

Archaeological Field Unit

**The Model Laundry, Ouse Walk,
Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire:
An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment**

S Kenney

2003

Cambridgeshire County Council

Report No. 213

Commissioned by DH Barford+Co
on behalf of Huntingdon Model Laundry

**The Model Laundry Site, Ouse Walk,
Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire:
An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment
(TL 2434/7176)**

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SUMMARY

The proposed development, covering an area of approximately 0.43 ha and centred on TL 2434/7176, is bounded by Riverside Road, Brook House, and the houses of Victoria Square and Temple Close, in the town of Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire. The proposed development involves construction of residential dwellings. The site lies in an area of largely unknown archaeological potential, within the medieval town and probably just outside the Saxon/Danish burh. There are Roman and medieval remains recorded in the vicinity, but no historic maps that indicate any development in the area until the construction of the Model Laundry itself in 1896. The evidence of past activity to the north, south, and west and the lack of post-medieval development until the late nineteenth century imply a high potential for preservation of any archaeological remains on the site that have not been disturbed by foundations.

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1 INTRODUCTION

This study was commissioned by DH Barford+Co, on behalf of Huntingdon Model Laundry, in advance of a proposed residential re-development. The assessment aims to define the archaeological potential of the land likely to be affected by the development. It has been compiled by the author in response to a brief issued by the County Archaeology Office (CAO) of Cambridgeshire County Council. The brief was written by Andy Thomas, Principal Archaeologist at the CAO, and is dated 9th June 2003. It includes the requirements for both a desk-based assessment and intrusive evaluation, however, this document only addresses the former point.

The site is a roughly rectangular area of approximately 0.43ha, bounded on the south-east by Riverside Road, and with Brook House to the north. To the south-west lie the houses of Victoria Square and Temple Close. The site is centred on TL 2434/7176.

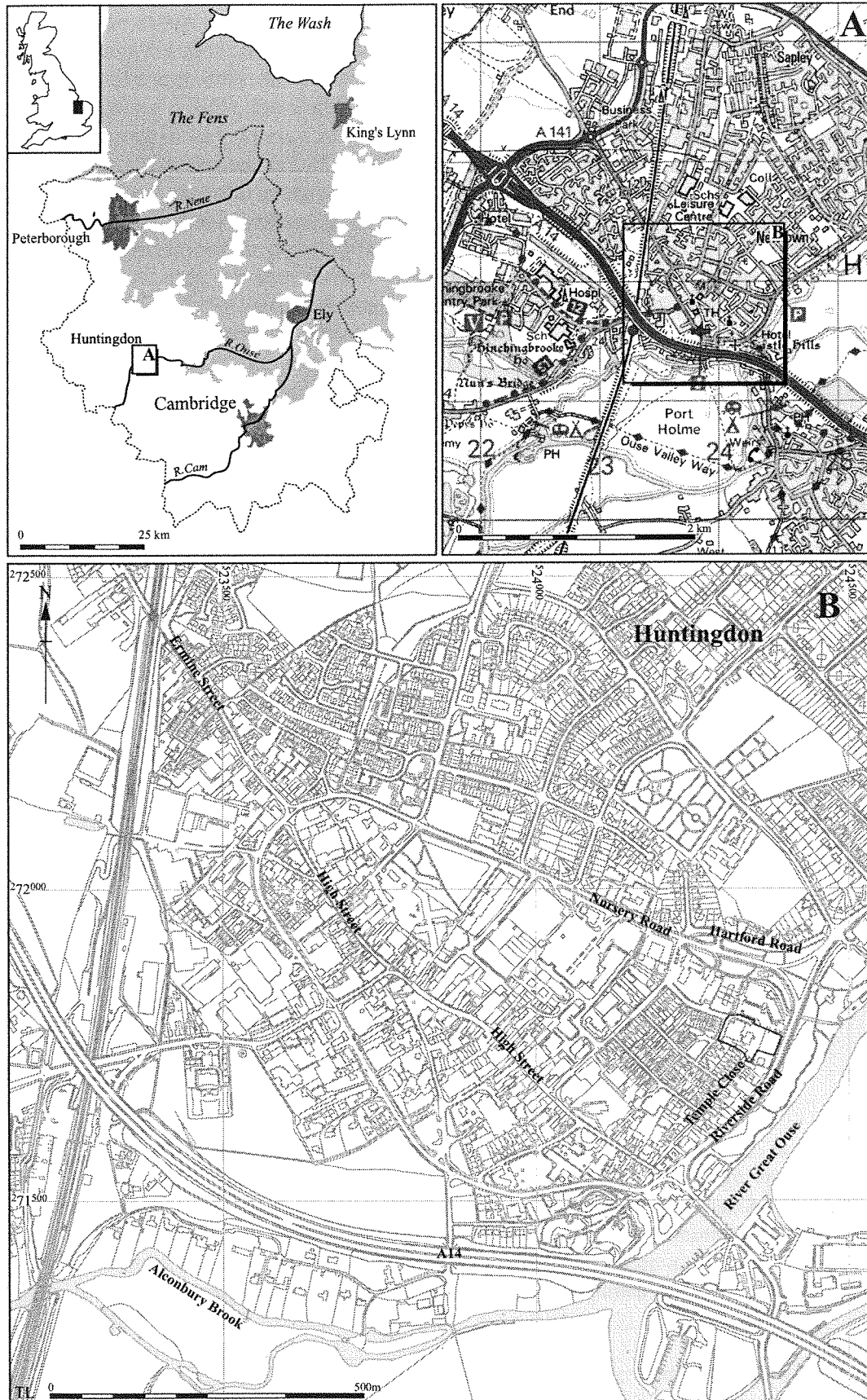
2 TOPOGRAPHICAL AND GEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The site lies within the modern town of Huntingdon, just inside the ring road on the eastern side. Hartford Road lies at around 10mOD to the north and west. To the south, the land around the High Street is generally higher, at around 14mOD.

According to the British Geological Survey, the development area is located on the Pleistocene First and Second Terrace Gravels of the River Great Ouse. The gravels overlie Upper Jurassic Oxford Clays, which are the underlying solid geology across a wide area in this region.

3 METHODOLOGY

The aim of this desktop assessment is to provide information concerning the location, extent, survival and significance of the known archaeological remains in the vicinity and on the site, as well as assessing the potential for further archaeological remains to survive.



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Figure 1 Location of Development Area (in red).

In order to map the potential for archaeology at Huntingdon, the investigation concentrated on the accessible archaeological and historical resources held by Huntingdon Record Office (HRO), Cambridge Record Office (CRO), the Cambridgeshire Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) and documentary sources held by the CCC Archaeological Field Unit. The latter includes the archive of the Huntingdon Archaeological Town Survey (1997-9) and material gleaned from the archives of Sidney Inskipp Ladds, held by the Norris Museum in St. Ives. Unpublished archives of archaeological interventions in Huntingdon were also studied, although none refer to the exact area of the current development. The subject area is considered unsuitable for aerial photographic assessment or geophysical survey, due to the current and recent building cover.

The known archaeological resource was investigated through the County's Sites and Monuments Record held by Cambridgeshire County Council. Additional published resources such as the Victoria County Histories and the Royal Commission inventory for the parish were examined. Reports and archives on excavations carried out in and around Huntingdon were consulted.

The historical records held at the HRO in Huntingdon were consulted. The Office holds copies of the Enclosure Award, Tithe map and earlier maps of the town, as well as documents referring to land sales. This work was supplemented by study of the Ordnance Survey maps of the area, from the draft First Edition onwards. The modern layout of the town appears to retain many boundaries and holdings set out in the medieval period and perhaps dating from earlier periods.

No geotechnical survey has been undertaken or is known to the client, thus it has not been possible to assess the condition and status of buried deposits or confirm local geological conditions.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 Prehistoric

The subject site is situated within the Ouse Valley, which is rich in prehistoric remains. During the late Neolithic and Bronze Age, major ritual complexes sprang up and evolved along the course of the Ouse and although much of the material culture does not survive, these monuments are highly visible from the air as cropmarks. These ceremonial complexes cover extensive territories and are distributed evenly across the landscape (Malim 2000).

