

Archaeological Field Unit

**45 High Street, Trumpington:
Archaeological Evaluation by Trial Trenching**

Steve Hickling

June 2005

Cambridgeshire County Council

Report No. 780rev

Commissioned by *St. Andrews Bureau*

45 High Street, Trumpington: Archaeological Evaluation by Trial Trenching

Steve Hickling

June 2005

Editor : Aileen Connor
Illustrator : Carlos Silva

With Contributions by Paul Spoerry, Rachel Fosberry and Spencer Cooper



Report No. 780rev

©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 22nd and 23rd December 2004, the Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Field Unit conducted an archaeological evaluation consisting of two trenches at 45 High Street, Trumpington.

Subsequently, on the 24th and 25th of May 2005 the Archaeological Field Unit conducted a watching brief during the excavation of foundation trenches.

The site can be characterised as medieval roadside activity close to settlement. The possible roadside ditch and the quarry pits for resurfacing the High Street indicate that legal duty of upkeep of the highway was taken seriously by the parish of Trumpington. The large amount of medieval finds from the site suggests that the site was close to late medieval settlement. The Green Man Public House, 60m to the south, is a 15th century building, while 70m to the north-east was a possible medieval windmill mound. Of some interest is an assemblage of metalworking residue in a buried medieval soil layer.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY	1
ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND	1
METHODOLOGY	3
RESULTS	3
DISCUSSION	5
CONCLUSIONS	6
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	6
BIBLIOGRAPHY	6
LIST OF FIGURES	
Figure 1 Site Location Plan	2
Figure 2 Trench Plan	4
Figure 3 Watching Brief Location Plan	12
Figure 4 Watching Brief Plan	13
LIST OF PLATES	
Plate 1 Trench 1 from the west	5
LIST OF APPENDICES	
APPENDIX 1 Pottery	7
APPENDIX 2 Miscellaneous Finds	7
APPENDIX 3 Environmental samples	8
APPENDIX 4 Watching Brief	10

Drawing Conventions

Sections

Limit of Excavation	-----
Cut	_____
Cut - Conjectured	-----
Soil Horizon	-----
Soil Horizon - Conjectured	-----
Intrusion/Truncation	-----
Top of Natural	_____
Top Surface	_____
Break in Section	-----
Cut Number	118
Deposit Number	117
Ordnance Datum	$\frac{18.45\text{m ODN}}{\wedge}$

Plans

Limit of Excavation	_____
Deposit - Conjectured	-----
Natural Features	-----
Intrusion/Truncation	-----
Sondages/Machine Strip	-----
Illustrated Section	S.14
Deposit (Evaluation)	
Deposit (Watching Brief)	
Excavated Slot	
Cut Number	118

45 High Street, Trumpington:
Archaeological Evaluation by Trial Trenching
TL 4461 5533

1 INTRODUCTION

During December 2004, the Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Field Unit (AFU) conducted an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching at 45 High Street, Trumpington. The work was carried out at the request of St. Andrews Bureau in order to fulfil a Brief for Archaeological Investigation issued by Andy Thomas, Principal Archaeologist, Land Use & Planning, Cambridgeshire County Council, in advance of the construction of two new dwellings.

The site is located at the corner of the High Street and Alpha Terrace.

2 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

According to the British Geological Survey Map (Sheet 205, Saffron Walden, 1:50,000), the village is located on river terrace gravels.

The topography is flat, at a height of 17m OD, with Hobsons Brooke to the east and the river Cam to the west.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The site lies within an extensive prehistoric landscape. Remains of early Neolithic to late Iron Age date have been excavated by the AFU less than 1km to the south at the Park and Ride site. An Iron Age settlement was excavated in 1967, 1.6km to the west (SMR04800).

A Roman landing place (SMR04929) is recorded 1.8km to the south-west, with a large quantity of pottery and coins. Roman pottery and tiles (SMR05044) have been discovered in 1873, 450m to the west, perhaps representing a villa or temple site. Cropmarks representing field systems and hut circles or possible barrows are recorded to the west, on the east bank of the River Cam (SMR08966). More enclosure and trackway cropmarks are recorded 350m to the north-east (SMR07808). These are undated. A possible



© Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Cambridgeshire County Council 100023205 2004

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

Roman barrow (SMR4923) survives as an earthwork 80m to the east. This however, is now thought to have been a medieval windmill mound.

