

Archaeological Evaluation at Scotsdales Garden Centre 120 Cambridge Road Great Shelford



Archaeological Evaluation Report



September 2014

Client: Scotsdales Garden Centre

OA East Report No: 1658

OASIS No: oxfordar3-189667

NGR: TL 456 536


Archaeological Evaluation at Scotsdales Garden Centre, 120 Cambridge Road, Great Shelford.

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Report Date: September 2014

Report Number: 1658
Site Name: Scotsdales, 120 Cambridge Road, Great Shelford
HER Event No: ECB4173
Date of Works: July 2014
Client Name: Scotsdales Garden Centre
Client Ref: n/a
Planning Ref: S/0687/13/FL
Grid Ref: TL 456 536
Site Code: GSHSCO14
Finance Code: GSHSCO14
Receiving Body: CCC Stores, Landbeach
Accession No: n/a
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Position: Acting Supervisor
Date: August 2014
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Position: Senior Project Manager
Date: September 2014
Signed: 

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Summary

An archaeological evaluation was carried out at the current site throughout July 2014 prior to the construction of a new storehouse. The site is located in an area adjacent to known and extensive Roman-period archaeology. The excavation revealed one significant archaeological feature. A single ditch, while containing no datable material, was most likely Roman in date. All other features in the excavation area were firmly identified as Post Medieval - Modern.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 An archaeological evaluation was conducted at Scotsdales Garden Centre, 120 Cambridge Road, Great Shelford.
- 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/0687/13/FL), supplemented by a Specification prepared by OA East.
- 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 geological sheet for the area (sheet 205 Saffron Walden) indicates that the site is underlain by a drift of Second terrace River deposits (silt, sand and gravel) over a solid geology of West Melbury Marly Chalk Formation.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 There is evidence for prehistoric activity from the immediate and surrounding area. Flint tools dated from the Neolithic and Bronze Age have been recorded south east of the site at White Hill (HER 04880/04880A, 04881, 04882, 04886). Evidence for Neolithic and Bronze Age activity has also been identified in the large scale archaeological excavations at Clay Farm to the north east of Great Shelford village (MCB16973, MCB17815).
- 1.3.2 Iron Age settlement remains have been identified at Granhams farm (CB15540) and Clay lane (MCB16973). Cropmarks east of the current site may possibly contain evidence for Iron Age settlement and agricultural enclosures (HER04461).
- 1.3.3 Extensive Roman settlement has been recorded east of the current site (HER 04461), on the east side of Hobsons brook. These remains initially identified from aerial photography are interpreted as a probable Roman villa and associated settlement. Fieldwalking has produced finds ranging from the 1st to the 4th century. A pattern of rectangular enclosures and double ditched trackways have been revealed by the crop marks on a Northwest to southeast orientation following the foot of White Hill.

Confirmed Roman enclosures and settlement have been recovered at Granham's Farm (CB15539) and (CB15538). Additional cropmark enclosures of probable Roman date have been found southeast of the current site (04463).

Roman enclosures and settlement evidence have been identified at Clay Farm, southeast of the current site (MCB16976) and (MCB16977).

- 1.3.4 A Saxon enclosure has been identified at Granham's Farm (HER01002a) within 1km of the current site.
- 1.3.5 An area of 11th century settlement had developed around Granham's Manor House (01002) and (CB15542).
- 1.3.6 Passing east of the site is a watercourse mapped by the HER, constructed in the early 18th century to supply the centre of Cambridge (HER 04529a). The conduit was partly an artificial course channelling water from Nine Springs (on White Hill) but also utilised the natural stream subsequently known as Hobson's Brook (Mortimer 2014).

1.4 Acknowledgements

- 1.4.1 The author would like to thank David Rayner of Scotsdales Garden Centre who commissioned and funded the work. Edgar and Gavin Stern of Durman Stern Construction who carried out the excavation work under the supervision of the author. The project was managed by Richard Mortimer and monitored by Dan McConnell of Cambridge County Council. An archaeological and heritage based assessment was produced by Myk Flitcroft of CgMs in 2012.

