stephen Macaulay							
Supervisor		Gareth Rees								
Project Archi	ves									
Physical Archive			Digital A	rchive	Paper Archive					
OAEAST		OAEAST				OAEAST				
STIWHF13			STIWHF	13	STIWHF13					
Archive Conten	ts/Media									
	Physical Contents	Digital Contents	Paper Contents		Digital Media		Paper Media			
Animal Bones					Database		☐ Aerial Photos			
Ceramics					GIS		▼ Context Sheet			
Environmental					☐ Geophysic	cs	▼ Correspondence			
Glass					▼ Images		☐ Diary			
Human Bones					▼ Illustration	ıs	Drawing			
Industrial					☐ Moving Im	nage	Manuscript			
Leather					Spreadsh	eets	☐ Map			
Metal					<b>⋉</b> Survey		Matrices			
Stratigraphic					<b>X</b> Text		Microfilm			
Survey		×			☐ Virtual Re	ality	☐ Misc.			
Textiles							Research/Notes			
Vood					Photos					
Worked Bone							× Plans			
Worked Stone/Lithic	×						─ Report			
None										
Other							Survey			
Notes:		-					<u> </u>			

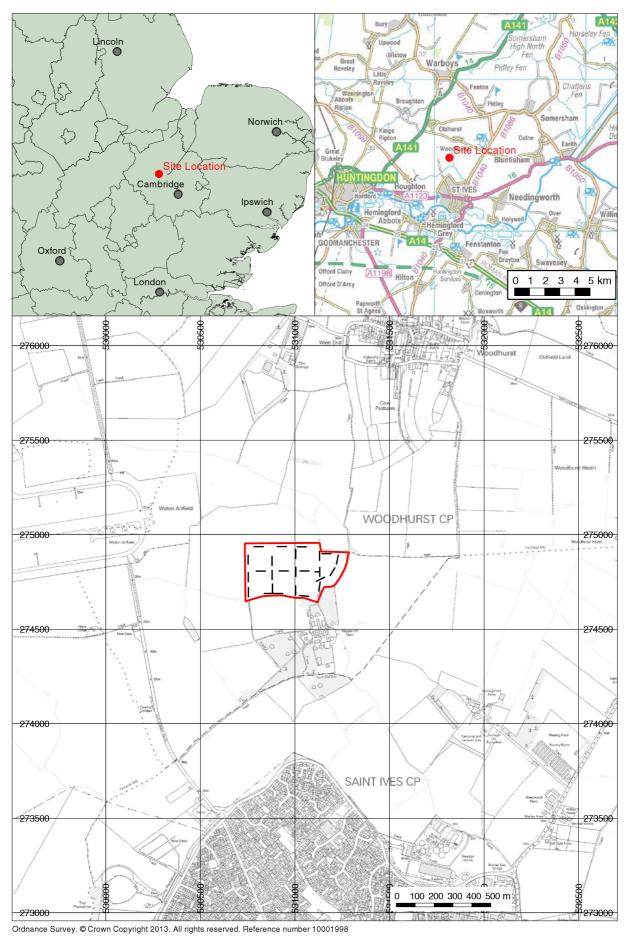


Figure 1: Site location showing evaluation trenches (black) and development area (red)



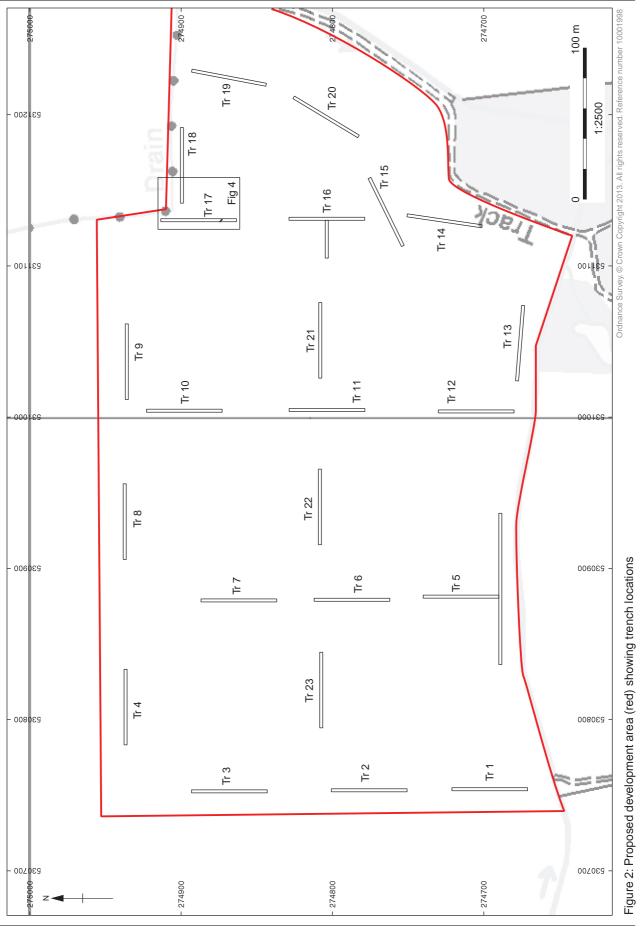






Figure 3: Results of aerial photography survey (after Deegan 2012)

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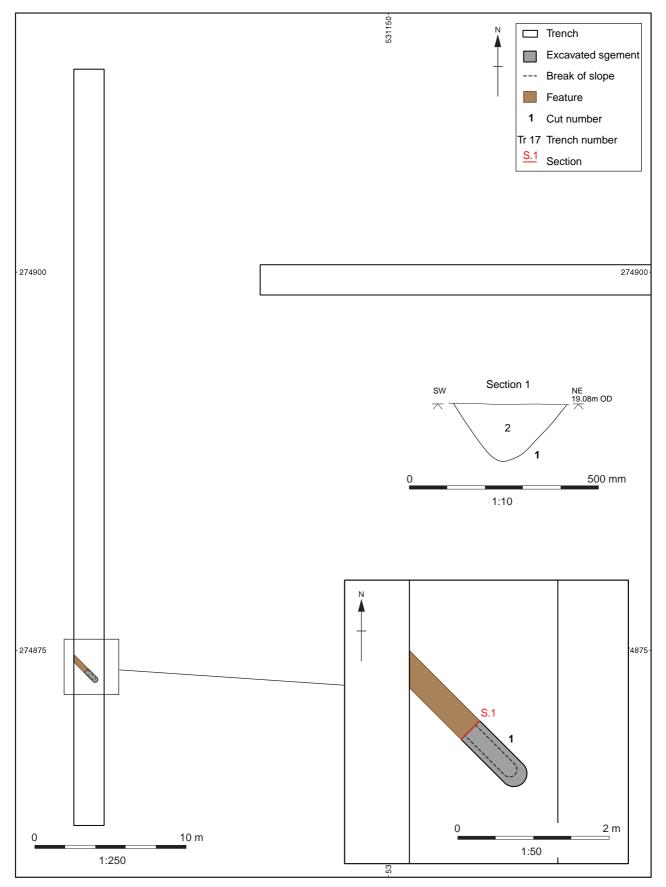


Figure 4: Plan and section of feature 1, Trench 17

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Plate 1: Trench 4, facing west



Plate 2: Trench 18, facing east

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