

Cover Images

Machine stripping, Soham	On-site surveying
Roman corn dryer, Duxford	Guided walk along Devil's Dyke
Bronze Age shaft, Fordham Bypass	Medieval well, Soham
Human burial, Barrington Anglo-Saxon Cemetery	Timbers from a medieval well, Soham
Blue enamelled bead, Barrington	Bed burial reconstruction, Barrington Anglo-Saxon Cemetery
Aethusa cynapium 'Fool's parsley'	Medieval tanning pits, Huntington Town Centre
Digging in the snow, Huntingdon Town Centre	Beaker vessel
Face painting at Hinchingsbrooke Iron Age Farm	Environmental analysis
Research and publication	Monument Management, Bartlow Hills

CCC AFU Report Number 880

**Bayer Crop Science, Hauxton,
Cambridgeshire**

An Archaeological Evaluation

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Site Code: HAU BCS 06

CHER Event Number: ECB 2307

Date of works: 5th to 8th June 2006

Grid Ref: TL 4338 5256

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Summary

Between the 5th and 8th June 2006, Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Field Unit carried out an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching land to the north of the Bayer Crop Science site adjacent to the Cam/Granta river (TL 4338 5256).

The site lies in an area of rich archaeological and historical remains and was perceived as having high potential for multi-period remains. However due to the proximity of the river only deep alluvial layers were found and no archaeological features or finds were discovered.

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Drawing Conventions

Sections	Plans
Limit of Excavation	Limit of Excavation
Cut	Deposit - Conjectured
Cut-Conjectured	Natural Features
Soil Horizon	Intrusion/Truncation
Soil Horizon - Conjectured	Sondages/Machine Strip
Intrusion/Truncation	Illustrated Section
Top of Natural	Natural Deposit
Top Surface	Excavated Slot
Break in Section	Modern Deposit
Cut Number	Cut Number 118
Deposit Number 117	
Ordinance Datum $\frac{18.45m}{\times}$ ODN	

1 Introduction

This archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a Brief issued by Kasia Gdaniec of the Cambridgeshire Archaeology, Planning and Countryside Advice team (CAPCA), supplemented by a Specification prepared by Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Field Unit (CCC AFU).

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 *Planning and Policy Guidance 16 - Archaeology and Planning* (Department of the Environment 1990). The proposed development is for a flood relief channel to be cut on the northeast side of the Cam/Granta river, intended to enable a redevelopment scheme for the large former Bayer Crop site to the south-west. The evaluation was carried out on behalf of CgMs Consulting. It is at the pre-planning stage.

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

2 Geology and Topography

The site overlies alluvium: silt, clay, sand and gravel with peat (British Geological Survey 2002). The site lies at approximately 10m OD on the flood plain of the River Cam/Granta between low valley walls that rise to approximately 15m OD.

