

# Land Rear of 1 Oakington Road Cottenham



## Archaeological Evaluation Report



July 2010

**Client: FE Peacock**

OA East Report No: 1193  
OASIS No: oxfordar3-79230  
NGR: TL 4457 6708

**Archaeological Evaluation on land rear of 1 Oakington Road, Cottenham**

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*With contributions by Rachel Fosberry (HNC (Cert Ed) AEA)*

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*Report Date: July 2010*

**Report Number:** 1193  
**Site Name:** Land rear of 1 Oakington Road, Cottenham  
**HER Event No:** Cher 11978  
**Date of Works:** June 2010  
**Client Name:** FE Peacock  
**Client Ref:**  
**Planning Ref:** S/1979/07/F  
**Grid Ref:** TL 4457 6708  
**Site Code:** COTOAK10  
**Finance Code:**  
**Receiving Body:** Museum/stores to take archive e.g. CCC Stores, Landbeach  
**Accession No:** Add where relevant, leave blank if not  
**Prepared by:** James Fairbairn  
**Position:** Supervisor  
**Date:** June 2010

**Checked by:** James Drummond Murry  
**Position:** Manager  
**Date:** June 2010  
**Signed:**



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## Table of Contents

<b>Summary.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1 Introduction.....</b>	<b>6</b>
1.1 Location and scope of work.....	6
1.2 Geology and topography.....	6
1.3 Archaeological and historical background.....	6
1.4 Acknowledgements.....	7
<b>2 Aims and Methodology.....</b>	<b>8</b>
2.1 Aims.....	8
2.2 Methodology.....	8
<b>3 Results.....</b>	<b>9</b>
3.1 Introduction .....	9
3.2 Trench 1.....	9
3.3 Trench 2.....	9
3.4 Trench 3.....	9
3.5 Trench 4.....	10
3.4 Finds Summary.....	10
<b>4 Discussion and Conclusions.....</b>	<b>11</b>
4.1 Conclusion .....	11
4.3 Significance.....	11
4.4 Recommendations.....	11
<b>Appendix A. Trench Descriptions and Context Inventory.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Appendix B. Environmental Reports.....</b>	<b>13</b>
B.1 Environmental samples.....	13
<b>Appendix F. OASIS Report Form .....</b>	<b>21</b>

### **List of Figures**

Fig. 1 Site location map and position of trenches.

Fig. 2 Trench Plans

Fig. 3 Section drawings

### **List of Plates**

Plate. 1 Trench 2

Plate. 2 Trench 3

Plate. 3 Trench 4

Plate. 4 Ditch 106

Plate. 5 wooden uprights in the base of feature 106

## **Summary**

*On the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> of June 2010 Oxford Archaeology East was commissioned by the client FE Peacock to mechanically excavate four trenches (totalling c55m) in advance of the construction of six residential units. The evaluation revealed a large East – West running linear feature, five post holes, three shallow pits and a modern rubbish dump.*

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 An archaeological evaluation was conducted at land to the rear of 1 Oakington Road, Cottenham TL4457 6708
- 1.1.2 This archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a Brief issued by Dan McConnell of Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC; Planning Application S/1970/07/F), supplemented by a Specification prepared by OA East (formerly Cambridgeshire County Council's CAM ARC).
- 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 *Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment* (Department for Communities and Local Government 2010). 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 to the rear of 1 Oakington Road on the western fringe of the village. (TL4457 6708) The underlying geology consists of Lower Greensand overlying Kimmeridge Clay (BGS Sheet 188). The site lies at an average of 10.m aOD

### 1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The site lies in an area of some archaeological potential between two main, known areas of interest. Some 250m to the south-west are extensive cropmark remains of probable Iron Age and/or Roman date, the full extent of which is not known (HER No. 09547). To the north and east is the Saxon and Medieval village core of Cottenham (HER 15525, 15526), again the full extent of which is unknown.
- 1.3.2 The Lordship Lane excavations in 1995/6 (Mortimer 2000) uncovered significant Mesolithic and Bronze Age remains some 800 metres to the north-east along the ridge.
- 1.3.3 The Roman earthwork/cropmark site of Bullocks Haste on the Car Dyke lies some 2km to the north-east and the road from Cambridge through Histon and Cottenham is thought to be of at least Roman origin. The road runs approximately 500m south of the subject site.
- 1.3.4 The medieval core of Cottenham appears to have grown around an extant early to middle Saxon site around the Lamb's Lane/Lordship Lane/High St junction 800m to the north-east – other Early Saxon settlements locations or foci along this ridge are possible.

