# Land Adjacent to Ermine Street Business Park



Archaeological Evaluation Report



January 2009 Client:

OA East Report No: 1083 OASIS No: oxfordar3-53444 NGR: TL 229 741



# **Report Title**

# Archaeological Evaluation

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Report Date: January 2009



Report Number:

1083

Site Name:

Land Adjacent to Ermine Street Business Park

**HER Event No:** 

**FCB 3078** 

Date of Works:

December 2008

Client Name:

Savills for St Johns College

Client Ref:

Planning Ref:

Grid Ref:

TL 229 741

Site Code:

STUEB08

Finance Code:

STUEB08

Receiving Body:

CCC Stores, Landbeach

Accession No:

Prepared by:

James Fairbairn

Position:

Supervisor

Date:

1st January 2009

Checked by:

James Drummond Murray

Position:

Project Manager

Date:

Signed:

\_\_\_\_

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#### Summary

Between the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 5<sup>th</sup> of December 2008 Oxford Archaeology East conducted a fieldwalking investigation of 39.2ha of land south of Stukeley and north and west of the current Ermine Street Business park TL 229 741. The report was commissioned by Savills on behalf of St Johns College Cambridge. The investigation ran concurrently with a geophysical survey by Peter Masters of Cranfield University in order to add to the current level of information available relating to the character, date and possible extent of those archaeological remains present within the proposed development area.

The investigation revealed traces of human activity from the Roman period to modern times.

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#### 1 Introduction

# 1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 A fieldwalking investigation was conducted on land to the north and east of the Ermine Street Business Park, Stukeley, Cambridgeshire. The study area, centred on TL 229 741, covered approximately 39.2 hectares the site was bordered to the east by the Ermine Street Business park and to the south by the Roman Ermine Street (figure 1).
- 1.1.2 The work was designed to assist in determining the extent, date and significance of artefactual evidence within the ploughsoil in the proposed development area. The results will enable decisions to be made by the CCC on behalf of the local Planning Authority, with regard to the proposed trenching strategy for the evaluation stage.
- 1.1.3 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 Boulder Clay to the east of Ermine Street.

#### 1.3 Archaeological and historical background

Extensive archaeological works have taken place on the fields on the other side of Ermine Street from the current site including an aerial photographic survey (ECB 2181 - Palmer 1998), a geophysical survey (ECB2187 – GSB Prospection 2000) and an archaeological evaluation (ECB 1883 – Cullen 2004).

These three phases of work revealed four concentrations of activity from the Bronze Age to Roman periods. No evidence of Ermine Street itself was uncovered, nor was it during observations on the installation of a water main (ECB 2952 – Gdaniec 1993). Thus the precise course of this major Roman Road is unknown in this particular area.

To the south, at the Spittals Link roundabout, remains from a leper cemetery were uncovered (ECB1338 – Mitchell 1993) but it is not thought that the cemetery extends to the current site.

An evaluation at St Johns Business park, adjacent to the Ermine Business Park, revealed post-medieval ridge and furrow (ECB 2455 – Hoad 2007).

#### 1.4 Acknowledgements

1.4.1 The Author would like to thank Savills who commissioned the work on behalf of St Johns College Cambridge. The project was managed by James Drummmond Murray. Andy Thomas of Cambridgeshire County Council wrote the brief for the works and approved the specification. Thanks go to the fieldwalking team of Helen Fowler, Chris Montague, Steve Wadeson, Anne Jarzabek, John Jarzabek, Neil Smith, Gareth Rees, Terry Mortlock and Mike Hogan. Robert Parker and Chris Montague metal detected the site using Whites Spectrum XLT Metal detectors.

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#### 2 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

