

Archaeological Field Unit

**Land between 47 and 59, Hall Barn Road, Isleham:
An Archaeological Evaluation**

S Kenney

2001

Cambridgeshire County Council

Report No. B84

Commissioned by Isleham Pound Lane Free Church

**Land between 47 and 59 Hall Barn Road, Isleham:
An Archaeological Evaluation
(TL 6392/7384)**

Scott Kenney

May 2001

Editor : Judith Roberts MA
Illustrator: Scott Kenney



Report No. B84

©Archaeological Field Unit
Cambridgeshire County Council
Fulbourn Community Centre
Haggis Gap, Fulbourn
Cambridgeshire CB1 5HD
Tel (01223) 881614
Fax (01223) 880946

Arch.Field.Unit@libraries.camcnty.gov.uk
<http://www.camcnty.gov.uk/library/afu/index.htm>
<http://www.archaeology.freewire.co.uk>

SUMMARY

The Archaeological Field Unit of Cambridgeshire County Council has conducted an archaeological evaluation on 0.51ha of land between 47 and 59, Hall Barn Road, Isleham, Cambridgeshire (TL 6392/7384). This was in advance of a proposed housing development.

Despite a wealth of Roman remains to the west of the site, only a single pit of undetermined prehistoric date was found in the five trenches excavated.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	1
2	GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY	1
3	HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND	3
4	METHODOLOGY	3
5	RESULTS	3
6	DISCUSSION	4
7	RECOMMENDATIONS	4
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	5
	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	5
	Maps consulted	5

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1:	Site location	2
Figure 2:	Section and plan of pit 4	4

**Land between 47 and 59 Hall Barn Road, Isleham:
An Archaeological Evaluation
(TL 6392/7384)**

1 INTRODUCTION

Between the 30th of April and the 1st of May 2001, an archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Field Unit (AFU) on a plot of land between Nos. 47 and 59, Hall Barn Road, Isleham, Cambridgeshire (TL 6392/7384) (Fig. 1). It was commissioned by Isleham Pound Lane Free Church in response to a brief set by the County Archaeology Office (CAO).

The site lies on the south-west side of Isleham, and to the east of Hall Barn Road. It is rectangular in plan, 0.51ha in area and has been under an agricultural regime until the present time.

The presence of archaeological remains was considered likely by the CAO on the basis of information contained in the County Sites and Monuments record (SMR). It records Roman remains at several find spots within 500m of the site, to the west.

2 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

2.1 Geology

According to the British Geological Survey, Isleham sits on the Upper Beds of the Cretaceous Lower Chalk ridge of south Cambridgeshire (BGS 1974).

2.2 Topography

The village of Isleham lies at the south-eastern Fen edge, at a height ranging from 18m OD in the southern part of the parish to 7m OD towards the northern fen-edge.