- 1.3.5 On the other side of Oakington Road, at Orchard Close, an evaluation produced no archaeological features (Lyons 2009).

## **1.4 Acknowledgements**

- 1.4.1 The author would like to thank the client FE Peacock who commissioned and funded the archaeological work. The project was managed by James Drummond Murray. James Fairbairn carried out the work with assistance from Elizabeth Jones. The Illustrations were produced by Severine Bezie. Carole Fletcher identified the bottles and modern pottery. The report was edited by James Drummond Murray. Rachel Clarke carried out the site survey using a Leica GPS 1200.

Dan McConnell wrote the brief for the archaeological works who also visited and monitored the evaluation



## 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.

### 2.2 Methodology

- 2.2.1 The Brief required that four trenches totalling c55m were mechanically excavated totalling 5% of the development area
- 2.2.2 Machine excavation was carried out under constant archaeological supervision with a wheeled JCB-type excavator using a toothless ditching bucket.
- 2.2.3 The site survey was carried out by Rachel Clarke using Leica GPS 1200
- 2.2.4 Spoil, exposed surfaces and features were scanned with a metal detector. All metal-detected and 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 Environmental samples were taken from fills (104) and (105) in ditch **106** these were processed by Rachel Fosberry at Oxford Archaeology's environmental unit at Bourn
- 2.2.7 Site conditions were sunny, dry and warm.

### 3 RESULTS

#### 3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 The results are discussed by trench and in numbered order.

#### 3.2 Trench 1

3.2.1 Trench one measured 10m by 1.8m and had an average depth of 0.4m. Trench one was located to the west of the site towards the entrance to the site. A dark brown silty topsoil overlay a mid brown sandy subsoil both which had been heavily disturbed by rooting and modern intrusions, this was typical of the entire evaluated area. Trench one contained a modern machine dug pit 127 with a backfill consisting of rubble and building sand. A small shallow post hole 109 was excavated towards the western end of trench one It had a diameter of 0.25m and a depth of 0.15m with steep sides and a slightly concave bottom. Its single fill (108) consisted of a mid brown silty sand with occasional stones but no finds. Two pits were located at the eastern end of trench one 111 and 113 no finds were found in either of these features both had similar fills of a mid brown silty sand which contained small stones. Pit 111 had a diameter of 0.40m and a depth of 0.18m its sides were gently sloping and its base was concave. Pit 113 was somewhat smaller with a diameter of 0.20m and a depth of 0.10m. Its sides were also gently sloping but with a flattish base.

#### 3.3 Trench 2

3.3.1 Trench two measured 10m by 1.8m and had an average depth of 0.22m and was located along the boundary to the west of the development area. Trench two contained only two features a possible post hole **123** and a pit **121**. Post hole **123** had a diameter of 0.15m and a depth of 0.08m with steep sides and a flat bottom, its single fill (122) consisted of a light brown silty sand with regular inclusions of small stones. No finds were found within the fill. The second feature a larger slightly elongated pit **121** had a diameter of 0.74m and a depth of 0.18m. It had gently sloping sides and a concave base. The fill of this feature consisted of a mid brown silty sand with occasional small stones but no finds.

