

Evaluation at Little St Mary's Church Cambridge



Archaeological Evaluation Report



April 2010

**Client: Cowper Griffith Architects
for Ely Diocese**

OA East Report No: 1156

OASIS No: oxfordar3-70057

NGR: TL 4482 5797

Test Pit Evaluation at Little St Mary's Church, Cambridge

Archaeological Evaluation

By Taleyna Fletcher BA, AlFA

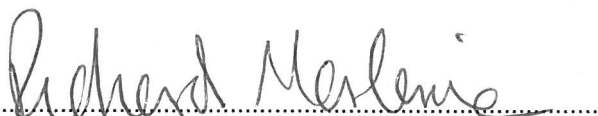
Editor: Richard Mortimer, MfA

Illustrator: Andrew Corrigan BA

Report Date: January 2010

Report Number: 1156
Site Name: Little St Mary's Church, Cambridge
HER Event No: ECB 3313
Date of Works: December 2009
Client Name: Cowper Griffith Architects for Ely Diocese
Client Ref: N/A
Planning Ref: 09/0466/FUL
Grid Ref: TL 4482 5797
Site Code: CAMLSM09
Finance Code: CAMLSM09
Receiving Body: CCC Stores, Landbeach
Accession No: n/a
Prepared by: Taleyna Fletcher
Position: Project Officer
Date: 5th January 2010

Checked by: Richard Mortimer
Position: Project Manager
Date: 5th January 2010
Signed:



Disclaimer

This document has been prepared for the titled project or named part thereof and should not be relied upon or used for any other project without an independent check being carried out as to its suitability and prior written authority of Oxford Archaeology being obtained. Oxford Archaeology accepts no responsibility or liability for the consequences of this document being used for a purpose other than the purposes for which it was commissioned. Any person/party using or relying on the document for such other purposes agrees and will by such use or reliance be taken to confirm their agreement to indemnify Oxford Archaeology for all loss or damage resulting therefrom. Oxford Archaeology accepts no responsibility or liability for this document to any party other than the person/party by whom it was commissioned.

Oxford Archaeology East,
15 Trafalgar Way,
Bar Hill,
Cambridge,
CB23 8SQ

t: 01223 850500
f: 01223 850599
e: oaeast@thehumanjourney.net
w: <http://thehumanjourney.net/oaeast>

© Oxford Archaeology East 2008
Oxford Archaeological Unit Limited is a Registered Charity No: 285627

Table of Contents

Table of Contents

Summary.....5

1 Introduction.....6

 1.1 Location and scope of work.....6

 1.2 Geology and topography.....6

 1.3 Archaeological and historical background.....6

 1.4 Acknowledgements.....8

2 Aims and Methodology.....9

 2.1 Aims.....9

 2.2 Methodology.....9

3 Results.....10

 3.1 Introduction10

 3.2 Test Pit 1.....10

 3.3 Test Pit 2.....10

 3.4 Finds Summary.....10

 3.5 Environmental Summary.....10

4 Discussion and Conclusions.....11

 4.1 Discussion and Conclusions.....11

 4.2 Significance.....11

 4.3 Recommendations.....11

Appendix A. Test Pit Descriptions and Context Inventory.....12

Appendix B. Bibliography13

Appendix C. OASIS Report Form14

List of Figures

- Fig. 1 Location of the development area (red)
Fig. 2 Location of test pits within developments area (green) and section drawings

List of Plates

- Plate 1: General Site shot
Plate 2: Test Pit 1
Plate 3: Test Pit 2

Summary

In December 2009 Oxford Archaeology East undertook a Test Pit evaluation within the churchyard on the southern side of Little St Mary's Church, Cambridge. The work was carried out for Cowper Griffiths Architects acting on behalf of the Ely Diocese in advance of an extension to the church. The work involved the excavation of two 1m x 1m test pits.

This was a second phase of works following a desk-based assessment carried out by Cambridge University's Archaeological Field Unit in 2009.

