

Archaeological Field Unit

Post-Medieval Remains at Granta Vale, Linton, Cambridgeshire

Spencer Cooper

2001

Cambridgeshire County Council

Report No B94

Commissioned by S.G.Impey

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SUMMARY

Between the 17th September and 19th September 2001 the Archaeological Field Unit of Cambridgeshire County Council carried out an archaeological evaluation on land at Granta Vale, Linton (TL 5657 4675) before the proposed construction of five bungalows. The work was commissioned by Gerrard A. Crouch on behalf of Mr. S.G. Impey. The evaluation undertaken in accordance with the Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Field Unit Specification drawn up by Judith Roberts in response to a Design Brief issued by Andy Thomas of the County Archaeology Office.

Anglo-Saxon burials have been revealed within 200m of the site, which may be evidence for an important Saxon cemetery in the centre of Linton. Documentary evidence indicates that the site is adjacent to one of the two medieval market places set up in Linton in the thirteenth century. Medieval buildings still survive within very close proximity to the development area.

The evaluation revealed post-medieval deposits in trenches 1, 2, 3 and 6. No Roman, Saxon or medieval remains were encountered in the development area.

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**Post-Medieval Remains, at Granta Vale,
Linton, Cambridgeshire
NGR (TL 5657 4675)**

1 INTRODUCTION

Between the 17th September and 19th September 2001 the Archaeological Field Unit of Cambridgeshire County Council carried out an archaeological evaluation on land at Granta Vale, Linton (TL 5657 4675) before the proposed construction of five bungalows. The work was commissioned by Gerrard A. Crouch on behalf of Mr. S. G. Impey. The evaluation was undertaken in accordance with the Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Field Unit Specification drawn up by Judith Roberts in response to a Design Brief issued by Andy Thomas of the County Archaeology Office.