#### 3.4 Trench 3

3.4.1 Trench three was situated at a right angle protruding from the centre of trench two with a NE – SW orientation. It had a length of 11m and a width of 1.8m and an average depth of 0.39m. Only one feature was discovered in trench three a NW -SE linear feature **106**. This feature was visible on the surface as a slight depression (see plate 4) and when excavated had the characteristics of a large ditch with moderately sloping sides and a concave base. Although only partially excavated It had a possible width of approximately 5m and an augured depth of 1.64m. This feature had six discernible fills a base fill of a mid to dark grey organic silty material (105) (see environmental summary) with a depth of 0.25m in which three stakes or uprights were found (see plate 5) these seemed to be embedded into the sandy gravel natural. There were no obvious signs of the timber being worked but all three pieces had a similar diameter of 0.06m. Above this was a layer of reddish brown silty clay material (104) this had a depth of 0.25m and a partially excavated width of 0.65m. Overlaying this was fill (107) this consisted a mid grey brown silty sand with a maximum depth of 0.20m. This seemed to be the uppermost fill of **106** because above this was a silty brown subsoil

102 and a sandy silty grey layer which contained bottles and china dating to the 20<sup>th</sup> century including Camp coffee bottles and a Iclima cosmetics jar circa 1948.

### 3.5 Trench 4

3.5.1 Trench four measured 20.00m by 1.8m and had an average depth of 0.30m and was located on the SW boundary of the site. Trench four contained three post holes located at the central point in the trench. Post hole **115** was 0.20m in diameter and had steep sides and a slightly concave base. This feature had a single mid brown silty sand fill (114) to a depth of 0.20m. Post hole **117** was also 0.20m in diameter and again had steep sides with a slightly concave bottom. Its single mid brown silty sandy fill (116) existed to a depth 0.20m. Post hole **119** was slightly different with almost vertical sides and a slightly concave base. The diameter measured 0.24m with a depth of 0.20m. The fill (118) consisted of a mid brown silty sand had a depth of 0.20m. No finds were located in any of these features. A machine dug sondage was located at the southern end of trench four to ascertain an accurate soil profile (see section 2). This was dug to a depth of 2.10m.

### 3.6 Finds Summary

3.6.1 Artefactual evidence suggests that the linear feature **106** was visible in the topography until fairly recently. The depression was evident and deep enough for at least part of it to be used as a rubbish dump probably no earlier than the 1950's. The single pottery sherd found in fill (105) has been identified as a piece of post mediaeval metropolitan type slip ware (Carol Fletcher, pers comm). The only other find of any significance was a flint found in fill (107). It is thought to be a flint core of neolithic date (Richard Mortimer, pers comm). Its position within the linear feature **106** strongly suggests the artefact to be residual.

## 4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

### 4.1 Discussion

4.1.1 The archaeological evaluation at 1 Oakington Road Cottenham has revealed a large linear feature running NW-SE across the site. This feature has been noted on Cambs County Council crop mark survey and is still visible on the ground as a slight depression. This feature was probably more pronounced in the recent past and deep enough to be used as a modern rubbish dump. It is difficult to ascertain a use for this feature but an enclosure ditch does seem to be more likely use. The wooden stakes found in the base of the ditch are intriguing and could be uprights but due to health and safety constraints it was not deemed safe to excavate to any greater depth. All other trenches revealed modern features or features of an indeterminate date.

### 4.2 Significance

4.2.1 The archaeological evaluation located a substantial feature on the site at Oakington road but adds little to what we know of the west of Cottenham. It however does raise the question of its use and relationship to this part of the village.

### 4.3 Recommendations

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

## APPENDIX A. TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench 1						
<b>General description</b>					<b>Orientation</b>	NW - SE
Trench 1 contained one modern intrusion and 3 small pits covered by a mid brown silty sandy subsoil with an average depth of 0.25m and a grey brown sandy silty topsoil with an average depth of 0.15m.					<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>	0.4
					<b>Width (m)</b>	1.8
					<b>Length (m)</b>	10
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
108	Fill	0.25	0.15	Fill of post hole 109	-	-
109	Cut	0.25	0.15	Cut of post hole	-	-
112	Fill	0.2	0.1	Fill of pit113	-	-
113	Cut	0.2	0.1	Cut of pit	-	-
110	Fill	0.4	0.18	Fill of pit 111	-	-
111	Cut	0.4	0.18	Cut of pit	-	-
126	Fill	0.45	0.3	Fill of Modern trench 127	-	-
127	Cut	0.45	0.3	Cut Of Trench	-	Modern
Trench 2						
<b>General description</b>					<b>Orientation</b>	NW - SE
Trench 2 contained one modern intrusion and 2 small pits covered by a mid brown silty sandy subsoil with an average depth of 0.22m and a grey brown sandy silty topsoil with an average depth of 0.15m.					<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>	0.44
					<b>Width (m)</b>	1.8
					<b>Length (m)</b>	15
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
122	Fill	0.15	0.08	Fill of post hole 123	-	-
123	Cut	0.15	0.08	Cut of post hole	-	-
120	Fill	0.74	0.18	Fill of pit 121	-	-
121	Cut	0.74	0.18	Cut of pit	-	-
Trench 3						
<b>General description</b>					<b>Orientation</b>	NE-SW
Trench 3 contained a modern rubbish dump overlying a NW – SE linear feature					<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>	0.39
					<b>Width (m)</b>	1.8
					<b>Length (m)</b>	11
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
101	Fill	5	0.7	Modern rubbish dump	Bottles and Pottery	20C

