



CCC AFU Report Number 902

Roman Enclosures at Longsands Community College, St Neots, Cambridgeshire

Archaeological Evaluation

Aileen Connor

September 2006

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St Neots, Cambridgeshire**

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Aileen Connor BA AIFA

With contributions by Rachel Fosberry, S.P.
Macaulay

Site Code: STN LSC 06
CHER Event Number: ECB2350
Date of works: 21st – 30th August 2006
Grid Ref: TL 1911 6072

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Summary

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken in the grounds of Longsands Community College, St Neots between 21/08/06 and 30/08/06. The Archaeological Field Unit of Cambridgeshire County Council undertook the work on behalf of Cambridgeshire County Council Property Services.

The evaluation was designed to assist in defining the character and extent of any archaeological remains within the proposed redevelopment area, in accordance with the guidelines set out in *Planning and Policy Guidance 16 - Archaeology and Planning* (Department of the Environment 1990). The results will enable decisions to be made by CAPCA, on behalf of the Local Planning Authority, with regard to the treatment of any archaeological remains found.

Two areas of development are proposed in the Community College grounds, a new building and a new all weather pitch. The area of the proposed all weather pitch contains significant archaeological remains including a possible roundhouse, ditched track and a series of large ditches that may be part of an extensive enclosure system. Pottery from the features indicates a consistent date in the Early Roman period (1st and 2nd centuries), although the roundhouse and track may be earlier.

The area of the proposed new build has a much lower incidence of archaeological features comprising a single, possibly prehistoric ditch.

The site archive is currently held by CCC AFU under the site code STN LSC 06 and will be deposited with the appropriate county stores in due course.

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Limit of Excavation		Limit of Excavation	
Cut		Deposit - Conjectured	
Cut-Conjectured		Natural Features	
Deposit Horizon		Sondages/Machine Strip	
Deposit Horizon - Conjectured		Intrusion/Truncation	
Intrusion/Truncation		Illustrated Section	S.14
Top Surface/Top of Natural		Archaeological Deposit	
Break in Section/ Limit of Section Drawing		Archaeological Feature	
Natural Deposit		Excavated Slot	
Cut Number		Stone	
Deposit Number	117	Root Disturbance	
Ordnance Datum	$\frac{18.45\text{m OD}}{\wedge}$	Field Drain	
Inclusions		Cable	
Sample Number		Gas	
		Modern Sewer	
		Cut Number	118

1 Introduction

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken in the grounds of Longsands Community College, St Neots (TL 1911 6072) between 21/08/06 and 30/08/06. Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Field Unit (CCC AFU) undertook the work on behalf of Cambridgeshire County Council Property Services.

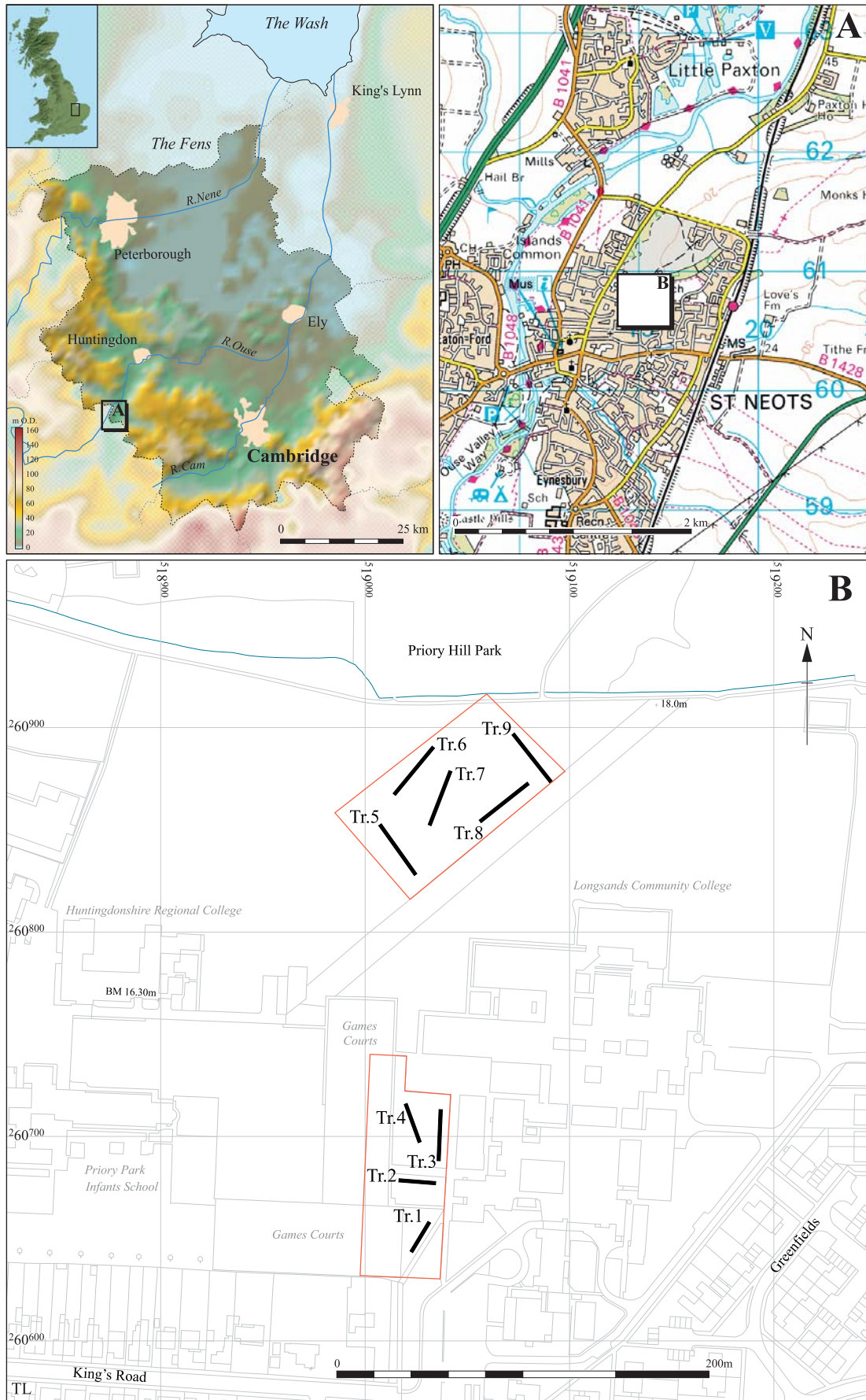
This archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a Brief issued by Andy Thomas of the Cambridgeshire Archaeology, Planning and Countryside Advice team (CAPCA; supplemented by a Specification prepared by CCC AFU.

The work was designed to assist in defining the character and extent of any archaeological remains within the proposed redevelopment area, in accordance with the guidelines set out in *Planning and Policy Guidance 16 - Archaeology and Planning* (Department of the Environment 1990). The results will enable decisions to be made by CAPCA, on behalf of the Local Planning Authority, with regard to the treatment of any archaeological remains found.

The site archive is currently held by CCC AFU under the site code STN LSC 06 and will be deposited with the appropriate county stores in due course.

2 Geology and Topography

The Soil Survey of England and Wales (SSEW 1983) shows the area to lie on a boulder clay bedrock over which, on the west side of the Study Area, there is a deposit of marine and river terrace gravel. A mixed sandy gravel and clay was encountered in all of the trenches. The area of the proposed all weather pitch had a slight slope from north (approximately 17.20m OD) to south (approximately 16.70m OD). The area of the proposed new build varied between approximately 17.10m and 17.70m OD. The subject site is located within a broader landscape that slopes down from north-east to south-west, the higher ground being to the north-east of the site and the lower towards the river Ouse to the west. The nearest Benchmark (16.30m) is located on the Huntingdonshire Regional College building adjacent to the west of the subject site (fig. 1).