2 TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

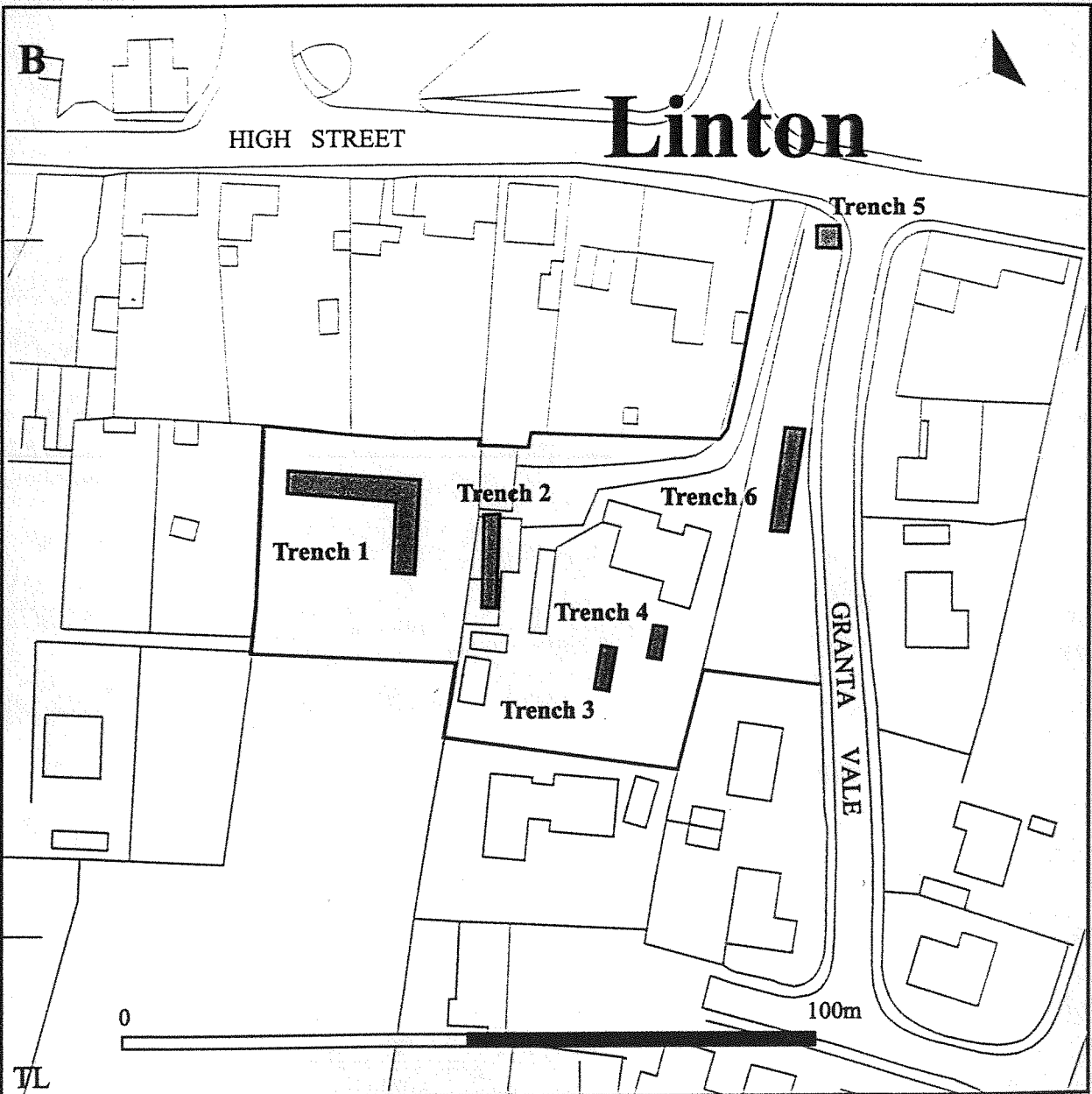
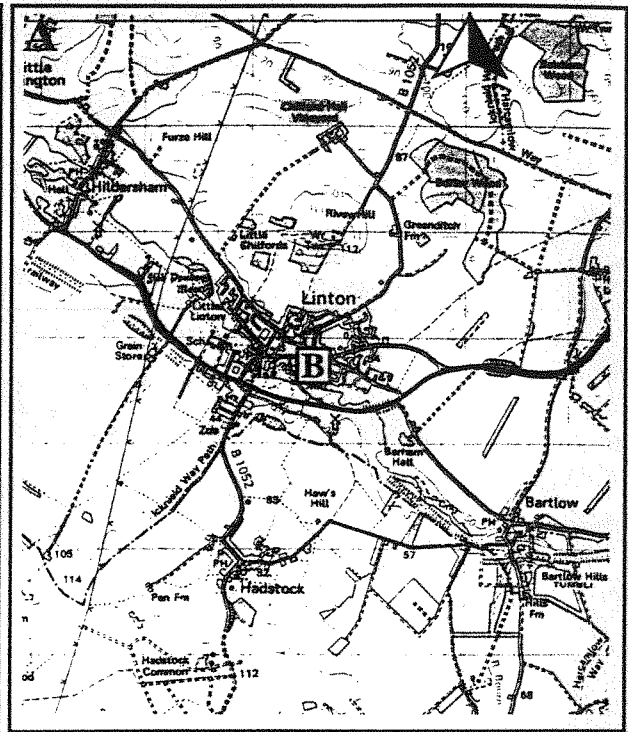
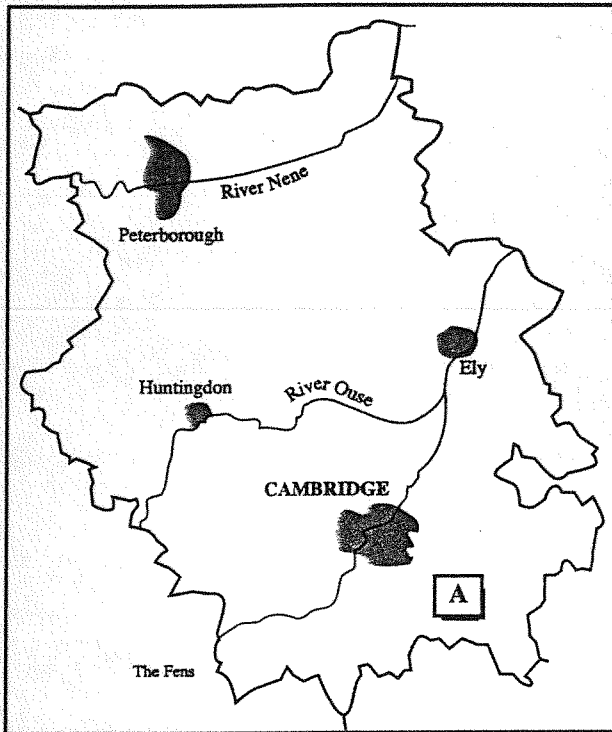
The town of Linton lies twelve miles south-east of Cambridge. It is formed around the crossing of the river Granta and spreads back along the High Street on either side. The subject site lies to the west of the church and 300m to the north of the river Granta. The site slopes from north to south with the northern part of the site 43.1m OD and southern 42.6m OD.