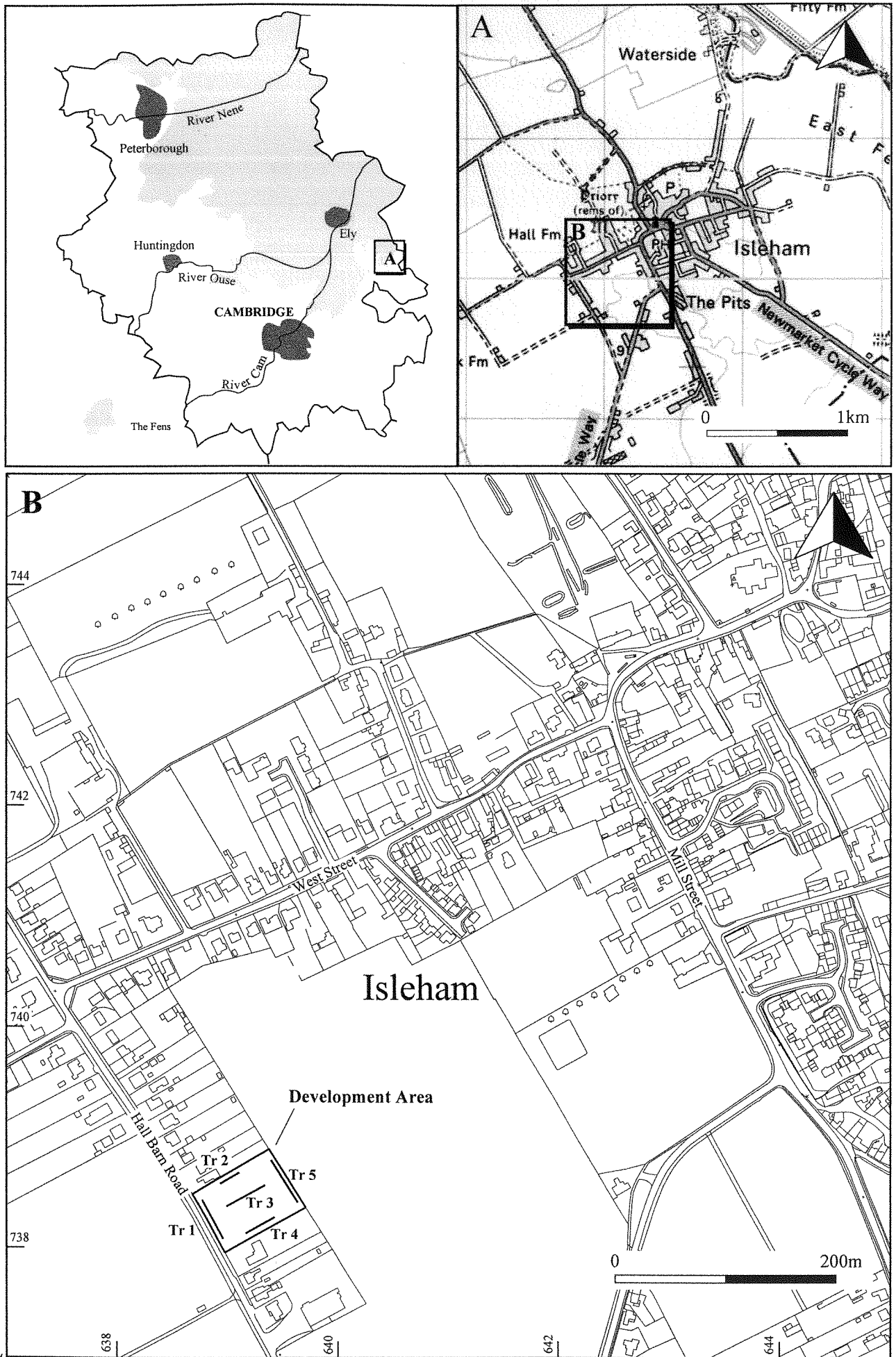


Figure 1 Site location

3 HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Before the evaluation stage of this project, a desk-based assessment of archaeological potential was undertaken, and this forms the background for this report. The results will not be reiterated here, and can be found in the companion report (Casa-Hatton 2001).

4 METHODOLOGY

Five trenches were opened by a JCB using a flat-bladed ditching bucket 1.5m wide, under the supervision of an archaeologist. The total length of the trenches was 175m and this constitutes a 5.2% sample of the development area.

5 RESULTS

Trench 1 was 40m long and contained no archaeology. 0.3-0.4m of dark brownish grey sandy clay silt topsoil overlay 0.2-0.3m of orange-brown sandy clay silt subsoil. This in turn overlay the natural chalk.

Trench 2 was 20m long and contained no archaeology. 0.3m of dark brownish grey sandy clay silt topsoil overlay the natural chalk.

Trench 3 was 40m long and contained a single pit, 4. 0.3m of dark brownish grey sandy clay silt topsoil overlay the fill of the pit. The pit was only partially visible within the trench, however, it was probably originally circular. It had vertical sides, an irregular, slightly concave base, and was 1.7m long, 0.45m deep and at least 0.85m wide. The fill, 3, was a brown sandy clay silt with occasional chalk lumps and rare charcoal flecks. Burnt flint and animal bone were recovered from the fill, along with three small sherds of undiagnostic prehistoric pottery.

Trench 4 was 30m long and contained no archaeology. 0.3m of dark brownish grey sandy clay silt topsoil overlay the natural chalk.

