

Archaeological Field Unit

**Bretton Way, Bretton, Peterborough:
An Archaeological Evaluation**

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August 2002

Cambridgeshire County Council

Report No. B103

Commissioned by Mr A. B. Shair

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SUMMARY

Between 8th and 13th of August 2002, an archaeological evaluation was undertaken on 0.5ha of land off Bretton Way (TF16380219) by staff of the Archaeological Field Unit of Cambridgeshire County Council. The project was commissioned by Mr A.B. Shair in advance of construction of a specialist clinic / hospital for bone and joint surgery. The work was carried out in accordance with a brief for an archaeological evaluation issued by Ben Robinson of the Peterborough City Council Archaeological Service (Planning Application No 02/00201/OUT).

The results of the evaluation revealed 20th century deposits which relate to the construction of the adjacent industrial estate or the Bretton Way. No features or artefacts earlier than the 20th century were identified within the subject site.

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(TF 1638 0219)**

1 INTRODUCTION

Between 8th and 13th of August 2002, an archaeological evaluation was undertaken on 0.5ha of land off Bretton Way (TF16380219) by staff of the Archaeological Field Unit of Cambridgeshire County Council. The project was commissioned by Mr A. B. Shair in advance of construction of a specialist clinic / hospital for bone and joint surgery. The work was carried out in accordance with a brief for an archaeological evaluation issued by Ben Robinson of the Peterborough City Council Archaeological Service (Planning Application No 02/00201/OUT).

Bretton is located 4km to the north west of the historic core of Peterborough. The site is currently rough grassland.