To the west of Huntingdon lies the late Neolithic and Early Bronze Age ceremonial complex of Brampton. Mortuary enclosures, cursus monuments and ring ditches have been identified. Brampton and its surroundings are an

area rich in archaeological activity. Aerial photographic work has discovered groups of Neolithic monuments including henges, a cursus and a long mortuary enclosure, in addition to Bronze Age burial monuments and Iron Age/Romano-British field systems. Parts of this landscape have been scheduled as an ancient monument (SAM 121). In 1990 and 1991 an investigation of a portion of this monument, north of the Thrapston Road and south of Alconbury Brook, found evidence for a Neolithic mortuary enclosure situated at the end of a cursus (Malim 1990).

Excavations within the area have also recovered material relating to prehistoric ritual activity. In 1966 a Bronze Age triple ring ditch was investigated south of the Thrapston Road and a cinerary urn and 'maritime' beaker fragments were recovered from the ditches (White 1969). Subsequent work in the same area uncovered an Iron Age settlement and associated ditch systems (Malim and Mitchell 1993).

Within the Huntingdon area, an Iron Age presence has been identified. At Godmanchester a series of Early Iron Age farmsteads or hamlets have been located at intervals along the gravel terrace. (Green 1977). One such farmstead has been sample excavated just east of the town (Wait 1992) whilst other evidence of Iron Age activity is known from under modern Godmanchester town by the appearance of the typical roundhouses and ditched enclosures encountered below Roman occupation (Green op. cit.).

Investigations north of the Alconbury Brook at Huntingdon Racecourse have revealed evidence of prehistoric land clearance, settlement and ritual activity adjacent to an ancient stream channel (Macaulay forthcoming). This settlement, dating to the Neolithic, Bronze Age and Iron Age was sealed by alluvial deposits, as were all of those discussed above.

Within Huntingdon itself, artefacts of prehistoric date have been found and reported to the SMR. These are largely of Neolithic and Bronze Age date. The presence of such artefacts is unsurprising given the preference of early prehistoric populations for low-lying gravels and the major late Neolithic ceremonial complex at Rectory Farm Godmanchester, which lies about 1km to the southeast of the development area. The site consisted of a huge rectilinear "horned" ditch enclosure approximately 6.3ha in area, with an internal bank and 24 posts arranged regularly along the perimeter of the enclosure. Radiocarbon dates from the site suggests a late Neolithic date of between 5050 ±80BP and ±4850 80BP (McAvoy, in Dawson 2000). Excavations by the AFU south of the enclosure indicate that the activities associated with the monument were of a widespread nature (Hinman & Kenney 1998).

Iron Age finds have been found most recently within Huntingdon at Watersmeet, including Scored Ware pottery dating from the middle to late Iron Age (Cooper and Sperry, 2000).

3.2 Roman

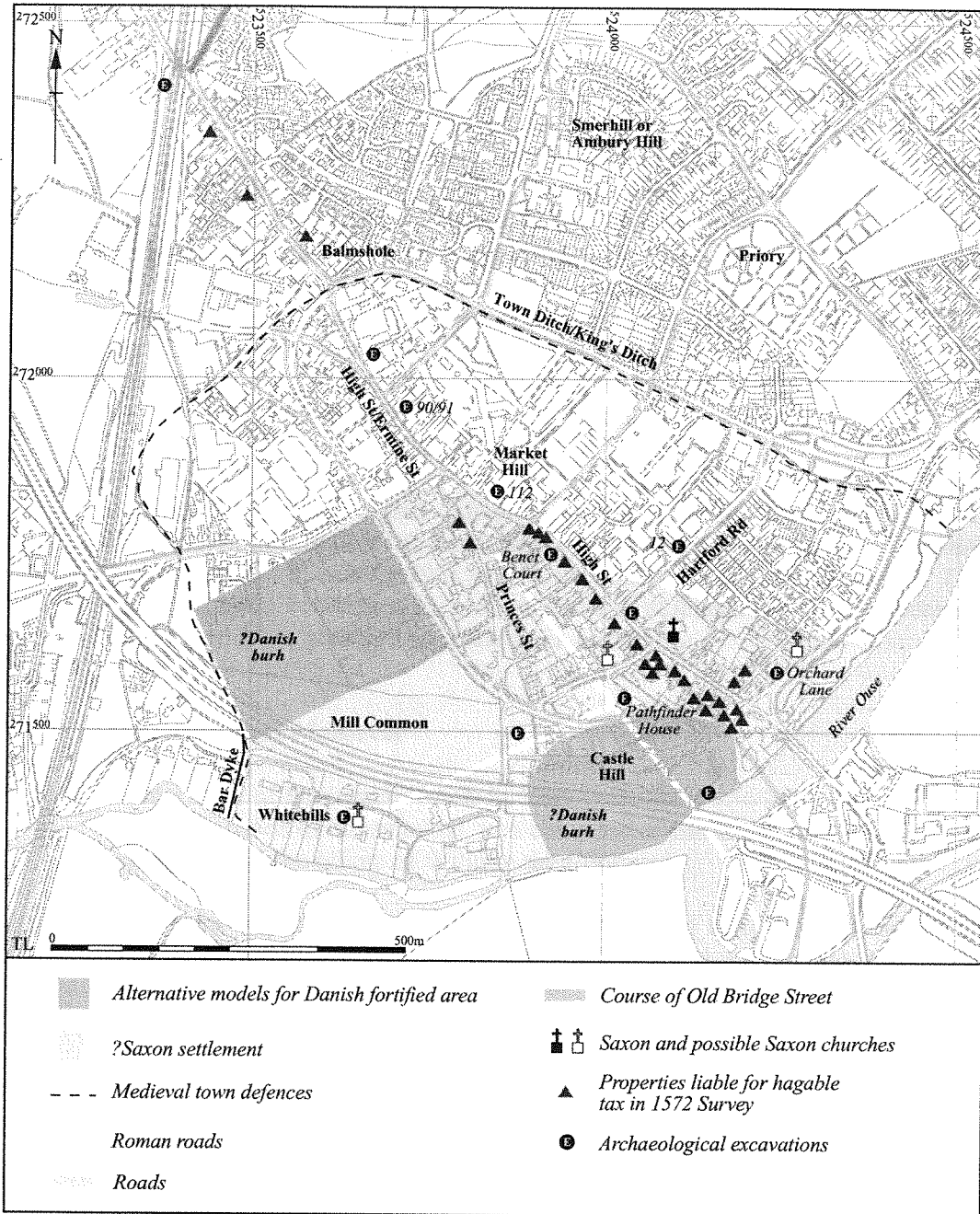
Roman Huntingdon is often seen as a suburb of Godmanchester, and/or ribbon development northwards along Ermine Street. Evidence for Roman activity comes mostly from chance finds, and also from three unpublished excavations. The results of these are detailed in Appendix B below, but to summarise, they consist of a villa site overlooking Alconbury Brook, and two investigations within the town that revealed metalled Roman road surfaces. One of these was probably a spur road off the Ermine Street that led to the villa mentioned above. Chance finds have indicated that roadside burial was taking place during this period alongside Ermine Street. Since this is a common Roman practice, further examples may come to light during future archaeological work in the roadside zone.

Several authors have made attempts to locate the line of Ermine Street between Godmanchester and the northern edge of Huntingdon. The consensus is shown on Figure 2. Ermine Street lies several hundred metres to the south of this development. The Roman period SMR entries imply that the area to the north, south and west experienced a range of activities, whilst the presence of an excavated villa site to the south-west of the site, on the high riverbank, implies that further, related, remains may be present in the zone between there and the line of Ermine Street. If similar riverside occupation existed during the Roman period along the northern bank of the Great Ouse, this site is within that zone. The Roman tile mentioned in SMR entry 02733 may be evidence of this type of occupation.