Saxon and medieval remains were uncovered 650m to the south of the site, in advance of the construction of a new supermarket (Hatton and Hinman, 2000).

The site is located close to the medieval core of Trumpington. Several standing buildings dating to the medieval and early post-medieval periods are located immediately south of the site. These include The Green Man Inn (SMR04661, 15th century), The Coach and Horses Public House (SMR05092, 17th century) and 24, 26, 28 and 30 High Street. Trumpington Hall lies across the High Street to the west and is dated to 1710, but incorporates an earlier building of c.1600 (SMR04847).

The 1885 Ordnance Survey Map shows no.45 and its garden in existence.

4 METHODOLOGY

Two trenches, one 19m long and the other 20m long and both 1.1m wide were excavated using a 1.5-ton minidigger fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, under archaeological supervision. The garden soils and topsoils were stripped off to the level of the natural geology or archaeological features.

The exposed surfaces were cleaned in order to clarify any features or deposits. All exposed features and deposits were excavated and recorded according to AFU standards and practises.

5 RESULTS

In both trenches, 0.40m of dark brown clay loam topsoil (14), 0.40m of mid grey-brown silty clay with occasional gravel and coal subsoil (16) and 0.30m of buried medieval topsoil (20, 21 and 22) were removed by machine. The buried soil contained a small quantity of hammerscale, a byproduct of smithing.

Pit 07 was stratigraphically the earliest feature, it was 1.45m wide and 0.40m deep. It was filled with a dark greyish brown silty sand (06) with occasional gravel and late medieval pottery. Sample 2 contained a few weed and cereal seeds.

It was cut by a large medieval quarry pit (03), which was 10m east to west and in excess of 15m north to south. The base lay at 1.6m below present ground surface. Its edges varied from being almost vertical to the north to being much