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Figure 1: Location of trenches (black) with the development areas outlined (red)

3 Archaeological and Historical Background

3.1 Prehistoric

The subject site is located close to the Ouse corridor which has attracted settlement from the Neolithic onwards. The earliest remains are mainly ritual in character including the regionally very important ritual landscape at Eynesbury (Kemp, 1993, 1996, 1997, Ellis 2002) Bronze Age ring-ditches (probably the remains of burial mounds are located close by (Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (CHER) 08281, 04754, 09837)). Extensive evidence of prehistoric activity has also recently been investigated to the east (CCC AFU STR LOF04-06).

3.2 Iron Age and Roman

Extensive evidence of Iron Age and Roman activity has recently been investigated to the east of the subject site (CCC AFU STR LOF04-06) and additional activity is known to the north-west (CHER 04747).

Excavations in the wider area have confirmed the presence of many Iron Age sites that continued into the Roman period. Excavations along the Ouse valley for example have recorded occupation sites stretching from Huntingdon (Malim 1990; Hinman 1997, 2000) to Brampton (Malim & Mitchell 1993), to Paxton (Greenfield 1968; Alexander 1992) and Eynesbury (Alexander 1993; Kemp 1993, 1997; Macaulay 1994). The scale of Romano-British infrastructure and wealth found in the area is also evidenced by the number of find spots recorded in the CHER records.

The line of a Roman road that ran between Sandy and Godmanchester (Margary 1967) is nearby with the nearest east-west crossing point of the river thought to be a few hundred metres to the north of the medieval bridge in the area of Islands Common.

3.3 Anglo-Saxon and Medieval

The subject site is located to the north-east of the historic core of the town of St Neots. There is evidence of Early Saxon occupation in the St Neots area and burials at Brampton (Herne 1984). There is increasing evidence for the development of St Neots during the Middle and Late Saxon period. Certainly by the medieval period St Neots was well established within the parish of Eynesbury (Addyman 1973). Evidence of Late Saxon Settlement (CHER 00573) and burials (CHER 00574, 00570) is situated nearby. With further evidence of Saxon activity to the north of the site (CHER 00622)

4 Methodology

The objective of this Evaluation was to determine as far as reasonably possible the presence/absence, location, nature, extent, date, quality, condition and significance of any surviving archaeological deposits within the development area.

The Brief required that 5% of the area to be developed should be subject to trenching and that aerial photographs of the area should be subject to re-plotting.

Aerial photographs centred on the subject site were re-plotted by Air Photo Services (appendix 8). Trenching was undertaken by a mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.6m wide toothless ditching bucket. All machine excavation was carried out under constant archaeological supervision.

Spoil, exposed surfaces and features were scanned with a metal detector. All metal-detected and hand-collected finds were retained for inspection, other than those which were obviously modern.

All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using CCC AFU's *pro-forma* sheets. Trench locations, plans and sections were recorded at appropriate scales and colour and monochrome photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits.

Bulk samples were taken to assess the quality and preservation of environmental remains.

The soil in both areas that were evaluated had been heavily compacted and in the southern area a number of modern services were present. Safety fencing around the site areas was subject to some vandalism but otherwise site and weather conditions were generally good.

5 Results

Aerial photographs (appendix 8) show that the predominant archaeological features in the vicinity of the subject site are furlongs of ridge and furrow remaining from medieval cultivation. A single block of what may be steam ploughing can be seen in the grounds of Priory Park. Lengths of 'possible ditch' have been identified north of the subject site and may extend into it.

Nine trenches totalling 230m in length were excavated, four (trenches 1 to 4) in the area of the proposed new building block and five (trenches 5 to 9) in the area of the proposed all weather pitch.

Archaeological features/natural deposits were all sealed beneath a layer of subsoil which was in turn sealed beneath topsoil. The total thickness of sealing deposits varied from 0.5m thick to 0.7m thick.

Detailed results are presented below by area and trench.

5.1 Area of Proposed New Building Block (Figs 1, 2 and 4)

5.1.1 Trench 1

Trench 1 was 17m long, 1.6m wide and 0.7m deep, it was orientated south-west to north-east. No archaeological features were present.

5.1.2 Trench 2

Trench 2 was 18m long, 1.6m wide and 0.46m deep, it was orientated east to west. It contained one north to south aligned ditch (**203=403**), which is likely to be recent since it cut topsoil and fragments of modern brick were recovered from the segment (403) running through Trench 4.

5.1.3 Trench 3

Trench 3 was 25m long, 1.6m wide and 0.5m deep, it was orientated north to south. It contained one east to west aligned narrow, shallow ditch (**303=405**), sealed by subsoil but containing no finds. Post-medieval and modern features included a field drain, two electric cables and one gas pipe trench.

5.1.4 Trench 4

Trench 4 was 20m long, 1.6m wide and 0.47m deep, it was orientated north-west to south-east. It contained a north-west to south-east aligned ditch (**405**; fig. 4, Section 5) in which a single flint flake and a relatively large assemblage of animal bones, (possibly all from the same animal (appendix 5)) was found. It was sealed by subsoil and truncated by a modern ditch (**403**). Post-medieval and modern features included a north to south aligned ditch (**403=203**) that contained modern brick fragments, two post-medieval field drains and one electric cable.