3.3 Saxon (Pre-Conquest Medieval)

Recent research seems to suggest that the late Saxon settlement of Huntingdon is located in the southern part of the area later enclosed by the medieval town ditch in the north-east and the *bar dyke* in the south-west (Spoerry 2000). This is, however, a general suggestion rather than a certainty and this area may not in fact include *all* elements of pre-Conquest Huntingdon. In particular there is much dispute as to the location of the late ninth/ early tenth century Danish burgh. One model, although not the most favoured, is based on the comparative situation at Stamford (Mahany 1982) and would place the burgh at a defensible location north of the river crossing, as opposed to around the river crossing which tends to form the basis of other interpretations, including that most favoured by Spoerry.

The location of the documented Danish and Late Saxon burhs (the latter being a re-build or extension of the former) is not known. Recent work has attempted to re-assess the evidence now available to provide the best possible indication of the location and extent of Danish and Saxon burhs, and the extent of late Saxon occupation that presumably developed in and around the latter (Spoerry 2000). This process eventually resulted in the very substantial town documented by Domesday Book, which also refers to the twenty properties cleared to make way for the Castle.



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Figure 2 Models of Saxon Huntingdon

The SMR entry of most significance in terms of this period is that of the Late Saxon church and burial ground at Whitehills. This is the most obvious element in a range of documentary and recorded data that suggest that the main area of pre-Conquest Saxon settlement was a zone from the later High Street in the east, to the end of Mill Common in the west, where an earthwork known as the Bar Dyke probably represent part of the Saxon burh defences. In addition, by analogy with other sites, the most likely location for the Danish defended area would be a D-shaped enclosure around the river crossing, which at this time was still Ermine Street. This suggests that the later Castle may represent the approximate location of the Danish burh, with, on topographic grounds, the western burh defences perhaps coinciding with the western part of the Watersmeet site (Cooper & Spoerry 2000).

In conclusion this site may lie outside the Danish burh, the late Saxon Town, and the Edwardian burghal defences, although this is by no means certain. Late Saxon occupation has been found on Orchard Lane (Oakey 1997) and Hartford Road (Connor 1996), which itself is probably earlier in date. This site may have been an area just outside the defended settlement, possibly being used for unsociable activities such as tanning.

3.4 Post-Conquest Medieval

By the time of Domesday Book in 1089 there were 256 burgesses (freemen who were heads of households), two churches, a mill and a wooden and earth castle built on the orders of William the Conqueror.

The major element in the post-Conquest medieval townscape is the castle, built in 1068 and at least partially destroyed in 1174. The imposition of the castle onto the pre-existing Saxon town caused a need to move the river crossing, resulting in the construction of a wooden bridge. This made it necessary to lay out a new High Street and, probably, market place. Both Ladds and Dickinson thought that the original castle curtilage was much larger than that surviving by the post-medieval period, and proposed that the area immediately west of the Motte was in fact a second bailey. The distinct rise from west to east under the houses on the street Castle Hill, plus the substantial earthworks present on the Watersmeet site offer strong support for this model and it must be taken seriously. The fact that the earthworks are not shown on the 1886 OS map (or the 1901 revision) but appear by 1926 may mean that this area was substantially re-modelled in the early 20th century, perhaps when the house called Watersmeet was built. If this land were not part of the castle then it may still have experienced a range of other activities in the medieval period and could have been occupied by buildings, particularly following the castle's demise as a defensive structure.

The bridge carrying Ermine St over the river Ouse was built of stone in AD 1332 with six arches. It is believed that the present stone bridge replaced an earlier timber bridge (VCH, 1932). It is considered to be one of the finest of its kind in England and was constructed simultaneously at both ends by two different authorities, without much regard to direction. Fortunately, the two parts joined in the middle, but as they were not on the same axis there is a

bend that has to be negotiated. Records described a chapel on the east side, which unlike the chapel at St Ives has not survived and no trace is left of its existence.

St Mary's Priory was built north of the town ditch around AD1086 and may have been located within a detached cemetery of the pre conquest collegiate church of St Mary (VCH, 1932). The new priory was constructed shortly after 1086 by Eustace and was substantially complete by the middle of the 12th century. In 1253 the priory held the original 2 hides of land with the church and the priory, whose buildings included the infirmary and sacristy, both located within the monastic enclosure. These two hides of land were bounded by the King's Ditch, and the parishes of Stukeley and Hartford on the north east, by the Ouse to the south and by the High Street on the west.

The next two to three hundred years was, in general, a period of population growth and increased prosperity over much of England. Huntingdon was a very successful town during this time. It gained prosperity by being the Shire town and being a bridged crossing on Ermine Street, which still formed the basis of the route later to become the Great North Road and A1. In addition Huntingdon collected tolls for all those going to St Ives fair, one of the largest gatherings in the country. By the early 14th century Huntingdon had sixteen churches, two priories, a friary and three hospitals, all the hallmarks of a thriving place. The castle was partially demolished in the late 12th century and, except for the gaol, ceased to be used. It is not certain whether Huntingdon's lower political profile after this time had any economic effect on the town itself. One might expect this to be the case, however, the continued growth of the town's key institutions may suggest otherwise.

The 14th century was the period during which fortunes changed for Huntingdon, an extreme example of a trend seen all over the country. Huntingdon had always gained much of its prosperity from its position as a meeting point for goods passing up the Ouse from the Fenland and the Wash and goods travelling along Ermine Street. During the late 13th and 14th centuries there are many references to disputes between the borough and landowners restricting river flow and riverine access further downstream. In addition the construction of a bridge downstream at St Ives and the demise of St Ives fair, all weakened the local economy in Huntingdon. On top of this, there was countrywide overpopulation, several years of failed harvests, followed by several waves of plague. It seems that there was a particularly severe visitation of the Black Death to Huntingdon itself, and the shortage of people and parlous state of local finances is regularly attested in documents in the 14th and 15th centuries. Six of the churches are not mentioned in documents after the mid-14th century and by the 16th century only four were still functioning: St Mary's, All Saints, St Benedict's and St John's. Archaeological investigations within the town suggest that occupation inside the town ditch may have been rather piecemeal after the 13th century.

Huntingdon had a small Jewry in the 12th and 13th centuries. References exist to its chest of charters, and in 1279 a curious grant was made to the bailiffs and good men of Huntingdon for three years of one penny for every Jew or

Jewess crossing the bridge on horseback, or a halfpenny if on foot (VCH 1932). The name Temple Close may refer to the original location of such a foundation, rather than to any Templar activity in the area, for which there exists no evidence. Although Temple Close or Lane has been used as a street name since at least 1572, it appears that the label moves around over the centuries. It once applied to what is now St Clement's Passage, and is currently in use to the south-west of that lane, close to the development area.

During this period, the development site may have been utilised for many types of activity. Medieval pottery was found at the same location as the Roman tile mentioned above (SMR 02733a), and this may indicate nearby occupation utilising the area for rubbish dumping. A moated site lay to the east, close to the riverbank (SMR 01055), but was filled in during the construction of the ring road. This may have been the source of the medieval pottery found less than 100m to the west.

Most of the investigations detailing the medieval finds within Huntingdon are listed in Appendix B.

3.5 Post-Medieval

Huntingdon suffered in the 15th century War of the Roses and in the Civil war in the 17th century, and throughout this time documents still speak of 'the poor decayed town'. It was only with the rise of the coaching trade in the 18th century that the town found another role and prosperity returned.

In the post-medieval period the castle had re-use and major re-modelling for defensive purposes during the Civil War, however, the general picture is very much of a town that is much less densely populated than in the preceding centuries.

It is this point in the evolution of the town that the earliest surviving maps depict. Although a map does not accompany the 1572 survey, it is possible for entries to be transcribed onto Jeffries' 1768 map of Huntingdon, or the 1752 plan of the Hospital Lands. These and John Speed's map of 1610, all show the development area as a blank, but would not have recorded temporary structures or quarrying for instance, and cannot therefore be taken as an indicator that the area was completely unused at this time.