The test pits were only required to be investigated to a depth of the proposed foundations, 0.5m. Both test pits revealed the same sequence of topsoil over a compacted lighter gravelly soil. No burials were encountered and very few human bones from disturbed burials were recovered; those that were, were handed back to the church for reburial.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 Little St Mary's Church, also known as the Church of Mary the Less is located on Trumpington Street, at the corner of Little St Mary's Lane within the historic core of Cambridge.
- 1.1.2 This archaeological test pit evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a Brief issued by Dan McConnell of Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC; Planning Application 09/0466/FUL), supplemented by a Specification prepared by OA East (formerly Cambridgeshire County Council's CAM ARC) (Fletcher 2009).
- 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 and Policy Guidance 16 - Archaeology and Planning* (Department of the Environment 1990). 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 is situated on Second terrace river gravels and lies at approximately 9.5m OD (BGS Sheet No 188)
- 1.2.2 The Cam rises from springs along the north-west/south-east Cretaceous chalk ridge south-east of Cambridge. Valley gravels and alluvium cover the valley bottoms, with terraces formed from drift deposits. Chalk rivers have conditioned the topography of the surrounding area draining in a general north-easterly direction into the Fen Basin; Cambridge lies on the southern edge of this basin, with the height of the land rising from approximately 8m OD in the Cam valley immediately adjacent to the site to 9.5m OD along Trumpington Street.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

A full and extensive background of the site can be found in the Desk-Based Assessment for the site carried out in 2009 (Appleby 2009) however, a brief summary is provided below.

- 1.3.1 Cambridge owes its position to the crossing of two natural lines of communication. The Cam, constituting a river route from south-west to north-east, was a main artery for traffic through the Fenland until the railway period. It was the chalk and gravel ridge that determined the line of the road which continued the Worsted Street to Huntingdon. Known in the Middle Ages as Stoneway or Huntingdon Way, it crossed the river by 'the one bridge in England which gives name to a county'. Roads from St. Neots and Ely join the Huntingdon Road west of the bridge, and to the east roads from Newmarket, Bishop's Stortford, Ware, and Baldock converge on the city.

- 1.3.2 To the end of the 18th century the built-up area of Cambridge was concentrated round the castle site north-west of the bridge and the market-place south-east of it, roughly 1 mile long and ½ mile broad, surrounded by the town fields which stretched east and west for 3½ miles. Outlying settlements at Barnwell downstream and Newnham upstream were only absorbed by the expansion of the 19th century which, beginning along the Newmarket Road, extended the built-up areas southwards and northwards both sides of the river until the houses of Cambridge in 1951 extended 2½ miles southeast of the bridge and a mile to the north. The remains of the medieval town fields are to be seen south-west of the Huntingdon Road and in the various 'pieces' and college playing fields. 'Medieval Cambridge is largely separated from the expanding Cambridge of today by a ring of open land formed by the Commons and the Backs.' (Victoria County History 1959).
- 1.3.3 There has been a place of worship on the current site since around the twelfth century. The earliest known records of the church state that the first church here, called St Peter-without-Trumpington Gate, was controlled by three successive generations of the same family until 1207. After that date it was given to the Hospital of St John the Evangelist and served by chaplains from that foundation.
- 1.3.4 In the 13th century, the Bishop of Ely lodged some scholars in the Hospital but to his dismay found soon that the sick and the students could not live in harmony together. The students were moved in 1284 to the site of what is now Peterhouse, this was the origin of Peterhouse. By the 1340s, the church was in such a bad state that the fellows of Peterhouse decided to rebuild it. In 1352, the new building had the dual purpose of College Chapel (to Peterhouse) and Parish Church. At this time, it was rededicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. In 1632, Peterhouse built a separate Chapel and St Mary the Less reverted to being a Parish Church. Richard Crashaw the metaphysical poet, was a priest there from 1638 to 1643, at the same time that he was a Fellow of Peterhouse. A few years after his departure, many of the Church's ornaments and statues were damaged or destroyed by the Puritan extremist William Dowsing. The damage to the sedilia and the entrance to the Lady Chapel have never been repaired. In 1741, the church was refitted with wooden panelling, box pews, choir gallery, and the present pulpit. From 1856–7 Sir George Gilbert Scott restored the church and removed the 18th century panelling. Further restoration work was carried out in 1876 and 1891, but by 1880 the church was much as it is now. The south, or Lady Chapel, was added in 1931 and designed by Thomas Lyon, the architect of Sidney Sussex College Chapel. The Parish Room at the west end of the church was built in 1892 and enlarged in 1990.
- 1.3.5 The building is Grade B listed (LBS number 47871); the listed building description is as follows :
- The Church consists of an undivided chancel and nave of 5 bays built between 1340 and 1352 with C12 tower porch in north end of west wall; south chantry chapel of 1517; modern south Chapel, south porch, choir vestry and west tower. For long time served as chapel of Peterhouse, with gallery to it. Interesting example of C14 work with noteworthy font and canopy and good C18 pulpit. Rubble, ashlar faced with Barnack and church dressings restored by Gilbert Scott, 1856-7. Brass of John Hollrock 1436. Sundial on south-west buttress. (RCHM 54.) (www.lbonline.english-heritage.org.uk).

