



Archaeological Field Unit

# **Archaeological Monitoring at 1 Park Lane, Saffron Walden, Essex**

Spencer Cooper

October 2002

**Cambridgeshire County Council**

Report No. B111

Commissioned by Mr D.P. Rowell

# Archaeological Monitoring at 1 Park Lane, Saffron Walden, Essex

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## SUMMARY

*On the 19th October 2002 archaeological monitoring was undertaken within the garden at the rear of 1 Park Lane Saffron Walden by the Archaeological Field Unit of Cambridgeshire County Council.*

*No archaeological remains were observed, the depth of the trenches excavated was insufficient to conclude whether the lack of remains was due to an absence of archaeology.*

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**Archaeological Monitoring at 1 Park Lane, Saffron Walden, Essex.  
(TI53643841)**

**1 INTRODUCTION**

On the 19th October 2002 archaeological monitoring was undertaken within the garden at the rear of 1 Park Lane Saffron Walden by the Archaeological Field Unit of Cambridgeshire County Council. Mr D.P. Rowell commissioned the project and work was carried out in accordance with a brief issued (Planning application UTT 049002) by Richard Havis of the HAMP team of Essex County Council.

The proposed development lies within the garden at the rear of 1 Park Lane, Saffron Walden. The development includes the construction of a garden room with associated services.

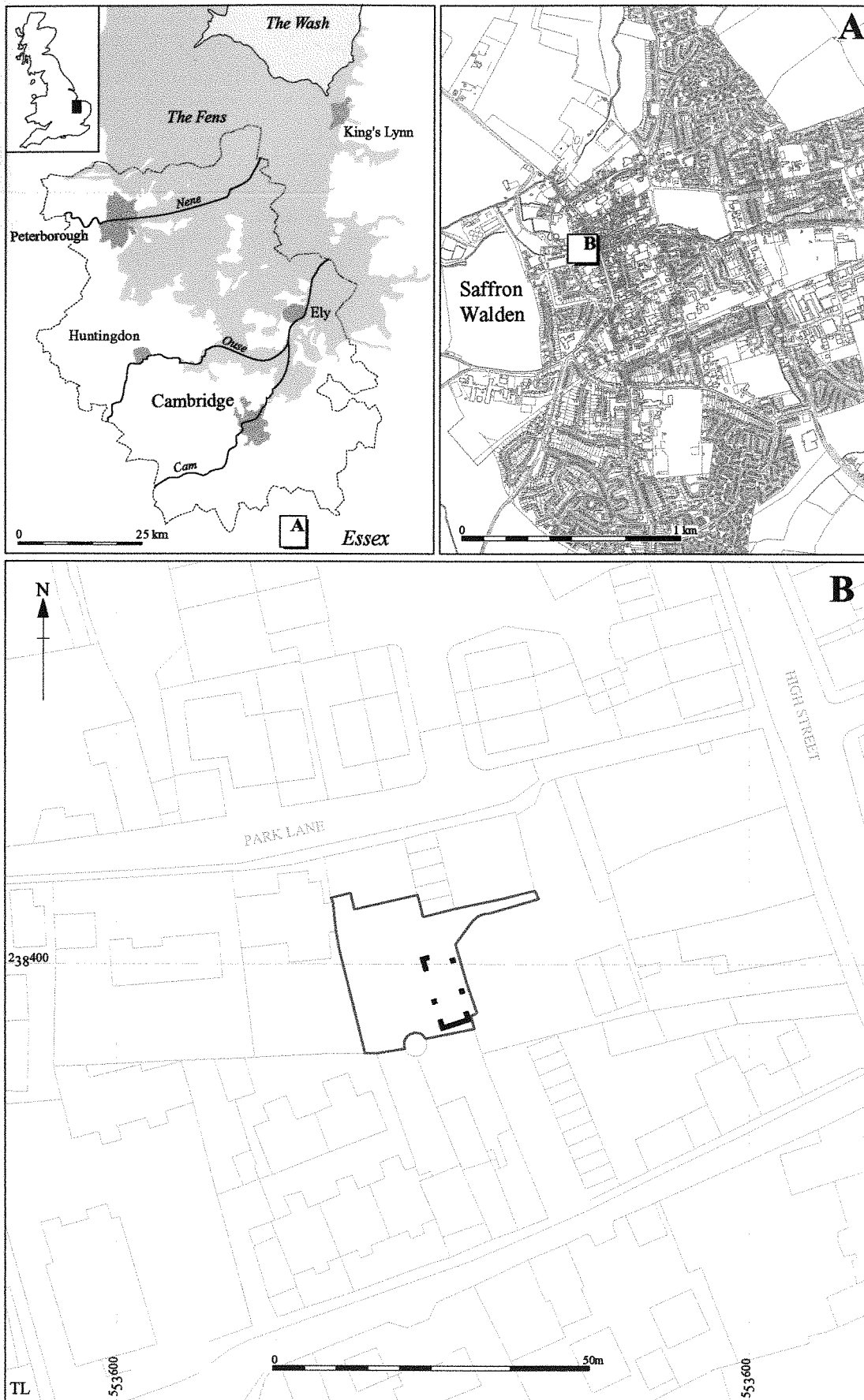
**2 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY**

Saffron Walden is located on Lower Chalk (BGS Sheet 205), on the 90-100m contour. The area of investigation is on level ground, located on Park lane near the High Street

**3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

The development area lies within an archaeologically sensitive area of the medieval town of Saffron Walden. The town of Saffron Walden developed around the castle which was founded in the eleventh century by the de Mandevilles. In 1141 Geoffrey de Mandeville was given permission to remove Newports market and transfer it to his castle at Saffron Walden. It is assumed that by this date the keep and its earthworks were well advanced if not finished. In the early to mid 13<sup>th</sup> century a large area to the south of the castle bailey was enclosed with new streets being laid out. Part of this enclosure survives as the Repell ditches part of which are preserved as a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

A small extension to an adjacent building identified features of a possible medieval date within the garden area. No finds were recovered from the pits. Within the flint wall on the north side of the development area are carved corbels and fragments of medieval building sculptures.



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**Figure 1** Location of trenches with Development Area outlined.



## **4 METHODOLOGY**

Trenches for building foundations were excavated under archaeological supervision. The trenches were opened by a JCB mini-digger using an 0.60m wide flat bladed ditching bucket. The excavated trenches were up to 0.80m deep. After machining was completed the trenches were photographed and recorded using the AFU standard recording system. The spoil from the trench was scanned by eye in order to obtain artefacts.

## **5 RESULTS**

Trenching totalling 14.50m in length was excavated within the footprint of the building. No archaeological features were present and no artefacts were found.

A possible post-medieval layer, possibly a garden soil was encountered. This layer may relate to 19<sup>th</sup> century gardens that occupied this site. The layer observed was light brown chalky silt, which varied from 0.30m-0.80m thick. 19<sup>th</sup> century tiles were observed within this layer, but were not collected.

## **6 CONCLUSION**

No archaeological features were encountered. The layer that was encountered was post-medieval in origin and may be a 19<sup>th</sup> century garden soil. The layer may be associated with the 19<sup>th</sup> century gardens of a former large estate now divided into individual properties. The depth of the excavated trenches varied from 0.30m to 0.80m.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The author would like to thank D.Rowell who commissioned and funded the archaeological work. The project was managed by Aileen Connor. Spencer Cooper was the site supervisor. The illustrations were produced by Crane Begg.

The brief for archaeological works was written by Richard Havis, HAMP Team of Essex County Council.



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