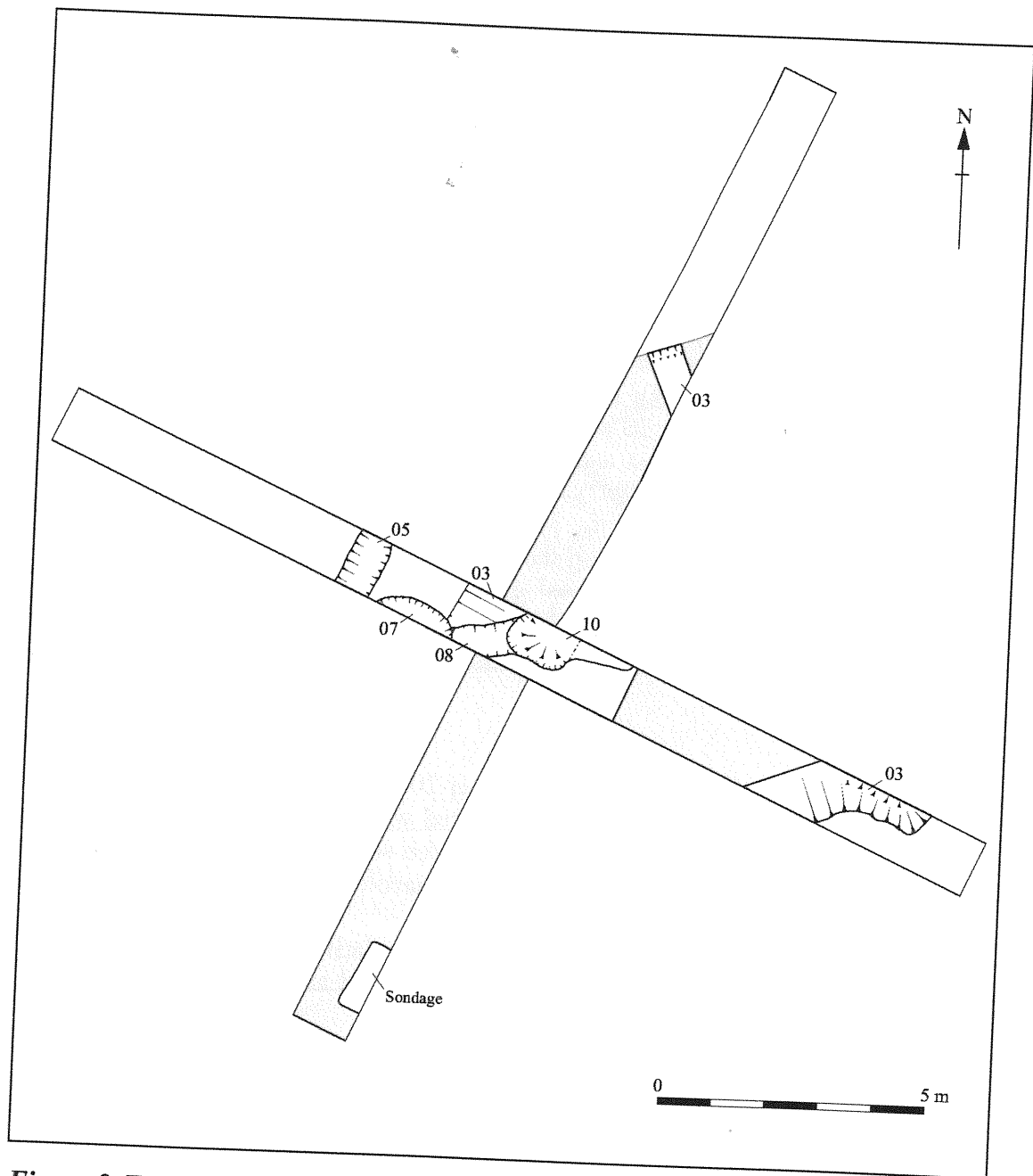


Figure 2 Trench plan

shallower to the east and west. Its fill (01, 13, 18) was a dark brown silty sand with occasional gravel, shell, bone and late medieval pottery. This deposit was sampled. The upper part of the pit had been filled with a pale yellow gravelly sand (fill 12) as levelling. In the base of this feature were two possible features (10 and 08). Both shared the same fill with 03 and were probably irregularities in its base.

Beyond the western edge of these pits and running parallel with the modern High Street, was a small ditch (05) 72cm wide and 23cm deep. Its fill (04) was a dark greyish brown silty sand with moderate gravel and late medieval pottery.



Plate 1 Trench 1 from the west. The figure in the foreground is sitting in ditch 05, while the figure at the back is standing on the east edge of pit 03.

6 DISCUSSION

The large pit (03) dominated the archaeology of this site and was probably an extraction pit for quarrying gravel for surfacing the High Street. This was cut through a layer (20, 21 and 22) of buried medieval topsoil. It contained a

small amount of hammer scale suggesting that iron working was taking place on or near the site. The pit contained a levelling deposit (12), which corresponded in depth to the top of the buried medieval soil. The single ditch was also medieval in date, it was parallel with the modern High Street, and 7m to its east. It may represent a medieval road edge boundary.

7 CONCLUSION

The site can be characterised as medieval roadside activity close to settlement. The possible roadside ditch and the quarry pits indicate that legal duty of upkeep of the highway was taken seriously by the parish of Trumpington. The large amount of late medieval finds from the site suggests that the site was close to late medieval settlement. The Green Man Public House, 60m to the south, is a 15th century building, while 70m to the north-east was a possible medieval windmill mound. Although the site was small it does contribute to our understanding of medieval Trumpington. Particularly interesting is the metalworking residue in the buried medieval soil layer.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to thank the St. Andrews Bureau who commissioned and funded the archaeological work. The project was managed by Aileen Connor. Carlos Silva provided the illustrations. Paul Spoerry examined the pottery and Rachel Fosberry examined the environmental samples.