# 2.1 Methodology

- 2.1.1 The Brief required that fieldwalking should be undertaken in order to characterise the artefact contents of the ploughsoil.
- 2.1.2 The site consisted of areas which were ploughed and rolled, heavily ploughed and areas sown with a sparse crop. All areas except the heavily ploughed ground were conducive to fieldwalking.
- 2.1.3 Fieldwalking was carried out using the 'Essex method providing a 10% coverage (Meddlycott and Germany, 1994).
- 2.1.4 The Site was divided into units of one hectare, each numbered individually and defined with reference to the ordnance survey grid. The site was further sub-divided into 20m transects aligned north to south and numbered 1-5 from west to east within each hectare.
- 2.1.5 The survey was set out precisely using a Leica GPS 1200 System. The site survey was carried out by Gareth Rees.
- 2.1.6 All categories of artefactual material were hand collected from the surface of the ploughsoil and bagged at 20m intervals from a pre-established baseline and labelled accordingly (I.e. ha \ transect East \ transect North).
- 2.1.7 Metal detectorists were also employed to enhance the results of the fieldwalking survey through the retrieval of small metal objects that may otherwise have been missed. When found these objects were given a small find number and located within the fieldwalking grid.
- 2.1.8 All categories of artefactual material were quantified according to type and date. The number of individual sherds were noted by transect for each 20m unit and recorded on an Access database.
- 2.1.9 The results of the fieldwalking exercise have been presented graphically by period and type as appropriate in relation to the topographic and geophysical survey data currently available.

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#### 3 Results

#### 3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 The area of investigation was approximately 39.2 hectares and was sub divided by a field boundary which doglegged east-west across the site.
- 3.1.2 The study area was walked in 3 days during which rain and clay presented some adverse conditions on the heavily ploughed area of the site, although the majority of the investigation was carried out in sunny or overcast conditions.
- 3.1.3 The topsoil was fairly uniform across the site and consisted of a mid grey brown silty clay with moderate quantities of small stones and pebbles.

#### 3.2 Field A

- 3.2.1 A total of 341 pottery sherds were found during the fieldwalking exercise from the site north and west of the Ermine Street Business Park. Preliminary investigations show that the largest percentage of pottery 70% of the assemblage (237 sherds) were of a post medieval date. 23% of the assemblage (78 sherds) were considered to be of a medieval date. Potential Roman pottery consisted of (16 sherds), 5% of the assemblage and the remaining 3% of the assemblage (10 sherds) consisted of transitional medieval to post medieval pottery.
- 3.2.2 Potential Roman Pottery consisting mostly of highly-abraded shelly wares were found in 14 separate hectares and does not seem to have any definite distribution pattern (table 3).
- 3.2.3 Medieval Pottery was present in 16 separate hectares across the site again with no definite distribution pattern and in no particular concentration (table 1)
- 3.2.4 Transitional medieval to post -medieval pottery was found in 8 separate hectares (table 4).
- 3.2.5 The large percentage of post medieval material which seems to be fairly evenly distributed across the site may imply the use of widespread manuring over several hundred years. (table 2).

# 3.3 Geophysical Survey

3.3.1 A full report of of the geophysical survey will be supplied by Peter Masters of Cranfield University in due course but initial findings point to a large percentage of the site being covered by ridge and furrow ploughed field systems with the majority running roughly east to west and being more pronounced at the southern end of the site. The initial findings of the geophysical survey did identify an anomaly, possibly a track way running north from Ermine Street. The higher area to the north of the site also shows some possible archaeological features (figure 4).

#### 3.4 Metal Detecting Survey

3.4.1 A metal detecting survey was carried out by Chris Montague of Oxford Archaeology East, assisted by Robert Parker. This survey was undertaken to enhance the results of the fieldwalking. Although a systematic search was conducted using the same methodology as the fieldwalking survey a total of twenty two objects found and recorded. Hectares 6,7,12 produced the greatest concentration of metallic finds these being mostly of a medieval date with one notable find of a fragmented silver coin. This

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concentration may suggest that this area saw more activity in the the medieval period. No in depth identification has been carried out at this stage, a more detailed analysis will be combined with any finds made during any evaluation excavations.

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#### 4 Conclusions

4.1.1 The results of this fieldwalking investigation seem to show there has been human activity from the Roman period to the modern day within the study area, but the greater use of the land seems to have been agricultural, this seems to be borne out by the initial findings of the geophysical survey which found that a large part of the study area was covered by ridge and furrow. A surprisingly low amount of Roman pottery was found considering its proximity to Ermine Street, although the precise route of the major Roman road is unknown.

#### 4.2 Recommendations

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

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#### APPENDIX A. FINDS REPORTS

# A.1 By Alasdair Mark Brooks, BA MA DPhil

With contributions by Carole Fletcher and Stephen Wadeson

#### 1 Introduction

1.1.1 A total of 341 sherds of pottery (not including ceramic building material) were recovered from the Ermine Street Business Park, the Stukeleys (STU EBP 08), fieldwalking exercise. These included post-medieval and medieval materials, and possibly some Roman shelly wares, though the difficulty of identifying highly-abraded surface finds inevitably complicated analysis.