1.4 Acknowledgements

- 1.4.1 The author would like to thank Cowper Griffith Architects working for the Ely Diocese, who commissioned and funded the archaeological work. The project was managed by Richard Mortimer. The author would like to thank Reverend Greany who kindly allowed use of the church facilities during the investigation. The author carried out all on-site excavation and survey.
- 1.4.2 The brief for archaeological works was written by Dan McConnell, Kasia Gdaniec visited the site and monitored the investigations.

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 All test pits were to be investigated to a depth of 500mm, the depth at which the clients proposed footings will reach.

2.2 Methodology

- 2.2.1 The test pits were excavated by hand using a mattock, shovel and trowel. The location of the test pits was agreed prior to the start of work, however, the location of the second test pit was reviewed following a visit from Kasia Gdaniec of CAPCA.
- 2.2.2 The site survey was carried out by the author using a Leica TCR705 to locate the test pits and tie into the Ordnance Survey grid using fixed, known points on the church building. Level data was supplied by the client.
- 2.2.3 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.
- 2.2.4 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.
- 2.2.5 Due to the nature of the soil, its date and relative height, soil samples were not taken for analysis.
- 2.2.6 Conditions on site were poor with a thick blanket of snow covering the churchyard (Plate 1).

3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 The results are presented below, test pit by test pit in chronological order. Both test pits were located on the south side of the church, within the footprint of the proposed extension (Figure 2).

3.2 Test Pit 1

- 3.2.1 Test Pit 1 measured 1m x 1m and was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.50m (Figure 2, Section 1 and Plate 2).

- 3.2.2 Three distinct layers were recorded within Test Pit 1 (see below) two of which contained finds dating to the 19th and 20th century including pottery and fragments of clay pipe stems. A small number of human bones were recovered which were returned to the church for reburial.

Context 01 was a loose, dark brown clayey silt with occasional small stone inclusions. This layer had a maximum thickness of 0.47m and was the upper-most layer recorded. Finds retrieved included 19th century pottery sherds and fragments of clay pipe stems.

Context 02 was a band/lens recorded within context 01 and was recorded only within the south facing section. This context was a light mid brown, clayey silt containing occasional gravel stone inclusions. There were no finds retrieved from this context which may represent root or animal disturbance.

Context 03 was a firm, light brown clayey silt containing frequent gravel stones, flint and occasional bone. Only 0.03m of this layer was exposed before reaching the maximum depth of the test pit. A single sherd of 19th century blue and white transfer print pottery and a small number of human bones were retrieved from the top of this deposit.

3.3 Test Pit 2

- 3.3.1 Test Pit 2 measured 1m x 0.75m and excavated to a maximum depth of 0.50m (Figure 2, Section 2, Plate 3).