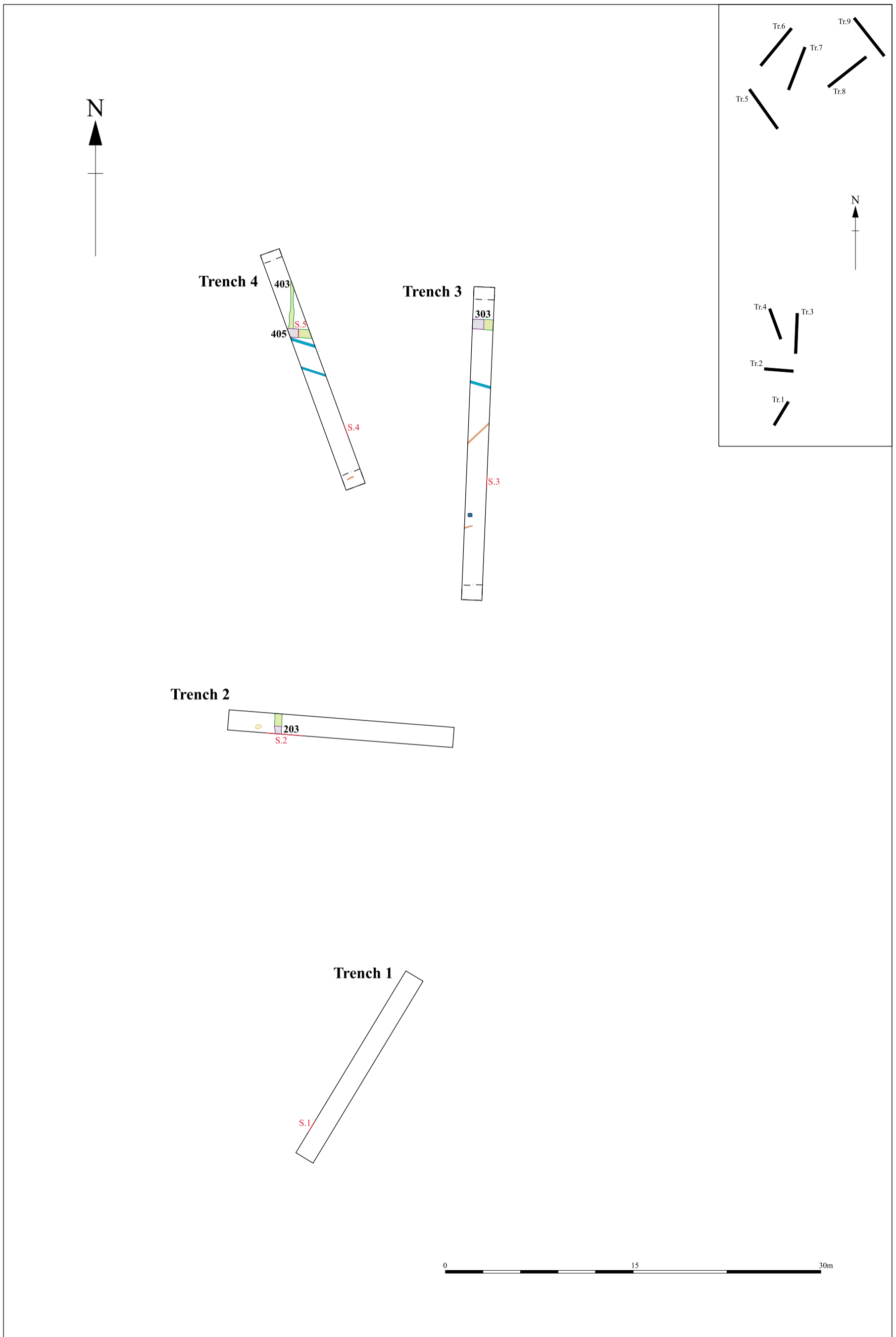


Figure 2: Trench plans in area of proposed new building block

5.2 Area of Proposed New All Weather Pitch (Figs 1, 3 and 4)

5.2.1 Trench 5

Trench 5 was 30m long, 1.6m wide and 0.48m deep, it was orientated north-west to south-east. Three large, deep ditches (**503**, **506** and **508**) were present. Two of the ditches (**506** and **508**) were on an approximately north to south alignment. These ditches were only a few metres apart and unlikely to have been in use at the same time. The most northerly ditch (**508=603**; fig. 4, Section 10) was 1.5m wide and 0.55m deep with a gentle U-shaped profile. It contained a single fill (507) from which rare fragments of Roman pottery and animal bone were recovered. Approximately 4m to the south and on a similar alignment was a wider, deeper ditch (**506**; fig.4, Section 9); this was approximately 3m wide and 1m deep, and contained two fills. The lower fill (505) contained Early Roman pottery including the handle and neck of an unusual pinch neck jar (appendix 3), the layer above it (504) also contained animal bone and Early Roman pottery. A soil sample (sample 2) from the upper layer was assessed for environmental remains; preservation was generally poor but did include a few fragments of wheat, possible rye and some unidentified weeds (appendix 4). The most southerly ditch (**503**; fig.4, Section 8) was on an east to west alignment, it was 2m wide and 0.70m deep. It had a gentle U-shaped profile and contained a single fill (502) from which occasional Roman pottery and animal bone was recovered. It is likely that all three ditches were part of the same rectilinear field system given their similarity of orientation, but that more than one phase is represented given the close proximity of two of the ditches and also the slight differences in general character. Ditches **508** and **503** were similar in character and may belong to the same phase.

5.2.2 Trench 6

Trench 6 was 30m long, 1.6m wide and 0.53m deep, it was orientated south-west to north-east. Three large ditches were present. These were unexcavated as all could be traced in other trenches. The north to south aligned ditch (**603**) was equivalent to ditch **508** in trench 5. The east to west aligned ditch (**605**) was equivalent to ditch **903** in trench 9, and the north-west to south-east aligned ditch (**607**) was equivalent to ditch **807** in trench 8.