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 Trial trenching would be excavated by machine to the depth of the geological horizon or to the upper interface of the archaeological features or deposits, whichever was encountered first. The trial trenches would coincide with the areas of the two storage tanks (6m x 22m and 5m x 35m), the swale (c10m x 10m) and one side of each of the two new buildings (c 2mx 35m and 2m x 20m). This would give a total of some 585 sq m, an approximate 17% of the development area,
- 2.2.2 Machine excavation was carried out under constant archaeological supervision with a tracked 360 excavator using a toothless ditching bucket.
- 2.2.3 The site survey was carried out by Steven Graham using two 30m tapes.
- 2.2.4 Spoil, exposed surfaces and features were visually scanned. All 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 No environmental sampling was undertaken.
- 2.2.7 Around 80% of the site was sealed by a mixture of hardcore and cement, which had to be broken through by machine before the top Soil could be excavated. The trenches were dry and drainage was good.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 There were two distinct areas of excavation. The first of which contained trench 1. This was a trapezoidal area 21.50m in length running parallel to and distinct from the proposed storage building.
- 3.1.2 The second area was the site of the proposed storage building. This consisted of a rectangular area of 16m x 35m. A continuous foundation trench was cut around the perimeter of the proposed building with a break of 1.00m in the centre of the eastern end to accommodate the entrance. At the four corners of the foundation trench, four square post pads (1.5m x 1.50m) were cut to the same depth as the trench. An additional 12 pads were cut along the run of the trench, a total of eight in the two long NWW-SEE sides of the cut and four in the two smaller NNW-SSE running sides. For recording purposes, the overall foundation trench was split into four sub trenches. Trench 2 represents the shorter western side of the structure, Trench 4 represents the eastern “front” end of the building. The longer North and south sides of the building are represented by trenches 3 and 5 respectively.
- 3.1.3 The internal area of the proposed building was largely left untouched, however eight square post pads (1.50m x 1.50m) were cut within the internal area to the depth of the natural horizon and a further two post pads (A and pad B) were cut 2 m in front of foundation trench 4.

3.2 Area 1

- 3.2.1 This area consisted of a trapezoidal trench (1), 21.50m in length ,running from the NW to the SE. The NW end of the trench was 5.50m in width tapering down to 1.50m in the SE. The natural was sealed by a subsoil (**013**) comprising of a mid greenish grey clay silt, this was in turn overlaid by a top soil (**002**) of dark reddish brown sand silt. In the NW corner of the trench, a deep circular brick-filled soak away 3.5m in width was uncovered, this was clearly 20th century in date. At the SE end of the trench, a single trench [**004**] was recorded running east to west. The trench was clearly seen to be cutting through both top and sub soil with modern tile fragments evident in its fill. An apparent dark blue disturbance of the natural was investigated as a potential feature but excavation revealed it to be the remains of a potential Palaeo-channel (**006**): it contained no finds material.

3.3 Area 2

- 3.3.1 This area was sealed by a layer of mixed hardcore and concrete (**001**) 2.40m in depth. Below this was a topsoil (**005**) of compact dark grey brown clay silt with an average depth of 0.60m. Throughout Area 2, this soil had a strong organic component consistent with having been recently buried. The subsoil was the same as in Area 1 (**013**) with an average depth of 0.80m.
- 3.3.2 *Trench 2* - This was the northern foundation cut running on an orientation of SW to NE for 12.5m between the two corner post pads. No archaeology was evident within this trench.

- 3.3.3 *Trench 3* -This was the eastern foundation trench running NW to SE for 29m. In the extreme NW end of the trench two features were sealed by the sub soil. The first was a ditch [007] running across the site in a NE to SW direction. Containing a single fill of clayey silt (008) the ditch was 0.42m deep and 0.45m wide. No archaeological finds were retrieved from the fill and it remains undatable. However the location of the ditch in the northern corner of the site, being in close proximity to and parallel to identified Roman field systems to the north east of the area of excavation suggest a likely Roman date. To the north of this feature, running across the trench from N to S was a small gully [009] 0.60m wide and 0.20m deep. No finds were recovered its fill and it may represent a natural rather than an archaeological feature. At the SE end of the trench was a trench [018], containing modern tile and ceramic in its surface fill; this was in direct alignment with and a clear continuation of the service trench [004] identified in Trench 1 and remained unexcavated.
- 3.3.4 *Trench 4* -This was the shorter southern foundation trench running from corner post pad to pad for 13m on a NE to SW orientation. The trench had a central break to accommodate an entrance. No archaeology was evident within the trench.
- 3.3.5 *Trench Five*- This ran from corner pad to corner pad a distance of 29m in a NW to SE direction. Only two features were recorded, these were both located in the NW end of the trench. The first was ditch [011]. it had a single fill (012), and was clearly a continuation of ditch [007] previously identified in Trench 3. As before no finds were retrieved in the fill and so the feature remained undatable. Some 2m further along from this ditch to the SE was a pit [014], this contained two fills The upper fill (016) was a dark reddish brown clayey silt, whilst the base fill (015) was a soft mid grey silt clay. Both fills contained brick, tile and Post-medieval ceramics