- 3.3.2 Two distinct layers were recorded within Test Pit 2 (see below for description) which both contained finds dating to the 19th and 20th century and can be equated to those recorded in Test Pit 1.

Context 04 was a loose, dark brown clayey silt with occasional small stone inclusions. This layer had a maximum thickness of 0.26m and was the upper-most layer recorded. Finds retrieved included 19th/20th century pottery and fragments of clay pipe stems.

Context 05 was a firm, light brown clayey silt containing frequent gravel stones, flint and occasional bone. This layer measured at least 0.24m in thickness, however its full depth was not revealed as it continued beyond the required depth of the test pit. No finds were retrieved from this layer.

3.4 Finds Summary

- 3.4.1 19th and 20th century finds were recovered from the uppermost fill of both test pits and from the top of context 03 in Test Pit 1. These were noted but not retained.

3.5 Environmental Summary

3.5.1 Due to the date of the layers recorded no soil samples were taken for environmental analysis.

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Discussion and Conclusions

- 4.1.1 The layers encountered within both test pits most likely represents the landscaping which has occurred within the churchyard over the past 100 years. The uppermost layer (01 and 04) contained pottery which dates to the 19th and early 20th century. The lower layer in each test pit (03 and 05) may be earlier in date, however likely to date no earlier than the 19th century as indicated by the single sherd of pottery found in Test Pit 1.
- 4.1.2 Excavations at this depth did not reveal any archaeological features and no human burials were encountered, though disarticulated remains were recovered from most of the contexts.
- 4.1.3 The ground surface where Test Pit 2 was located was approximately 35cm lower than that of the location of Test Pit 1 and so revealed more depth of the lower deposit recorded in both sections. However, despite the lower ground level any archaeological remains would appear to be under no greater threat from disturbance at these depths. Test pits were previously investigated approximately 5m to the north of this area in 1990 (in Appleby 2009) in advance of an extension to the Vestry where only Victorian 'made-ground' was found although a number of residual Saxo-Norman pottery sherds were recovered.

4.2 Significance

- 4.2.1 This investigation has successfully identified that, providing the footings for the proposed extension are limited to 500mm, there should be no impact on archaeological or human burial remains. However, as the investigations in close proximity in 1990 revealed disturbed Saxo-Norman pottery, there is potential for the survival of further contemporary disturbed artefacts.

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. TEST PIT DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

Test Pit 1						
General description					Orientation	n/a
Test Pit not deep enough to encounter archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil.					Avg. depth (m)	0.5
					Width (m)	1.0
					Length (m)	1.0
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
01	Layer	1.0	0.47	Topsoil	Pottery, bone, CBM, slate	19th-20th century
02	Layer	0.45	0.10	Lens / disturbance	-	-
03	Layer	1.0	0.03	Subsoil	Pottery	19th-20th century
Test Pit 2						
General description					Orientation	n/a
Test Pit not deep enough to encounter archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil.					Avg. depth (m)	0.5
					Width (m)	1.0
					Length (m)	1.0
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
04	Layer	1.0	0.26	Topsoil	Pottery	19th-20th century
05	Layer	1.0	0.24	Subsoil	-	-

APPENDIX B. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|------|---|
| Appleby, G. | 2009 | Little St Mary's Church, Cambridge: An Archaeological Desk Top Assessment. Cambridge Archaeological Unit, University of Cambridge |
| Ayres, B. | 2008 | Post-Medieval and Modern in Medleycott, M., and Brown, N., (eds) <i>Revised Research Framework for the Eastern Region</i> . http://www.eaareports.org.uk/ |
| Brown, N., and Glazebrook, J. | 2000 | <i>Research and Archaeology: a Framework for the Eastern Counties, 2. research agenda and strategy</i> . EAA Occasional Paper No 8 |
| Fletcher, T. | 2009 | Specification for Archaeological Evaluation : Little St Mary's Church, Cambridge. |
| Glazebrook, J. | 1997 | Research and Archaeology: a framework for the Eastern Counties, 1. Resource Assesment. EASS Occasional Paper No 3 |
| British Geological Survey | | Cambridge : Sheet 188 Solid and Drift Edition 1:50000 Series |
| McConnell. D. | 2009 | Brief for Archaeological Test-Pit Evaluation: Little St Marys Church, Cambridge. CCC Archaeology, Planning and Countryside Advice |
| Victoria County History 1959 Series | | A History of the County of Cambridge and the Isle of Ely: Volume 3: The City and University of Cambridge |