## 2 Methodology

- 2.1.1 As this was a fieldwalking exercise, no indepth identification of the pottery was carried out at this stage of the project (at the request of project manager James Drummond-Murray). Instead, the pottery was identified by primary period, and then catalogued by this period and the grid reference in order to help site staff map potential concentrations by period. The periods used were 'post-medieval', 'medieval', 'transitional medieval post medieval', and (tentatively) 'Roman'.
- 2.1.2 More detailed cataloguing of the site's pottery, integrating the fieldwalking materials, will be undertaken at the evaluation stage.
- 2.1.3 All percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number, and may not add to 100.

# 3 QUANTIFICATION

3.1.1 Tables listing the number of sherds found by period and grid reference may be found at the conclusion of this brief report. The post-medieval sherds comprise 70% of the assemblage (237 sherds); the medieval sherds comprise 23% of the assemblate (78 sherds); the potentially Roman sherds comprise transitional medieval to post-medieval sherds comprise 5% of the assemblage (16 sherds); the remainder of the assemblage consists of the transitional medieval to post-medieval sherds, which comprise 3% of the assemblage (10 sherds).

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## 4 FABRICS, FORMS AND PROVENANCE

4.1.1 No attempt was made to identify pottery fabric, form or provenance at this stage of analysis. Quite apart from the needs of the fieldwalking exercise only requiring a basic rapid cataloguing by period, many of the surface find sherds are unsurprisingly highly-abraded, complicating identification. This is particularly true of the potentially Roman materials, which are all shelly wares. In-house OA East medieval and Roman specialists Carole Fletcher and Stephen Wadeson felt that these were more likely to be Roman than medieval, but definitive ID was impossible at this stage.

#### 5 Sampling Bias

5.1.1 These materials were recovered through fieldwalking. While every attempt will have been made by the fieldwalking crews to identify all surface finds, by the very nature of the process some sherds may have been missed.

#### 6 STATEMENT OF RESEARCH POTENTIAL

6.1.1 Mapping of the sherds will allow site staff to identify potential site concentrations by period. No other research is possible at this stage.

#### 7 FURTHER WORK AND METHODS STATEMENT

7.1.1 Further work is only required as and when the evaluation stage is undertaken.

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# Table 1 - Medieval Distributions

Grid reference	Period	sherds
12.1.80	Medieval	1
12.1.80	Medieval	1
13.3.60	Medieval	2
13.5.100	Medieval	1
18.3.80	Medieval	1
19.3.100	Medieval	1
19.5.80	Medieval	1
20.1.20	Medieval	1
20.5.100	Medieval	2
21.1.100	Medieval	1
21.1.20	Medieval	1
21.5.60	Medieval	2
21.5.80	Medieval	1
24.4.100	Medieval	1
24.5.100	Medieval	2
25.1.20	Medieval	1
25.4.60	Medieval	1
25.4.80	Medieval	1
25.5.60	Medieval	1
26.3.100	Medieval	1
27.1.100	Medieval	1
27.1.80	Medieval	1
27.4.40	Medieval	1
30.3.20	Medieval	1
30.3.60	Medieval	1
31.3.80	Medieval	2

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Medieval	1
Medieval	1
Medieval	1
Medieval	3
Medieval	2
Medieval	1
Medieval	3
Medieval	1
Medieval	1
Medieval	1
Medieval	3
Medieval	1
Medieval	2
Medieval	2
Medieval	1
Medieval	2
Medieval	1
Medieval	1
	Medieval

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44.5.60	Medieval	1
45.4.60	Medieval	1
50.4.20	Medieval	1
51.1.20	Medieval	1
6.5.80	Medieval	1
7.3.20	Medieval	1
7.5.100	Medieval	1
H.17.4	Medieval	1
	Total	78

TABLE 2 - POST-MEDIEVAL DISTRIBUTIONS

Grid reference	Period	sherds
08.8.1	Post-medieval	1
10.1.100	Post-medieval	1
10.2.100	Post-medieval	1
10.3.80	Post-medieval	1
10.4.20	Post-medieval	1
10.4.40	Post-medieval	1
10.4.60	Post-medieval	2
11.1.100	Post-medieval	2
11.1.20	Post-medieval	1
11.1.40	Post-medieval	2
11.3.100	Post-medieval	1
11.5.20	Post-medieval	1
11.5.80	Post-medieval	2
12.1.80	Post-medieval	1
12.2.60	Post-medieval	1