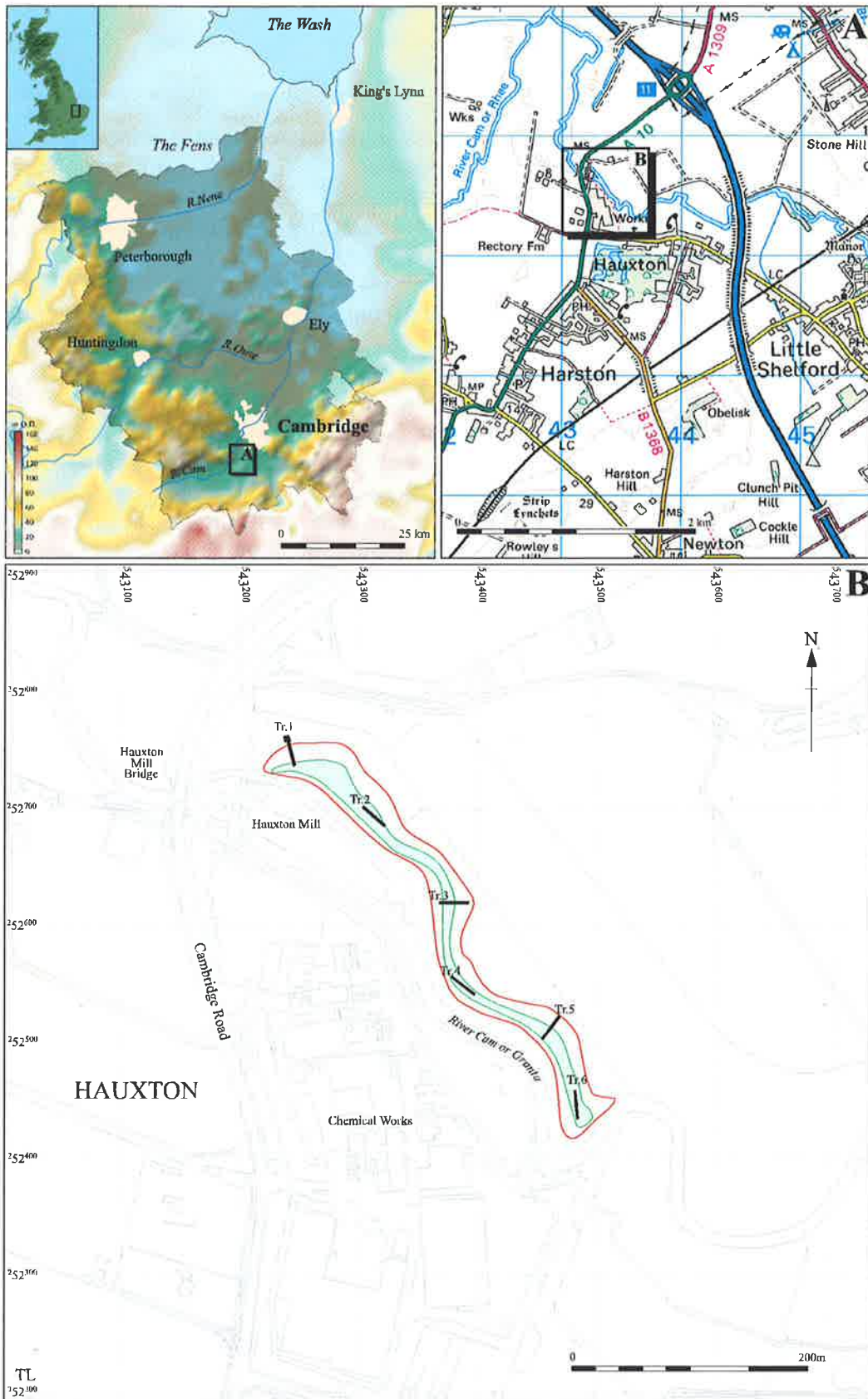
3 Archaeological and Historical Background

3.1 General

Hauxton lies approximately 6km to the south-southwest of Cambridge. The site lies in area where aerial photography of cropmarks has revealed a series of areas of settlement to the north, south and west of the site, and most notably 1km to the east where a cropmark settlement complex (HER 04503) stretching from the early Neolithic to Late Roman, is a scheduled ancient monument (Cambridgeshire 58).

Two other areas of scheduled cropmarks lie slightly further to the east.

Another (non-scheduled) cropmark enclosure (HER08341) lies c.450m to the south-east of the site at Rectory farm. There is a cluster of cropmark enclosures (HER09641) c.750m to the north-west of the site. Several other clusters lie 1km and more away.



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Figure 1: Location of trenches (black) with the extent of the proposed flood bank outlined (red) and flood relief channel (green)

Much closer to the site an excavation of cropmarks immediately to the south-east of the site uncovered two phases of prehistoric and four phases of Roman activity (HER 05090).

Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age finds have come from Cantelupe Farm (HER 04376, a and b) to the north of the site whilst an Iron Age weaving comb (HER 04386) was found in the Hauxton area.

Finds associated with Hauxton Mill, immediately to the north of the site include a Neolithic stone axe (HER 05028), a Bronze Age axe and other finds (HER 04979), Iron Age settlement evidence (HER 04978) finds associated with Roman and Saxon burials, Saxon brooches (HER 04979a and b) and other Saxon finds (HER 05057).

The only fieldwork of note in the vicinity was an evaluation at Hauxton Primary School in 2004 where only post-medieval deposits were recorded.

4 Methodology

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.

The Brief required that a minimum of 5% of the development area should be subject to trial trenching. The development area was approximately 12983m². Six trenches of 26.65m, 24.7m, 25m, 24.5m, 24.8m and 24.10m were machined covering approximately 7.3% of the development area. CAPCA also requested that the maximum depth of the trenches was to be 1.2m with a sondage cut into the ends of trenches 1, 2 and 3 down to the natural deposits. The sondages were to ascertain the depth of the full sequence of alluvial deposits found on the site. A sondage was machined in the first trench to a depth of 1.6m but the sides became unstable and it filled with water. It was decided not to continue with this method and to use an auger to determine the depths of the natural gravels.