APPENDIX C. OASIS REPORT FORM

All fields are required unless they are not applicable.

Project Details

OASIS Number	oxfordar3-70057			
Project Name	Evaluation at Little St Mary's Church, Cambridge			
Project Dates (fieldwork)	Start	22-12-2009	Finish	22-12-2009
Previous Work (by OA East)	No		Future Work	Unknown

Project Reference Codes

Site Code	CAMLSM09	Planning App. No.	09/0466/FUL
HER No.	ECB 3313	Related HER/OASIS No.	n/a

Type of Project/Techniques Used

Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16
Development Type	Small Scale (e.g. single house)

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 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 type="checkbox"/> Measured Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Targeted Trenches
<input type="checkbox"/> Dendrochronological Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Metal Detectors	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Test Pits
<input 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 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
	Select period...	pottery	Post Medieval 1540 to 1901
	Select period...		Select period...
	Select period...		Select period...

Project Location

County	Cambridgeshire	Site Address (including postcode if possible)	
District	Cambridge	Little St Marys Church, Trumpington Road Cambridge CB2 2AE	
Parish	Trumpington		
HER	Cambridgeshire		
Study Area	35sqm	National Grid Reference	TL 4482 5797

Project Originators

Organisation	OA EAST
Project Brief Originator	CAPCA
Project Design Originator	Taleyna Fletcher
Project Manager	Richard Mortimer
Supervisor	Taleyna Fletcher