The 1826 map of the Earl of Sandwich's estates indicate trackways crossing this area, leading to the river, but no buildings (HRO no ref.). Again, this is not an absolute indicator of a lack of activity.

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

The Huntingdon and Godmanchester area is rich in archaeological remains of all periods. From at least the Roman period onwards, Huntingdon has been

the site of continuous occupation, although its fortunes have waxed and waned. The location of the site alone makes it clear that the development site has the potential for survival of archaeological deposits. Study of historical records and known archaeological remains serves to further reinforce this. The number of recorded find spots from the site itself should not be interpreted, at this stage, as an indication of the density of archaeological remains within the development area.

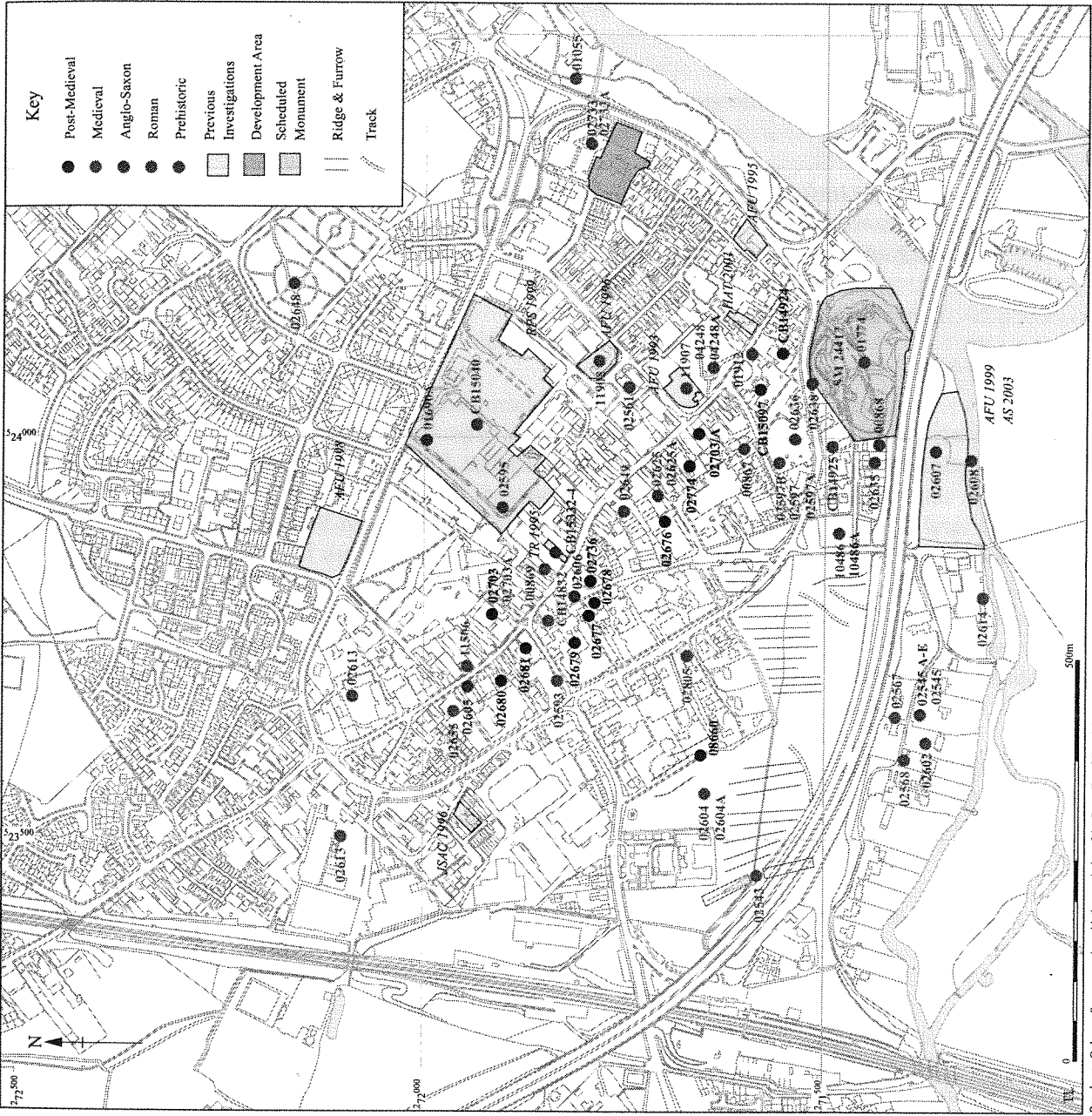
The Sites and Monuments Record for the zone adjacent to and including the development area begins with a single Roman entry, 02733, tile fragments "found at a depth of seven feet". This point is located adjacent to the development area, and Medieval pottery was found at the same spot (SMR 02733a). This is probably indicative of medieval rubbish pitting.

The site has been fortunate, in that modern 20th and 21st century alterations on the site have largely been cosmetic. Much of the area is tarmaced or covered in concrete slab. Both of these are factors that will have had a positive effect on the preservation of any archaeological deposits that survive in that area.

6 IMPACT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Given the requirements of a residential development and the depths of groundwork, the proposed development will have a major impact on any buried archaeological remains on the site. Foundations and services are usually the main impact zones, but the development may include provision for landscaping, which would significantly increase the impact upon any archaeology present. No details of present soil depth or ground water are yet available, although it is usual to do borehole tests in advance of such development.

Proposals for mitigation strategies are beyond the scope of this report. The site has moderate archaeological potential but preservation by record or *in situ* may be considered, depending on the precise nature of the development. Deep deposits may be preserved through architectural or engineering measures. Given the urban nature of the site, intrusive evaluation may uncover extensive, deeply stratified remains. Without physical investigation this cannot be accurately predicted and modelled, in spite of the documentary research already carried out.



7 CONCLUSIONS

The archaeological potential of the development area at Huntingdon can be summarised thus:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| • Mesolithic, Neolithic, Bronze Age | low/unknown |
| • Iron Age/Romano-British | high/known |
| • Anglo Saxon/Anglo Danish | moderate/unknown |
| • medieval | high/known |
| • post-medieval | moderate/known |

The study has demonstrated that the subject site lies within a rich archaeological landscape, surrounded by sites of all periods. Whilst mostly Roman and medieval remains or finds are known from the vicinity of the subject site itself, its archaeological potential for many periods may be considered moderate, with particular emphasis placed upon the later Saxon period. If archaeology is encountered on the site, conditions for preservation are likely to range from good to very good, particularly at depth. The relative proximity of the site to the river may mean that deposits encountered at depth may be waterlogged. These conditions are ideal for the preservation of organic remains such as wood and leather, as well as foodstuffs and pollen, both of which can give an idea of the local environment and economy.

Whatever finds may be located during work on this area, archaeological investigations within the development zone are likely to have a profound effect upon future models of the evolution of the town.

