



Gamlingay Village College

Archaeological Evaluation Report

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Gamlingay Village College
Archaeological Evaluation Report
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Summary

Oxford Archaeology East undertook an archaeological evaluation on the 23rd of October 2017 at Gamlingay Village College, Gamlingay, Cambridgeshire.

A total of three trenches were excavated across the development area, each measuring 12m in length. Topsoil and subsoil were observed overlying sandy natural. All trenches were devoid of archaeology.

Acknowledgements

Oxford Archaeology would like to thank Coulson Building Group for commissioning this project on behalf of Cambridgeshire County Council. Thanks is also extended to Andy Thomas who monitored the work on behalf of Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team for his advice and guidance.

The project was managed for Oxford Archaeology by Chris Thatcher. The fieldwork was directed by Graeme Clarke. Survey and digitizing was carried out by David Brown.

The finds were cleaned and packaged by OA staff under the management of Natasha Dodwell. The environmental remains were processed under the management of Rachel Fosberry. Katherine Hamilton prepared the archive.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope of work

- 1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by Coulson Building Group, on behalf of Cambridgeshire County Council, to undertake a trial trench evaluation at the site of Gamlingay Village College (centred on TL 2413 5206).
- 1.1.2 The work was undertaken to inform the Planning Authority in advance of a submission of a Planning Application. A Brief was set by Andy Thomas and a Written Scheme of Investigation was produced by OA detailing the Local Authority's requirements for work necessary to discharge the planning condition. This document outlines how OA implemented the specified requirements.

1.2 Location, topography and geology

- 1.2.1 The bedrock of the site is sandstone of the Woburn Sands Formation. No superficial deposits are reported (British Geological Survey 2014). The soils are shallow and sandy.
- 1.2.2 Gamlingay lies on a shallow plateau, which has been eroded by the Millbridge Brook. The Village College site lies at approximately 48mOD, immediately west of the Brook.
- 1.2.3 The site is currently a school, with lawned playing fields around the buildings.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The archaeological and historical background below is drawn from the Written Scheme of Investigation (Wiseman 2017).

Palaeolithic to Bronze Age

- 1.3.2 A significant number of flint implements have been recovered along the line of the Greensands Ridge. Palaeolithic implements including borers, scrapers and graters (CHER 02386) were found c.100m to the south-west of the Village College.
- 1.3.3 Mesolithic flints, including a large number of arrowheads, are widely scattered around the village. There is a notable concentration 600m north-east of the site: finds have included an axehead (CHER 08353), a flint knife (CHER 00025), arrowheads (CHER 00243, 02006), cores and a variety of tools (CHER 2336, 8355, 08267). To the west and south-west, Mesolithic finds include arrowheads (CHER 00105, 02396), microlith tools (CHER 02393) and worked flint (CHER 00060, 20912). Neolithic flints include a barbed arrowhead (CHER 02393a). Early Bronze Age finds include two arrowheads (CHER 02396A, 02395).
- 1.3.4 Three hundred metres to the south-east, on the opposite bank of the Brook, a large rectangular cropmark was identified in aerial photographs. Excavation produced a large assemblage of worked flint and some pottery dating from the Mesolithic to Bronze Age. Finds also included five Mesolithic tranchet axes (CHER 11980).
- 1.3.5 A cropmark of a ring ditch – presumably Bronze Age – lies 500m to the south-east of the site (CHER 05372).

Roman

- 1.3.6 The small number of Roman finds recovered within the village suggest that the site was not settled during this time. Finds have included a Roman tile at the church (CHER 00253), a fragment of quern, Roman coins, a possible Roman pin and a spoon fragment recovered from the Saxon cemetery (CHER 11980A). A single pottery sherd has been recovered 800m to the north-west of the site (CHER 20421).