102	Fill	5	0.35	Fill of linear 106	Bottles	20C
103	Fill	1.6	0.3	Fill of linear 106	-	-
107	Fill	2.4	0.2	Fill of linear 106	-	-
104	Fill	1.5	0.25	Fill of linear 106	Flint	Neolithic
105	Fill	0.5	0.25	Base fill of linear 106	Pottery	Post medieval

Trench 4						
<b>General description</b>					<b>Orientation</b>	NW - SE
Trench 4 contained one modern intrusion and 3 small pits or possible post holes covered by a mid brown silty sandy subsoil with an average depth of 0.20m and a grey brown sandy silty topsoil with an average depth of 0.13m					<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>	0.3
					<b>Width (m)</b>	1.8
					<b>Length (m)</b>	20
<b>Contexts</b>						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
100	Layer			Topsoil	-	-
124	Layer			Subsoil	-	-
125	Layer			Subsoil	-	-
114	Fill	0.2	0.2	Fill of post hole 115	-	-
115	Cut	0.2	0.2	Cut of post hole	-	-
116	Fill	0.24	0.2	Fill of post hole 117	-	-
117	Cut	0.24	0.2	Cut of post hole	-	-
118	Fill	0.23	0.22	Fill of post hole 119	-	-
119	Cut	0.23	0.22	Cut of post hole	-	-

## APPENDIX B. ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTS

### B.1 Environmental samples

*By Rachel Fossberry*

#### 4.4 Introduction and Methods

- 4.4.1 Two bulk samples were taken from features within the evaluated areas of the site in order to assess the quality of preservation of plant remains and their potential to provide useful data as part of further archaeological investigations.
- 4.4.2 Both samples were from features that have been interpreted as probable ditches. Sample 1, fill 104, was thought to be a deposit of burnt clay or possible panning. Sample 2, fill 105, was from the lower fill of a ditch and was waterlogged.
- 4.4.3 The total volume of each sample were processed by tank flotation for the recovery of charred plant remains, dating evidence and any other artefactual evidence that might be present. The flot was collected in a 0.3mm nylon mesh and the residue was washed

through a 0.5mm sieve. Both flot and residue were allowed to air dry. The dried residue was passed through 5mm and 2mm sieves and a magnet was dragged through each resulting fraction prior to sorting for artefacts. Any artefacts present were noted and reintegrated with the hand-excavated finds. The flot was examined under a binocular microscope at x16 magnification and the presence of any plant remains or other artefacts are noted on Table x.

## 4.5 Results

Sample No.	Context No.	Cut No.	Feature Type	Sample Size (L)	Flot contents	Residue Contents
1	104	106	Ditch	20	Small fragments of burnt clay. No charcoal	Bone fragments
2	105	106	Ditch	10	Waterlogged seeds. No charcoal	No finds

- 4.5.1 Sample 1 does not contain any plant remains but animal bone was recovered from the residue. Sample 2 contains seed preserved by waterlogging. These include plants commonly found on disturbed/waste ground such as bramble (*Rubus* sp.) and stinging nettle (*Urtica dioica*) and also wetland plants such as water crowfoot (*Ranunculus* subgenus *batrachium*) and gypsywort (*Lycopus europaeus*)

## 4.6 Discussion

- 4.6.1 The seed assemblage in Sample 2 suggests that ditch 106 contained water, at least sufficiently to support a few wetland plants. The other plants represented indicate a

local environment of disturbed/waste ground that doesn't add much to the interpretation of this feature.