The brief for archaeological works was written by Andy Thomas, County Archaeology Office, who visited the site and monitored the evaluation.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- | | | |
|---------------------------|------|---|
| British Geological Survey | 1985 | <i>Sheet 205, Saffron Walden, 1:50,000</i> |
| Connor, A. | 2002 | <i>Specification for Archaeological Evaluation: 45 High Street, Trumpington</i> CCC AFU |
| Hatton, A. and Hinman, M. | 2000 | <i>A Medieval Ditch and Earlier Features on Land Adjacent to Hauxton Road, Trumpington, Cambridge</i> CCCAFU report 177 |
| Thomas, A. | 2002 | <i>Brief for Archaeological Evaluation: 45 High Street, Trumpington, Cambridge</i> |

APPENDIX 1 Pottery by Paul Spoerry

Context	Feature	Description	Spot Date
02	03	3 Essex Micaceous Ware (EMW) sherds	1200-1400
04	05	2 Colchester Ware, clear glaze, one with slip decoration 9 body sherds and one base sherd of EMW 1 EMW everted jar rim 2 Ely type sherds 2 buff sherds of a sandy ware jar	1350-1500
06	07	1 Essex red ware (possibly Colchester) sherd 6 body sherds of various Essex Micaceous Grey Wares (EMGW) 1 Orange Essex Micaceous Ware jar rim	1300-1500
09	08	1 EMW sherd, externally smoothed. Possibly Mill Green Ware 1 Northants type Shelly Ware	1250-1350
11	10	1 Ely type jug rim 1 sandy EMGW sherd 1 late medieval Ely Ware biconical jug body sherd. Glazed, strip decoration, hard fired	1400-1550
13	03	1 Colchester Ware jug sherd, complex slip painted decoration with a copper flecked glaze 1 Ely type Ware, buff coloured 10 assorted EMW sherds, both smooth and sandy 1 large sandy jar sherd, possibly from Essex	1350-1450

APPENDIX 2 Miscellaneous Finds by Steve Hickling

Animal Bone

Context Number	Feature Number	Description
02	03	Tarsal, possibly pig
04	05	Collar bone (?), possibly pig
13	03	One tooth (pig?) and 5 bone fragments, probably bovine

A small assemblage of cow and pig bones, no butchery marks. Nothing remarkable.

Shell

A small amount of mussel shell from context 02.

APPENDIX 3 Environmental Samples by Rachel Fosberry

1. Introduction and methods

Four Samples were taken from across the evaluated area and were submitted for an initial appraisal. 10 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 and the presence of any plant remains or other artefacts are noted on Table 1

2. Results

The results are recorded on Table 1

The residues all contained small fragments of pottery and bone.

Preservation is mainly by charring and is variable in quality

Charcoal fragments are present in most samples in varying quantities

Sample 1, Context 6. A relatively rich sample containing several cereal grains, mainly wheat, with a few grains of barley and oat/rye. Peas were also present. Several weed seeds were present in small quantities including *Cladium mariscus* (Great fen sedge), *Eleocharis palustris* (Common Spike Rush), *Gallium* sp. (cleavers), *Rumex* sp. (docks), *Medicago/Trifolium* (clover), small *poacea* (grasses) and *Chenopodium* sp. (Fat hen). Uncharred seeds of *Rubus* sp (bramble) are also present

Sample 2, Context 6 contains several wheat grains that were quite abraded. A single grain of oat was also present. Weed seeds include *Rumex* sp. (dock), *Euphorbia* sp. (Spurge), *Chenopodium* sp. and a possible *Urtica* sp. (nettle) seed. An uncharred seed of *Aethusa cynapium* (Fool's parsley) is also present.

Sample 3, Context 13 also contains several wheat grains and peas. Fewer weed seeds are present but include *Rumex* sp and an uncharred *Sambucus nigra* (Elderberry).

Sample 4, Context 22 contains flake and spheroidal hammerscale in the residue along with small (<1cm) pieces of slag. The flot contains small fragments of coal and distorted and puffed wheat grains. Two barley grains with good preservation are present. No weed seeds were visible.

Sample Number	Context Number	Cut Number	Feature Type	Sample Size	Flot Volume (ml)	Cereals	Chaff	Legumes	Weed Seeds	Hammer scale	Charcoal <2mm	Charcoal > 2mm

1	6	7	pit	10	20	++	+	+	++		+	++
2	11	10	pit	10	10	++	0	+	+		+	++
3	13	3	pit	10	15	++	0	+	+		+	++
4	22		Buried soil	10	25	++	0	+	0	+	+	++

Sample Number	Flot comments	Residue Volume (ml)	Small animal bones	Large animal bones	Marine molluscs	Pottery	Slag	Magnetic residues	Metal	Residue Comments
1	several weed seeds	1400			+	+			+	
2	very abraded wheat	2000				+				
3	wheat fragmented	1600	+	++	+	+				
4	high temp burning	3000		+		+	+	+		COAL

3. CONCLUSION

All four samples produced evidence of domestic waste in the form of food products. Despite the charred assemblage being small (all flot volumes less than 25ml), they all contained grains of at least three different cereals; wheat (probably bread wheat, barley and oats/rye. Peas are also present in all the samples.