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12.2.80	Post-medieval	2
12.3.60	Post-medieval	2
12.4.100	Post-medieval	1
12.5.100	Post-medieval	1
12.5.20	Post-medieval	1
12.5.60	Post-medieval	2
13.1.80	Post-medieval	3
13.2.80	Post-medieval	1
13.3.60	Post-medieval	1
13.5.100	Post-medieval	3
13.5.80	Post-medieval	1
17.2.40	Post-medieval	1
18.1.40	Post-medieval	1
18.1.60	Post-medieval	1
18.4.100	Post-medieval	1
18.4.20	Post-medieval	1
18.5.100	Post-medieval	3
18.5.40	Post-medieval	1
18.5.60	Post-medieval	2
19.2.20	Post-medieval	1
19.4.40	Post-medieval	1
19.5.40	Post-medieval	3
19.5.80	Post-medieval	2
20.1.20	Post-medieval	1
20.1.40	Post-medieval	1
20.3.100	Post-medieval	1
20.5.20	Post-medieval	1
21.1.100	Post-medieval	2
21.1.20	Post-medieval	4

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21.1.60	Post-medieval	3
21.3.100	Post-medieval	2
21.3.20	Post-medieval	1
21.4.20	Post-medieval	1
21.5.20	Post-medieval	2
21.5.60	Post-medieval	1
21.5.80	Post-medieval	1
24.1.100	Post-medieval	1
24.1.100	Post-medieval	1
24.1.20	Post-medieval	1
24.2.20	Post-medieval	1
24.2.20	Post-medieval	1
24.2.20	Post-medieval	1
24.4.40	Post-medieval	1
24.5.20	Post-medieval	1
24.5.40	Post-medieval	1
24.5.40	Post-medieval	1
24.5.60	Post-medieval	1
24.5.60	Post-medieval	1
24.5.80	Post-medieval	1
25.1.20	Post-medieval	2
25.1.60	Post-medieval	1
25.2.20	Post-medieval	1
25.4.60	Post-medieval	1
25.5.20	Post-medieval	1
26.1.20	Post-medieval	1
26.1.40	Post-medieval	1
26.1.80	Post-medieval	1
26.3.60	Post-medieval	1

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26.5.40	Post-medieval	3
26.5.60	Post-medieval	2
26.5.80	Post-medieval	1
27.1.100	Post-medieval	1
27.1.80	Post-medieval	1
27.1.80	Post-medieval	2
27.2.40	Post-medieval	3
27.2.60	Post-medieval	1
27.2.80	Post-medieval	1
27.2.80	Post-medieval	1
27.3.80	Post-medieval	1
27.4.40	Post-medieval	1
27.5.100	Post-medieval	1
30.2.40	Post-medieval	1
30.3.40	Post-medieval	1
30.5.100	Post-medieval	1
30.5.40	Post-medieval	1
31.1.20	Post-medieval	1
31.1.40	Post-medieval	1
31.2.20	Post-medieval	1
31.4.20	Post-medieval	1
32.2.100	Post-medieval	2
32.2.20	Post-medieval	2
32.4.60	Post-medieval	1
32.5.60	Post-medieval	3
33.1.100	Post-medieval	1
33.3.20	Post-medieval	1
33.4.20	Post-medieval	2
33.5.100	Post-medieval	1

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33.5.40	Post-medieval	1
34.1.20	Post-medieval	1
34.1.80	Post-medieval	1
34.5.100	Post-medieval	1
38.1.20	Post-medieval	1
38.1.40	Post-medieval	1
38.1.60	Post-medieval	1
38.3.100	Post-medieval	1
38.5.100	Post-medieval	2
38.5.20	Post-medieval	2
38.5.40	Post-medieval	2
38.5.60	Post-medieval	1
38.5.80	Post-medieval	2
39.1.100	Post-medieval	3
39.1.60	Post-medieval	2
39.2.60	Post-medieval	1
39.2.80	Post-medieval	1
39.5.60	Post-medieval	1
4.2.20	Post-medieval	1
40.1.100	Post-medieval	1
40.1.20	Post-medieval	2
40.1.60	Post-medieval	2
40.2.40	Post-medieval	1
40.2.60	Post-medieval	1
40.4.100	Post-medieval	1
40.4.40	Post-medieval	3
40.5.100	Post-medieval	1
40.5.20	Post-medieval	1
40.5.40	Post-medieval	1