#### **4.7 Further Work and Methods Statement**

4.7.1 No further work is recommended.

#### **Bibliography**

Stace, C., 1997 *New Flora of the British Isles*. Second edition. Cambridge University Press













## APPENDIX C. OASIS REPORT FORM

All fields are required unless they are not applicable.

### Project Details

OASIS Number	<input type="text"/>		
Project Name	<input type="text" value="Evaluation on land to the rear of 1 oakington road Cottenham"/>		
Project Dates (fieldwork) Start	<input type="text" value="10-06-2010"/>	Finish	<input type="text" value="11-06-2010"/>
Previous Work (by OA East)	<input type="text" value="No"/>	Future Work	<input type="text" value="Unknown"/>

### Project Reference Codes

Site Code	<input type="text" value="COTOAK10"/>	Planning App. No.	<input type="text" value="S/1979/07/F"/>
HER No.	<input type="text" value="ECB 3395"/>	Related HER/OASIS No.	<input type="text"/>

### Type of Project/Techniques Used

Prompt	<input type="text" value="Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16"/>
Development Type	<input type="text" value="Rural Residential"/>

### Please select all techniques used:

<input type="checkbox"/> Aerial Photography - interpretation	<input type="checkbox"/> Grab-Sampling	<input type="checkbox"/> Remote Operated Vehicle Survey
<input type="checkbox"/> Aerial Photography - new	<input type="checkbox"/> Gravity-Core	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sample Trenches
<input type="checkbox"/> Annotated Sketch	<input type="checkbox"/> Laser Scanning	<input type="checkbox"/> Survey/Recording Of Fabric/Structure
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Augering	<input type="checkbox"/> Measured Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Targeted Trenches
<input type="checkbox"/> Dendrochronological Survey	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Metal Detectors	<input type="checkbox"/> Test Pits
<input type="checkbox"/> Documentary Search	<input type="checkbox"/> Phosphate Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Topographic Survey
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Environmental Sampling	<input type="checkbox"/> Photogrammetric Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Vibro-core
<input type="checkbox"/> Fieldwalking	<input type="checkbox"/> Photographic Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Visual Inspection (Initial Site Visit)
<input type="checkbox"/> Geophysical Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Rectified Photography	

### Monument Types/Significant Finds & Their Periods

List feature types using the [NMR Monument Type Thesaurus](#) and significant finds using the [MDA Object type Thesaurus](#) together with their respective periods. If no features/finds were found, please state "none".

Monument	Period	Object	Period
<input type="text" value="Ditch"/>	<input type="text" value="Uncertain"/>	<input type="text" value="Bottles"/>	<input type="text" value="Modern 1901 to Present"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="Select period..."/>	<input type="text" value="Pottery"/>	<input type="text" value="Modern 1901 to Present"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="Select period..."/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="Select period..."/>

### Project Location

County	Cambridgeshire	Site Address (including postcode if possible)
District	South Cambs	1 Oakington Road Cottenham
Parish	Cottenham	
HER	Cambs	
Study Area	c55m	National Grid Reference
		TL4457 6708

### 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
CC stores Landbeach	OA East	OA East
COTOAK10	COTOAK10	COTOAK10




### Archive Contents/Media

	Physical Contents	Digital Contents	Paper Contents
Animal Bones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ceramics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Glass	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Human Bones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leather	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Metal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stratigraphic		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Survey		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Textiles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wood	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worked Bone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worked Stone/Lithic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
None	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Digital Media	Paper Media
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Database	<input type="checkbox"/> Aerial Photos
<input type="checkbox"/> GIS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Context Sheet
<input type="checkbox"/> Geophysics	<input type="checkbox"/> Correspondence
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Images	<input type="checkbox"/> Diary
<input type="checkbox"/> Illustrations	<input type="checkbox"/> Drawing
<input type="checkbox"/> Moving Image	<input type="checkbox"/> Manuscript
<input type="checkbox"/> Spreadsheets	<input type="checkbox"/> Map
<input type="checkbox"/> Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Matrices
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Text	<input type="checkbox"/> Microfilm
<input type="checkbox"/> Virtual Reality	<input type="checkbox"/> Misc.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Research/Notes
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Photos
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Plans
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Report
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sections
	<input type="checkbox"/> Survey

