# 270 Cambridge Science Park Milton Cambridgeshire

## Archaeological Evaluation Report

oxfordarchaeology east east east

**September 2015**

**Client: Dorset County Council Pension Fund**

OA East Report No: 1830
OASIS No: oxfordar3-222061
NGR: TL 4636 6205

Archaeological Evaluation Report

# 270 Cambridge Science Park, Milton, Cambridgeshire

*Archaeological Evaluation*

*By Pat Moan BA ACIfA*

*Editor: Chris Thatcher BA*

*Illustrator: Charlotte Walton MPhil*

*Report Date: September 2015*

**Report Number:** 1830

**Site Name:** 270 Cambridge Science Park, Milton, Cambridgeshire

**HER Event No:** ECB4541

**Date of Works:** September 2015

**Client Name:** Dorset County Council Pension Fund

**Client Ref:**

**Planning Ref:** S/0630/15/FL

**Grid Ref:** TL 4636 6205

**Site Code:** ECB4541

**Finance Code:** CAMSPA15

**Receiving Body:** CCC Stores

**Accession No:**

Prepared by: Pat Moan
Position: Project Officer
Date: 18th September 2015

Checked by: James Drummond-Murray
Position: Senior Project Manager
Date: 18th September 2015
Signed:

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## *Summary*

*Between 1st and 11th September 2015, Oxford Archaeology East (OA East) carried out an archaeological evaluation at 270 Cambridge Science Park, Milton, Cambridgeshire (TL 4636 6205). A total of seven trenches were excavated that revealed an undated ditch, a possible furrow, a glacial feature and a modern footpath.*

*The trenching indicated that the development area had seen significant truncation and landscaping in the recent past, possibly related to the activities on site during the Second World War. This activity and the impact of modern development on the area means that the majority of any undesignated heritage assets that may have been in the area have been significantly truncated.*

# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Location and scope of work

1.1.1 An archaeological evaluation was conducted at 270 Cambridge Science Park, Milton, Cambridgeshire (TL 4636 6205).

1.1.2 This archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a Brief issued by Gemma Stewart of Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC; Planning Application S/0630/15/FL), supplemented by a Specification prepared by OA East (Drummond-Murray 2015).

1.1.3 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 *National Planning Policy Framework* (Department for Communities and Local Government March 2012). The results will enable decisions to be made by CCC, on behalf of the Local Planning Authority, with regard to the treatment of any archaeological remains found.

1.1.4 The site archive is currently held by OA East and will be deposited with the appropriate county stores in due course.

## 1.2 Geology and topography

1.2.1 The site lies on Gault Formation Mudstone, with no superficial deposits recorded, though river terrace gravels are located in the surrounding area (BGS Geology of Britain Viewer: http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html: Accessed 11/09/15). The subject site is located 2.5km to the north-east of the historic core of Cambridge and 1km south-west of the historic core of Milton. The level of the land is approximately 12mOD across the site, with significant landscaping having taken place.

## 1.3 Archaeological and historical background

1.3.1 A thorough archaeological background was written for the desk-based assessment of the development area (Mott MacDonald, 2015) and is drawn from below.

***Prehistoric***

1.3.2 There are few records or findspots dating to between the Palaeolithic and Neolithic within the surrounding area. A single Palaeolithic handaxe was found 900m to the south of the subject site (MCB19188). Large scale archaeological excavations 700m to the north at Milton Landfill recorded residual Mesolithic/Early Neolithic flint blades (Phillips 2013). Similarly, a single Neolithic flint was recovered from the Trinity College/NAPP site adjacent to the development area (ECB2527).

1.3.3 There are numerous Bronze Age findspots and features recorded in the surrounding area. Again, 700m to the north of the development area, at Milton Landfill, an Early Bronze Age waterhole was excavated containing fragments of waterlogged wood which were radiocarbon dated to 1700-1520 cal. BC (*ibid.* ECB1382). A Middle Bronze Age field system was also found with a possible later Bronze Age post-built roundhouse and two posthole alignments of uncertain date, though they are similar to other Bronze Age posthole alignments in the region (*e.g.* Bell Language School, South Cambridge; Bush 2015).

1.3.4 A pit containing Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age pottery was recorded adjacent to the development area during evaluation of the Trinity College/NAPP site. There are also a

number of individual findspots within 1km such as the worked stone objects from 377 Milton Road (ECB05219) and Bronze Age beaker fragments from Milton (ECB05532).