Saxon and early medieval

- 1.3.7 Excavations directly across the Brook, 300m south-east of the site, uncovered an Early-to-Middle Saxon farmstead/settlement and inhumation cemetery (CHER 11980A).
- 1.3.8 Early Saxon settlement features included a six-post structure (possibly a granary) and 12 sunken-feature buildings, along with pits, postholes and ditches, surrounded by a causewayed enclosure ditch. A second phase of activity resulted in the construction of a long building – initially on beamslots but subsequently as a post-built structure – along with livestock enclosures.
- 1.3.9 After the site was abandoned as a settlement, a plot roughly 40 × 40m was used as an inhumation cemetery, with at least 118 inhumations buried in seven rows, and a small cluster of six burials to the north.
- 1.3.10 Despite the density of Saxon settlement on this site, there is little evidence for Saxon occupation elsewhere in the village. Two sherds of Saxon pottery were found at the church (CHER 00253), and excavations 800m west of the site found possible Late Saxon ditches and pits (CHER 17802).

Later medieval

- 1.3.11 The medieval core of Gamlingay is around the church, 250m north of the site (CHER 00253). One medieval manorial complex dating back to the 12th century stands immediately north-east of the site (Merton Manor Farm). The oldest buildings date from the 15th century and the site is moated (CHER 012366a). There are also two other moated sites: one immediately east of the church (CHER 01139); the other 650m north-east of the site. There is one building, 250m north of the site, by the church, which dates from the 15th century (CHER 02311). Excavations 200m north of the site found beamslots and other remains of medieval buildings (CHER 20226).
- 1.3.12 Medieval ridge and furrow is recorded in a number of fields east of the village, 500 – 1,000m from the site (CHER 18943, 18942, 18944, 21218).

Post-medieval and modern

- 1.3.13 Post-medieval development has generally spread west of the church, along Church Street (where there is a concentration of listed buildings), and then around Mill Street and Potton Road in the 19th century.
- 1.3.14 Twentieth century development has seen substantial residential infilling between Church Street and Mill Road, as well as expansion to the west of Potton Road.

2 EVALUATION AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

2.1.1 The project aims and objectives were as follows:

- i. To establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains on the site, characterise their location, depth and extent and establish the quality of preservation of any archaeology and environmental remains
- ii. To provide sufficient coverage to establish the character, condition, date and purpose of any archaeological deposits
- iii. To provide sufficient coverage to evaluate the likely impact of past land uses, and the possible presence of masking deposits
- iv. To provide – in the event that archaeological remains were found – sufficient information to construct an archaeological mitigation strategy, dealing with preservation, the recording of archaeological deposits, working practices, timetables, and orders of cost.

2.2 Methodology

- 2.2.1 A total of three trenches, each measuring 12 × 1.6m, were excavated. This was equivalent to 5% of the development area (1,175 m²). Service plans were checked before work commenced on site. Before trenching, the footprint of each trench was scanned by a qualified and experienced operator using a CAT and Genny with a valid calibration certificate.
- 2.2.2 Bucket samples of 90 litres of excavated soil were taken from the end of each trench, in order to characterise artefactual remains in the topsoil and other soil horizons above the archaeological level. These were sieved off site for the purposes of finds retrieval. No finds were recovered.
- 2.2.3 Spoil, exposed surfaces and features were scanned with a metal detector.
- 2.2.4 All machine excavation was undertaken under the supervision of a suitably qualified and experienced archaeologist.
- 2.2.5 The trial trenches were excavated by a mechanical excavator to the upper interface of archaeological features or deposits. A toothless ditching bucket used to excavate the trenches. Overburden was excavated in spits not greater than 0.1m thick.
- 2.2.6 Spoil was stored alongside trenches. Topsoil, subsoil, and archaeological deposits were kept separate during excavation, to allow for sequential backfilling of excavations.
- 2.2.7 Site survey was carried out using a survey-grade differential GPS (Leica CS10/GS08 or Leica 1200) fitted with "smartnet" technology with an accuracy of 5mm horizontal and 10mm vertical.
- 2.2.8 The site grid is accurately tied into the Ordnance Survey National Grid and located on the 1:2500 or 1:1250 map of the area. Elevations are levelled to the Ordnance Datum.
- 2.2.9 A register has been kept of all trenches and photographs. Written descriptions are recorded on pro-forma sheets comprising factual data and interpretative elements.