Notes:



Plans	
Limit of Excavation	—————
Deposit - Conjectured	- - - - -
Natural Features	—————
Sondages/Machine Strip	- - - - -
Intrusion/Truncation	- · - · - ·
Illustrated Section	————— <span style="color: red;">S.14</span>
Archaeological Feature	
Excavated Slot	
Modern Deposit	
Cut Number	118
Deposit Number	117
Sections	
Limit of Excavation	- - - - -
Cut	—————
Cut Conjectured	- - - - -
Deposit Horizon	—————
Deposit Horizon Conjectured	- - - - -
Intrusion/Truncation	- · - · - ·
Top Surface/Top of Natural	—————
Break in Section/ Limit of Section Drawing	- - - - -
Cut Number	117
Deposit Number	117
Ordnance Datum	18.45m OD ⌘
Sample Number	◇ 1 ◇

Convention Key

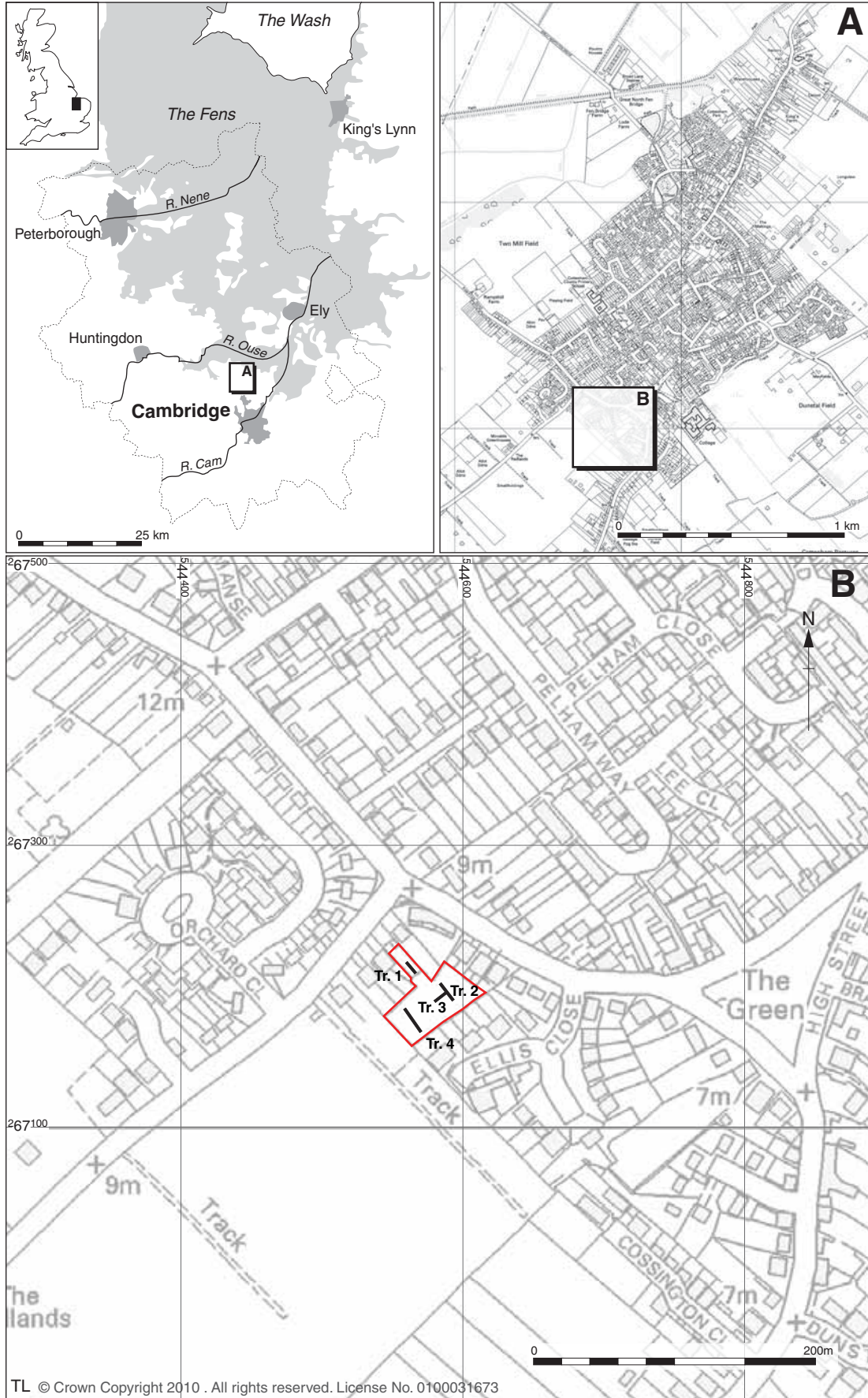


Figure 1: Location of trenches (black) with the development area outlined (red)

