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Archaeological Field Unit

**Archaeological Monitoring at Coronation Avenue,
Throckenholt, Lincolnshire**

Andrew Hatton

June 2004

Cambridgeshire County Council

Report No. 734

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**Archaeological Monitoring at Coronation Avenue,
Throckenholt, Lincolnshire**

Andrew Hatton HND, BSc

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Editor: Judith Roberts MA
Illustrator: Emily Oakes BA



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©Archaeological Field Unit
Cambridgeshire County Council
Fulbourn Community Centre
Haggis Gap, Fulbourn
Cambridgeshire CB1 5HD
Tel (01223) 576201
Fax (01223) 880946

arch.field.unit@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
<http://edweb.camcnty.gov.uk/afu>

SUMMARY

On the 24th March, 2003 and the 25th of February 2004 the Archaeological Field Unit of Cambridgeshire County Council (AFU) undertook two phases of archaeological monitoring work at Coronation Avenue, Throckenholt, in advance of the construction of fourteen dwellings and associated access roads and services. The aim of the investigation was to record and assess the nature of any archaeological evidence encountered before construction and hence to assess the potential for surviving remains. Given the subject site's location to the east of substantial Iron Age and Roman remains the area was considered to have high archaeological potential.

During the archaeological monitoring work no archaeological features were discovered. The absence of remains may be due to the low-lying nature of the land which rendered it prone to flooding and only useful on a seasonal basis. This would account for the presence of a drainage ditch, identified by aerial photography and geophysical survey, to the south-west of the area investigated.

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**Archaeological Monitoring at Coronation Avenue,
Throckenholt, Lincolnshire
(TF 3515 0925)**

1 INTRODUCTION

On the 24th March 2003 and the 25th of February 2004 the Archaeological Field Unit of Cambridgeshire County Council (AFU) undertook archaeological monitoring at Coronation Avenue, Throckenholt (TF 3515 0925) (Fig. 1). The work was carried out to satisfy a planning condition (Application H19/1428/00) in advance of the construction of fourteen dwellings as well as access roads and services. The first phase of work carried out in 2003 saw the excavation of the building footprint within plot 1, in the second phase of work three individual building footprints were excavated within plots 2, 3 and 4.