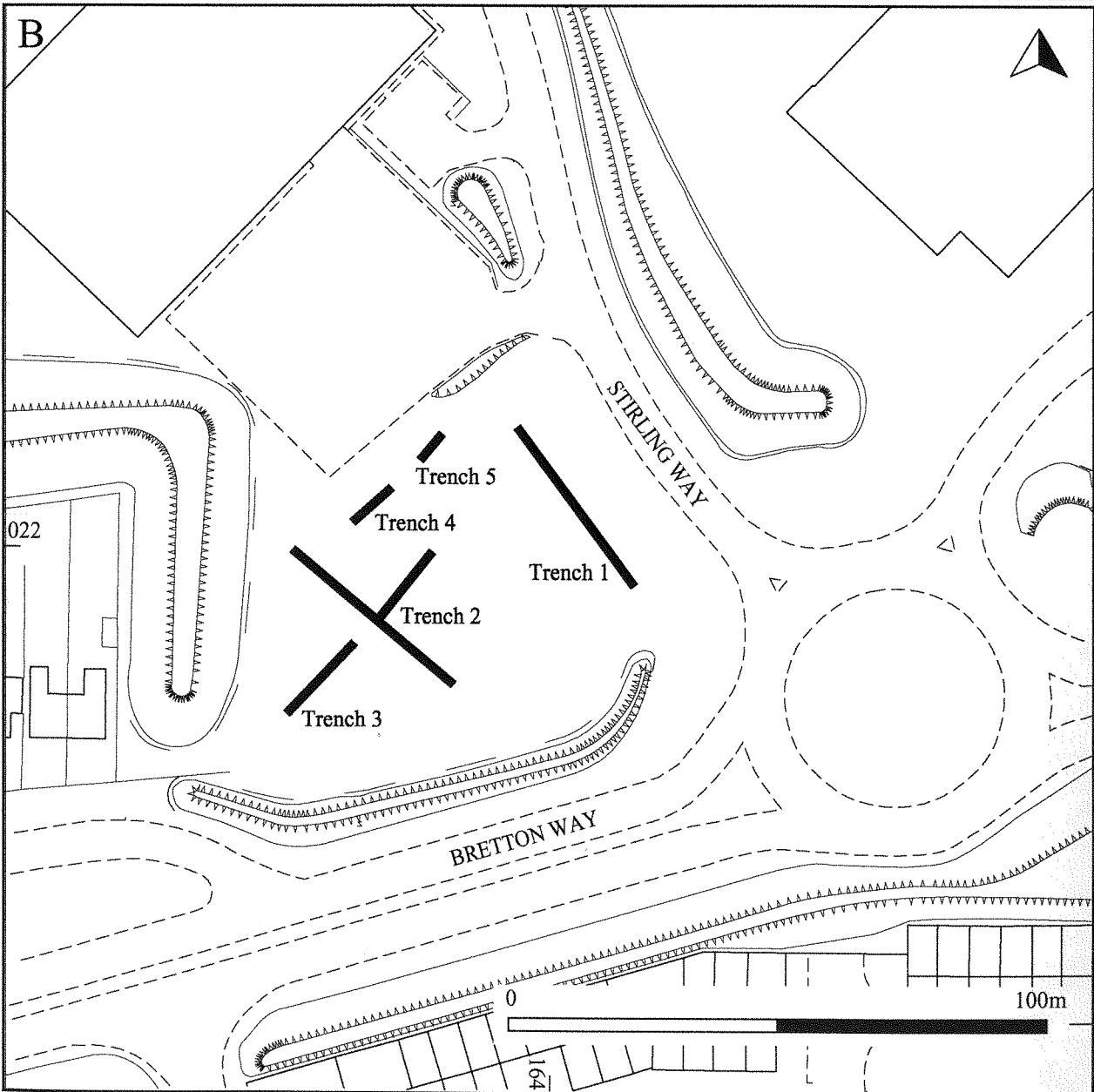
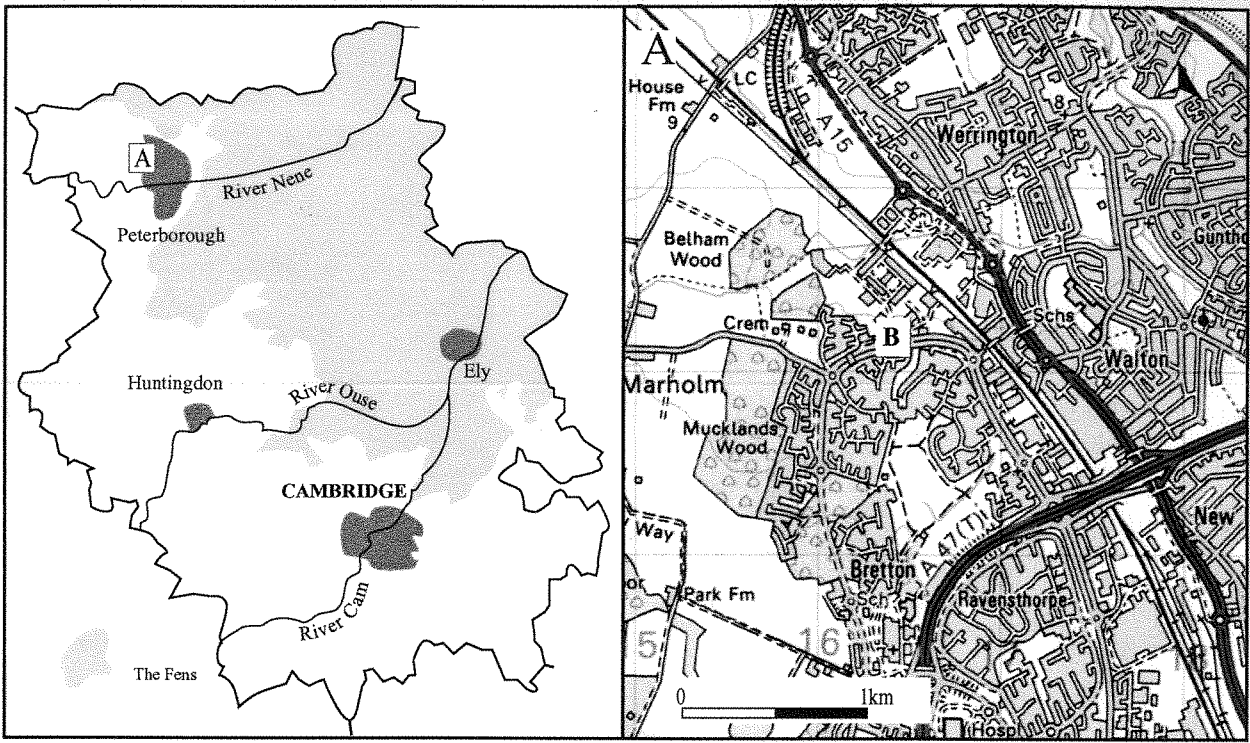
2 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