Machine excavation was carried out under constant archaeological supervision with a tracked 360° excavator using a 2m wide toothless ditching bucket.

All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using CCC AFU'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.

Environmental samples were not taken on the site. After consulting Kasia Gdaniec (CAPCA) it was decided that as there was no archaeological evidence to date the alluvial deposits environmental sampling would provide little more information about the time frame in which the silting across the flood plain occurred.

Site conditions were good above ground. The site had been cut for hay, although not bailed and the ground conditions were dry. Vehicular access was also good. An overhead cable ran from north-west to south-east across the location of Trench 1. This trench was therefore moved north from its original position. As the trenches were being opened all of them were progressively inundated with water once the depth was approximately 1m. The trenches took less than one hour to become 10 –35cm deep with water. The water was not pumped out of the trenches because of the large quantity of water and also due to the close proximity to the river.

5 Results

5.1 General

Six trenches were excavated across the development area. The overburden observed in all six trenches consisted of two layers. Layer 1 (topsoil) was a dark grey silty clay with occasional modern masonry and ceramics, varying in depth from 0.27-0.11m. Layer 2 (subsoil) was a mid yellowish grey silty clay which varied in thickness from 0.3-0.13m across the development area.

Trench Number	Topsoil (m)	Subsoil (m)
1	0.27	0.18
2	0.11	0.15
3	0.15	0.13
4	0.19	0.14
5	0.11	0.19
6	0.11	0.3

Table 1: Maximum depths of topsoil and subsoil in the trenches

5.2 Trench 1

Trench 1 was 26.65m long and 1.1m deep. It lay on a north-northwest to south southwest alignment. A deep sondage was machined in the northern end of the trench measuring a maximum of 1.6m. It was 4.7m wide on the surface and 2m wide in the base. Three alluvial deposits were observed along the length of the trench. Gravel was seen at

1.6m in the sondage however it was impossible to ascertain whether this was natural or alluvial since the water covered it almost immediately. The southern end of the trench was augered to locate the natural gravel. The results showed that the gravel was more than 2.78m below the ground level. The trench contained no archaeological remains.

Underneath topsoil (1) and subsoil (2):

Layer 32

A hard, mid greyish brown clay with frequent dark brownish orange mottling. It was 0.4m deep and 0.3m thick.

Layer 33

A soft light grey clay. It was 0.67m deep and 0.27m thick. It was sterile.

Layer 34

A soft reddish brown peaty clay. It was 0.7m deep and 0.06m thick to limit of excavation. It contained frequent molluscs.

5.2 Trench 2

Trench 2 was 24.7m long and 1.2m deep max. It lay on a north-west to south-east alignment. During machining a higher baulk was left in the middle of the trench to facilitate access. Two alluvial deposits were observed along the length of the trench. Auger results show that gravel was below 2.87m from the top surface. The trench contained no archaeological remains.

Layer 21

A hard light yellowish grey clay with very frequent orange mottling. It was 0.3m deep and 0.47m thick.

Layer 22

Same as layer 34. It was 0.71m deep and 0.15m thick to limit of excavation.

5.3 Trench 3

Trench 3 was 25m long and 1.2m deep. It lies on an east to west alignment. Four alluvial deposits were observed along the length of the trench. Re-deposited gravels occurred in the base of the trench. Natural gravels occurred at 1.85m below the ground level. No archaeological remains were identified.

Layer 23

A firm light grey silt. It was 0.25m deep and 0.3m thick

Layer 24

A firm mid brownish orange silty clay. It was 0.48m deep and 0.32m thick.

Layer 25

A soft dark grey silty slightly peaty clay. It was 0.64m deep and 0.24m thick

Layer 26

A soft light grey silty clay. It was 0.75m deep and 0.35m thick to limit of excavation.