2 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

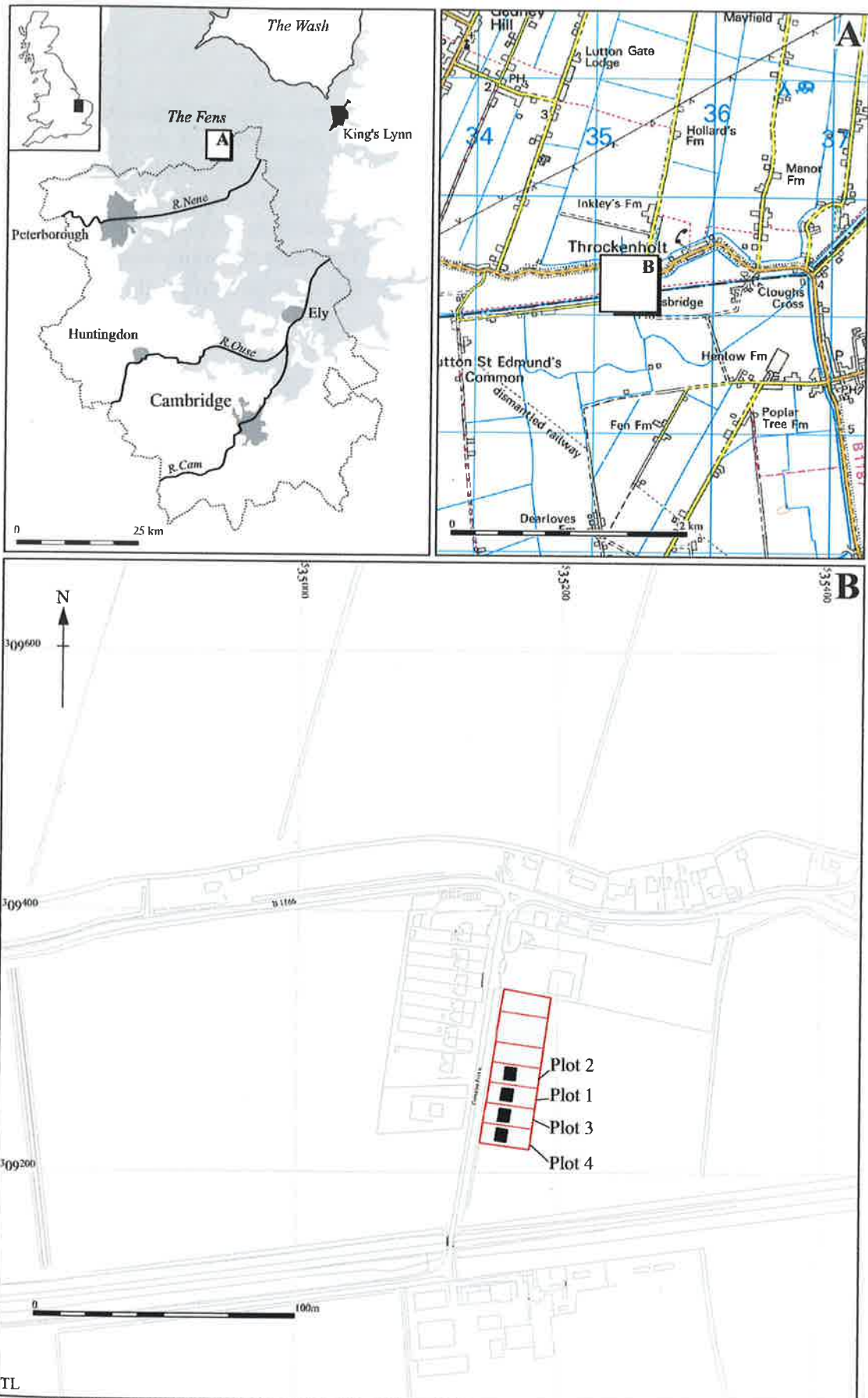
The geology of the site is older marine alluvium (Barroway Drove Beds) (BGS Sheet 158) with a silt-filled creek to the east. The site lies at approximately 3m OD.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Located predominately to the east of the site are numerous cropmarks (identified through aerial photography) which are assumed to be Iron Age or Roman in origin but which currently lack firm dating evidence.

Excavations to the south-west of Cole's Bridge at the southern end of Coronation Avenue in 1993 (Bray 1995) followed fieldwalking and survey. The excavations revealed extensive agriculture and settlement on the siltland during the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD. High quality locally made pottery and imported samian wares were found. The site appears to have fallen out of use and been abandoned as a consequence of flooding episodes – indicated by sterile water-borne silts and shallow peat deposits. It is suggested that the cropmarks indicate droveways and from this it is inferred that use of the land was limited to cattle or sheep rearing.

There was some reclamation of the silt fens during the 15th century with 'new enclosures' being formed, although there was a constant threat of flooding both from the sea and freshwater (Darby 1983).



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Figure 1 Location of excavation within plots 1-4 of the development area

4 GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY

The project required that geophysical survey methods were employed and the results were used to assist the archaeological monitoring of the site. It was deemed appropriate to carry out the survey over the whole area of the development, which covers 0.33ha (Appendix 1). The survey identified large amounts of interference caused by modern disturbance. A single ditch aligned from north-west to south-east was identified towards the south-western end of the development area. This is probably the ditch identified through aerial photography.

5 METHODOLOGY

The areas excavated were building footprints, each measuring 10m x 8m. The areas were excavated down to the natural geology (Fig. 1). The excavation of the footprints was undertaken by a tracked excavator using a 1.8m ditching bucket. A member of the AFU staff carried out observation of the excavation.