1.3.5 Iron Age activity was again recorded during excavations at Milton Landfill, where an Early Iron Age scattered farming settlement was found. This comprised features such as waterholes, post-built structures and fence lines, all of which contained a much richer assemblage of artefacts compared to earlier features, indicating that they were associated with settlement rather than a less-used area (*ibid*.). Activity continued into the Middle Iron Age and Late Iron Age with consolidation of settlement features and a Late Iron Age field system was introduced.

1.3.6 Excavation 900m to the south-west of the subject site, at King's Hedges School recorded an Iron Age ditch, 700m to the west of the subject site, possible Iron Age pottery was recorded (ECB2309)

***Roman***

1.3.7 The development area lies 600m to the east of Akeman Street, the Roman road connecting Littleport and Cambridge. It was recorded during a watching brief just over 1km to the north of the subject site (ECB1499). Similarly, 830m to the south-west, excavations identified part of the street and associated pits and ditches (ECB353). Furthermore, Roman activity was attested to at Milton Landfill where Roman gravel quarrying was recorded, though no settlement activity was seen (Phillips 2013).

1.3.8 Approximately 700m to the south-west of the subject site, at King's Hedges School, a Roman villa was excavated in the late 20th and early 21st century. The excavations revealed a villa lying parallel to Akeman Street and comprising a 2nd century rectangular building which was extended in the 4th century (MCB16897).

***Anglo-Saxon and medieval***

1.3.9 Very few find spots dating to the Anglo-Saxon period are found within 1km of the development area. Excavations at the King's Hedges School recorded a feature suggestive of a sunken-feature building with possible smithing evidence (CHER 05421b).

1.3.10 A possible Anglo-Saxon origin for Milton is suggested by Toponomastic evidence. The settlement is first recorded in AD 975 as *Middletune* meaning 'the middle farm'. The modern name has been in use since the late 13th century (Reaney 1943).

1.3.11 There is limited evidence for medieval activity within 1km of the study site, with medieval ridge and furrow recorded at Milton Landfill to the north and surviving ridge and furrow in a field to the south of the landfill site (MCB20022). It is likely that the subject site was agricultural land during the medieval period, with the land being owned by Trinity College since its foundation in 1546 and staying as farmland until the 20th century.

***Post-medieval and modern***

1.3.12 The development area was left as agricultural land until the 20th century. The railway line linking Cambridge and St Ives was built in 1847. The land was requisitioned by the US Army during the Second World War and was used to prepare vehicles and tanks for the D-Day landings. The 20th century maps show the development area to the north of the railway siding in an area clearly developed during the war (Mott Macdonald 2015).

1.3.13 The subject site lay derelict after the Second World War until redevelopment in the 1970s, when the Science Park was constructed.

## 1.4 Acknowledgements

1.4.1 The evaluation was funded by the Dorset County Council Pension Fund and Phillippa Adams of Mott MacDonald monitored the fieldwork on behalf of their client. The project was managed by James Drummond-Murray and fieldwork was directed by the author with the assistance of Toby Knight. Machine excavation and reinstatement was undertaken by Lattenbury Plant Hire Services. The site was monitored and visited by Gemma Stewart, Assistant Archaeologist for Cambridge County Council

# 2 Aims and Methodology

## 2.1 Aims

2.1.1 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. A particular aim of the trenching was to investigate the amount of truncation to buried deposits by modern development on the site.

## 2.2 Methodology

2.2.1 The Brief (Stewart 2015) stated that an archaeological evaluation was necessary prior to redevelopment. A total of seven trial trenches were excavated across the Phase 1 area of redevelopment.

2.2.2 Machine excavation was carried out under constant archaeological supervision with a tracked 360-type excavator using a toothless ditching bucket. A toothed bucket had to be used on a number of trenches to remove compacted concrete rubble layers.

2.2.3 The site survey was carried out using a Leica GS08 Smartnet GPS.

2.2.4 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 and not related to the activity on site during the Second World War.

2.2.5 All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using OA East'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.

2.2.6 Environmental samples would be taken from features deemed as having potential for preserved ecofactual remains.

2.2.7 Site conditions were dry and sunny and ground conditions were dry, although moderate contamination was encountered in most trenches.