3.4 Post Pads

- 3.4.1 In addition to the sixteen post pads cut into the foundation trench of Area 2, a further ten discrete square pads were cut down to the natural horizon. Eight of these were within the interior area of the storage building (C-J) and two were directly in front of Trench four.(A and B).
- 3.4.2 Of the front two, *Pad A* was situated 4m south of Trench four. It was cut to a depth of 1.18m, being 2.50m long and 1.50m wide. At its base ran a modern concrete service pipe 0.40m wide. All the layers above the pipe were clearly backfill into the construction cut of the service pipe. These consisted of redeposited clay and silt containing 20th century brick and tile. *Pad B* was located 3.5m to the east of trench four's eastern corner. As with Pad A this was cut to a width of 1.50m, a length of 2.50m and a depth of 1.60m. As this pad was in direct alignment with Pad A, as anticipated the modern concrete service main ran straight through this pad, obliterating all trace of earlier archaeology with the upper layers all being back filled clay and silt.
- 3.4.3 The eight pads within the interior of the storage building were all 1.50mx1.50m. With an average depth of 1.00m. All contained the hardcore, sub soil and topsoil layers. Whilst three of them contained pits (G, H and I), these were clearly all modern containing plastics and post medieval brick and tile. No earlier archaeology was present in any of them.

3.5 Finds Summary

- 3.5.1 All finds were clearly 20th century in date, and the majority of these were modern. None were retained for inspection.

3.6 Environmental Summary

3.6.1 No environmental samples were taken.

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Discussion

- 4.1.1 Despite the proximity of the current excavation to an extensive area of Roman settlement to the northeast (HER 04461) and as part of a much wider South Cambridge Prehistoric and Roman landscape, there was little evidence of Roman or earlier activity at the site. The only significant feature being the single undated ditch running across the site from northeast to southwest ([007] and [011]). This probably represents a field ditch allied to the boundary ditches revealed as a crop mark running through the next field directly to the northeast. All activity south of this feature was clearly modern. Whilst crop marks in the adjacent eastern fields indicated a small number of further Roman ditches to the south of the excavated ditch, none of these were identified in any of the trenches at the site.
- 4.1.2 Most of Area 2, located within the interior of the proposed storage building, remains sealed and potentially preserved by the extant hardcore and concrete surface. Unfortunately the prevalence of modern pits and services identified in the foundation trenches and post pads south of the excavated ditch suggest only a small chance of survival for medieval or earlier archaeology in this area.

4.2 Significance

- 4.2.1 Despite the paucity of any activity earlier than the 20th century, there is at least some potential evidence of Roman activity at the site, linking it to the wider Roman landscape.

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						
General description					Orientation	NW-SE
The trench contained one post-med/modern ditch, a post medieval soak away drain and an amorphous feature probably a tree throw. The natural was overlain by a single sub and topsoil. The subsoil sealed a heavy clay palaeochannel fill.					Avg. depth (m)	0.45
					Width (m)	5.50
					Length (m)	21.50
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
001	Layer	-	0.26	Hardcore/Concrete	-	-
002	Layer	-	0.30	Top Soil	-	-
003	fill		0.50	Post medieval ditch fill		Post-med/Modern
004	Cut	1.00	0.50	Post medieval ditch cut		Post-med/Modern
006	Layer		0.40	palaeochannel Fill		
013	Layer		0.50	Sub Soil		
Trench 2						
General description					Orientation	NE-SW
The western foundation trench for storage building 1. The natural was sealed over by a hardcore mixed with concrete, the top soil and the sub soil. No archaeological features were identified in this trench.					Avg. depth (m)	0.60
					Width (m)	0.60
					Length (m)	12.50
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Trench 3						
General description					Orientation	NW-SE
The northern foundation trench for storage building 1, sealed over by hardcore and concrete, the top soil and the sub soil. Three ditches were identified, two of which despite containing no archaeology had a strong probability of being Roman, the third was a continuation of the Post Medieval ditch identified in trench 1.					Avg. depth (m)	0.70
					Width (m)	0.60
					Length (m)	29.0
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
007	Cut	1.45	0.42	Ditch Cut		Roman?
008	Fill	-	-	Ditch Fill		Roman?
009	Cut	0.60	0.20	Ditch Cut?		Roman?/Natural
010	Fill	-	-	Ditch Fill?		Roman?/Natural
017	Fill	-	-	Ditch Fill		Post-med/Modern
018	Cut	1.20	-	Ditch Cut		Post-med/Modern