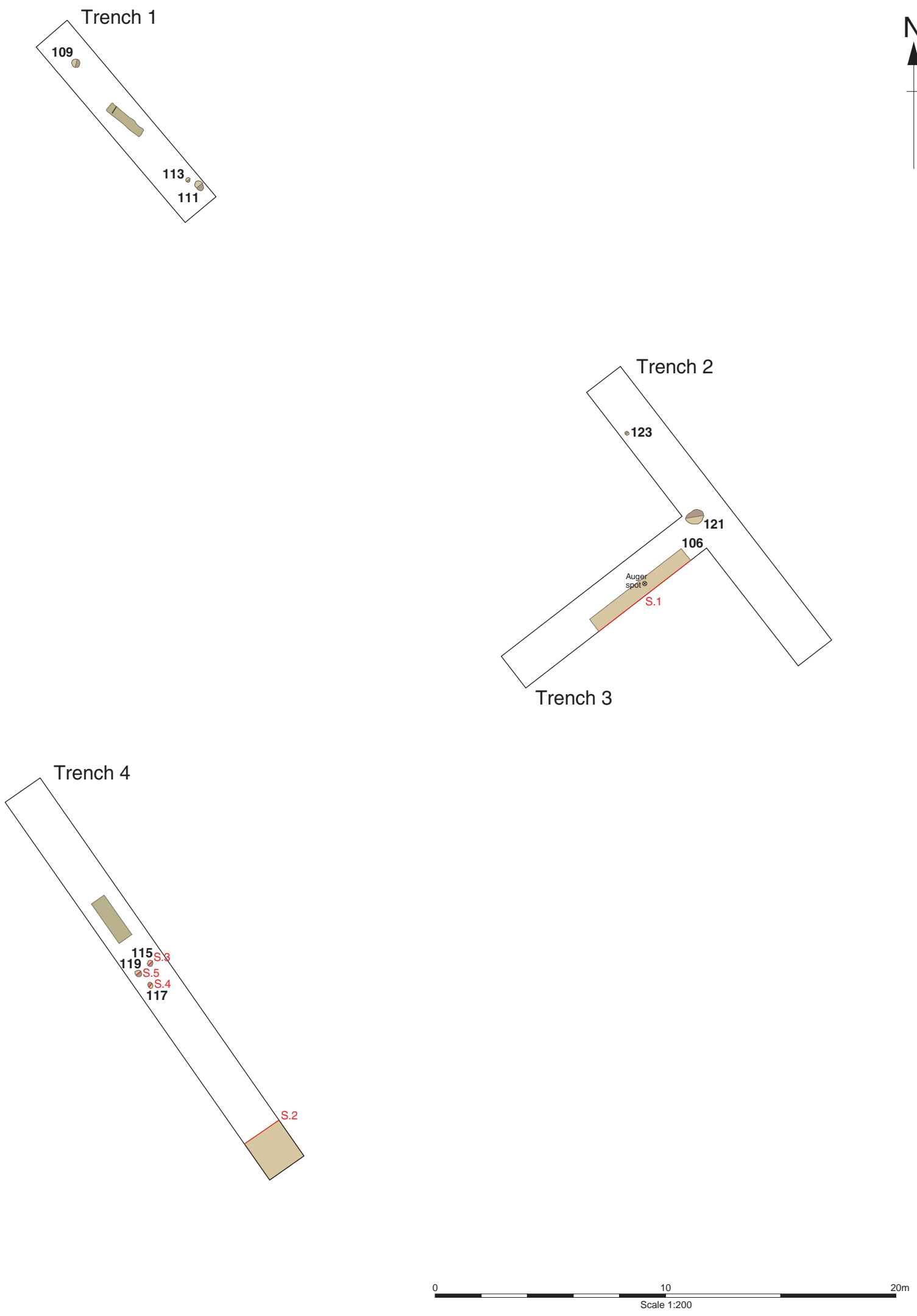


Figure 2: Trench plans

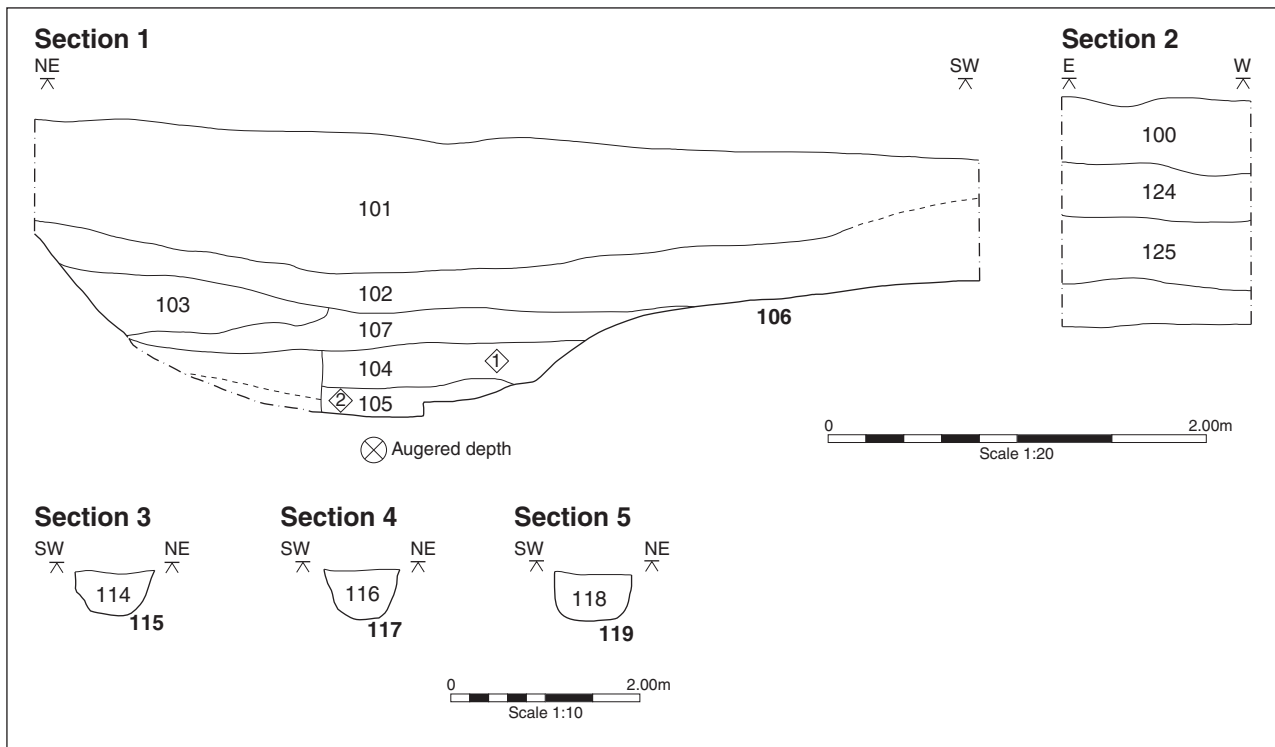


Figure 3: Section drawings



Plate 1: Trench 2



Plate 2: Trench 3



Plate 3: Trench 4



Plate 4: Section 106



Plate 5: Wooden uprights in the base of Feature **106**



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