Linton lies mainly on middle chalk, overlaid by narrow beds of alluvium and valley gravels.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The earliest material from the Linton area consists of one or two stray finds of Neolithic flint tools to the west of the subject site (SMR Nos 10154, 6074, and 6166). A Bronze Age barrow was located on Linton Heath which is presumed to be the present site of Heath Farm. This contained at least two urned burials and a number of Roman and Anglo-Saxon burials were later cut into its sides.

To the south of the subject site, near Hadstock Road, an Iron Age house was discovered during chalk quarrying in 1948 (Fell, 1952). Several Iron Age coins were discovered in the Barham area in the nineteenth century (SMR No 09842) and recent excavation revealed a late Iron Age settlement close to the river (SMR No 08941a, Ette and Hinds, 1993).



Based upon Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. (Cambridgeshire County Council licence No. LA 07649X 2001)

Figure 1 Trench location plan

There are extensive Roman remains to the east of the subject site near Barham Hall. A Roman villa, 300m to the north west of Barham Hall, was found by labourers during land-ditching operations in 1826 and partly excavated between 1846 and 1860 by Richard Neville. In plan it seems to have been a corridor villa with a bath suite projecting from the north-eastern end to form an 'L'.

Excavations demonstrated that the bath house was remodelled at least once and that there were hypocaust heating systems throughout the villa. Outlet drains from the bath suite were identified and a separate drain from a latrine. The villa was on a slope above the river and drainage may have been a problem. The villa was brick built with the exception of its south-western corner where flint, chalk and clunch was used.

Neville also investigated a Roman inhumation cemetery just to north of the modern A604 (SMR No 6198). Two inhumations were found alongside a wall faced with large square Roman flanged tiles, and other inhumations were found nearby, one of them carelessly buried. The only grave goods were iron nails, occasional Roman sherds and an iron spearhead. In 1926 a Roman cremation burial was discovered to the east of the villa. The burnt remains were in a pit with a number of early Roman pots, a bronze brooch, a stud in the form of a lion's head.

Roman artefacts (SMR No 6111a) were also found over the eastern half of the field near Barham Hall.

Anglo Saxon burials have been revealed on three separate occasions, all within 200m of the development site (SMR Nos 06114, 06114a and 06114b), which may be evidence for a large Saxon cemetery in the centre of Linton. In 1934 an inhumation burial with a spear was found near the old dovecote. Two cremation burials were found in 1935 when a pipe was being laid at the back of the village near the old road over Rivey Hill. In 1936 during the extension of the Prince of Wales public house two skeletons were uncovered in the cellar. Two silver rings of a spiral form were observed on the finger bones on one of the bodies.

More than 100 Anglo-Saxon burials from the fifth and sixth centuries were excavated from the tumulus on Linton Heath.

Linton was first mentioned in 1008, in the *Liber Eliensis* as *Lintune* and in the Domesday Book as *Lintone*, its name deriving from the Anglo-Saxon for 'flax farm'. Other early references mention *twam Lintunum* i.e. two Lintons (Reaney, 1943).

Domesday Linton consisted of four holdings: Great and Little Linton, Barham and Barham Hall and archaeological evidence confirms that there were settlements in all these areas in the eleventh century. By the late thirteenth century, however, a combination of good communications and ambitious

landowners made Linton into the foremost commercial settlement in Cambridgeshire outside Cambridge.

Changes in the character of the town began in 1246 when William de Say, lord of Great Linton, obtained a grant for a weekly market and annual fair and created a market place near to his manor house at the junction of High Street and Church Lane. Around this he leased small plots to numerous craftspeople and traders. In 1279 his tenants included several merchants, tailors, bakers, tanners, falconers and money-lenders.

Noting the economic success of this venture Simon de Furneaux, lord of Barham manor acquired a similar grant to hold a market and fair in 1282 and made a large rectangular market place at Green Lane. It is possible that the development area may have been located on the site founded by Simon de Furneaux. Taylor suggests (Taylor,1998) that commercial activities may have begun before the 1289 grant was made and many of the tenants were already involved in trade. Around 1280 another market place was created south of the river. This market was the most successful and it was still in use when a map of the parish was made in 1600AD.