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British Geological Survey 1:50000 Sheet 187, Huntingdon, 1975

William Margett's map of the Estates of the Earl of Sandwich, 1826 and undated draft

APPENDIX A

Sites and Monuments Record Gazetteer for Huntingdon

REC. NO	GRID REF	KEYS	PERIOD
00268	TL/256-/726-	inhumation, cremation, brooch, pin, pottery, knife	BA ?, AS ?
00268a	TL/256-/726-	axe	Neo
00268b	TL/256-/726-	quern	IA / Ro
00867	TL/2397/7156	pottery	Ro
00869	TL/2382/7185	pottery	Ro
00871	TL/233-/716-	coin	Ro
00888	TL/23--/72--	coffin, inhumation	U
01054	TL/231-/728-	moat, building, ridge and furrow	Med
01055	TL/2443/7178	moat	Med
01439	TL/255-/728-	worked flint, axe	Pa
01439a	TL/255-/728-	worked flint	Neo
01687	TL/258-/733-	worked flint	Pa
01688	TL/248-/728-	worked flint	Pa
01690	TL/24--/72--	worked flint, axe	Pa
01690a	TL/24--/72--	worked flint	Neo
01774	TL/2409/7145	castle, well, windmill, chapel, skeleton, battery	Med, P Med
01774	TL/2409/7145	castle, well, windmill, chapel, skeleton, battery	Med, P Med
01847	TL/25--/72--	arrowhead, worked flint	Neo
01912	TL/241-/716-	worked flint	Ne
01946	TL 256-/725-	axe, human, bone, urn, pin, knife, quern	BA, AS
01960	TL/253-/727-	arrowhead	BA
01962	TL/25--/72--	axe, palstave	BA
02733	TL/2437/7177	roof tile	Ro
02733a	TL/2437/7177	pottery	Med
02528	TL/261-/694-	ridge and furrow	Med
02543	TL/235-/716-	earthwork, bank, ditch, mound, ridge and furrow	Med ?, P Med
02545	TL/2366/7138	excavation	Ro
02545a	TL/248-/713-	villa, kiln, tessellated, pavement, hearth, ditch, pit, wall plaster, tessera	Ro
02545b	TL/248-/713-	church, cemetery, inhumation, carved stone, coin	AS
02545c	TL/248-/713-	castle, siege, works, inhumation	Med
02545d	TL/248-/713-	church, wind mill, architectural, fragment, tile, pottery	Med
02545e	TL/248-/713-	house, wind mill, gallows, pottery	P Med
02547	TL/2476/7227	gun battery, ditch	P Med
02547a	TL/247-/723-	worked flint	Neo
02547b	TL/247-/723-	pottery	Ro
02547c	TL/247-/723-	pottery	Med
02560	TL/23--/71--	church	Med
02561	TL/23--/71--	church	Med
02562	TL/23--/71--	church	Med
02563	TL/23--/71--	church	Med
02564	TL/23--/71--	church	Med
02567	TL/237-/714-	wind mill	Med - P Med
02568	TL/236-/714-	wind mill	Med - P Med
02569	TL/23--/71--	church	Med
02572	TL/23--/71--	worked flint	Neo
02574	TL/23--/71--	hospital	Med
02580	TL/23--/71--	hospital	Med
02581	TL/23--/71--	burgh	AS
02583	TL/23--/71--	cistern	Ro
02586	TL/228-/714-	inhumation, coin, pottery, hanging bowl, glass vessel, cult object	Ro
02593	TL/2370/7183	church	Med
02594	TL/2406/7158	church	Med

02595	TL/239-/719-	church, bone	Med
02596	TL/23--/72--	church	Med
02597	TL/2397/7156	pottery, coin	Ro
02597a	TL/2397/7156	pottery	IA
02597b	TL/2397/7156	mortar	Med
02599	TL/235-/721-	church	Med
02601	TL/233-/718-	bowling green	P Med
02602	TL/2362/7137	coin	Ro
02603	TL/2355/7139	coin	Ro
02604	TL/2356/7165	arrowhead, pottery	Med
02604a	TL/2356/7165	pottery	Ro
02605	TL/236-/719-	pottery	AS
02606	TL/238-/718-	pottery	AS
02607	TL/2399/7136	coin	Ro
02608	TL/2397/7132	coin	Ro
02609	TL/243-/702-	pottery	Med
02613	TL/2368/7209	key	Ro
02614	TL/238-/713-	water mill	Med - P Med
02621	TL/248-/727-	wind mill	Med - P Med
02624	TL/2425/7159	church	Med
02625	TL/2393/7171	pottery, stone vessel	Ro
02625a	TL/2393/7171	pottery, shoe	Med
02629	TL/245-/748-	forest	Med
02635	TL/2397/7144	cremation, pottery	Ro
02636	TL/2400/7153	arrowhead, pottery	Med
02637	TL/2406/7152	pottery	Ro
02638	TL/2406/7152	pottery, coffin	Ro
02639	TL/2400/7166	house	P Med
02639a	TL/2400/7166	wall painting	P Med
02643	TL/245-/717-	artefact	Med
02648	TL/2423/7216	priory, coffin, tile	Med
02649	TL/2391/7175	church, inhumation, pottery, tile, carved stone, architectural, feature	Med
02652	TL/23--/71--	coin	IA
02655	TL/2366/7196	church, churchyard, building material	Med
02656	TL/2406/7158	house	P Med
02675	TL/239-/717-	house, shop	P Med
02676	TL/239-/717-	house	P Med
02677	TL/238-/718-	house	P Med
02678	TL/238-/718-	inn	P Med
02679	TL/2375/7182	house	P Med
02680	TL/237-/719-	house, shop	P Med
02681	TL/2374/7187	inn	P Med
02682	TL/2542/7264	coin hoard	Med
02683	TL/2499/7245	artefact	Pa
02690	TL/25--/73--	axe	Mes
02696	TL/2469/7203	coin	Ro
02700	TL/254-/725-	coin, mill stone	Ro
02701	TL/2396/7217	token	Med
02703	TL/2366/7204	house	P Med
02703a	TL/2366/7204	friary, wall, tile, architectural, fragment, plaster, carved wood	Med
02707	TL/2273/7148	great house	P Med
02707a	TL/2273/7148	convent, window, arch, architectural, feature	Med
02710	TL/2575/7280	house	P Med
02733	TL/2437/7177	tile	Ro
02735	TL/258-/733-	worked flint	Mes
02736	TL/2382/7180	town hall	P Med
02747	TL/260-/726-	pottery	Ro

02764	TL/242-/711-	seal	P Med
02764a	TL/242-/711-	coin	Ro
02764b	TL/242-/711	church plate	Med
02774	TL/2397/7168	pottery	P Med
02805	TL/2373/7167	pottery, inhumation	Med
03958	TL/2285/7315	gallows, inhumation, human skeleton, pottery	Med, P Med
03958a	TL/229-/732-	pottery	Ro ?
04248	TL/2409/7164	church	Med
04248a	TL/2409/7164	church	AS
05559	TL/253-/727-	worked flint	Pa
05774	TL/2530/7273	worked flint	Pa
06824	TL/262-/708-	rectangular, enclosure, enclosure	U
06918	TL/230-/729-	hospital	Med
08117	TL/2---/7---	worked flint	Neo / BA
08118	TL/2---/7---	worked flint, arrowhead	BA
08660	TL/2360/7166	human bone	U
08747	TL/232-/722-	ridge and furrow	Med
08751	TL/227-/723-	ridge and furrow, earthwork w,	Med, U
09200	TL/260-/720-	enclosure	Ro
09597	TL/25--/72--	spike	BA ?
09781	TL/2---/7---	lock, bottle	P Med
09871	TL/2497/7244	worked flint	Pa
10486	TL/2388/7148	pottery, ditch, animal bone, shell	Med
10486a	TL/2388/7148	pottery	AS
11506	TL/2371/7194	pit, pottery	Med
11740	TL/---/----	ditch, plant remains	Preh
11741	TL/---/----	inhumations, pits	Med

APPENDIX B

Previous Archaeological Work in Huntingdon

Pre-1990s

Castle Hill Early 1960s

TL2414/7149; Generally SMR 01774

Philip Dickinson reported that during the laying of telephone lines a short distance within the modern entrance to Castle Hill, in a location close to the footpath, massive stone foundations were discovered a few feet below the ground. He believed that these represent a stone gatehouse inside the moat, probably replacing an earlier one of wooden construction, and stated that tooling on the stones indicated a date of around 1100.

Castle Hill 1963

TL2418/7152; Generally SMR 01774

Construction of the High Street to Mill Common relief road resulted in little damage in the northern section as it ran mostly over the top of the infilled moat. In the garden and car park of the Old Bridge Hotel, however, the foundations of what Dickinson believed to be a Barbican, paired with the gatehouse, were discovered. He did not state whether it was stone-built, but this seems likely. A section through the moat revealed it to be 20' wide with sloping sides becoming near vertical at a depth of 5', at a reduced width of 15'. The full depth is not known as only 7' was revealed, however, Dickinson estimated it to have been 15' or more.