# 3 RESULTS

## 3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 Trenches are described below in numerical order. Full details of the trenches can be found in Appendix A, refer to Fig. 2 for a plan of the trenches. Due to the thickness and compaction of some deposits located in Trenches 1 and 2, both trenches were shortened and not fully excavated to natural geology due to health and safety concerns. Similarly, the south-western end of Trench 5 had to be shortened by 4 metres as a previously unknown service was found by CAT Scanning.

3.1.2 Moderate diesel contamination was noted in most trenches, where diesel had stained the natural geology and overlying made ground a mid greenish grey (Plate 1).

## 3.2 Trench 1

3.2.1 Trench 1 (Plate 2) was the northern-most trench in the development area, aligned east-north-east to west-south-west and cut through an area of scrub land, currently used to dump plant and grass cuttings. The trench measured 18m long and 1.8m wide, with another small section of trench excavated at the eastern end measuring 3m long and 1.8m wide. The depths varied from 1m to the west to 2m at the east.

3.2.2 Natural geology was encountered at a depth of 2m in the eastern segment of trench. This was overlain by 1.1m of modern backfill consisting of redeposited clays and gravels with large quantities of reinforced concrete, wood and metal. Photographs of the metal objects can be found in the archive. This backfill was in turn overlain by 0.9m of compost and mulched wood.

3.2.3 The western segment of trench consisted of redeposited modern backfill overlain by 0.37m of asphalt. A small section of natural geology was located in the south-western corner of the trench, indicating the modern backfill was within the cut of a large trench or pit backfilled with demolition material. Large fragments of corroded metal were found in the backfill, possibly relating to activity on site during the Second World War.

## 3.3 Trench 2

3.3.1 Trench 2 was located to the south of, and on the same alignment as, Trench 1 within a landscaped area on the edge of the car park. The trench was excavated in two segments, the eastern segment measuring 5.5m long, 1.8m wide and excavated to a depth of 1.55m. The western segment of trench measured 2m long, 1.8m wide and 0.54m deep.

3.3.2 Natural geology was not encountered within the trench. A total of 0.35m of redeposited sandy clay with clinker inclusions was overlain by 0.3m of dark clayey silts with regular clinker inclusions. Above this was 0.4m of compacted concrete rubble which was in turn overlain by 0.5m of topsoil.

## 3.4 Trench 3

3.4.1 This trench was located on the western edge of the development area and aligned north-east to south-west, within the car park itself. The trench measured 30m long and 1.8m wide with a depth of 0.9m (Fig. 3, Section 1).

3.4.2 A single truncated furrow or boundary ditch (**1**; Fig. 3, Section 2) was cut through the natural geology on a north-west to south-east alignment, it measured 3.5m wide, 0.25m deep and had a wide U-shaped profile. The fill was a mid greyish brown silty clay (2)

with occasional manganese inclusions, from which no finds were recovered. A field drain was located in the base of the feature on the same alignment. Overlying this ditch was a layer of mid yellowish brown redeposited clays and sands, measuring 0.41m deep, with occasional clinker and brick inclusions. Above this were layers of hardcore and tarmac.

## 3.5 Trench 4

3.5.1 Trench 4 was located in the south-western corner of the development area and aligned north-west to south-east, measuring 20m long, 1.8m wide and 0.75m deep. The natural geology was sealed by 0.45m of mid yellowish brown redeposited sandy clays with regular clinker and brick inclusions. Above this was 0.37m of hardcore and tarmac related to the modern car park. No archaeological features were located in the trench.

## 3.6 Trench 5

3.6.1 Trench 5 was located to the south-east of Trench 3 and aligned north-west to south-east. The trench measured 16m long, 1.9m wide and 0.91m deep. No archaeological features were located in the trench, with natural geology overlain by 0.51m of redeposited mid yellowish brown clayey silt with occasional clinker and brick inclusions, overlain in turn by hardcore and tarmac associated with the modern car park.

## 3.7 Trench 6

3.7.1 Trench 6 (Plate 1) was located in the south-eastern area of the site on a north-east to south-west alignment. The trench measured 14m long, 1.8m wide and between 0.75m to 0.95m deep. A single ditch (**3**; Fig. 3, Section 3) cut the natural geology on a north-west to south-east alignment, measuring 0.85m wide and 0.4m deep with a U-shaped profile. The single fill (4) was a light yellowish brown silty clay with small stone inclusions. No finds were recovered from the feature.