In 1086 the various settlements at Linton had a large population of 61 and this grew to at least 172 tenants in 1279 (about 860 people), making it the largest settlement in Cambridgeshire away from the fen edge. By 1377 it had collapsed to 155 tax payers.

The first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1885 shows that the area was divided into two elongated plots with no buildings present.

4 METHODOLOGY

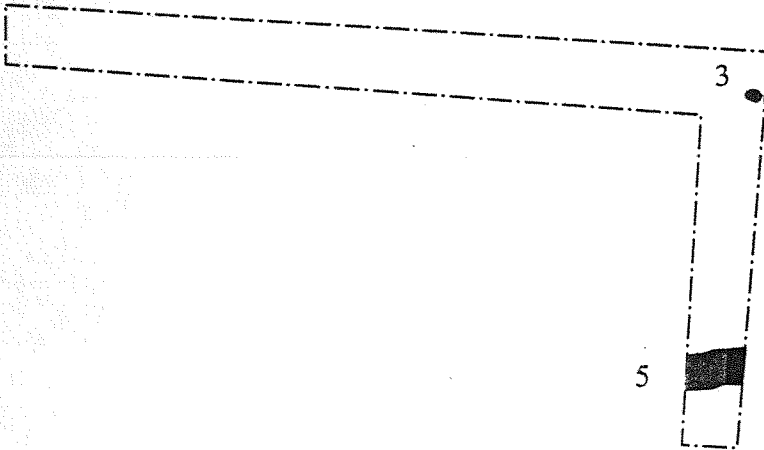
Following background and documentary study a six trenches totalling 80m in length, were excavated using a JCB with a 1.6m wide toothless ditching bucket. A total of 5% of development area was evaluated. The location of trenches are shown in Figure1. After machining the trench was photographed and recorded using the AFU standard archaeological recording system. The spoil heap was scanned for artefact retrieval.

5 RESULTS (see Figure1)

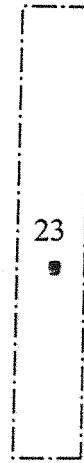
Common layers 1 topsoil and subsoil 2 were present in all trenches. The topsoil was a dark grey silty clay and varied in depth from 0.20m-0.40m across the site. The subsoil was a light grey silty clay and varied in depth from 0.20m-0.70m across the site.



Trench 1



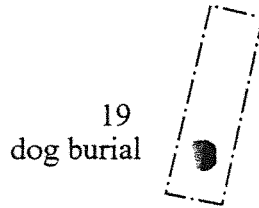
Trench 2



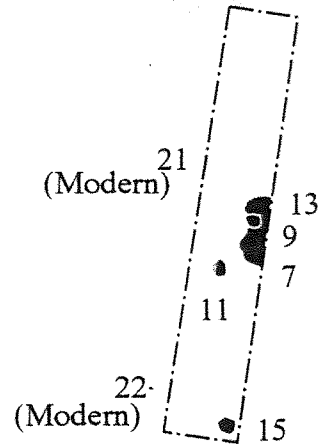
Trench 3



Trench 4



Trench 6



Trench 5

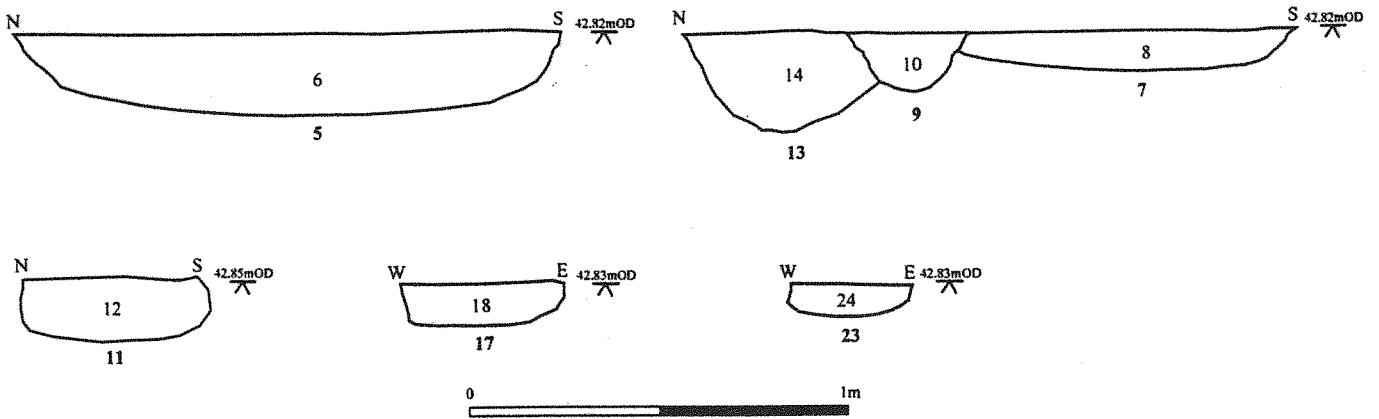
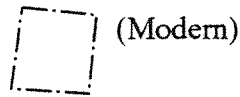