The weed seeds recovered are all common plants of disturbed ground (grasses, cleavers, docks) in a relatively wet area (sedges, rushes). The uncharred seeds of bramble, elderberry and Fools Parsley are all woody seeds that survive for relatively long periods of time in the ground and are probably contemporary with the deposit rather than being modern contaminants.

Crop processing waste and characteristic crop weeds were not present which suggests that crop processing was not carried out in the vicinity and that cleaned grain was probably imported onto the site.

The presence of hammerscale in Sample 4 indicates that ironworking was taking place in the near vicinity.

The results of the environmental sampling from this site are not unusual for a medieval domestic site. It is recommended that any further work should include sampling for any further metalworking evidence.

APPENDIX 4 Watching Brief by Spencer Cooper

1 INTRODUCTION

On May 24th and 25th 2005, the Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Field Unit (AFU) conducted an archaeological watching brief on groundworks at 45 High Street, Trumpington (Fig.. The work was carried out at the request of St. Andrews Bureau in order to fulfil a Brief for Archaeological Investigation issued by Andy Thomas, Principal Archaeologist, Land Use & Planning, Cambridgeshire County Council, in advance of the construction of two new dwellings.

The site is located at the corner of the High Street and Alpha Terrace.

The Watching Brief followed an archaeological evaluation (above) that revealed medieval roadside type features such as quarry pits and a roadside ditch.

2 METHODOLOGY

A watching brief was carried out during the excavation of foundation trenches for a building measuring 14m by 7m. The foundation trenches were 0.60m wide by 1m deep, extending to 2.1m where deep deposits of made ground were encountered. They were cut using a wheeled mechanical excavator with a toothed ditching bucket under the supervision of a qualified and experienced archaeologist. The foundation trenches totalled approximately 67m in length. After machining was completed each trench was photographed and recorded using the AFU standard archaeological system. Finds were collected from the spoil removed from the trenches.

3 RESULTS

Two layers (101 and 102) were identified throughout and had a combined thickness of approximately 1m. Layer 101 was a dark grey silty clay topsoil which contained modern material, it was equivalent to layer 14 of the evaluation. Layer 102 was a brownish grey silt which may represent a buried medieval soil and is equivalent to evaluation layers 20-22.

A small assemblage of residual post-medieval and medieval pottery was recovered from the spoil but could not be attributed to any specific feature.

Three large features were observed. These were similar in character to a large irregular pit (03) identified in the evaluation as a quarry.

Pit 104 was 0.9m deep and 5m wide and contained a single fill 103. Fill 103 was a dark grey silty clay. which produced no finds.

Pit 106 was 1.10m deep and 2.8m wide and contained a single fill 105. Fill 105 was a light grey sandy silt which produced no finds.

Pit 108 was 2.7m wide and 1.10m deep and contained no artefacts. It contained a single fill 107 which was a dark grey silty clay.

6 POTTERY

A small pottery assemblage was collected from the topsoil generated from the cutting of the foundation trench for the proposed buildings. The earliest pottery encountered in this watching brief was part of a Colchester type baluster jug dating from 1350-1400AD. In addition several small abraded sherds of Essex Micaceous dating from 1200- 1350 AD were recovered.

Context	Feature	Description	Spot Date
000	000	4 Essex Micaceous Ware (EMW) sherds	1200-1350
		1 Colchester type ware baluster jug. (Base)	1350-1400
		5 sherds of post medieval redware	1600-1800
		4 sherds of willow pattern	1700-1900
		1 post medieval bowl redware	1600-1800

7 CONCLUSION

The three pits (104, 106 and 108) are probably equivalent to or part of the large quarry pit (03) observed during the evaluation.

The results of the watching brief support the conclusions drawn from the evaluation, that the site was located near to late medieval settlement, but that peripheral activities such as quarrying took place on the site itself. A possible road side ditch identified by evaluation was not observed in the watching brief.