3.7.2 Overlying this ditch were mid yellowish brown redeposited clays and sands with moderate clinker and brick inclusions that were on average 0.51m thick. Overlying this was 0.3m of compacted concrete fragments and geotextile sheeting, presumed to relate to an earlier compound for the construction of the Science Park. This was overlain by 0.15m to 0.2m of hardcore and tarmac associated with the modern car park.

## 3.8 Trench 7

3.8.1 This trench was located in the north-eastern corner of the development area, on a north-west to south-east alignment. The trench measured 20m long, 2m wide and an average of 0.97m deep. The natural geology was overlain by 0.6m of mid yellowish brown redeposited silty clay with regular brick inclusions. Within the central area of the trench, this material was overlain by a concrete paving slab footpath, lined with bricks (Plate 4). This was in turn overlain by 0.3m of hardcore and 0.07 to 0.15m of tarmac related to the modern car park.

# 4 Discussion and Conclusions

4.1.1 No significant archaeological remains were found during the evaluation at 270 Cambridge Science Park. It is likely that any significant remains would have been truncated away by modern activity in the area. The undated ditch recorded in Trench 6 was extremely sterile and the lack of any artefacts within it suggests that settlement was not located nearby during the period the ditch was in use.

4.1.2 The single possible furrow surviving in Trench 3 indicates the land was likely to have been in agricultural use during the medieval and post-medieval period, which is supported by cartographic sources.

4.1.3 The only possible evidence of activity in the area during the Second World War was located in Trench 1, where significant quantities of concrete, wooden fence posts and sizeable fragments of metal were backfilled within a large cut. Whether these remains relate to the US Army base located here during the later stages of the Second World War is unclear, though suggested. Similarly, the concrete footpath located in Trench 7 is of unclear date and could have been constructed at any time from the land's use as an Army base in the 1940s through to the original construction of the Science Park in the 1970s.

## Appendix A. Trench Descriptions and Context Inventory

| **Trench 1** | | |
|---|---|---|
| **General description** | **Orientation** | ENE-WSW |
| Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil overlying a backfill of redeposited clays and concrete. Natural geology encountered at the eastern end of the trench at 2m depth. | **Avg. depth (m)** | 1-2 |
| | **Width (m)** | 1.8 |
| | **Length (m)** | 18 & 3 |
| **Trench 2** | | |
| **General description** | **Orientation** | ENE-WSW |
| Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil overlying compacted concrete and made ground. Natural geology not encountered. | **Avg. depth (m)** | 1.55 |
| | **Width (m)** | 1.8 |
| | **Length (m)** | 2 & 5.5 |
| **Trench 3** | | |
| **General description** | **Orientation** | NE-SW |
| Trench contained a possible furrow or boundary. Consists of tarmac and hardcore overlying made ground. Natural geology encountered at 0.9m | **Avg. depth (m)** | 0.9 |
| | **Width (m)** | 1.8 |
| | **Length (m)** | 30 |

**Contexts**

| **context no** | **type** | **Width (m)** | **Depth (m)** | **comment** | **finds** | **date** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Cut | 3.5 | 0.25 | Furrow/ditch? | - | Post-medieval |
| 2 | Fill | 3.5 | 0.25 | Furrow/ditch? | - | Post-medieval |

| **Trench 4** | | |
|---|---|---|
| **General description** | **Orientation** | NW-SE |
| Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of tarmac and hardcore overlying made ground. Natural geology encountered at 0.75m | **Avg. depth (m)** | 0.75 |
| | **Width (m)** | 1.8 |
| | **Length (m)** | 20 |
| **Trench 5** | | |
| **General description** | **Orientation** | NW-SE |
| Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of tarmac and hardcore overlying made ground. Natural geology encountered at 0.91m | **Avg. depth (m)** | 0.91 |
| | **Width (m)** | 1.8 |
| | **Length (m)** | 16 |

| Trench 6 | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **General description** | | | | | **Orientation** | NE-SW |
| Trench contained a single undated ditch. Consists of tarmac and hardcore overlying made ground. Natural geology encountered at a depth between 0.75m and 0.95m | | | | | **Avg. depth (m)** | 0.75-0.95 |
| | | | | | **Width (m)** | 1.8 |
| | | | | | **Length (m)** | 14 |
| **Contexts** | | | | | | |
| **context no** | **type** | **Width (m)** | **Depth (m)** | **comment** | **finds** | **date** |
| 3 | Cut | 0.85 | 0.4 | Ditch | - | - |
| 4 | Fill | 0.85 | 0.4 | Ditch | - | - |

| Trench 7 | | |
|---|---|---|
| **General description** | **Orientation** | NW-SE |
| Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of tarmac and hardcore overlying concrete paving slabs in turn overlying made ground. Natural geology encountered at 0.97m | **Avg. depth (m)** | 0.97 |
| | **Width (m)** | 1.8 |
| | **Length (m)** | 20 |