The subject site is close to the boundary between Bilsworth Clay and Cornbrash at a height of 14m OD.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Archaeological investigation next to the development area in the 1970s (Britannia, 5,1974) revealed extensive Roman remains (SMR Nos. 936 and 936a) and early Anglo-Saxon settlement. Finds indicate occupation of the site from the first century with major phases of activity from the second to fourth century. Occupation continued into the fifth and sixth century and Anglo-Saxon pottery and other artefacts were found in the upper fills of ditches.

One substantial Roman building was recognised and one possible sunken feature building was noted. Building material suggests high status Roman buildings nearby. Waterlogged deposits were found in one feature.



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TF **Figure 1** Location map.

4 METHODOLOGY

A series of five trenches, totalling 107m in length and 1.6m wide, was excavated using a JCB with a toothless ditching bucket. The positions of the trenches are shown in Figure 1. After machining was completed each trench was cleaned by hand, photographed and recorded using the A.F.U. standard archaeological system. In addition all of the spoil heaps from the trenches were scanned visually for artefacts.

5 RESULTS

The topsoil was composed of dark grey silty clay with a frequent amount of modern bricks and other modern debris. The depth of the topsoil varied across the site from 0.25–0.50m. Concrete pads were identified in trenches 1 and 3. No archaeological features were identified within the development area. No artefacts earlier than the 20th century were identified.

Trench 1

Trench 1 was 35m long and 0.50m deep and was on a northwest-southeast alignment. A concrete floor was revealed in the southern part of the trench. No archaeological features were identified in this trench. Extensive concrete flooring was observed in the southern part of the trench.

Trench 2

Trench 2 was a T-shaped trench that was 28m long and 0.30m deep on a northwest-southeast alignment. On an east-west alignment it was 13.25m long and 0.40m deep. Three modern features were encountered at the T-junction. Ditch 6 ran on a northwest-southeast alignment and was 0.50m wide and 0.10m deep. It contained one fill, which was light brown silty clay and contained modern brick. Ditch 10 ran on a northeast-southwest alignment 0.50m wide and 0.08m deep. It contained a single fill 11, a dark grey silty clay, and produced modern artefacts. Ditch 8 ran on a northwest-southeast alignment and was 0.61m wide and 0.12m deep. It contained one fill 9, which was a dark grey silty clay and produced modern artefacts.

Trench 3

Trench 3 was 14.80m long and 0.25m deep and was on a northeast-southwest alignment. No archaeological features were identified in this trench.

Trench 4

Trench 4 was 10.60m long and 0.50m deep and was aligned northeast-southwest. No archaeological features were identified in this trench.

Trench 5

Trench 5 was 5.10m long and 0.50m deep and was aligned northwest-southeast. No archaeological features were identified in this trench.

6 DISCUSSION

Deposits encountered within this evaluation represent debris from either construction of the nearby roads or the adjacent industrial estate. The lack of archaeological deposits, coupled with the presence of extensive concrete floors, suggest that this area had been used as a compound for temporary buildings relating to the construction of the Bretton Way or the industrial estate.

7 CONCLUSION

The aim of the evaluation was to identify remains relating to the Roman and early Anglo Saxon settlement revealed in the 1970s. Those excavations identified extensive Roman remains including a substantial Roman building and one sunken featured building. It was hoped that this level of occupation might have been identified within the subject site.

The results of the evaluation revealed 20th century deposits which relate to the construction of the adjacent industrial estate or the Bretton Way. No features or artefacts earlier than the 20th century were identified within the subject site.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to thank Mr A. B. Shair who commissioned and funded the archaeological work. The project was managed by Judith Roberts.

The brief for archaeological works was written by Ben Robinson, Peterborough City Council Archaeology Service, who visited the site and monitored the evaluation.

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