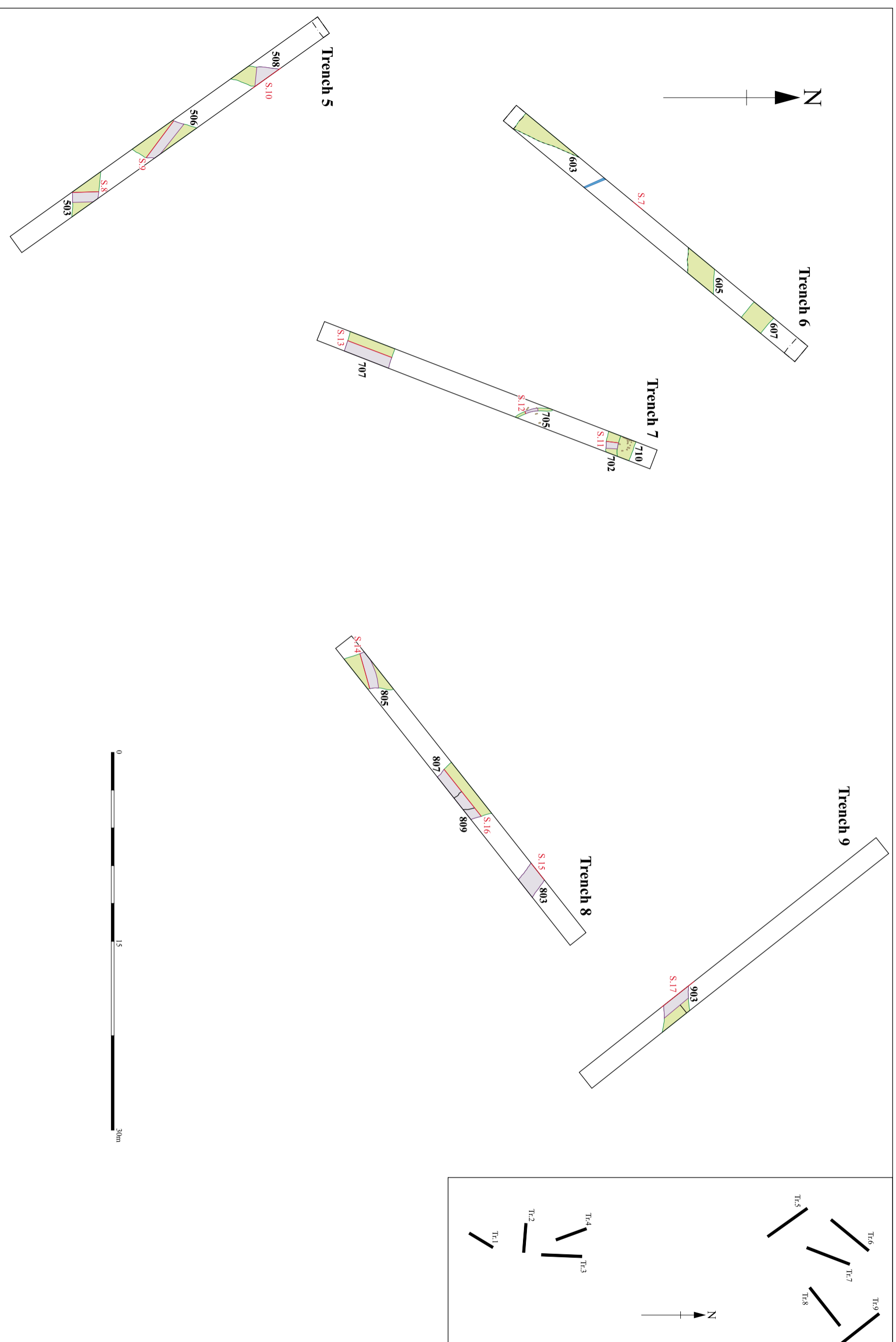


Figure 3: Trench plans in area of proposed new all weather pitch

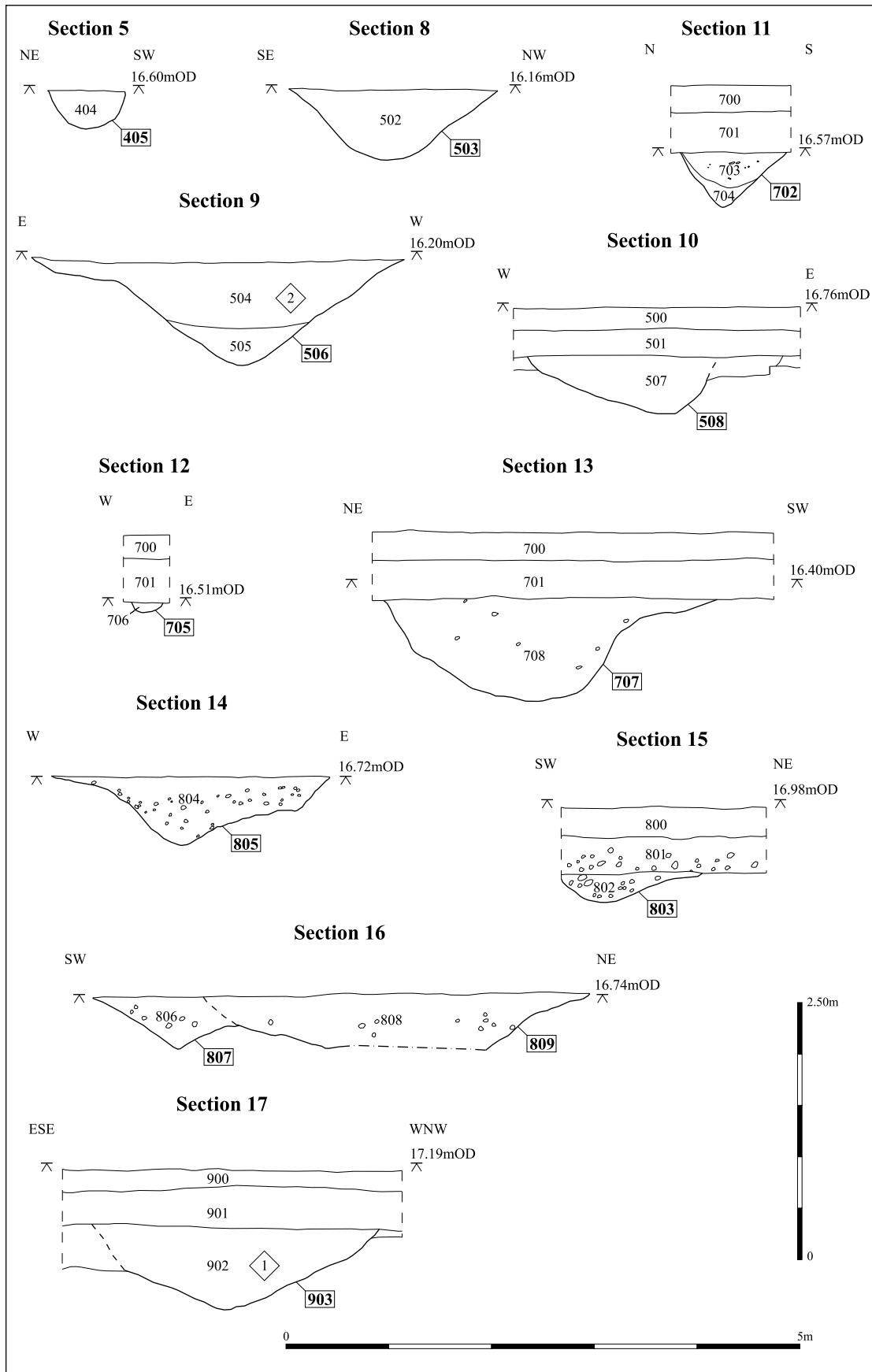


Figure 4: Section drawings

5.2.3 Trench 7

Trench 7 was 30m long, 1.6m wide and 0.66m deep, it was orientated SSW to NNE. A very large ditch (**707**), a curvilinear gully (**705**), and a slightly curving ditch (**702**), were found in this trench, all contained Roman pottery. The large ditch (**707**; fig.4, Section 13) was 3.5m wide, and 1m deep with a wide U-shaped profile. Although it only contained a single fill (708) its size was otherwise consistent with ditch **506** in trench 5 and the two may be part of the same system. The curvilinear gully (**705**, fig.4, Section 12) was only 0.30m wide and 0.08m deep with a U shaped profile. It is likely that the gully is part of a circular ditch estimated to be approximately 9m in diameter and may be evidence of a roundhouse. A second but much larger curvilinear ditch (**702**; fig.4 section 11) was located at the north end of trench 7. This was 1m wide and 0.5m deep with a V-shaped profile. It contained two fills (703 and 704). It is estimated that this ditch would also have had a diameter of approximately 9m, however, the character of the ditch was so different from **705** that it is unlikely to have performed the same function and it is possible that the curve observed in the trench was unrepresentative. Adjacent to ditch **702** was a patch of cobble stones (710), these were not densely packed together but they were dissimilar from the natural, it is possible that they represent the remnant of a cobbled surface or perhaps individual packing stones around posts.

5.2.4 Trench 8

Trench 8 was 30m long, 1.6m wide and 0.64m deep, it was orientated south-west to north-east. Four ditches were observed in this trench on two alignments. The two ditches (**803** and **807=607**) on a north-west to south-east alignment are likely to be the earliest since **807** was cut by north to south aligned ditch **809** (fig. 4, Section 16). The two earlier ditches (**803** and **807**) were parallel with each other and approximately 8m apart; they may represent a track. The ditches were somewhat dissimilar in profile one being 1.20m wide by 0.30m deep and U-shaped (**803**) whilst the other (**807**) was well over 1m wide by 0.5m deep and V-shaped. The later ditches (**805** and **809**) were both much larger, contained Early Roman pottery and were sealed by subsoil (801). One of the ditches (**805**; fig. 4, Section 14) also contained a fragment of hand-made tile in its backfill (804; appendix 7), the only evidence for Roman building material to be found in the evaluation.

5.2.5 Trench 9

Trench 9 was 30m long by 1.6m wide by 0.56m deep. One north-east to south-west aligned ditch (**903=605**) was found in this trench, it was 2m wide and 0.80m deep filled by mid brown sandy clay (902) that, contained Roman pottery and animal bone, it was sealed by subsoil

(901). A sample (appendix 1; 1) from this deposit (902) contained no evidence for plant remains.

6 Discussion

A single narrow ditch attests to probable prehistoric activity in the area of the proposed new build. Although aligned on a similar (east to west) orientation to ditches in the area of the all weather pitch it is unlikely to be contemporary since it was much smaller, was filled by a much paler and more leached deposit and the single flint flake suggests a pre-Roman date. The area of the proposed new build was otherwise devoid of archaeological features.