## Appendix B. Bibliography

Bush, L. 2015 *Bronze Age Post Alignments, an Iron Age trackway and a Roman Field System on Land South of the Bell Language School, Cambridge.* OA East Grey Literature Report 1662

Drummond-Murray, J. 2015 *Specification for Archaeological Evaluation: 270 Cambridge Science Park Phase 1.*

Mott MacDonald 2015 *Cambridge Science Park Plot 2070: Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment*

Phillips, T. 2013 *Bronze Age land use, Iron Age settlement and Roman quarrying at Milton Landfill, Milton, Cambridgeshire.* OA East Grey Literature Report 1326

Reaney, P. H. 1943 *The Place-Names of Cambridgeshire and the Isle of Ely.* English Place-Name Society XIX, CUP

Stewart, G. 2015 *Brief for Archaeological Evaluation: 270 Cambridge Science Park Phase 1*

**Online Resources**

British Geological Survey Geology of Britain Viewer (http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html) Accessed 11/09/15

# Appendix C. OASIS Report Form

## *Project Details*

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| OASIS Number | oxfordar3-222061 | | |
| Project Name | Evaluation at 270 Cambridge Science Park | | |
| Project Dates (fieldwork) Start | 01-09-2015 | Finish | 11-09-2015 |
| Previous Work (by OA East) | No | Future Work | No |

**Project Reference Codes**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Site Code | CAMSPA15 | Planning App. No. | S/0630/15/FL |
| HER No. | ECB4541 | Related HER/OASIS No. | |

**Type of Project/Techniques Used**

| | |
|---|---|
| Prompt | Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS 5 |
| Development Type | Urban Commercial |

### *Please select all techniques used:*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ☐ Aerial Photography - interpretation | ☐ Grab-Sampling | ☐ Remote Operated Vehicle Survey |
| ☐ Aerial Photography - new | ☐ Gravity-Core | ☒ Sample Trenches |
| ☐ Annotated Sketch | ☐ Laser Scanning | ☐ Survey/Recording Of Fabric/Structure |
| ☐ Augering | ☐ Measured Survey | ☐ Targeted Trenches |
| ☐ Dendrochronological Survey | ☐ Metal Detectors | ☐ Test Pits |
| ☐ Documentary Search | ☐ Phosphate Survey | ☐ Topographic Survey |
| ☐ Environmental Sampling | ☐ Photogrammetric Survey | ☐ Vibro-core |
| ☐ Fieldwalking | ☐ Photographic Survey | ☐ Visual Inspection (Initial Site Visit) |
| ☐ Geophysical Survey | ☐ Rectified Photography | |

**Monument Types/Significant Finds & Their Periods**

List feature types using the NMR Monument Type Thesaurus and significant finds using the MDA Object type Thesaurus together with their respective periods. If no features/finds were found, please state "none".

| Monument | Period | Object | Period |
|---|---|---|---|
| Furrow | Post Medieval 1540 to 1901 | | Select period... |
| WW2 Demoition | Modern 1901 to Present | | Select period... |
| | Select period... | | Select period... |

## *Project Location*

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| County | Cambridgeshire | Site Address (including postcode if possible) | |
| District | Cambridge City | 270 Cambridge Science Park<br>Cambridge<br>CB4 0WE | |
| Parish | Milton | | |
| HER | Cambridge | | |
| Study Area | 0.5ha | National Grid Reference | TL 4636 6205 |

## *Project Originators*

| | |
|---|---|
| Organisation | OA EAST |
| Project Brief Originator | Gemma Stewart |
| Project Design Originator | James Drummond-Murray |
| Project Manager | James Drummond-Murray |
| Supervisor | Pat Moan |