5.4 Trench 4

Trench 4 was 24.5m long and 1.2m deep. It lay on a north-west to south-east alignment. Six alluvial deposits were identified along with two river channels (12 and 14). Channel 12 was identified in the section and not fully excavated. It was filled by 11, a dark grey silty clay with frequent inclusions of snails. It had gradual sides and appeared to be U-shaped. It is aligned east to west. Channel 14 was also discovered in section and was not fully excavated. It had steep sides and appeared to be V-shaped. It contained six fills (41 – 46) of mainly silt and gravels. This channel also had a later phase (40) that cuts through 14 and was V-shaped. Channel 40 contained four fills (13, 37–39) of mixed silt, clay and gravels. It was aligned north-east to south-west. In the base of the trench is the eastern edge of a larger river channel 48. It was only visible at this level and was filled with a mid greyish brown silty clay (47) (see Appendix 1). It was also not excavated. Natural gravels occurred in the rest of the trench. This trench also contained a post-medieval chalk filled field drain (36). It was present at 0.3m below the top surface. No archaeological remains were identified.

Layer 27

A firm slightly greyish orange silty clay. It was 0.25m deep and 0.4 to 0.1m thick.

Layer 28

A soft dark brownish grey silty clay with moderate sub angular stone up to 50mm. It was quite organic. It was 0.65m deep and 0.29m thick.

Layer 29

A soft dark greyish brown silty clay with occasional rounded and sub-angular stones. It also had occasional chalk flecks. It was a lens, 0.6m deep and 0.07m thick.

Layer 30

Same as 29 but more brown and peaty. It was 0.72m deep and 0.21m thick.

Layer 31

A dark grey silty clay with angular stones and frequent snails. It was 0.82m deep and 0.2m thick.

Layer 47

Light yellowish 90% gravel and 10% silt turning to natural in parts. It was 1.1m deep.

5.5 Trench 5

Trench 5 was 24.8m long and 1.2m deep max. It lay on a north-east to south-west alignment. Four alluvial deposits were identified along the length of the trench. The trench also contained a chalk filled field drain (20). Natural gravels were not present in this trench. No archaeological remains were identified.

Layer 15

Same as 21. It was 0.23m deep and 0.25m thick.

Layer 16

A hard greyish pale orange silty clay with orange mottling. It was 0.48m deep and 0.38m thick.

Layer 17

A soft brownish dark grey slightly silty clay. It was 0.8m deep and 0.38m thick.

Layer 18

Same as 34. It was 1.05m deep and 0.1m thick to limit of excavation.

5.6 Trench 6

Trench 6 was 24.1m long and 1.3m deep. It lay on a north to south alignment. It contained six alluvial deposits. The trench contained a modern pit/posthole (51) which was filled with glass bottles, ceramics and plastic and a chalk filled field drain (10). Gravel was not present at 2.82m. Due to the nature of the clays it is thought that this trench is located within the boundaries of a palaeo-channel.

Layer 3

A hard brownish grey orange slightly silty clay with occasional orange mineralization mottling. It is 0.25m deep and 0.55m thick.

Layer 4

A hard light orange clay with occasional fine grey lenses. It is 0.59m deep and 0.12m thick.

Layer 5

A hard mid grey clay with occasional orange clay mottling. It is 0.71m deep and 0.15m thick.

Layer 6

A hard greyish mid orange clay. It is 0.87m deep and 0.10m thick.

Layer 7

A firm bluish mid grey clay. It is 0.97m deep and 0.22m thick.

Layer 8

Same as layer 34. It is 1.2m deep and 0.1m thick to limit of excavation.