By contrast the area of the proposed all weather pitch to the north was very productive. Archaeological features (mainly ditches) were discovered in all of the trenches. Pottery with a date range of 1st to 2nd century (Early Roman) was found in almost all of the features. There were two ditch alignments indicating at least two phases of occupation. The earliest comprises a pair of parallel ditches (**803** and **807=607**), approximately 8m apart, on a north-west to south-east alignment. These ditches were dissimilar in profile but had similar fills, both contained worked flint flakes although one (**807**) also contained two small sherds of Roman pottery, possibly derived from the adjacent and later ditch (**809**). It seems likely that these ditches are evidence of a pre-Roman landscape, perhaps a ditched track way or part of a larger field system.

A single, narrow curvilinear gully (**705**) was located to the south of the possible track. The gully may be evidence for a roundhouse and is estimated to have been in the region of nine metres in diameter. Roundhouses were common in the Iron Age but also continued into the Roman period on rural settlements. It is possible that the track way and possible roundhouse belong to the same phase, although further excavation would be needed to confirm this.

At some time during the Roman period the track went out of use since one of its ditches was clearly cut by a ditch belonging to the rectilinear enclosure system that was later established on a north to south and east to west alignment. Most of the ditches located in the evaluation trenches belong to this later phase, although in some cases are so close together (e.g. **506** and **508**) that they are unlikely to be contemporary and must indicate additional phases that will only be recognised if further excavation takes place. The ditches were all relatively large, had a similar profile and with one exception contained a single fill.

A second curvilinear ditch (**702**) was located within a few metres of the possible roundhouse and is estimated to have had a similar diameter.

This ditch was much wider and deeper, however, and contained a relatively large quantity of Early Roman pottery (Appendix 2). Its proximity to both the track way and the roundhouse suggest that it is unlikely to have been contemporary with either, and associated pottery perhaps implies a somewhat later date (at least for dis-use).

Although only a fraction of the site has been viewed in the evaluation trenches it has certainly been sufficient to allow some level of interpretation that can be put into a broader landscape context by comparison with the recent and ongoing work at nearby Love Farm where a large segment of ancient landscape has been uncovered that shows a coherent system of fields, enclosures and tracks. A system of north to south and east to west enclosures clearly exists here and implies that the features identified at the subject site may be part of that same system. The Love Farm evidence shows that the landscape began to develop in prehistory and continued into the 5th century. The features at the subject site belong to a much shorter time period but fit well in terms of character and alignment with ditches of a similar date found at Love Farm.

7 Conclusions

In conclusion, it is clear that the area of the proposed all weather pitch contains significant archaeological remains including possible structures, dating to the Early Roman period. The remains indicate nearby occupation and can be viewed as elements of a much larger landscape that includes the Love Farm complex to the east. There is evidently more than one phase present, but the period of occupation was apparently short-lived since most of the pottery belongs to the 1st and 2nd centuries AD. The area is largely given over to ditched enclosures but the area in the vicinity of trench 7 is likely to be particularly sensitive as there is an indication that structural remains are present here.

The archaeological remains in the area of the all weather pitch are sealed beneath approximately 0.60m of subsoil and topsoil. Any ground disturbance associated with the proposed construction that penetrates more than this could, therefore, cause damage to the underlying archaeological remains.

The area of the proposed new build has a much lower incidence of archaeological features comprising a single, possibly prehistoric ditch. This ditch was sealed by approximately 0.50m of subsoil and topsoil. Any ground disturbance associated with the proposed construction that penetrates more than this could, therefore, cause damage to the underlying archaeological remains.

Recommendations for any future work based upon this report will be made by the County Archaeology Office.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank Dean Clark who commissioned the work on behalf of Cambridgeshire County Council. The project was managed by Aileen Connor. Chris Thatcher directed the fieldwork with the assistance of Tom Phillips. The excavators were Glenn Bailey, Chris Faine, Tom Lyons and Chris Montague. Survey was undertaken by Alex Howe and Taleyna Fletcher. Metal detecting was undertaken by Rob Parker. Thanks also to Ann Christie and staff of Longsands Community College who kindly allowed the archaeological team to use the facilities.

The brief for archaeological works was written by Andy Thomas (CAPCA) and the site was visited and monitored by Adrian Scruby (CAPCA).

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Appendix 1: Context Descriptions

Context	Cut	Trench	Description	Dimensions
100	n/a	1	Topsoil: Dark greyish brown clayey silt, occasional gravel	0.30m thick
101	n/a	1	Subsoil: Light greyish brown sandy silt, moderate gravel	0.40m thick
102	n/a	1	Natural: Mixed Sandy Gravel	n/a
200	n/a	2	Topsoil: Dark greyish brown clayey silt, occasional gravel	0.30m thick
201	n/a	2	Subsoil: Light greyish brown sandy silt, moderate gravel	0.15m thick
202	203	2	Ditch fill: Dark greyish brown clayey silt	0.40m thick
203	203	2	Ditch cut: U-shaped linear on N-S alignment	0.70m wide x 0.40m deep
204	n/a	2	Natural: Mixed Sandy Gravel	n/a
300	n/a	3	Topsoil: Dark greyish brown clayey silt, occasional gravel	0.25m thick
301	n/a	3	Subsoil: Light greyish brown sandy silt, moderate gravel.	0.40m thick
302	303	3	Ditch fill: Greyish brown silty sand, occasional gravel	0.20m thick
303	303	3	Ditch cut: U-shaped linear on E-W alignment	0.75m wide x 0.20m deep
304	n/a	3	Natural: Mixed Sandy Gravel	n/a
400	n/a	4	Topsoil: Dark greyish brown clayey silt, occasional gravel	0.15m thick
401	n/a	4	Subsoil: Light greyish brown sandy silt, moderate gravel	0.40m thick
402	403	4	Ditch fill: Dark greyish brown clayey silt	0.40m thick
403	403	4	Ditch cut :Ditch cut: U-shaped linear on N-S alignment	0.70m wide x 0.40m deep
404	405	4	Ditch fill: Pale greyish brown silty sand, occasional gravel	0.37m thick
405	405	4	Ditch cut: U-shaped linear on E-W alignment	0.75m wide x 0.37m deep
406	n/a	4	Natural: Mixed Sandy Gravel	n/a
500	n/a	5	Topsoil: Dark greyish brown clayey silt, occasional gravel	0.25m thick
501	n/a	5	Subsoil: Light greyish brown sandy silt, moderate gravel	0.25m thick
502	503	5	Ditch fill: Mid greyish brown silty sand with frequent flint	0.70m thick
503	503	5	Ditch cut: U-Shaped linear on E-W alignment	2.00m wide x 0.70 m deep
504	506	5	Ditch fill: Mid greyish brown silty sand with moderate flint	0.65m thick
505	506	5	Ditch fill: Dark greyish brown silty sand with occasional flint	0.35m thick
506	506	5	Ditch cut: Relaxed V-shaped linear on N-S alignment	3.00m wide x 1.00m deep
507	508	5	Ditch fill: Mid brown silty sand with frequent flint	0.55m thick
508	508	5	Ditch cut: Relaxed U-shaped linear on N-S alignment	1.80m wide x 0.55m deep
600	n/a	6	Topsoil: Dark greyish brown clayey silt, occasional gravel	0.25m thick
601	n/a	6	Subsoil: Light greyish brown sandy silt, moderate gravel	0.30m thick
602	603	6	Ditch fill: Same as 507	Not excavated
603	603	6	Ditch cut: Same as 508	Not excavated
604	605	6	Ditch fill: Same as 902	Not excavated
605	605	6	Ditch cut: Same as 903	Not excavated