## *Project Archives*

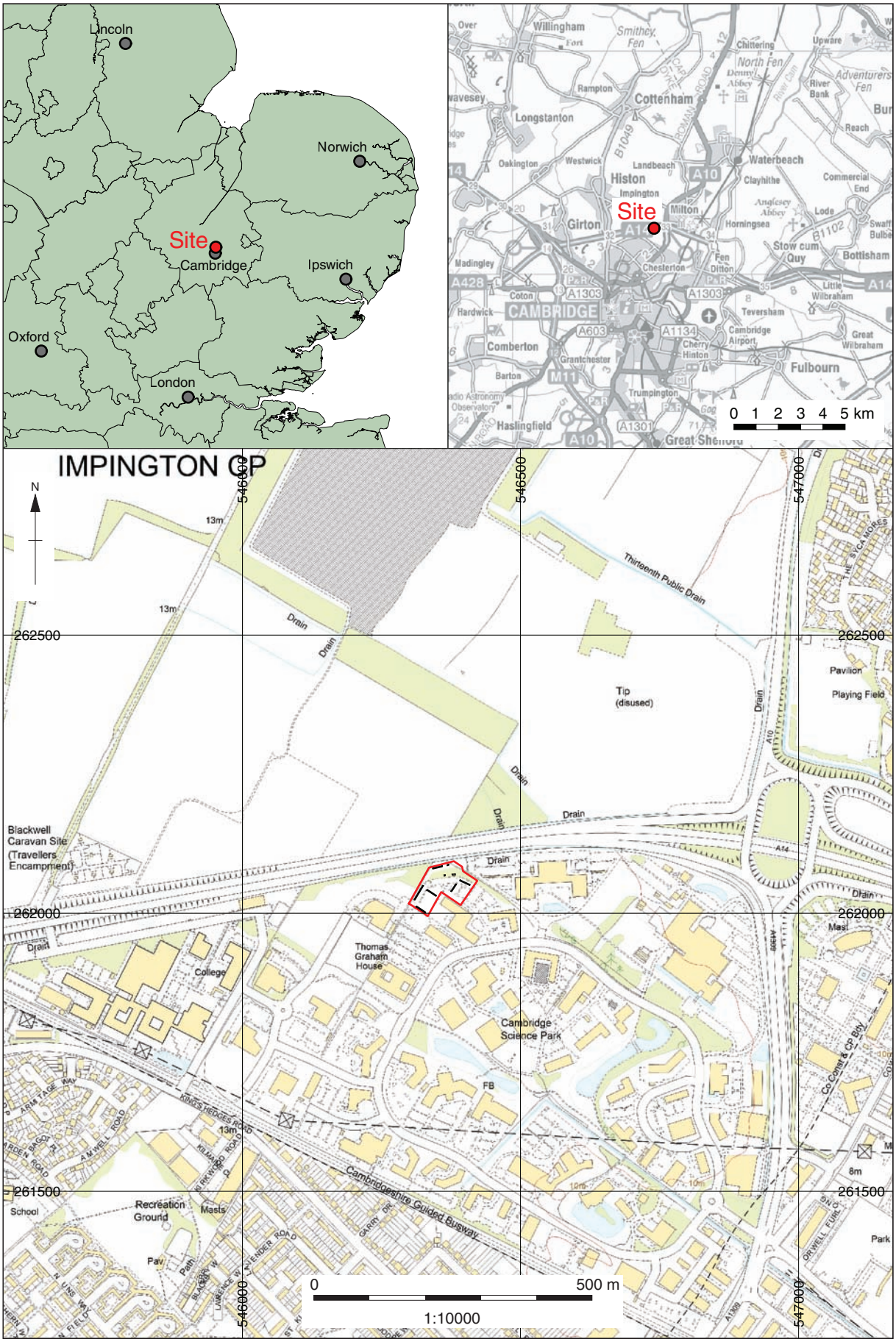
| Physical Archive | Digital Archive | Paper Archive |
|---|---|---|
| CCC Stores | OA East | CCC Stores |
| CAMSPA15 | CAMSPA15 | CAMSPA15 |