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43.1.100	Post-medieval	1
43.2.60	Post-medieval	1
43.3.100	Post-medieval	1
43.3.40	Post-medieval	1
43.4.100	Post-medieval	2
43.5.100	Post-medieval	1
43.5.40	Post-medieval	2
43.5.80	Post-medieval	1
44.1.40	Post-medieval	1
44.1.80	Post-medieval	3
44.2.20	Post-medieval	1
44.2.60	Post-medieval	2
44.4.100	Post-medieval	1
44.5.40	Post-medieval	2
44.5.80	Post-medieval	1
44.5.80	Post-medieval	1
44.5.80	Post-medieval	2
45.5.20	Post-medieval	1
47.2.60	Post-medieval	2
48.1.100	Post-medieval	1
48.1.80	Post-medieval	1
48.2.20	Post-medieval	2
48.2.60	Post-medieval	3
48.4.60	Post-medieval	1
6.1.80	Post-medieval	2
6.4.20	Post-medieval	1
6.5.80	Post-medieval	1
7.1.100	Post-medieval	1
7.1.20	Post-medieval	4

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7.1.60	Post-medieval	2
7.2.40	Post-medieval	1
7.5.100	Post-medieval	1
7.5.60	Post-medieval	1
H.10.5	Post-medieval	1
H.14.2	Post-medieval	1
H.37.5	Post-medieval	3
H.41.2	Post-medieval	1
H.45.2	Post-medieval	1
H.49.2	Post-medieval	1
H.50.5	Post-medieval	1
	Total	237

Table 3 - Potential Roman Distributions

Grid reference	Period	sherds
10.3.80	Roman?	1
11.4.100	Roman?	1
13.5.100	Roman?	1
14.4.40	Roman?	1
20.5.80	Roman?	1
21.1.80	Roman?	1
26.5.60	Roman?	1
27.1.80	Roman?	1
27.5.20	Roman?	1
32.1.40	Roman?	1
33.5.20	Roman?	1
33.5.80	Roman?	1
37.3.40	Roman?	1

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	Total	16
43.5.20	Roman?	1
39.3.80	Roman?	1
38.5.80	Roman?	1

# Table 4-Transitional Medieval to Post-Medieval Distributions

Grid reference	Period	sherds
10.2.100	Transitional med – post-med	1
12.2.60	Transitional med – post-med	1
12.5.40	Transitional med – post-med	1
24.5.20	Transitional med – post-med	1
27.1.100	Transitional med – post-med	1
27.4.40	Transitional med – post-med	1
31.2.60	Transitional med – post-med	1
32.2.20	Transitional med – post-med	1
40.2.40	Transitional med – post-med	1
43.1.100	Transitional med – post-med	1
	Total	10

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# APPENDIX B. OASIS REPORT FORM

All fields are required unless they are not applicable.