Trench 4						
General description				Orientation		NE-SW
The eastern foundation trench for storage building 1, sealed over by hardcore and concrete, the top soil and the sub soil. The trench was broken up in the centre by a space of 1.00m for the buildings entrance. No archaeology was evident in either side of the trench.				Avg. depth (m)		0.70
				Width (m)		0.60
				Length (m)		0.60
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Trench 5						
General description				Orientation		NW-SE
The southern foundation trench for storage building 1, sealed over by hardcore and concrete, the top soil and the sub soil. The western end of the trench contained the continuation of the possible Roman ditch previously noted in Trench 3 and a pit containing post medieval brick and tile.				Avg. depth (m)		0.70
				Width (m)		0.60
				Length (m)		29.0
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
011	Cut	1.00	0.58	Ditch Cut		Roman?
012	Fill	-	-	Ditch Fill		Roman?
014	Cut	0.98	0.42	Pit Cut		Post-med/Modern
015	Fill	-	-	Pit Fill		Post-med/Modern
016	Fill-	-	-	-Pit Fill		Post-med/Modern

APPENDIX B. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Mortimer, R. 2014. Specification For An Archaeological Evaluation: Scotsdales, 120 Cambridge Road, Great Shelford.

APPENDIX C. OASIS REPORT FORM

All fields are required unless they are not applicable.

Project Details

OASIS Number	<input type="text" value="oxfordar3-189667"/>		
Project Name	<input type="text" value="Evaluation at 120 cambridge Road, Great Shelford"/>		
Project Dates (fieldwork) Start	<input type="text" value="16-07-2014"/>	Finish	<input type="text" value="05-08-2014"/>
Previous Work (by OA East)	<input type="text"/>	Future Work	<input type="text"/>

Project Reference Codes

Site Code	<input type="text" value="GSHSCO14"/>	Planning App. No.	<input type="text" value="AS/0687/13/FL"/>
HER No.	<input type="text" value="ECB4173"/>	Related HER/OASIS No.	<input type="text"/>

Type of Project/Techniques Used

Prompt	<input type="text" value="Planning condition"/>
Development Type	<input type="text" value="Urban Commercial"/>

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 type="checkbox"/> Augering	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Measured Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Targeted Trenches
<input type="checkbox"/> Dendrochronological Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Metal Detectors	<input type="checkbox"/> Test Pits
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Documentary Search	<input type="checkbox"/> Phosphate Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Topographic Survey
<input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Sampling	<input type="checkbox"/> Photogrammetric Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Vibro-core
<input type="checkbox"/> Fieldwalking	<input checked="" 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="Roman 43 to 410"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="Select period..."/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="Select period..."/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="Select period..."/>
<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	Shelford	Scotsdales Garden Centre, 120 Cambridge Road, Great Shelford
Parish	Great Shelford	
HER	GSHSCO14	
Study Area	585 sq m	National Grid Reference TL 456 536

Project Originators

Organisation	OA EAST
Project Brief Originator	D McConnell
Project Design Originator	R Mortimer
Project Manager	R Mortimer
Supervisor	Steve Graham

