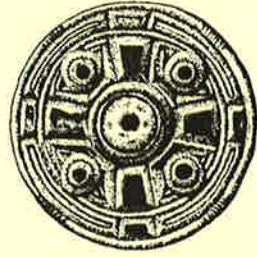


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Archaeological Field Unit

**Long Road 6th Form College, Cambridge:
An Archaeological Evaluation**

Jon Bolderson

June 2004

Cambridgeshire County Council

Report No. 733

Commissioned by Long Road 6th Form College

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SUMMARY

On 14th June 2004 the Archaeological Field Unit (AFU) of Cambridgeshire County Council conducted an archaeological evaluation in the grounds of Long Road 6th Form College, Cambridge (TL 4594 5542) in advance of the construction of a new Sports Hall.

Two trenches, of 20m and 25m length, were excavated. Neither trench revealed any evidence of archaeological features.

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**Long Road 6th Form College, Cambridge:
An Archaeological Evaluation (TL 4594 5542)**

1 INTRODUCTION

An archaeological evaluation was carried out by staff of the Archaeological Field Unit of Cambridgeshire County Council on 14th June 2004, at Long Road 6th Form College, Cambridge to fulfil the requirements of a planning application (C/99/0085/OP), in advance of the construction of a new Sports Hall facility. Work was carried out in accordance with a brief for archaeological works produced by Andy Thomas (CAO - September 2000) and a Project Specification prepared by the Stephen Macaulay (June 2004).

2 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

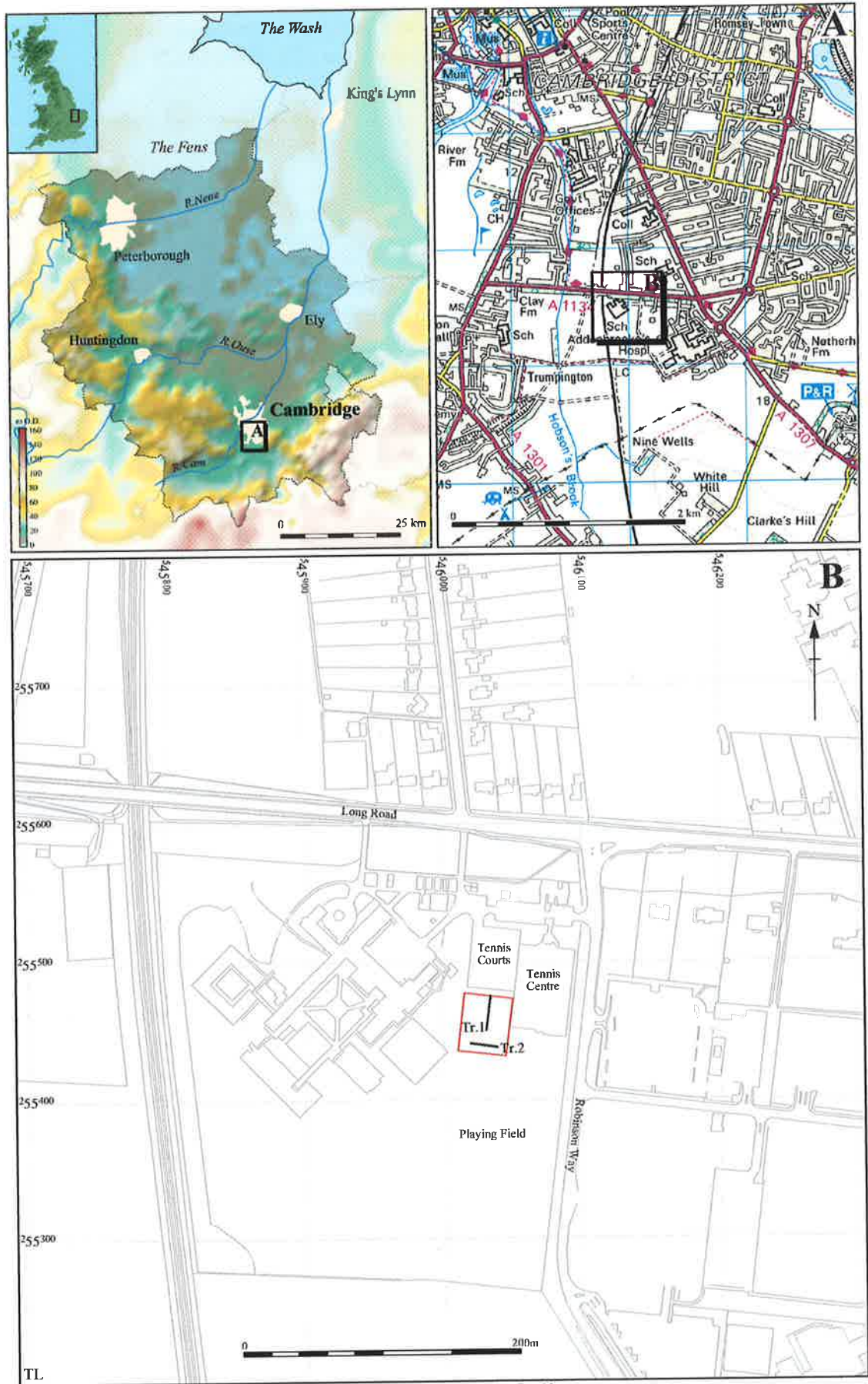
The site lies on fairly level ground, close to the 15m OD contour line. The local geology consists of terrace gravels, within an area of Lower Chalk (SSEW, 1983).