In the car park, Thetford ware and other artefacts were identified and in addition, a large area of fine wood ash about 18 inches deep (circa 45cm), was seen close to the gatehouse which Dickinson linked to historic records of the castle being burnt after its capture in 1173. A well with 18th century brickwork was found close by and in the line of the new road.

High Street 1967

TL235/719, 236/717; SMR 02605

A rather cryptic note, apparently from Philip Dickinson, published in the CBA Group 7 Bulletin briefly mentions that excavations for new buildings in the High Street produced "Saxon pottery of the 8/9th century 'at a depth of *twelve feet*'. Also numerous carved stones 'from two of the destroyed churches of the town have also been discovered one with fine chevron moulding'. The two grid references for these findings are, unfortunately, not explained and neither is actually on the High Street.

Whitehills 1967 and 1967-9

TL2366/7138; SMR 02545, 02567

Emergency excavation works were started in 1967 directed by Brian Davison for the Ministry of Works, as a builder had started levelling the site for construction of 2 houses. Following Davison's work Group Captain Trudgian was able to continue excavations on the site as a private venture. The excavation report is available for study through the NMR, however summaries in County SMR and in Med. Arch. 1967-9 provide a brief statement of each phase of activity. The sequence of construction and activity on the site appears to be as follows, however, succeeding annual statements indicate changing interpretations and this list is almost certainly incorrect at least in part.

- 1 1st century Roman occupation of uncertain form, but a series of ditches are present.
- 2 2nd century timber structure with mortared floor.
- 3 A Roman corridor villa, perhaps of early 3rd century construction, made in part of Barnack stone with a possible industrial (re-)use for one room.
- 4 Re-definition of the above building with changes to partition walls.
- 5 Around 400 east-west aligned burials, associated with late Saxon pottery (St Neots and Thetford type wares). Some of these burials were aligned with part-

surviving Roman walling suggesting that robbing occurred during the lifetime of the cemetery.

- 6 Some records indicate that the remains of a probable stone building, a chapel associated with the cemetery, were discovered.
- 7 Scarping of the hill that was associated with the 1174 siege, this site long being assumed to be a siege castle.
- 8 Very ruined walls of what may have been a medieval church or chapel, including one piece of re-used Saxon decorated masonry (interlace) which had a 13th century arch-moulding on the other side. All a rebuild of the earlier chapel?
- 9 A windmill (15th century).
- 10 The gallows, believed by the excavators to have been erected in the 16th century.
- 11 A second windmill (18th century).
- 12 19th century cottages.

Castle Hill 1973

TL2415/7140; Generally SMR 01774

Dickinson observed initial works for the Huntingdon bypass, which is located on top of the 19th century railway cutting through the castle, but in construction damaged a larger area of land. He observed a section through the southern rampart that showed it to be of sandy gravel construction lying on top of a raised bank of clay and silt, some ten feet above river level. He noted that where the western end of the moat joined the river the embankment was about 36 feet high. He also observed the castle well, located just outside of the eastern rampart.

Castle Hill 1974

TL2415/7140; Generally SMR 01774

During landscaping of the castle site following the bypass construction Alison Taylor carried out some emergency excavation and recording. Although not published, notes in the County SMR and photos held by CCC AFU indicate that the rampart above the level of the bailey was found to be post-medieval in date and probably of Civil War origin. This covered about 1m of buried soil, which included much artefactual debris of both medieval and Roman date. Below this were a number of shallow-cut and east-west aligned graves, surrounded by coffin nails. The graves may derive from a medieval castle chapel known to have been still in existence in 1327 and presumably with a late 11th-12th century origin.

Pathfinder House Car Park 1973

TL2403/7154

Roger Smith excavated this site for the DoE in 1973. No report or archive exists, but three slides showing plans of the excavated areas and some of the main features are in the possession of David Cozens and copies are with CCC AFU.

The site was located in the former grounds of Castle Hill House and work was allowed in areas of proposed car parks around the then new District Council HQ. A metalled surface, running approximately WSW-ENE, was interpreted as a spur road linking the 2-3rd century Roman Villa 400m to the west at Whitehills with Ermine Street. This latter, or one of Green's two proposed lines, was expected within the excavated area but it was not located and must therefore lie a little to the east of the excavation.

Personal recollections suggest that late Saxon building remains were found but no actual record exists.

Vague references hint at another trench being located at this time on the north side of St Mary's Street that uncovered a stone church. This reference has not been verified, however, 'great quantities of bone' were known by Carruthers to have been discovered there (1824).

St Benet's Court 1975

TL2388/7173

The large 1970s Benet's area shopping centre development included no archaeological provision beyond a 15m x 7m trial trench, with small linear extension. This represented just 5% of the area of the development and, sadly, is an awful example of a missed opportunity

to investigate and/or protect a major part of the town's archaeological resource. The excavated evidence suggests that the central part of the site may have had little pre-17th century occupation and also that the most significant deposits may lie under up to 2m or more of recent make-up.

The trial excavation was carried out by Terry Betts for the DoE in November 1975, the main purpose being to find the line of Roman Ermine Street and elucidate Roman and medieval occupation. A small triangular-sectioned ditch and associated gravel make-up may have been part of Green's proposed second (eastern) line of Ermine Street. This feature was partially removed by deep medieval ditches running parallel to, and behind, the properties lining the High Street. No trace was found of Green's earlier line of Ermine Street and thus it must either have lain further west, towards Prince's Street, or it did not exist. Cultivation beds containing St Neots, Thetford, Stamford and Lyveden wares lay west of the Roman road ditch and these were in turn covered by a build-up of topsoil under 17th century floors that appear to have been for buildings similar in plan to those surviving into the 20th century. A further metre of make-up overlay these and this may be linked to documentary evidence for ground-raising known for nearby Queen's Head Passage in the late 18th century.

St Benet's Church 1980

TL2391/7175; SMR 02649

St Benet's (Benedict's) Church is known from documents for the reign of Henry I and was still standing until the Civil War, when all but the tower was destroyed. This was pulled down in 1802 and the burial ground used until 1855; the parish was unified with St Mary's in 1668. Repairs to an outhouse revealed foundations and plinth stones, recorded by Ladds (1930); stone from the church was re-used in various constructions between its demise in the 17th century and the construction of a 'gazebo' on the site in the 1980s.

Only a small area (3m x 4m) of the church's known site was available for study, the fieldwork being carried out by A Taylor of CCC, D Cozens of HLHS and CAFG. The earliest E-W wall foundation was of flints bonded with gravel and mortar. The fabric also contained tile and one piece of Stamford ware dated to the twelfth century. The wall cut two graves, which suggests that an earlier church, perhaps of wooden construction, may have previously stood here. There were later burials both inside and outside of the stone building and this may have had a porch constructed on the north side. This was followed by an aisle, foundations for the west wall of which were found, and later evidence for part-removal of the west wall of the church may have coincided with the construction of the stone tower observed by Ladds, believed to be of fifteenth century date. A brick and tile floor was inserted in, perhaps, the 17th century.

After demolition of buildings over the rest of the church site, the team were allowed only part of a day to record some of its dimensions; the tower was found to be 6.4m east-west by 5.8m north-south.

Cromwell House 1976

TL2366/7204; SMR 02703

Small-scale excavations by Alison Taylor and HLHS in the kitchen garden prior to development revealed fragmentary remains of the post-dissolution house foundations, re-using stone from the Friary buildings.

Cromwell House 1984

TL2366/7204; SMR 02703

Small-scale excavations for CCC by David Haigh in advance of redevelopment of the house known to be on the site of the Augustinian Friary, identified that substantial remains of the 13th century buildings survived and also that a major rebuilding had occurred shortly after their initial construction. The remains seemed to be part of the west range, but no function for any room could be confirmed. At dissolution, alterations occurred followed by the major rebuilding of the site to provide the house used by the Cromwell family. The excavator's suggestion that the two observed phases of medieval building date to the Friary's foundation in 1258 and to a documented rebuild after a major fire in 1286 seems reasonable.