- 2.2.10 Site plans have been drawn at 1:50. Sections of features have been drawn at 1:20. All sections are tied in to Ordnance Datum.
- 2.2.11 All site drawings include the following information: site name, site code, scale, plan or section number, orientation, date and the name or initials of the archaeologist who prepared the drawing.
- 2.2.12 The photographic record comprises high resolution digital photographs. Photographs include a scale, north arrow, site code and trench number. The photograph register records these details, and photograph numbers are listed on corresponding context sheets.
- 2.2.13 The site archive is currently held by OA East and will be deposited with the appropriate county stores in due course.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 The results of the evaluation are presented below. The full details of all trenches with dimensions and depths of all deposits can be found in Appendix A. No artefacts were recovered from any of the trenches.

3.2 General soils and ground conditions

3.2.1 The soil sequence between all trenches was uniform. The natural geology of orange sand with occasional ironstone/sandstone inclusions was overlain by a mid brown sand topsoil. This was, in turn, sealed by turf.

3.2.2 Ground conditions during the evaluation were generally good, and the trenches remained dry throughout. No archaeological features or deposits were identified in any of the trenches.

4 DISCUSSION

4.1 Reliability of field investigation

- 4.1.1 The trenches excavated provided a 5% sample of the development area. The geology consisted of sand deposits and no archaeological features were identified. This would indicate that there had been little activity within the development site in the preceding periods.

APPENDIX A TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench 1						
General description					Orientation	E-W
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil overlying natural Woburn Sand geology.					Length (m)	12
					Width (m)	2
					Avg. depth (m)	0.4
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
1	Layer	-	0.4	Topsoil	-	-
2	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 2						
General description					Orientation	N-S
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil overlying natural Woburn Sand geology.					Length (m)	12
					Width (m)	2
					Avg. depth (m)	0.3
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
1	Layer	-	0.3	Topsoil	-	-
2	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 3						
General description					Orientation	SW-NE
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil overlying natural Woburn Sand geology.					Length (m)	12
					Width (m)	2
					Avg. depth (m)	0.3
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
1	Layer	-	0.3	Topsoil	-	-
2	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

APPENDIX B BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bush, L. & Thatcher, C., 2017, Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation at Gamlingay Village College, Gamlingay, Cambridgeshire

Thomas, A, 2017, Brief for an Archaeological Evaluation at Gamlingay Village College, Gamlingay, Cambridgeshire

Online Sources

<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> (Accessed 27/10/17)

APPENDIX C OASIS REPORT FORM

Project Details

OASIS Number	Oxfordar3-300533		
Project Name	Gamlingay Village College		
Start of Fieldwork	23/10/17	End of Fieldwork	23/10/17
Previous Work	No	Future Work	No

Project Reference Codes

Site Code	GAMVIC17	Planning App. No.	
HER Number	ECB5236	Related Numbers	

Prompt	NPPF
Development Type	Public building
Place in Planning Process	Pre-application

Techniques used (tick all that apply)

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <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 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 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	Period
None	None
	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.

Object	Period
none	None
	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.

Insert more lines as appropriate.

Project Location

County	Cambridgeshire	Address (including Postcode) Gamlingay Village College Station Road Gamlingay SG19 3HD
District	South Cambridgeshire	
Parish	Gamlingay	
HER office	Cambridge	
Size of Study Area	1,175 m ²	
National Grid Ref	TL 2413 5206	

Project Originators

Organisation	OA East
Project Brief Originator	Cambridgeshire County Council
Project Design Originator	OA East

Project Manager	Chris Thatcher
Project Supervisor	Graeme Clarke

Project Archives

	Location	ID
Physical Archive (Finds)	N/A	
Digital Archive	OA East	GAMVIC17
Paper Archive	CCC stores	ECB5236