Project Archives

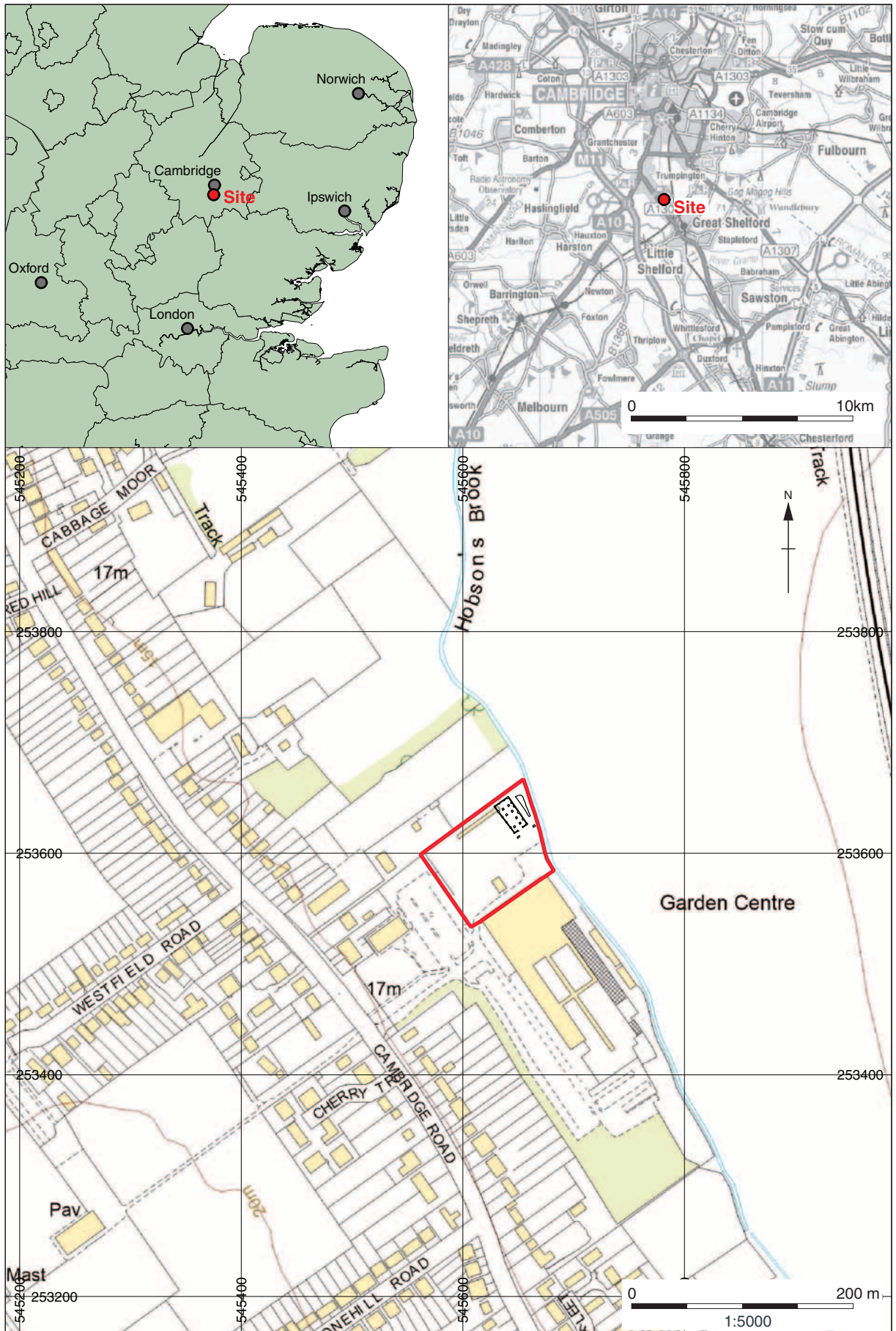
Physical Archive	Digital Archive	Paper Archive
Cambridgeshire County Council	OAE	Cambridgeshire County Council
GSHSCO14	GSHSCO14	GSHSCO14

Archive Contents/Media

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Animal Bones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ceramics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Glass	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Human Bones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Survey		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Illustrations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Drawing
<input type="checkbox"/> Moving Image	<input type="checkbox"/> Manuscript
<input type="checkbox"/> Spreadsheets	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> Photos
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Plans
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Report
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sections
	<input type="checkbox"/> Survey

Notes:



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Figure 1: Site location showing Development Area (red) and Trenches (black)



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Figure 2: Location of site within wider archaeology