Documentary evidence indicates that in 1363 the Friars gained permission to construct an underground conduit leading from a well on Spring Common to the monastery. Carruthers (1824) reports a description of a brick underground feature in the correct location, however, Ladds describes a stone construction in an early 20th century observation opportunity which showed the culvert to run beyond the south side of the present house in the direction of Spring Common.

1990s (Post-PPG16)

Mill Common 1992

TL2388/7148; SMR 10486, CB12453

In 1992 the Archaeological Field Unit dug several small test pits in land to the east of Mill Common (AFU Report No. 59). Although only a tiny area of earlier deposits was exposed the evidence suggests a (property) boundary ditch existed here from perhaps the eleventh or twelfth century onwards which superseded dumping, possibly within former quarries. Later deposits suggest dumping in both the medieval and modern periods. This location, close to the castle, might conceivably have provided earthen material for the defences, known to have been built in the late eleventh century. The suggestion of quarrying here in that period cannot, however, be directly linked to the construction of the castle, although the two *may* be related. The partial demolition of the castle in the late twelfth century might also have provided the fill of any open quarries (before the ditch was constructed), or it may be represented by the dumping over the top of this feature.

A Leper Cemetery at Spittal's Link 1993

TL229/732

In 1993 a team from the AFU excavated and recorded the mostly partial remains of 55-60 human burials during road widening at the Spittal's Link roundabout at the northern end of the historic settlement of Huntingdon (AFU Report No. A20). The Leper Hospital of St Margaret is known to have existed close to this location from its foundation by Malcolm IV of Scotland in the mid-twelfth century until a probable abandonment in the fifteenth century. Study of the skeletal material by Corinne Duhig, AFU Palaeopathologist, suggested that a large proportion of the bodies had abnormalities associated with leprosy. In addition it seems that many were buried in one very large pit, but at different depths. This may indicate mass burial of individuals after an epidemic (perhaps one of the fourteenth century plagues) or it might be that a large open pit was made available for regular, but periodic, burial of individuals who succumbed to secondary diseases and infections associated with leprosy.

Medieval Domestic Rubbish Pits at 90/91 High Street 1993

TL2371/7194

A small recording exercise in 1993 in advance of shop construction and refurbishment revealed a considerable density of archaeological remains behind two historic High Street frontage properties (AFU Report No. 97). At least twelve rubbish pits were recorded which, from pottery found within their fills, could be dated to the eleventh to twelfth centuries. At least one of these contained cessy material suggesting the deposition of human waste products. In addition linear features suggested, as expected, that the boundaries between the 'burgage plots' were of similar antiquity to the pits. Other smaller features included postholes which may indicate the former presence of timber structures. This one small recording exercise seems to confirm that there was a great density of occupation within the northern part of Huntingdon, at least in areas close to the High Street frontage, in the eleventh to twelfth centuries. Until now the historic data seems to have suggested that the main part of the town continued up to the Augustinian Friary (now Cromwell House) and beyond, but perhaps not until the later thirteenth century. The presence of earlier activity at 90/91 High Street is thus significant.

Medieval and Later Deposits at High Street/Hartford Road Corner 1993-4

TL2406/7167; SMR 11907, CB14013

In 1993-4 the AFU carried out evaluation trenching and observation in advance of a planning decision, on the forecourt of Marshall's Garage at the corner of Hartford Road and the High Street (AFU Report No. 105). Three trenches were excavated which revealed a variety of archaeological deposits. The earliest deposits may date to before the Norman Conquest, but this is not certain.

The first remains of certain date come from the thirteenth to fourteenth centuries, the dating deriving from pottery sherds. A gravel surface, perhaps part of a yard, was laid and in addition rubbish pits and evidence for timber, and possibly stone, structures was identified. As the latter in some way back from the High Street frontage it suggests fairly dense occupation in the secondary areas along this main street.

Following this a period of deliberate ground raising occurred, perhaps to combat flooding. Large quantities of clay and other materials, much of it burnt, were dumped towards the end of the medieval period. Then, around 1500, a cellared building was constructed on the High Street frontage which may be one of three inns mentioned in a document dating to 1572. This structure was probably partly demolished in the 17th century and around this time further buildings were constructed on the Hartford Road frontage. These were demolished in the 19th century prior to the building of St Mary's Vicarage.

A Medieval Burial Ground and Later Quarrying on Orchard Lane 1994-5

TL2420/7160

Evaluation in 1994 and Excavation in 1995 were carried out by the AFU, funded by English Heritage, in advance of the development of the former Peacock's builders yard on Orchard Lane only 70m from the High Street and close to the riverside. Human bone had been recorded during works in adjacent locations and it seemed likely that this might indicate the location of the burial ground of the lost church of St Clement, known to have existed between St Mary's parish and the riverside in the medieval period. Evaluation confirmed the presence of human remains, plus archaeological deposits pre-dating and post-dating the burials.

Excavations revealed rubbish and cesspits dating to the period 900-1150, along with evidence for property boundaries and burials. The date that the burial ground was established is not certain; it cannot be assigned to either before or after the Norman Conquest. It certainly was in existence in the 13th century, however, and may have ceased to function before the end of the 14th century. No evidence for the church itself was found.

After the 14th century the burial ground ceased to function. The later periods of activity on the site mostly seem to suggest that it remained open ground, supporting a belief that the town contracted significantly for several hundred years. In the 16th to 17th centuries, however, a period of quarrying was followed by the partial backfilling of one quarry pit with hot, damaged bricks and other building debris. This may be related to the demolition of structures damaged in the Civil War.

12 Hartford Road; Medieval occupation on a Side Street 1996

TL241/718; SMR 11908, CB14014

In 1996 an evaluation was undertaken at 12 Hartford Road, in advance of a planning decision for a residential development (AFU Report No. 122). A trench along the street frontage revealed three phases of medieval activity from the 12th to mid-14th centuries, including quarrying for clay and the construction of timber buildings. Towards the rear of the property more evidence for several phases of structures was revealed, and in addition a sequence of pitting, presumably for rubbish disposal, may have started as early as the 10th century, but was certainly underway by the early 12th. This was superseded by a mid-14th century dump layer. A pond may also have existed here throughout the medieval period and it was probably not filled in until the 18th century.

This site confirms the presence of dense occupation along Hartford Road, and not just on the immediate street frontage, in the twelfth to fourteenth centuries and possibly earlier. The absence of later activity supports documentary evidence for a severe decline in activity in the town in the late medieval period, with even a secondary routeway such as this becoming peripheral to the main areas of activity/occupation.

112 High Street 1995/6

TL2384/7183, SMR CB975, CB15332-4

Excavation was carried out by Tempus Reparatum on a key frontage plot on the north side of Market Hill on the High Street. The post-excavation assessment provides summaries by feature type and phase that can be reconstructed to gain a perception of the occupation history of the site.

There appears to have been a low level of occupation in the vicinity in the 10/11th to mid-twelfth centuries, with only a number of poorly defined layers and pits being possibly representative of this time period.

In the 12th to 13th centuries layers are present which are taken to be indicative of dumping associated with nearby occupation. Pitting increases in magnitude with two very substantial ones located 20m from the frontage, but structural evidence is still slight with only two post holes and *possibly* the earliest layers associated with hearths dateable to this period.

The majority of dumping horizons, make-up and activity surfaces could confidently be dated to the 13th to 14th centuries. In addition many pits were dug, albeit generally of small size. Structural remains take the form of a little post hole evidence for flimsy timber structures, several hearths and one possible domestic fireplace. These remains probably derive from some form of industrial processing taking place on the property in this period.

Stanton Butts, Stukeley Road 1997

TL2325/7260

Evaluation trenching by the CAU west of the old line of Ermine Street revealed dense pitting of a dispersed nature plus linear features that represent either fence-lines or timber buildings mostly dating to the 13th century or thereabouts. Ditched features in the southern part of the site and the possible building remains further north are aligned together but not with the present Stukely Road which here is believed to preserve the line of Ermine Street. The implication is that the road may have been aligned more to the northwest-southeast at this time. The occupation remains were interpreted as being most likely to be associated with a moated site immediately north of the site, rather than implying ribbon development continuing from the High Street this far north along Ermine Street.