### Archive Contents/Media

| | Physical Contents | Digital Contents | Paper Contents |
|---|---|---|---|
| Animal Bones | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Ceramics | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Environmental | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Glass | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Human Bones | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Industrial | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Leather | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Metal | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Stratigraphic | | ☐ | ☐ |
| Survey | | ☐ | ☐ |
| Textiles | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Wood | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Worked Bone | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Worked Stone/Lithic | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| None | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Other | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

| Digital Media | Paper Media |
|---|---|
| ☐ Database | ☐ Aerial Photos |
| ☐ GIS | ☒ Context Sheet |
| ☐ Geophysics | ☐ Correspondence |
| ☒ Images | ☐ Diary |
| ☒ Illustrations | ☐ Drawing |
| ☐ Moving Image | ☐ Manuscript |
| ☐ Spreadsheets | ☐ Map |
| ☐ Survey | ☐ Matrices |
| ☒ Text | ☐ Microfilm |
| ☐ Virtual Reality | ☐ Misc. |
| | ☐ Research/Notes |
| | ☐ Photos |
| | ☒ Plans |
| | ☒ Report |
| | ☒ Sections |
| | ☐ Survey |

**Notes:**




*Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2015. All rights reserved.Centremaps reference 10001998*

Figure 1: Site location showing archaeological trenches (black) in development area (red)