Figure 3 Location of foundation trenches (black) and evaluation trenches (grey) with the development area outlined (red)

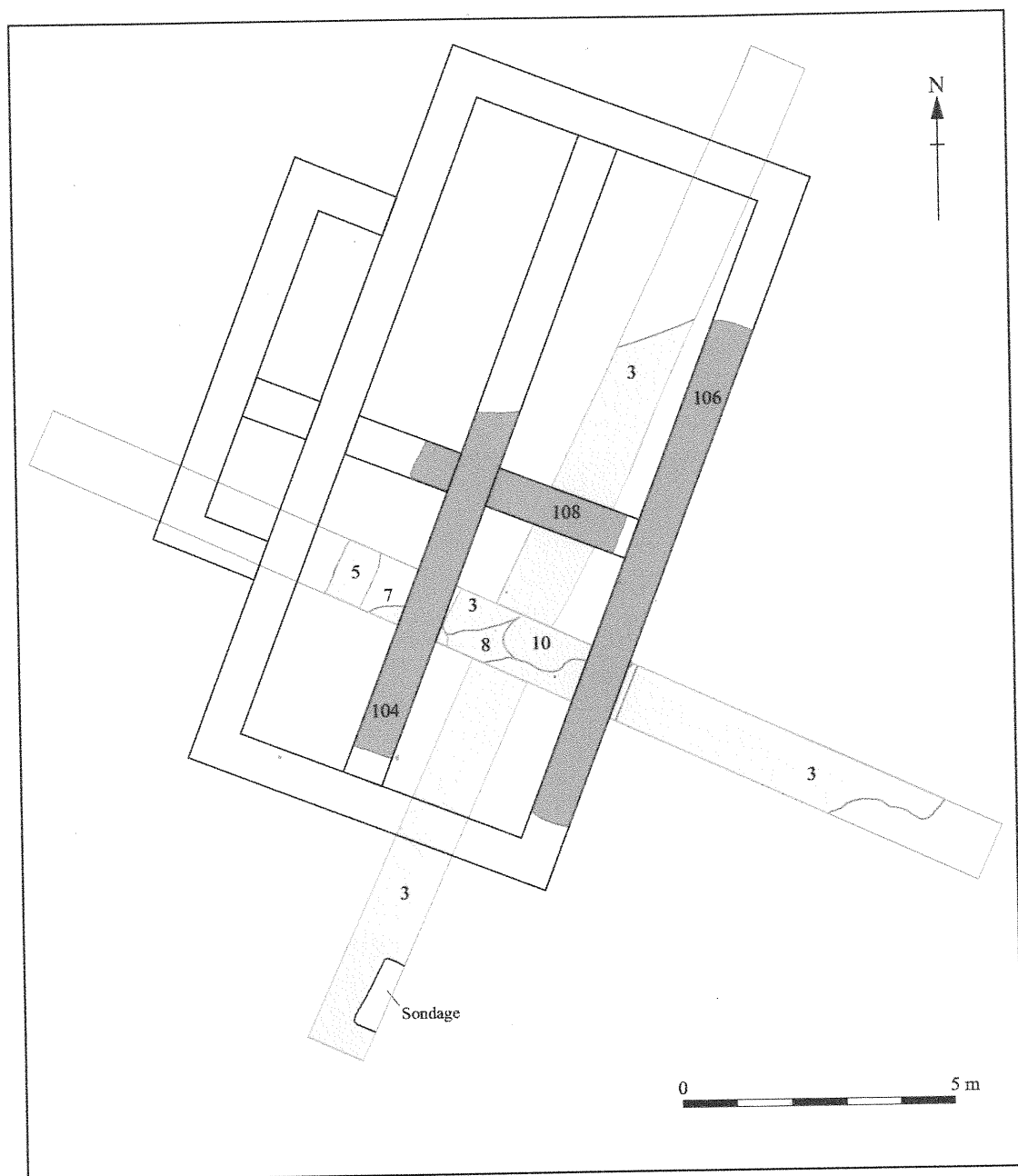


Figure 4 Plan of foundation trenches and 2004 evaluation trenches



Cambridgeshire
County Council
Environment &
Community Services

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