St Clements Passage 1998

TL 2413/7162, SMR CB14595

In 1998 the Archaeological Field Unit of Cambridgeshire County Council undertook an excavation at St Clements Passage (Roberts J, 1999). Excavation revealed quarry pits, rubbish pits and deposits dating from the medieval and post-medieval periods. A clay and wood lined pit was found in a group of similar features in the northern part of the site. The considerable build up of a garden type soil suggest this area was open land to the rear of properties along the High Street until the nineteenth century.

9/10 George St 2000

TL2367/7171, SMR CB182

An evaluation was carried out to the west of the development area at 9/10 George St in June 2000 by the Archaeological Field Unit of Cambridgeshire County Council (Cooper S, 2000). The evaluation revealed extensive 13th and 14th century quarrying, post-holes and pits.

Brookside 1998

TL

Medieval activity perhaps representing suburban development immediately outside of the town ditch was found at Brookside (Cooper & Sperry 1998)

Stanton Butts, Stukeley Road 1999

TL2325/7260

Excavations by the AFU revealed suburban ribbon development, activity of an interrupted nature in the 12th to 14th centuries, represented by the truncated foundations of timber buildings fronting onto Stukeley Rd.

These remains have important ramifications for the history and development of medieval Huntingdon. The location of these remains is highly significant since it establishes medieval suburban ribbon development along Ermine St. The identification of suburban development is of considerable interest since it provides an opportunity to examine issues concerning the growth of the town in the 12th and 13th centuries and subsequent decline in the 14th century. The excavation identified a number of phases; the first phase of activity on the site is the Roman roadside ditch. Phase 2 sees the development of roadside buildings and associated tenement plots whilst Phase 3 is characterised by greater development of tenement plots with extensive areas of pitting and quarrying across the site. Phase 4 is characterised by the reinstatement of backplot ditches and further pitting (Cooper & Sperry, forthcoming).

Watersmeet 2000

TL239/713

The evaluation revealed significant late Iron Age/Roman and medieval remains within the development area. The first century Iron Age or Roman remains may represent roadside activity alongside Ermine Street. The riverside occupation may eventually have culminated in the nearby villa site. The medieval remains consist of several occupation features, plus a re-working of the riverside escarpment that is almost certainly defensive and probably dates to the post-Conquest period, rather than being part of the Danish or Saxon burgh. It may therefore represent a 'lost' western bailey of the Norman Castle.

Hinchingbrooke 1997-2003

Just to the west of Huntingdon, adjacent to Hinchingbrooke Country Park, development has been ongoing for several years, creating new housing estates and local amenities. Archaeological work in advance of this has revealed extensive Iron Age settlement from the Middle and Late Iron Age, and also Roman occupation, possibly persisting into the 5th Century.

The first phase of evaluation, which took place in January 1997, identified a marked concentration of features datable to the late Iron Age adjacent to the northern limit of the current development area. As a result of this evaluation the AFU were commissioned to undertake the simultaneous excavation of two open areas, to the north and east of the current development area (see below).

1997 Excavation

Excavation revealed the north-eastern limit of a middle Iron Age settlement. Significant artefacts recovered included two currency bars, a ritually defaced quern base, the ritually placed upper fore-limb of a boar, a complete rotary quern top and base, knife fragments, iron working waste, loom weight fragments and large quantities of domestic pottery and animal bone.

The presence of currency bars would seem to suggest a settlement displaying a relatively high degree of wealth and status. That these and other objects had been deliberately placed at the same point on the northern settlement boundary is taken as indicative of symbolic ceremonial activity resulting from the beliefs and superstitions of the Middle Iron Age inhabitants.

Enclosure ditches associated with a separate late Iron Age settlement were also revealed at the eastern limit of the previous land sale area, within 30m of the northern limit of the current development.

The second phase of evaluation prises the current development area. This evaluation, which took place in spring 2000, identified marked concentrations of settlement related features datable to the late Iron Age and Roman periods.

2000 Excavation

Limited excavation was undertaken by the AFU in 2000. The main features identified included a late Neolithic/early Bronze Age pit, a 1st Century AD pottery kiln, three inhumations (human burials), a metalworking area/smithy with *in-situ* crucible, structural remains including an aisled barn and possible villa wall foundations, post alignments/fence lines, enclosure ditches, processing areas, hearths/ovens, cistern and rubbish pits.

Significant artefacts were recovered, which included a flint arrowhead (barbed and tanged), late Neolithic/early Bronze Age structured deposits of ceramics, lithics, animal bone and stone. Roman artefacts included high status Claudian/Neronian pottery (1st Century AD) including imported Dressel 20 Amphora (Spanish) and rare central Gaulish glazed ware, in addition to painted plaster, metalworking slag, stamped Samian ware, and over 70 metal objects. Environmental sampling has produced evidence for the consumption of fresh seafood, peas, wheat and barley, large assemblages of domestic pottery, tile and animal bone of 1st Century through 4th/5th? Century AD date.

The Romano-British Period

Area B contains highly significant remains, indicative of high status occupation spanning the whole period of Roman occupation from the conquest through to the fourth and very probably the fifth century AD. Evidence relating to the transition from late Iron Age settlement to the establishment of a Romano-British villa, the development and eventual decline of the site are all present. Although excavation to date has been minimal it is possible to place certain key features into broad phases on the basis of artefactual and stratigraphic data, illustrating the importance and variety of these remains.

The Second to Third centuries AD

The predominant archaeological remains present within Area B are a series of linear ditches aligned roughly north-south or east-west. These ditches represent the remains of enclosures and boundaries that were once intended for the control of livestock and to define areas of human habitation, whilst ensuring good drainage of the heavy clay soils of the area. Certain of these ditch lines were defined at least as early as the late Iron Age and were identified during evaluation. These ditch lines appear to have been maintained and gradually extended eastwards into and throughout the Romano-British period.

The New School Site 2000

(TL 223/722)

A further stage of evaluation was undertaken on land to the east and immediately adjacent to the Bob's Wood site in December 2000. The 'New School' evaluation identified a group of pits within the northernmost extent of the development area provisionally dateable to the early Bronze Age. Pits 2246, 2250 and 2252 were similar in terms of size and fill type to a series of features excavated within Area 1 of the 1997 excavations. Those pits, all of which, with one notable exception, were devoid of any artefactual material were aligned roughly north south and had subsequently been truncated by a later Iron Age ditch and have been interpreted as the first formalised phase of boundary definition within that part of the site.

The results of the New School Site were interesting in that the area evaluated was not covered by anything like the density and diversity of remains encountered either in 1997 or on the Bob's Wood site. One possible explanation for the paucity of features dateable to the late Iron Age and the surprising absence of Romano-British artefactual materials may be that the area currently under investigation had held some special significance to the earlier prehistoric peoples of the area, a significance that continued to be respected during the later Iron Age and Romano-British periods. Support for this idea may be gained by the presence of those pits dateable to the early Bronze Age within Trench 26.

Other more pragmatic explanations may include the possibility that this part of the hillside was unattractive for settlement, perhaps due to poor drainage or a relatively exposed

location. Evaluation identified a similar absence of artefactual materials combined with a lack of any surviving archaeological features within the south western corner of the Bob's Wood site (Hinman, 2000). Here the void in the archaeological record was attributed to poor drainage and soil conditions where the underlying boulder clay lay directly below the subsoil.

Glendower, Mill Common 2003

(TL 2371/7130)

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken on 440 square metres of land to the rear of Glendower, Mill Common, Huntingdon (NGR TL 23714 71304) by the Archaeological Field Unit of Cambridgeshire County Council.

The evaluation identified significant Roman riverside activity that may be related to a Roman villa less than 100m to the west, at Whitehills. A large channel, or a series of channels, which contained Roman building material was identified in Trench 1.



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