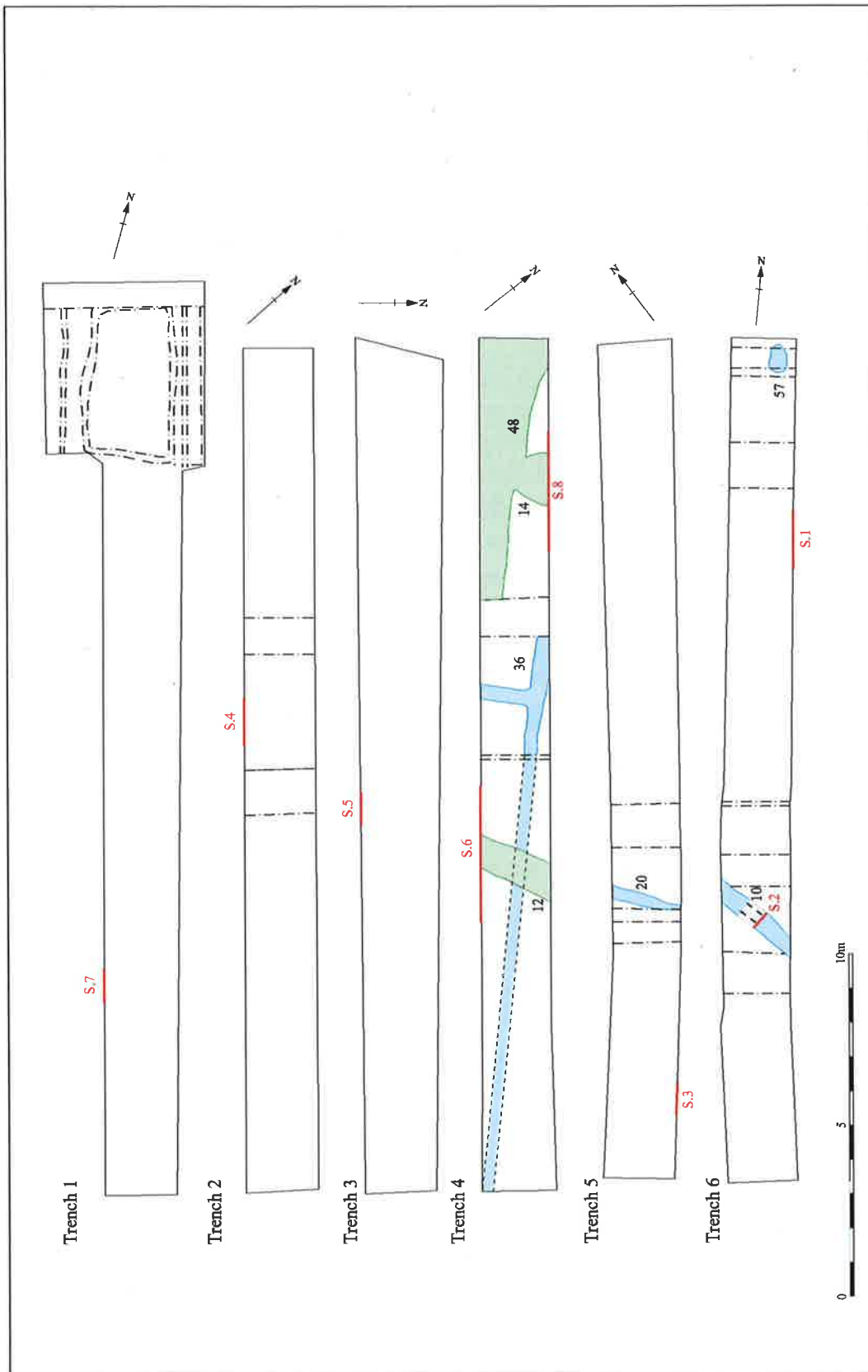


Figure 2: Trench plans

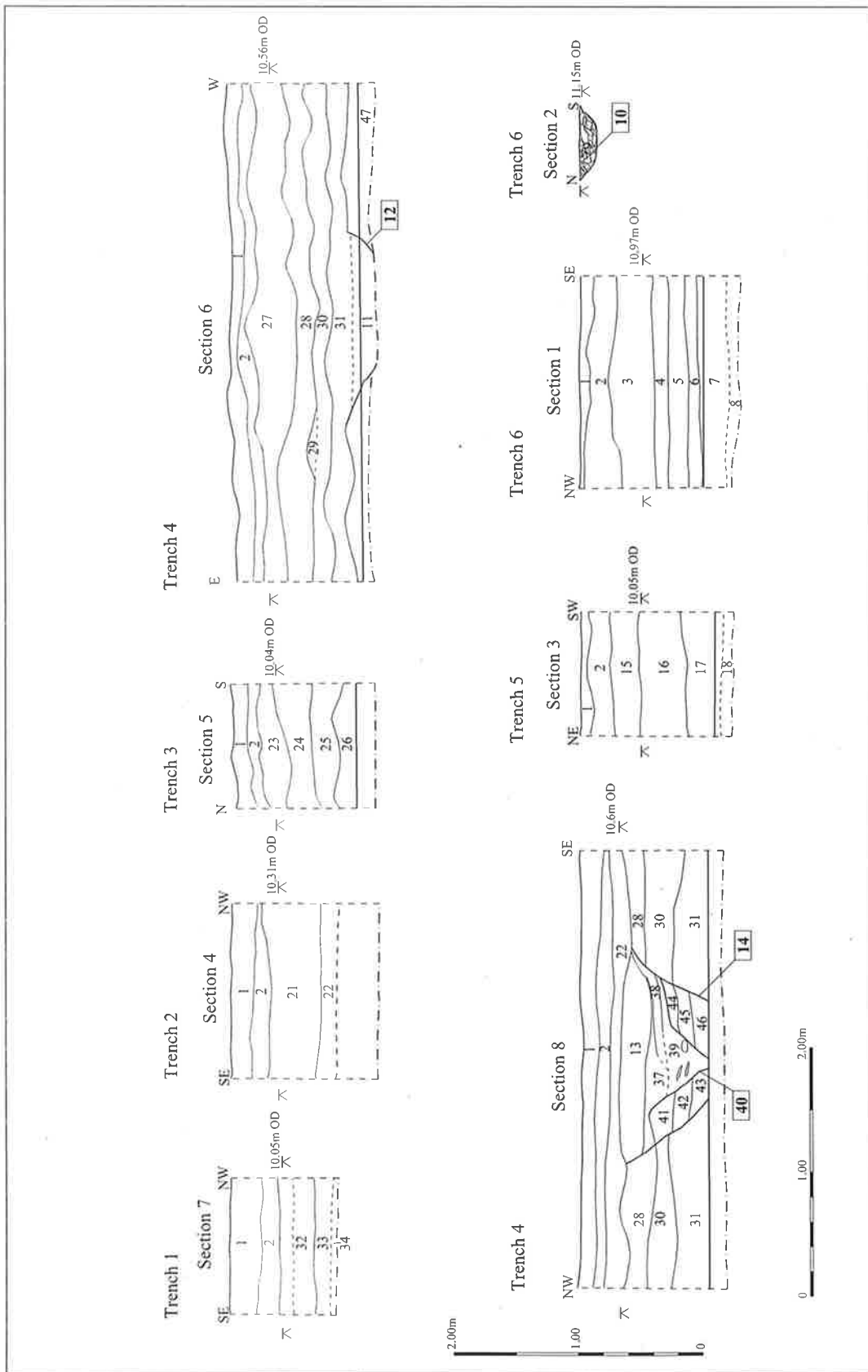


Figure 3: Section drawings

6. Discussion

The results of the evaluation indicate an absence of archaeological features and artefacts within the development area. Even though the site is within an a short distance of quite dense prehistoric and Roman activity, the area of investigation is situated on the Cam/Granta flood plain and would therefore have been frequently inundated with water. This would have created an unsuitable environment for habitation or exploitation.

7 Conclusions

The aim of the project was to establish the character, date, state of archaeological preservation and extent of archaeological remains. There were no archaeological remains present.

Recommendations for any future work based upon this report will be made by the County Archaeology Office.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank CgMs Consulting who commissioned and funded the archaeological work. The project was managed by James Drummond - Murray. Thanks are also due to Rachel Clarke who conducted the survey, to David Brown who assisted on site and to editor Elizabeth Popescu.

The brief for archaeological works was written by Kasia Gdaniec, who visited the site and monitored the evaluation.