Project De	etails											
OASIS Num	S Number oxfordar3-53444											
Project Name Fielwalking on land adjacent to Ermi				rmine Stre	et Busine	ess Park						—
Project Dates (fieldwork) Start		01-12-2008	01-12-2008		Finish	04-12-	2008					
Previous Work (by OA East)					Future	Work	Yes					
Project Refe	erence Co	odes										
Site Code STUEB08			Plannii	Planning App. No.								
HER No.	ECB 3078			Related HER/OASIS No.								
Type of Pro	ject/Tech	niques Use	d									
Prompt		Direction from	Local Planning	g Authority	- PPG16							
Developmen	t Type	Rural Comme	rcial									
Please sel	ect all te	echniques	used:									
Aerial Photo	ography - int	erpretation	Grab-Sa	mpling			□R	emote C	perated V	/ehicle S	urvey	
Aerial Photo	ography - ne	w	Gravity-C	Gravity-Core			Sample Trenches					
Annotated S	Sketch		Laser Sc	Laser Scanning			Survey/Recording Of Fabric/Structure				ıre	
Augering Measur			Measure	d Survey	urvey Targeted Trenches							
☐ Dendrochronological Survey ☒ Metal D		Metal De	etectors	ctors Test Pits								
	ry Search		Phospha	te Survey	Topographic Survey							
Environmer	ntal Samplin	g	Photogra	ammetric S	Survey Vibro-core							
▼ Fieldwalking	g		Photogra	phic Surv	vey Visual Inspection (Initial Site Visit)							
☐ Geophysica	l Survey		Rectified	Photogra	phy							
Monument	Types/Si	gnificant Fi	nds & Their	Period	s							
			ent Type Thesai o features/finds					DA Ol	oject typ	e The	sauru	SL
Monument		Period			Object		Peri	Period				
Ridge & Furro	W	Medieval	Medieval 1066 to 1540		Pottery		Ror	Roman 43 to 410				
		Select pe	iod		Pottery		Med	Medieval 1066 to 1540				
		Select pe	riod	od Buck		Buckle		Ме	Medieval 1066 to 1540			
Project Lo	ocation											
County				Site Address (including postcode if possible)								
District	Huntingdon				Land next to Ermine Street Business Park							
Parish	Stukeley Stukeley											
HER	HER ECB 3078											
Study Area	ea 39.2hectares				National Grid Reference TL 229 741							



# **Project Originators**

Organisation	OA EAST		
Project Brief Originator	CAPCA		
Project Design Originator	James Drummond Murray		
Project Manager	James Drummond Murray		
Supervisor	James Fairbairn		

# **Project Archives**

Physical Archive	Digital Archive	Paper Archive
LocationCCC Landbeach	LocationOA East	LocationOA East
Accession IDSTU	Accession IDSTUEB08	Accession IDSTUEB08

# **Archive Contents/Media**

	Physical Contents	Digital Contents	
Animal Bones			
Ceramics	$\times$		X
Environmental			
Glass			
Human Bones			
Industrial			
Leather			
Metal	$\times$	$\times$	
Stratigraphic			
Survey			
Textiles			
Wood			
Worked Bone			
Worked Stone/Lithic			
None			
Other			

Digital Media	Paper Media
▼ Database	Aerial Photos
GIS	Context Sheet
⊠ Geophysics	
	☐ Diary
	☐ Drawing
☐ Moving Image	Manuscript
Spreadsheets	☐ Map
	Matrices
▼ Text	☐ Microfilm
☐ Virtual Reality	☐ Misc.
	Research/Notes
	Photos
	Plans
	⋉ Report
	Sections
	Survey

#### Notes:



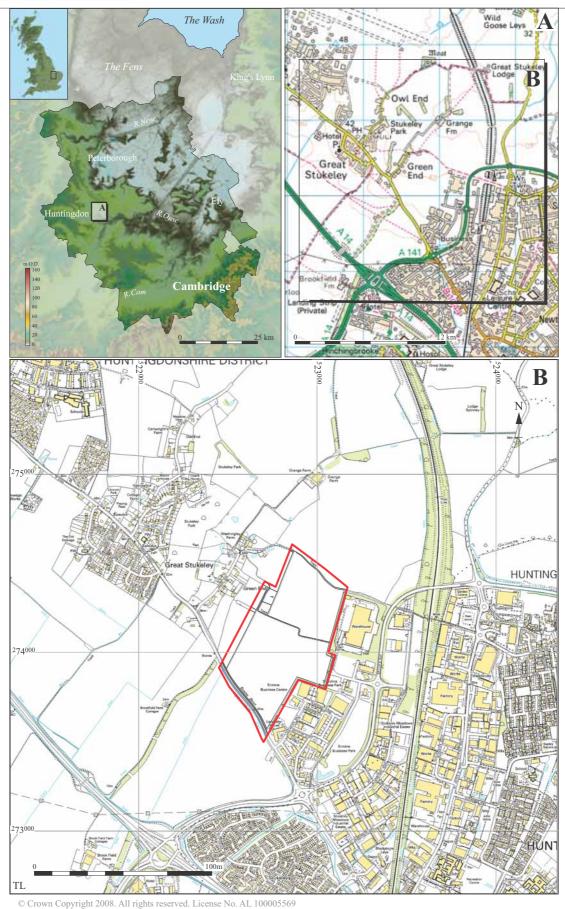


Figure 1 Location of the development area outlined (red) Scale 1:10000

















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