Context	Cut	Trench	Description	Dimensions
606	607	6	Ditch fill: Same as 806	Not excavated
607	607	6	Ditch cut: Same as 807	Not excavated
700	n/a	7	Topsoil: Dark greyish brown clayey silt, occasional gravel	0.25m thick
701	n/a	7	Subsoil: Light greyish brown sandy silt, moderate gravel	0.40m thick
702	702	7	Ditch cut: V-shaped profile, curvilinear in plan	1.00m wide x 0.54m deep
703	702	7	Ditch fill: Dark greyish brown silty clay	0.35m thick
704	702	7	Ditch fill: Light brown silty sand	0.20m thick
705	705	7	Ditch cut: U-shaped profile, curvilinear in plan	0.28m wide x 0.10m deep
706	705	7	Ditch fill: light greyish brown silty clay	0.10m thick
707	707	7	Ditch cut: U-shaped linear on an E-W alignment	3.20m wide x 1.00m deep
708	707	7	Ditch fill: Dark greyish brown clayey silt	1.00m thick
709	n/a	7	Natural: Mixed Sandy Gravel	n/a
710	n/a	7	Layer of sparse rounded cobbles, possible surface?	n/a
800	n/a	8	Topsoil: Dark greyish brown clayey silt, occasional gravel	0.30m thick
801	n/a	8	Subsoil: Light greyish brown sandy silt, moderate gravel	0.35m thick
802	803	8	Ditch fill: Dark greyish brown silty sand with frequent flints	0.26m thick
803	803	8	Ditch cut: U-shaped linear on NW-SE alignment	1.30m wide x 0.26m deep
804	805	8	Ditch fill: Blackish brown sandy silt with frequent flinty gravel	0.65m thick
805	805	8	Ditch cut: Complex V-shaped on N-S alignment	2.50m wide x 0.65m deep
806	807	8	Ditch fill: Dark greyish brown sandy silt with occasional small stones	0.50m thick
807	8807	8	Ditch cut: V-shaped linear on NW-SE alignment	>1.30m wide x 0.50m deep
808	809	8	Ditch fill: Dark grey brown sandy silt with frequent flinty gravel	>0.50m thick
809	809	8	Ditch cut: N-S aligned linear, profile not defined	3.60m wide x >0.50m deep
810	n/a	8	Natural: Mixed Sandy Gravel	n/a
900	n/a	9	Topsoil: Dark greyish brown clayey silt, occasional gravel	0.30m thick
901	n/a	9	Subsoil: Light greyish brown sandy silt, moderate gravel	0.40m thick
902	903	9	Ditch fill: Mid brown sandy clay with frequent flint	0.80m thick
903	903	9	Ditch cut: Relaxed V-shaped linear on E-W alignment	2.60m wide x 0.80m deep
904	n/a	9	Natural: Mixed Sandy Gravel	n/a

Appendix 2: Finds Quantification (by weight in kilograms)

Context	Bone	Pottery	Flint	Slag	Stone	Iron
404	0.637		0.019			
502	0.069	0.485				
504	0.18	0.485			0.192	
505	0.203	0.457				
507	0.076	0.043				
702	0.002	0.212				
706		0.004				
708	0.137	0.266	0.004			
802	0.216		0.001			
804	0.046	0.652	0.018			
807		0.005	0.003			
809	0.051	0.175	0.003	0.006		
902	0.127	0.154				
99999		0.053			0.029	

Appendix 3: Roman Pottery Appraisal

by Stephen Macaulay

A total of 2.873 kg of Roman pottery (289 individual sherds) were recovered during the excavations of evaluation trenches in August 2006 at Longsands Community College (STN LSC 06).

The pottery is in a relatively good condition with the assemblage being comprised almost entirely of coarse ware pottery from nearby domestic rural source(s). Of interest and note is the amount of burning (post-firing) of imported Colchester Ware material.

The coarse wares are predominantly from local (Cambridgeshire) sources but with some interesting Colchester wares present. The only exotic wares recovered were 3 sherds (9g) of Central Gaulish Samian (Mid 1st -2nd C AD). Otherwise Grey, Sandy and Oxidised (Grey) Sandy wares dominate.

Jars, large storage jars, cooking pots, and a dish are the main forms present, which is typical of a domestic kitchen and storage assemblage.

The assemblage is dominated by classic locally produced Romano-British domestic coarse wares (Grey Wares, Sandy and Oxidised Sandy Wares represent 70%), however Colchester White Wares account for 25% of the assemblage by weight which is perhaps significant.

The date range of the assemblage is 1st-2nd centuries AD, the diagnostic wares (GCS, Colchester) and the total absence of Nene Valley wares suggest that the site did not persist into the later 2nd century when the landscape was altered during the main period of Romanization in Cambridgeshire. What fine wares are present on the site derive from Colchester (and Gaul), the absence of later finewares is significant.

Of interest are the Colchester wares which all exhibit signs of burning whilst in use. The presence of a pinched neck flagon is more normally associated with finer wares, although this specimen is poorly made and may be an early copy of continental North Gaulish imports in Colchester.

This assemblage is of significance due to its (relative) size from a small evaluation and its composition should be considered in the light of nearby by investigations of Roman-British sites (e.g. Love Farm, St Neots 2005-6). Even if no further fieldwork is undertaken at the Longsands College site it would be worth considering full analysis of this assemblage to enable comparison with nearby Romano-British sites, especially Love Farm.

Fabric Type	Weight (kg)
Grey Ware	0.275
Grey Sandy Ware	0.461
Oxidised Grey Sandy Ware	0.733
Shelly Wares	0.542
Black Burnished Ware	0.030
Colchester White Ware	0.717
Colchester Colour Coat	0.010
Central Gaulish Samian	0.009
Undiagnostic	0.096
Total	2.873

Table 1: Pottery assemblage by fabric types

Context	Weight (kg)	Pottery type	Vessel	Decoration	Body or Rim	Spot Date
Unstrat	0.053	GW, GSW, SW	Jars	yes	Body	Roman
502	0.489	GW, GSW, OGSW, SW, BB, Colchester White Ware, Colchester Colour Coat	Jars, bowls, flagon	none	Body & rim	1 st -2 nd C AD
504	0.479	GSW, OGSW, SW, Colchester White Ware	Jar, bowls	none	Body	1 st -2 nd C AD
505	0.459	GSW, OGSW, SW, Colchester White Ware	Jars, Bowls, Pinched necked Flagon (Colchester)	none	Body & Rim	1 st -2 nd C AD
507	0.014	OGSW	?	none	Body	Roman
702	0.212	GSW, OGSW, Colchester White Ware, Grog?	Jars, Bowls	none	Body & Rim	1 st -2 nd C
706	0.004	GSW	?	none	Body	Roman
708	0.266	GW, OGSW, SW, GSW	Dish, Bowl, Jars	none	Body & Rim	1 st -2 nd C AD
804	0.560	GSW, OGSW, SW, Colchester White Ware, CGS	Cup, Jar, large storage jar	None	Body & Rim	1 st -2 nd C AD
807	0.005	GW, Colchester White Ware,	Jars?	none	Body	1 st -2 nd C AD
809	0.175	GW, GSW, SW, Colchester White Ware	Jars, bowls	none	Body & Rim	1 st -2 nd C AD
902	0.156	Colchester White Ware,	Bowl	none	Body & Rim	1 st 2 nd C AD
Totals	2.873					

GW = Grey Ware, GSW = Grey Sandy Ware, OGSW = Oxidised Grey sandy Ware, SW = Shelly Ware, BB = Black burnished ware, CGS = Central Gaulish Samian

Table 2: Pottery Assemblage by Context

Appendix 4: Environmental Appraisal

by Rachel Fosberry

Introduction and Methods

Two samples were taken from features within the evaluated areas of the site in order to assess the quality of preservation of plant remains and their potential to provide useful data as part of further archaeological investigations. Ten litres of each sample were processed by bucket flotation for the recovery of charred plant remains, dating evidence and any other artefactual evidence that might be present. The flot was collected in a 0.5mm nylon mesh and the residue was washed through a 1mm sieve. Both flot and residue were allowed to air dry. The dried residue was passed through 5mm and 2mm sieves and a magnet was dragged through each resulting fraction prior to sorting for artefacts. Any artefacts present were noted and reintegrated with the hand-excavated finds. The flot was examined under a binocular microscope at x16 magnification.