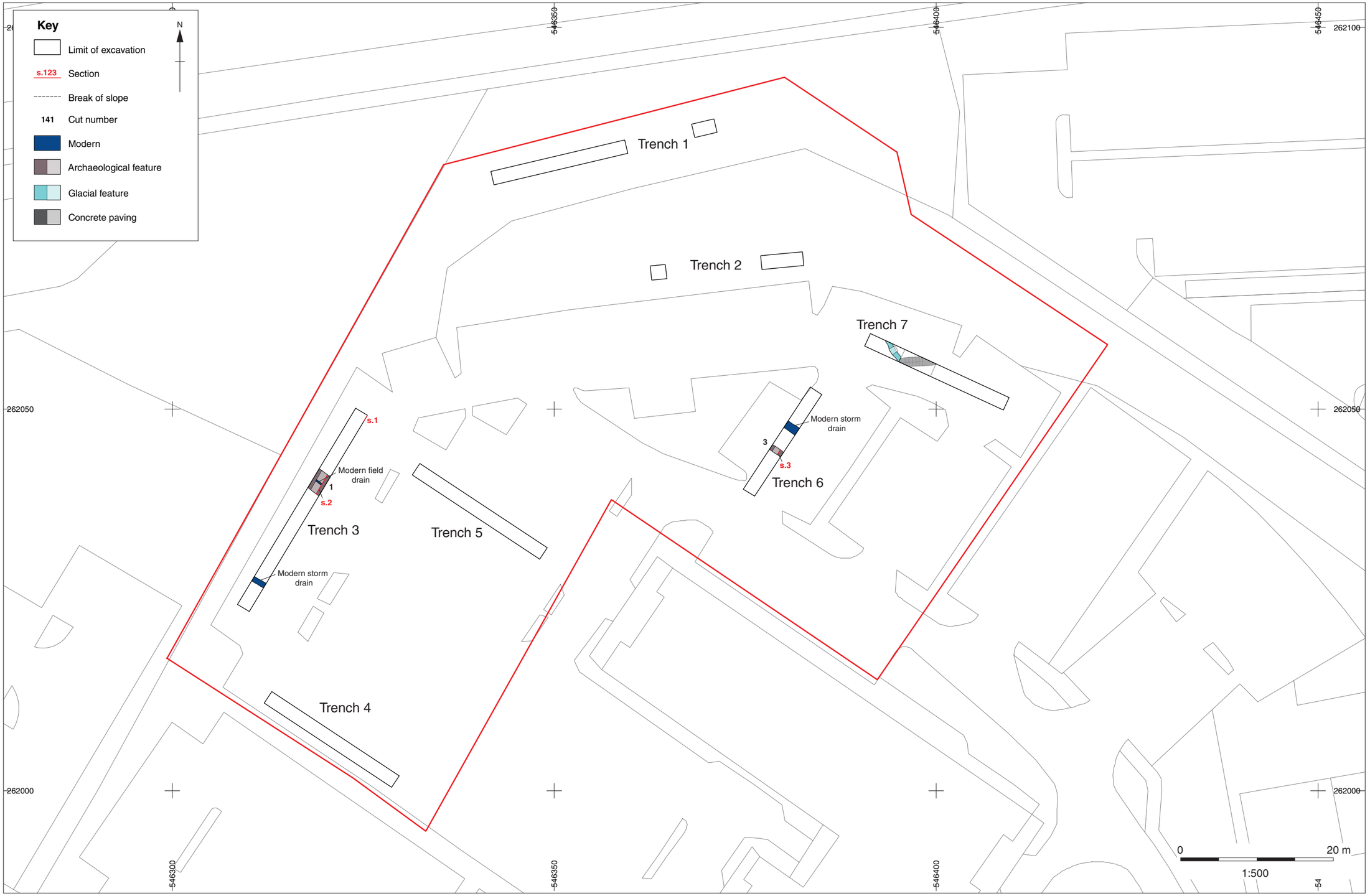



Figure 2: Plan of trenches (map data supplied by the client)

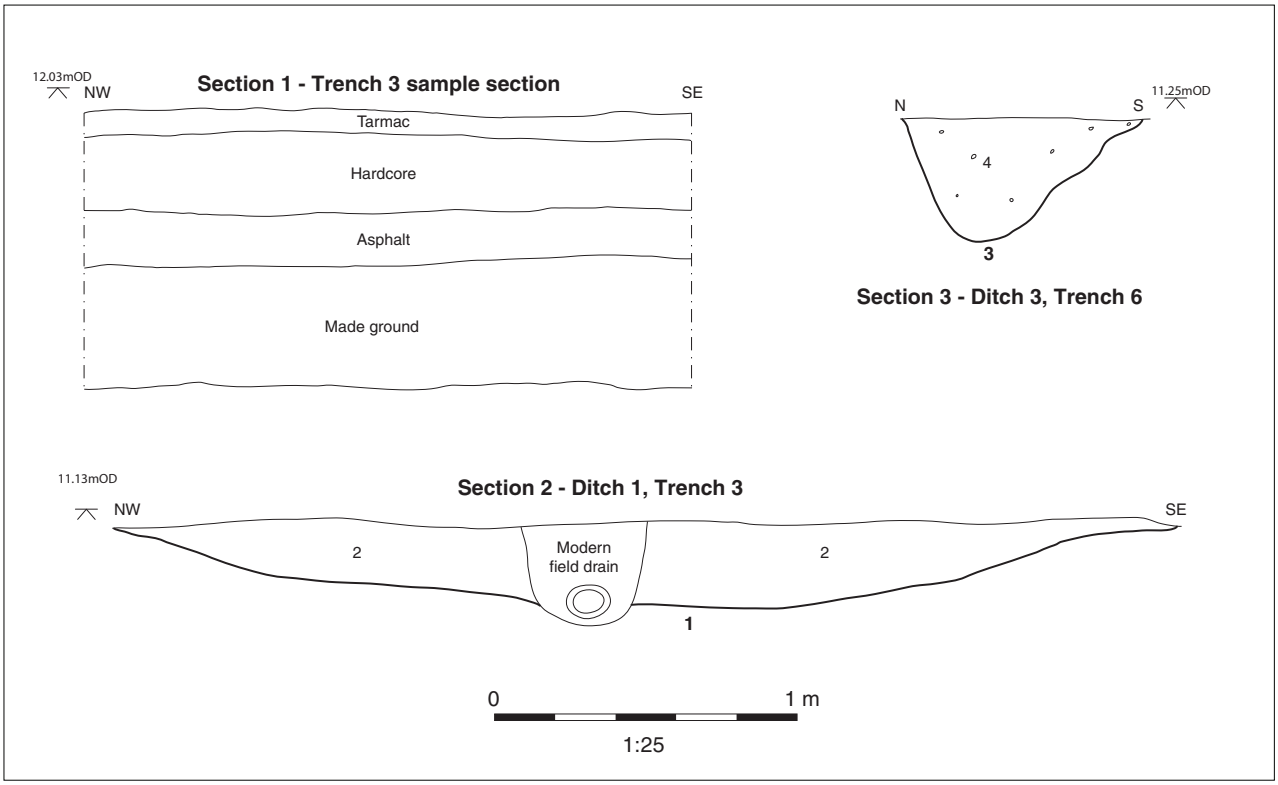



Figure 3: Sections

Plate 1: Trench 6, looking south-west. Note the contamination in foreground

Plate 2: Trench 1, looking west-south-west

Plate 1: Ditch **3**, Trench 6, looking south-west

Plate 2: Footpath overlying made ground, Trench 7, looking north-east

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