Project Archives

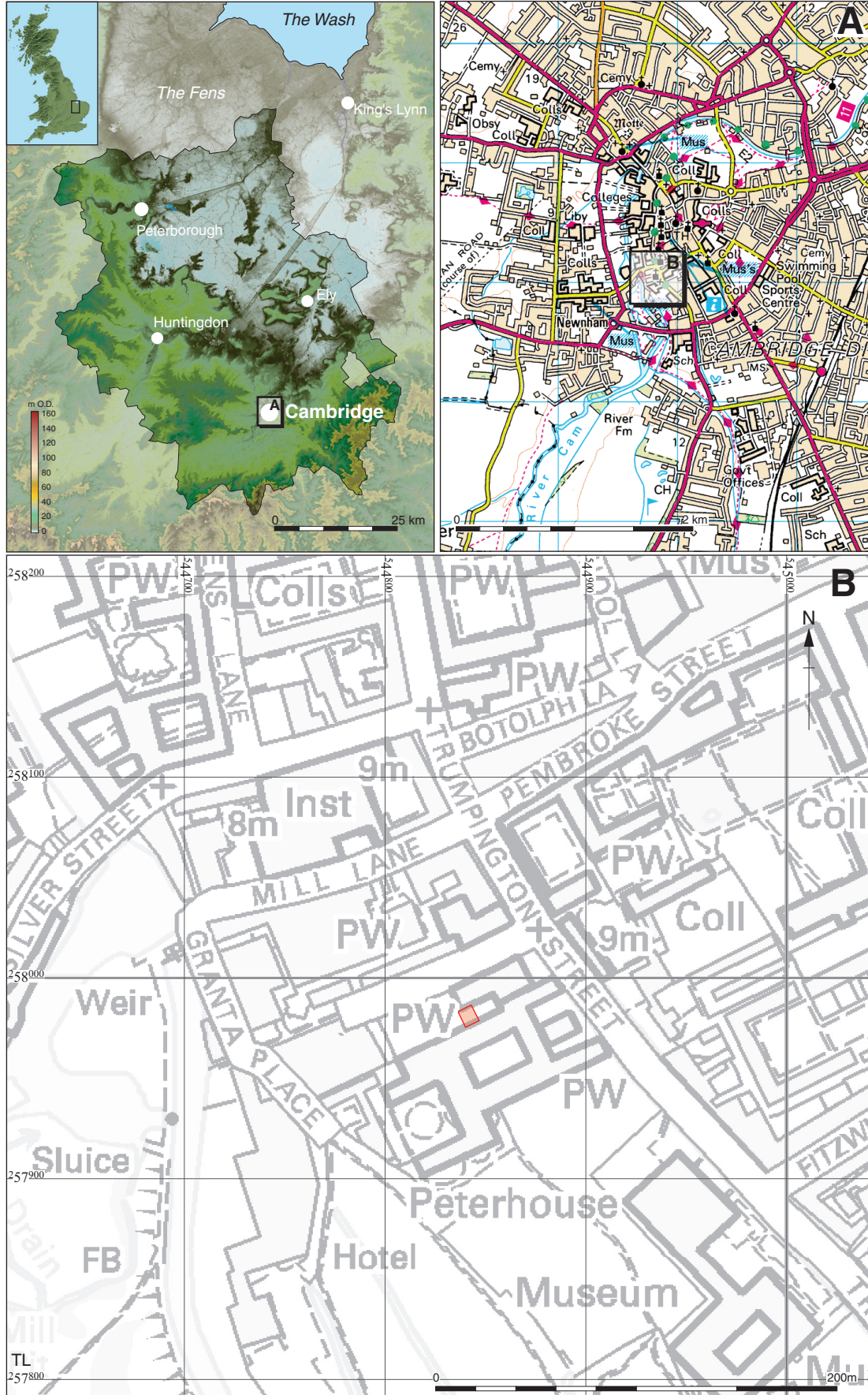
Physical Archive	Digital Archive	Paper Archive
CCC Stores, Landbech	OA East Offices, Bar Hill	CCC Stores, Landbech
CAMLSM09	CAMLSM09	CAMLSM09

Archive Contents/Media

	Physical Contents	Digital Contents	Paper Contents
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"/>
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 type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Correspondence
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Images	<input type="checkbox"/> Diary
<input 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 checked="" 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 checked="" 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:



© Crown Copyright 2010. All rights reserved. License No. AL 100005569

Figure 1: Location of the development area (red)



Figure 2: Location of test pits within development area (green) and section drawings



Plate 1: General Site shot



Plate 2: Test Pit 1



Plate 3: Test Pit 2



Head Office/Registered Office

Janus House
Osney Mead
Oxford OX2 0ES

t: +44 (0) 1865 263 800
f: +44 (0) 1865 793 496
e: info@thehumanjourney.net
w: <http://thehumanjourney.net>

OA North

Mill 3
Moor Lane
Lancaster LA1 1GF

t: +44 (0) 1524 541 000
f: +44 (0) 1524 848 606
e: [oanorth@thehumanjourney.net](mailto: oanorth@thehumanjourney.net)
w: <http://thehumanjourney.net>

OA East

15 Trafalgar Way
Bar Hill
Cambridgeshire
CB23 8SQ

t: +44 (0) 1223 850500
f: +44 (0) 1223 850599
e: [oaeast@thehumanjourney.net](mailto: oaeast@thehumanjourney.net)
w: <http://thehumanjourney.net/oaeast>

OA Méditerranée

115 Rue Merlot
ZAC La Louvade
34 130 Maugeio
France

t: +33 (0) 4.67.57.86.92
f: +33 (0) 4.67.42.65.93
e: [oamed@oamed.fr](mailto: oamed@oamed.fr)
w: <http://oamed.fr/>



Director: David Jennings, BA MIFA FSA

*Oxford Archaeological Unit is a
Private Limited Company, N^o: 1618597
and a Registered Charity, N^o: 285627*