Figure 2 Trench plans and feature sections (Excavated sections are shown in black)

Trench 1

The trench was 'L-shaped' and was 21m long and 1m deep on an east-west alignment and 10m long and 0.90m deep on a north south alignment. A posthole was observed in the western part of the site. Posthole 3 was 0.32m wide and 0.05m deep. It contained a dark grey silty clay fill, 4, and no artefacts.

In the southern corner of the trench a shallow ditch 5 was revealed. Ditch 5 was 1.43m wide and 0.21m deep and contained a single fill 6. Fill 6 was a light grey silty clay with charcoal flecks. Finds from this context included post-medieval brick.

Trench 2

Trench 2 was 15m long and 0.50m deep and was located on a north-south alignment. A posthole, 23, was revealed in the centre of the trench. Posthole 23 was 0.33m wide and 0.09m deep. It contained a single fill, 16, a dark grey silty clay which contained post-medieval brick.

Trench 3

Trench 3 was 12m long and 0.5m deep and located on a north-south alignment. Gully 17 had concave sides and ran on an east-west alignment. It was 0.42m wide and 0.10m deep and contained a single fill, 18, which was a mid grey silty clay with occasional flint. Finds from this context included modern brick.

Trench 4

Trench 4 was 6.2m long and 0.3m deep and located on a north-south alignment. An articulated modern dog burial 19 was encountered in the southern part of the site. This burial was 0.85m wide and 0.10m deep. In the northern part of the site there was a modern service trench running on an east-west alignment (not shown on trench plan, Fig. 2).

Trench 5

Trench 5 was 3.2m long and 0.3m deep on a north-south alignment. It was in the southern part of the development area in order to find possible archaeology relating to a medieval frontage. No archaeological features were observed in this trench. A modern sewer trench running on an east-west alignment was observed.

Trench 6

Trench 6 was 12m long and 0.7m deep on a north-south alignment. This trench was located in the north-western part of the development area. A number of post-medieval features were encountered in trench 6. Posthole 15, in the southern part of the trench, was 0.17m wide and 0.25m deep. It

contained a single fill, 16, a dark grey silty clay. Finds from this context included post-medieval pottery. In the centre of the trench a number of intercutting postholes were observed. Posthole 9 cut post holes 13 and pit 7.

Posthole 9 was 0.30m wide and 0.15m deep and contained a single fill 10. Fill 10 was a dark grey silty clay with post-medieval artefacts. Posthole 13 had concave sides and was 0.43m wide and 0.25m deep. It contained one fill, 14, which was a dark grey silty clay. Finds from this context included post-medieval pottery. Pit 7 had concave sides and was 0.90m wide and 0.10m deep. It contained one fill 8 which was of a dark grey silty clay. Finds from this context included post-medieval pottery. Posthole 11 was 0.50m wide and 0.15m deep. It contained a single fill, 12, a dark grey silty clay. Finds from this context included post medieval pottery and brick.

A foundation trench for a wall 21, which ran on an east-west alignment, was observed in the northern part of the trench. Feature 21 was unexcavated 0.40m wide and contained post-medieval brick. A foundation trench for a wall 22, which ran on an east west alignment, was observed in the northern part of the trench. Feature 22 was unexcavated 0.40m wide and contained post-medieval brick.

6 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The present evaluation has revealed post-medieval remains including ditches, foundation trenches and postholes. A modern dog burial was encountered in trench 3. Trench 5 revealed a number of post-medieval structural remains which may represent post-medieval outbuildings.

The absence of prehistoric and Roman remains is surprising when considering the area is rich in prehistoric and Roman archaeology.

The absence of Anglo-Saxon remains from the evaluation demonstrates that the Anglo-Saxon cemetery did not extend into the development area.

The lack of medieval remains would suggest that Simon de Furneaux's 1282 market place was to the north of the development area.

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