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 Prehistoric

Numerous flint scatters and stray finds in the broad area to the south of the proposed development site provide evidence for prehistoric activity, including Palaeolithic artefacts recovered during gravel quarrying at Hauxton Road, approximately 2km to the southwest and polished stone axes and other flint artefacts recovered from the area around Clarke's Hill, Granham's farm and the Gog Magog Golf Course to the SE (SMR 04882, 04880, 04893, 04971, 04891, 04892, 05058, 00969, 05059, 05016, 04851, 05012, 05011, 10944, 05088, 05052, 05017). Other early sites in this area include a causewayed camp and bowl barrow at Little Trees Hill (SMR 24422, 05056)

In addition, small quantities of worked flint recovered from the Downing College Playing Field Complex site to the east of the proposed development indicate some limited Bronze Age activity in the area (Evans 2002).



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

3.2 Iron Age/Romano British

The development area is located within an area known to contain significant Iron Age and Romano British remains.

A Roman road is thought to have run on a south-east/north-west alignment approximately 150m to the south of the development area, forming a T-junction with another Roman road that runs NW-SE parallel to the present-day Hills Road (Abrams 2000).

To the east, in the vicinity of Addenbrooke's hospital, excavation during the 1960s revealed Iron Age settlement remains (SMR 04800). More recently, geophysical survey and evaluation work carried out in the same area during 2001-2 revealed a network of paddock and field boundary ditches following the alignment of the E-W roman road and dated to the Late Iron Age and Early Roman periods (Evans 2002).

To the south of the development area, aerial photographs reveal cropmark evidence of a rectilinear enclosure and paddocks, probably dating to the Late Iron Age and Romano British periods (SMR 09591, 08339). Other rectilinear cropmarks, possibly dating to the same period, occur to the west of the development site (SMR 09596, 09599).

An archaeological evaluation carried out during 2000, approximately 200m SW of the current development area, revealed a series of ditches which appeared to be part of a coaxial field system. Although no dating evidence was recovered, it was thought likely, on the basis of their location and character, that these features date from the Iron Age/Romano British period (Abrams 2000)

3.3 Medieval and Post Medieval

There is little evidence of archaeological activity during the medieval and post-medieval periods, during which the subject site was outside the development core of Cambridge.

On the 1810 OS map the area is clearly marked as farmland, and a long linear cropmark to the south of the development area (SMR 11165) is considered to be of modern origin, probably relating to drainage work carried out during the 1950s (Abrams 2000).

4 METHODOLOGY

Two trenches were excavated within the 1400m² proposed development area, using a JCB with a 1.6m wide toothless bucket. The trenches were arranged in a T formation, with the longer trench running NE-SW parallel to the existing Tennis Centre, and the shorter trench running perpendicular to this, 10m to the south west. After machining, the trenches were cleaned, photographed and recorded using the AFU standard contextual recording system. The spoil-heaps were visually scanned for artefacts.

5 RESULTS

5.1 Trench 1

Trench 1 was 25m in length and ran in a NE-SW alignment parallel to the Tennis Centre immediately to the east of the development area. The depth of this trench varied from 0.4m at the NE end to 0.3m at the SW end.

The topsoil (1) in this trench had a maximum thickness of 0.1m, and consisted of a fairly loose, dark grey-brown silty clay loam with moderate rounded pebbles c.5-10mm and angular flints c.10-20mm. It also contained moderate inclusions of modern building material fragments and occasional chunks of coal.

The subsoil (2) in this trench had a maximum thickness of 0.38m and consisted of a moderately compact mid greyish orange-brown clayey silt with frequent sub-angular gravel stones c.5-10mm and angular flints c.10-20mm, as well as occasional manganese flecks.

The natural geology (3) consisted of compact mid orange-brown silty sandy gravels, with occasional patches of chalk with flints.

No archaeological features were observed in this trench.

5.2 Trench 2

Trench 2 was 20m in length and was located 10m to the south west of Trench 1, on a perpendicular NW-SE alignment, running parallel to the

southern boundary of the tennis courts immediately to the north of the development area.

The topsoil and subsoil in this trench were identical to that in Trench 1. The natural geology was very similar to that in Trench 1, although it contained a moderate amount of intrusive modern building material and coal fragments.

The only features present in this trench were some obviously modern, intrusive rectangular features containing fragments of modern building materials and coal, located at the NW end of the trench.

No archaeological features were observed in this trench.

6 Discussion and Conclusion

The negative results of this evaluation shows that the land in the immediate vicinity of the development site has been scarcely inhabited in the past. Due to the relatively small extent of the evaluated area, it is difficult to draw firm conclusions as to the reasons for this lack of archaeological activity, especially given the substantial Iron Age and Romano British settlement remains located just to the east on the Downing College Playing Field Complex and Addenbrooke's sites. It is possible that the natural topography of the site may have made it unattractive for settlement due to its low lying, wet character. The results of the earlier evaluation to the SW of the present development site do suggest that in the past, the area was marginal land, located on the periphery of a settlement area and infrequently, perhaps only seasonally occupied.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to thank Long Road 6th Form College who commissioned the work, Bob Hatton who was the Project Officer on site, Andy Thomas of the County Archaeology Office who prepared the brief for archaeological works and Stephen Macaulay who prepared the specification and managed the project. The excavations were carried out by the author and Bob Hatton.

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