Bibliography

British Geological Survey 2002 *Sheet 205*

Appendix 1: Context Summary

Trench	Context	Cut/ Fill	Fill of	Description
4	13	F	40	Soft greyish orange clay
	37	F	40	Soft dark greyish brown slightly peaty silt
	38	F	40	Mid brown silt 60% small chalk pebbles
	39	F	40	Very mixed silt/sand/gravel and organic lenses
	40	C	-	V shaped natural river channel
	41	F	14	Loose orange silt/gravel
	42	F	14	Soft brownish grey silt
	43	F	14	Loose gravel/ brown silt
	44	F	14	Dark greyish brown silty peat
	45	F	14	Soft grey silt, 70% angular and sub angular flints
	46	F	14	Soft brownish yellow silt. 50% small rounded gravel.
	14	C	-	Steep sided V shape river cut channel
	11	F	12	Same as layer 31
	12	C	-	Steep sided river channel
	35	F	36	Firm eroded chalk rubble occasional brown silt lenses
	36	C	-	Linear field drain, moderate sides, break of slope, slightly concave base, E-W orientation.
47		F	48	Mid greyish brown silty clay
48	C	-	Unexcavated river channel observed in base of 1.2m trench	
5	19	F	20	Same as 35
	20	C	-	Same as 36
6	9	F	10	Same as 35
	10	C	-	Same as 36
50	F	51	Clay with frequent glass bottles one with a plastic top.	
	51	C	-	Circular, not fully excavated



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