6 RESULTS

Plot 1

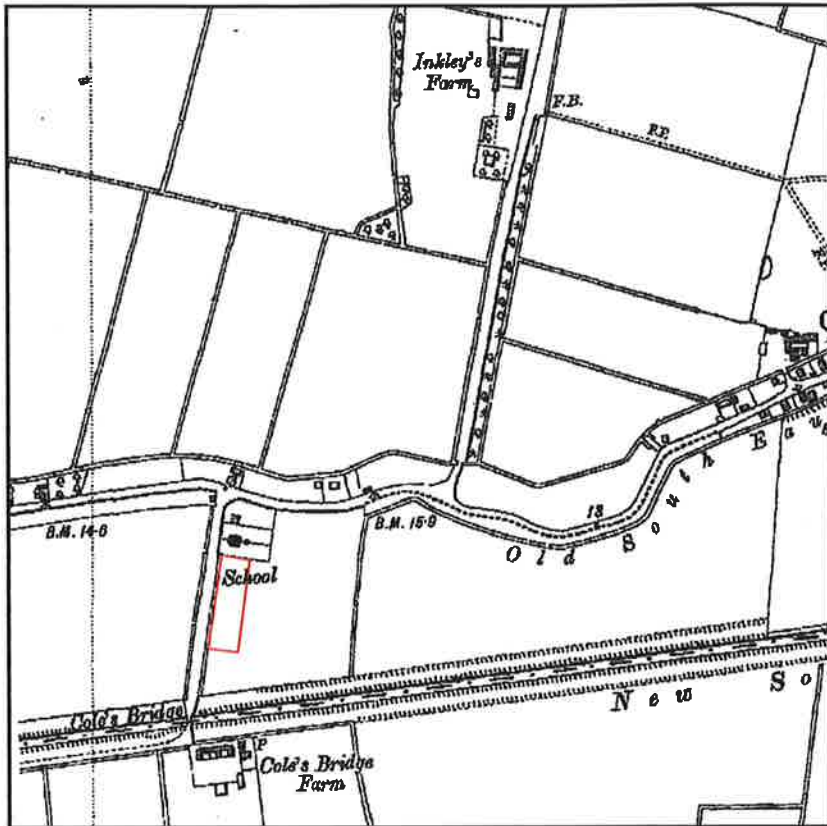
The excavated section showed the depositional sequence to be: grey brown topsoil (0.15m thick) overlying mid-grey brown clay (0.75m thick) which in turn sealed a layer of degraded black peat (0.10m thick). Removal of the peat revealed the natural geology, consisting of clay. No archaeological features were observed and no artefacts were recovered from the site.

Plot 2

The excavated section showed the depositional sequence to be: grey brown topsoil (0.20m thick) overlying mid-grey brown clay (0.95m thick) which in turn sealed a layer of degraded black peat (0.10m thick). Removal of the peat revealed the natural geology, consisting of clay. No archaeological features were observed and no artefacts were recovered from the site.

Plot 3

The excavated section showed the depositional sequence to be: grey brown topsoil (0.05m thick) overlying mid-grey brown clay (0.90m thick) which in turn sealed a layer of degraded black peat (0.10m thick). Removal of the peat revealed the natural geology, consisting of degraded clay. No archaeological features were observed and no artefacts were recovered from the site.



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Figure 2 The investigation area (outlined in red) as shown on 1st edition OS map (above) and aerial photograph (below)

Plot 4

The excavated section showed the depositional sequence to be: grey brown topsoil (0.05m thick) overlying mid-grey brown clay (0.90m thick) which in turn sealed a layer of degraded black peat (0.10m thick). Removal of the peat revealed the natural geology, consisting of clay. No archaeological features were observed and no artefacts were recovered from the site.

7 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The aim of the study was to highlight the potential for the preservation of archaeological remains on the subject site and to identify the nature of any remains that may be affected by the proposed development.

The key issues specific to the site relate to its location to Iron Age and Roman crop marks to the east and south-east.

Initial non-intrusive surveys (aerial photographic and geophysical surveys) of the site revealed the existence of a single ditch at the south-western end of the development area, outside the current phase of investigation. Excavation of the building footprint produced no evidence of archaeological remains, which supports the negative evidence gathered from the non-intrusive surveys.

The absence of significant archaeological remains (other than a drainage ditch) suggests that the land may have been used for agriculture in the Iron Age and/or Roman period and subsequently (Fig. 2). However, because of the low-lying nature of the land it may have only been used on a seasonal basis. The potentially wet conditions may also account for the presence of the drainage ditch located to the south-west.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The Archaeological Field Unit
Fulbourn Community Centre
Haggis Gap
Fulbourn
Cambridge CB1 5HD
Tel (01223) 576201
Fax (01223) 880946