Trench 5 was 45m long and contained no archaeology. 0.3m of dark brownish grey sandy clay silt topsoil overlay the natural chalk.

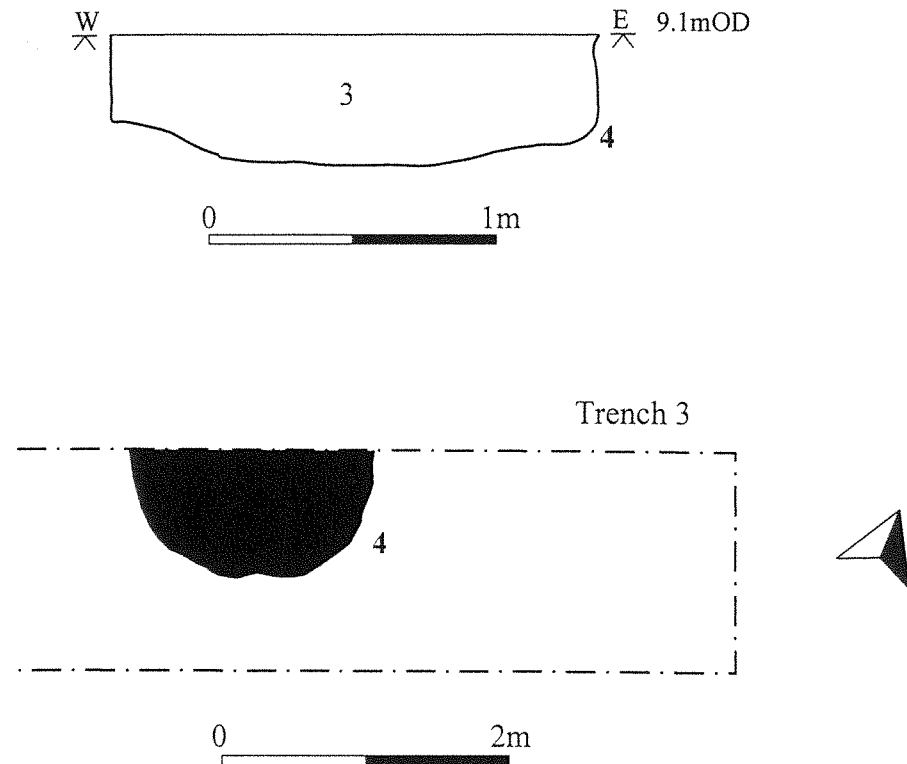


Figure 2 Section and plan of pit 4

6 DISCUSSION

Given the wealth of archaeological remains plainly highlighted by the desk-based assessment, it is perhaps surprising that more features were not located during the evaluation. The single pit indicates that pre-Roman occupation must have existed somewhere nearby, but it does not lie within the development area.

During the evaluation, it was observed that several ridges cross Hall Barn Road in a perpendicular manner at wide intervals. These are presumed to be headlands of the medieval field system, and other ridges running parallel to Hall Barn Road can be seen in the field to the west. Many of the modern boundaries appear to conform to these earlier arrangements. The fact that the road crosses these ridges seems to imply that it is a later imposition, and the line of it is raised above that of the surrounding land. It may be, however, that

the road was formed as a trackway between two headlands in a later field system which overlies the earlier medieval pattern.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS

No further work is recommended before construction takes place.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author wishes to thank Isleham Pound Lane Free Church for funding the work, and Judith Roberts for managing the project. This project was carried out in response to a brief drawn up by the County Archaeology Office.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Casa-Hatton, R, 2001 *Land between 47 and 59 Hall Barn Road, Isleham: An Archaeological Desktop Assessment*, Cambridgeshire Archaeology Report No A178

Maps Consulted

Ordnance Survey digital maps TL 6373, TL 6473, TL 6374, TL 6474, 2000.

British Geological Survey 188, Cambridge, Solid and Drift edition, 1974



Cambridgeshire
County Council

Education, Libraries
and Heritage

The Archaeological Field Unit
Fulbourn Community Centre
Haggis Gap
Fulbourn
Cambridge CB1 5HD
Tel (01223) 881614
Fax (01223) 880946