Results

Preservation is by charring and is generally poor. Charcoal fragments are present in both samples in small quantities. Modern contaminants in the form of rootlets and live insects are also present.

Three fragmented grains of wheat (*Triticum* sp.) are present in Sample 2, (504) along with three unidentified weeds and two poorly preserved cereal grains that have been tentatively identified as rye (*Secale cereale*). Two small pieces of Roman pottery were recovered from the residue. Sample 1, (902) does not contain any plant remains or artefacts.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The plant assemblage in Sample 2, (504) consist of low densities of plant macrofossils that are probably derived from scattered refuse within this Roman ditch. It is not considered that full analysis would add significantly to this interpretation and further work is not recommended.

Appendix 5: Animal Bone Appraisal

A small assemblage of 1.744kg of Animal Bone was recovered during the excavations of evaluation trenches in August 2006 at Longsands Community College (STN LSC 06).

The animal bone was all hand collected, no bone was recovered from the environmental samples suggesting that although it is in a moderately good condition, small bones have not survived.

Species present include cow, pig and sheep. Interestingly, by far the largest group of animal bone was recovered from context 404, the fill of a possible prehistoric ditch, the bone from this ditch differed markedly in colour and condition to the remainder of the assemblage. All of the bone from this context may have come from the same animal, a cow or other large ungulate.

Context	Bone weight (kg)
404	0.637
502	0.069
504	0.18
505	0.203
507	0.076
702	0.002
708	0.137
802	0.216
804	0.046
809	0.051
902	0.127

Appendix 6: Flint Appraisal

Context	No. of flakes	Description
404	1	Large struck flake,
708	1	Struck flake, possible blade, some retouch visible on two edges
802	1	Tiny burnt flake
804	3	All probably natural flakes
807	2	Struck flake, broken and possible blade flake
809	1	Probably natural flake

This is a very small flint assemblage, several of the flakes are almost certainly naturally occurring. The flake from 404 may be contemporary with its context, as may be those from context 807, the remainder are almost certainly residual in Roman contexts.

Appendix 7: Other Finds

A fragment of probably Roman hand-made tile in a Shelly Ware fabric was found in context 804, other fragments of undiagnostic fired clay were found in contexts 507 and 702. A fragment of burnt stone was found in context 504 and a single iron nail in context

Appendix 8: Aerial Photographic Assessment

By Rog Palmer MA MIFA

This assessment of aerial photographs examined an area of some 130 hectares (centred TL191607) in order to identify and accurately map archaeological, recent and natural features. The full assessment report is stored in the project archive under site code STN LSC 06. The following is a summary of that report

The predominant archaeological features are furlongs of ridge and furrow remaining from medieval cultivation.

In the grounds of Priory Park is a single block of what may be steam ploughing.

Lengths of 'possible ditch' have been identified north of the Development Area and may extend into it.

Original photo interpretation and mapping was at 1:2500 level.

Photographs examined

Cover searches were obtained from Bedfordshire HER, Cambridge University Collection of Aerial Photographs, and the National Monuments Record: Air Photographs, Swindon. Photographs included those resulting from observer-directed flights and routine vertical surveys.

Photographs consulted are listed below.

Base maps

Digital data from original survey at 1:2500/1250 were provided by the client. Positions of older field boundaries were obtained by transforming on to this base a copy of the Ordnance Survey First Edition Six-inch map (1890).

Photo interpretation and mapping

All photographs were examined by eye and under slight (2x) magnification, viewing them as stereoscopic pairs when possible. Ridge and furrow and other earlier cultivation was sketched on a working copy of the map for later transference to digital form. Ditched features were added from scanned copies of the most informative photographs. These were transformed to match the digital data using the specialist program AirPhoto (Scollar 2002). Scanned photographs were enhanced using the default setting in AirPhoto before being examined and interpreted on screen. Transformed files were set as background layers in AutoCAD Map, where features were overdrawn, making reference to the original prints, using standard conventions. Layers

from this final drawing have been used to prepare the figure in this report and have been supplied to the client in digital form.

Accuracy

AirPhoto computes values for mismatches of control points on the photograph and map. For the transformations prepared for this assessment the mean mismatches were less than $\pm 1.50\text{m}$. These mismatches can be less than the survey accuracy of the base maps themselves and users should be aware of the published figures for the accuracy of large scale maps and thus the need to relate these mismatches to the Expected Accuracy of the Ordnance Survey maps from which control information was taken (OS 2006).

COMMENTARY

Soils

The Soil Survey of England and Wales (SSEW 1983) shows the area to lie on a boulder clay bedrock (soil association 411d: HANSLOPE) over which, on the west side of the Study Area, there is a deposit of marine and river terrace gravel (soil association 571s: EFFORD 1). The edge of the gravel deposit was not apparent on the aerial photographs examined and it may be of minimal depth. Crops on clay respond poorly to variations in sub-surface depth other than in extremely dry summers such as 1996 when, for example, levelled ditched features were visible on photographs.

Archaeological features

The predominant archaeological features are the ridge and furrow remaining from medieval cultivation. The furlongs in the actual Development Area were excellently preserved earthworks in the 1940s but were subsequently levelled to provide a playing field for the school. The mapped fragments of ridge and furrow in the Study Area are probably parts of a once more extensive medieval arable landscape.

In the grounds of Priory Park is a single block of what may be steam ploughing. This was best recorded in 1947 and has since been eradicated.

Crop-marked evidence, including what appears to be a ditched trackway (leading to an enclosure north of the Study Area), was apparent on photographs taken in the dry summer of 1996. One length of possible ditch may extend into the Development Area.

Non-archaeological features

No non-archaeological features were identified on the photographs examined.

Land use

Land use in the Development Area was initially permanent pasture, in which there was earthwork ridge and furrow that indicated there had been no ploughing since that cultivation ceased. This was apparent on photographs taken in and earlier than 1950. By 1965 – the next date of photography – the field had been levelled and was a playing field. These are not good conditions for the detection of pre-medieval features on aerial photographs.

Many other fields in the Study Area were in arable use on photographs taken in or before 1950. By 1965, most had been built over or, as with the field immediately east of the Development area, converted to a playing field.

Land within Priory Park has remained grass covered but the east side was used for organised games (ie had tracks and pitches marked out) from 1968.