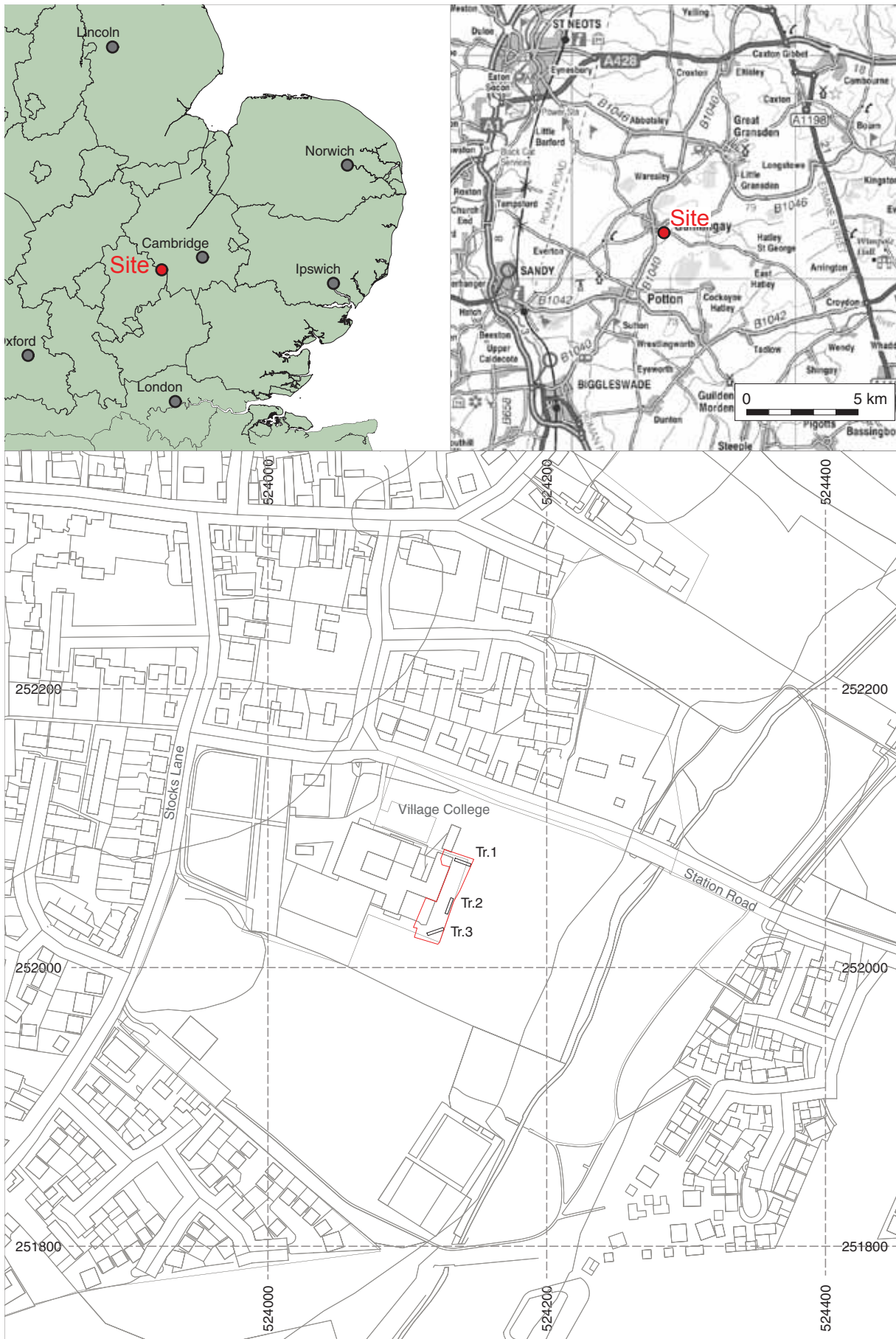
Physical Contents	Present?	Digital files associated with Finds	Paperwork associated with Finds
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Ceramics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Glass	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Human Remains	<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

Database	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
GIS	<input type="checkbox"/>
Geophysics	<input type="checkbox"/>
Images (Digital photos)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Illustrations (Figures/Plates)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Moving Image	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spreadsheets	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Survey	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Text	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Virtual Reality	<input type="checkbox"/>

Paper Media

Aerial Photos	<input type="checkbox"/>
Context Sheets	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Correspondence	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Diary	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drawing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Manuscript	<input type="checkbox"/>
Map	<input type="checkbox"/>
Matrices	<input type="checkbox"/>
Microfiche	<input type="checkbox"/>
Miscellaneous	<input type="checkbox"/>
Research/Notes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Photos (negatives/prints/slides)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Plans	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Report	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Sections	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Survey	<input type="checkbox"/>



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Figure 1: Site location showing archaeological trenches (black) in development area (red) Scale: 1:4000



Plate 1: Trench 1 from east



Plate 2: Trench 2 from south



Plate 3: Trench 3 from north-east



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