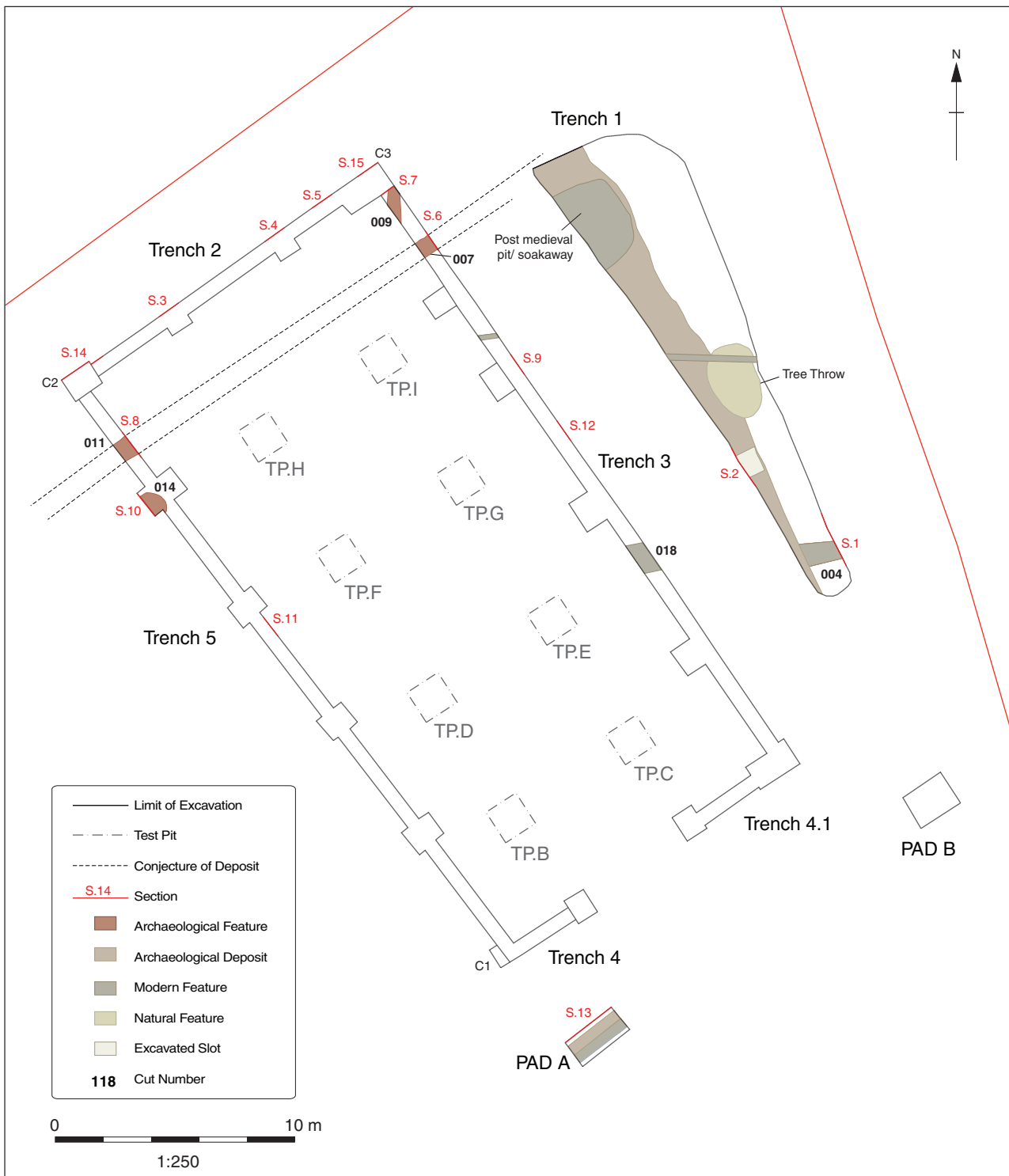


Figure 3: Plan of Trenches

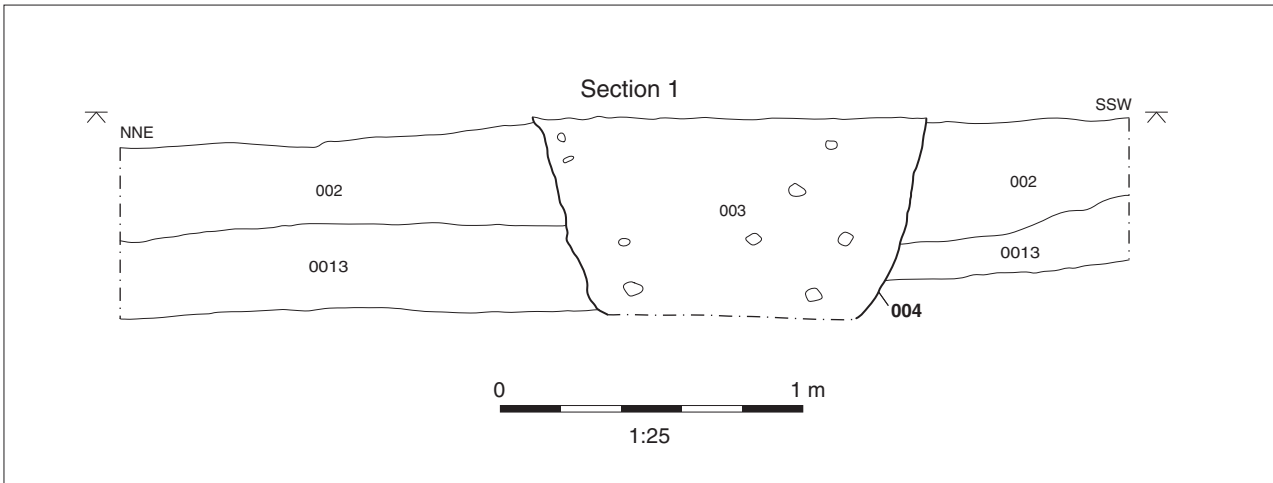


Figure 4: Section through Ditch [004]

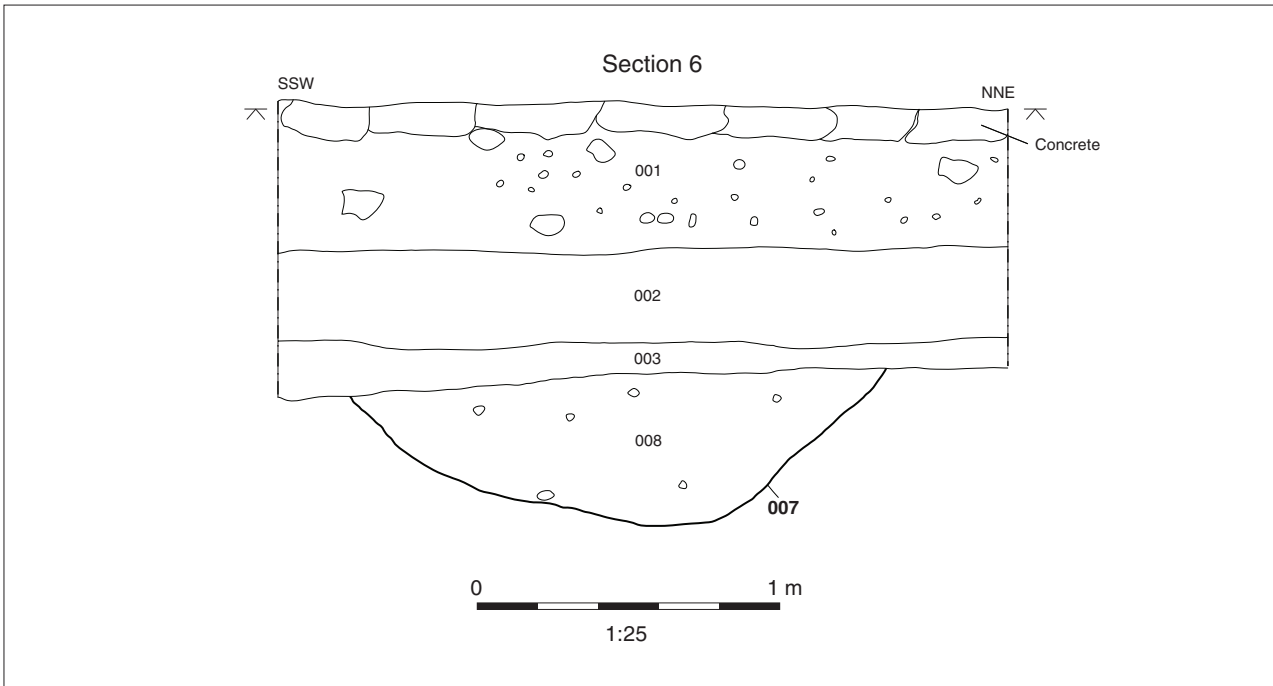


Figure 5: Section through Ditch [007].



Plate 1: Trench 1, south east facing view, 2m scale



Plate 2: Photo of Ditch [007] section, south east facing view, 2m scale



Plate 3: Photo of pit [014] section, north east facing view, 2m scale



Plate 4: Trench 3, north west facing view, 2m scale



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