Aerial photographs examined

Source: *Bedfordshire HER*

Vertical photographs

Aerofilms/96c/565/Run 19: 1681 18 July 1996 1:10000
Aerofilms/96c/565/Run 20: 1742 18 July 1996 1:10000

Source: *Cambridge University Collection of Aerial Photographs (searched 11 August 2006)*

Vertical photographs

PHOTO_ID	PHOTO_DATE	PHOTO_SUBJ	COVER_TRAC	PHOTO_SCAL
RC8AR 151-152	1 Oct 1974	Ouse valley near St Neots	74_116	5400
RC8BJ0 13-16	21 May 1976	Industrial estate, St Neots	76_029	4500
RC8BJ0 21-024	21 May 1976	Industrial estate, St Neots	76_029	4500
RC8EH 246-247	14 Apr 1982	Ouse Valley, between Huntingdon and Little Burford	82_008a	10000
RC8EI 078-079	11 May 1982	Ouse Valley, between Little Barford and Earith	82_012	10000
RC8knBF 213-214	12 Jun 1988	Cambridgeshire	88_c025	10000
RC8knBG 100-101	12 Jun 1988	Cambridgeshire	88_c025	10000

Oblique photographs

PHOTO_ID	PHOTO_SUBJ	NGRE	NGRN	PHOTO_DATE
ALI 79-80	Panorama near St. Neots, looking NNE	51930 0	26080 0	8 Jul 1965

Source: *National Monuments Record: Air Photographs (cover search 4137)*

Military obliques

NGR Index Number	Accession Number	Frame	Original Number	Film Details	Date Flown	6 Fig NGR
TL1960/1	MSO 31096	O-40	17OTU/12/2	M 5x5"	26-Mar-41	TL190603

TL1860/4 MSO 31096 O-51 17OTU/12/2 M 5x5" 26-Mar-41 TL188605

Vertical collection

<i>Sortie Number</i>	<i>Library Number</i>	<i>Camera Position</i>	<i>Start Frame</i>	<i>End Frame</i>	<i>NGR Start</i>	<i>NGR End</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Scale 01:00</i>
RAF/106G/UK/635	37	RP	3413	3414	TL195611	TL195606	10-Aug-45	10600
RAF/106G/UK/635	37	RP	3452	3455	TL190601	TL188613	10-Aug-45	10600
RAF/106G/UK/969	123	RS	4076	4077	TL195610	TL187609	01-Nov-45	10200
RAF/106G/UK/1490	326	RP	3218	3220	TL184599	TL198599	09-May-46	10000
RAF/CPE/UK/1952	554	RS	4297	4299	TL188614	TL182604	25-Mar-47	10000
RAF/541/483	1062	RS	4127	4129	TL194606	TL183605	07-Apr-50	10100
RAF/CPE/UK/2272	2793	V	5001	5003	TL193601	TL183601	29-Aug-47	8800
OS/68031	9313	V	32	34	TL190613	TL189599	09-Apr-68	7500
OS/71275	10175	V	19	20	TL197600	TL191600	02-Jun-71	7500
OS/73253	10428	V	80	80	TL195602	TL195602	06-Jun-73	7500
OS/73253	10428	V	143	143	TL193612	TL193612	06-Jun-73	7500
OS/75175	12121	V	219	219	TL184607	TL184607	06-Jun-75	10200
OS/HSL/85223	12769	V	7940	7943	TL188601	TL188613	01-Oct-85	5200
OS/HSL/85223	12769	V	7965	7968	TL194600	TL194613	01-Oct-85	5200
OS/83179	13064	V	20	21	TL176609	TL180617	20-Sep-83	10600
OS/91029	13803	V	61	63	TL196612	TL192598	12-Apr-91	7700

Most informative photographs

RAF/106G/UK/635: 3452-3454
 RAF/CPE/UK/1952: 4297-4298
 Aerofilms/96c/565/Run 19: 1681
 Aerofilms/96c/565/Run 20: 1742

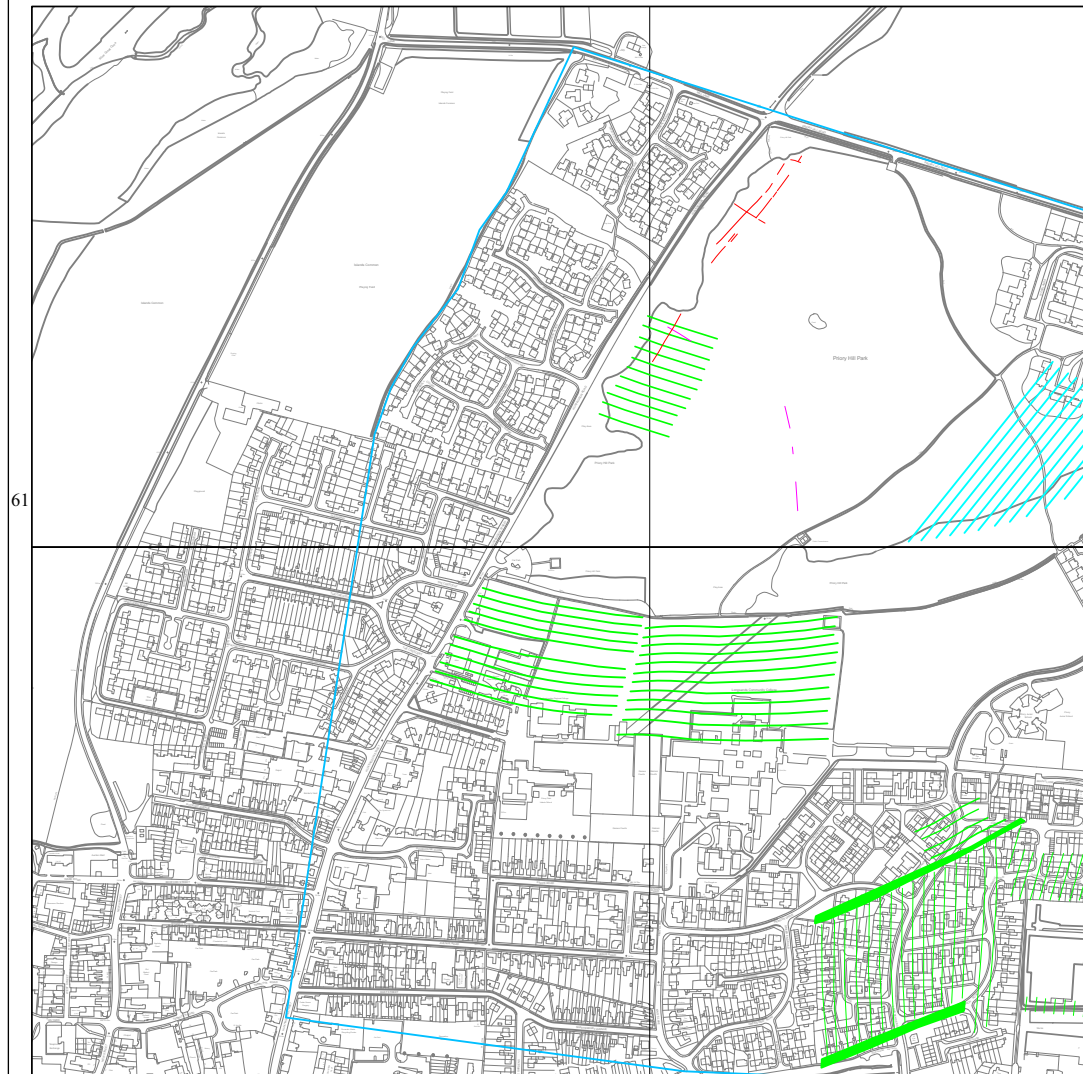
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My thanks to Stephen Coleman, Bedfordshire HER, for providing scans of selected vertical photographs.

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Longsands Community College, St Neots, Cambridgeshire:
Figure 1. Archaeological information from aerial photographs.



- Area examined
- Ridge and furrow (schematic)
- Headland
- - - Ditch
- - - Possible ditch
- Steam ploughing? (schematic)

Original photo interpretation and mapping at 1:2500 level based
on aerial photographs at Bedfordshire HER, CUCAP/ULM and NMRC.
Air Photo Services Cambridge
August 2006
Drawing: 0616Longsand.dwg



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