

**An Archaeological Evaluation on Former Allotments at Hedgemans  
Road, Dagenham, London Borough of Barking and Dagenham**

**Site Code: FAH 05**

**Central National Grid Reference: TQ 48035 84544**

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# **1 Abstract**

- 1.1 During October 2005, Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. carried out an archaeological evaluation on a former allotment site at Hedgemans Road, Dagenham, London Borough of Barking and Dagenham. Twenty-three trial trenches measuring between 7m and 30m in length, by 2m in width were excavated at locations across the site.
- 1.2 In all trenches the earliest deposit was a natural layer of silty sand with very gravelly patches, which became a sandy gravel with depth. The natural also tended to become coarser to the east of the site. Above the natural deposit in all trenches was a light, slightly orangey, greyish brown silt, interpreted as a subsoil. This was mostly a 'clean' deposit but a small fragment of pottery was recovered from Trench 4, and a fragment of burnt flint was recovered from Trench 5.
- 1.3 In Trench 3 the subsoil was cut by a north-south aligned ditch. This extended the length of the trench and was at least 1.45m wide, extending beyond the western edge of the trench. It was at least 0.35m deep, but became deeper to the west. It had gradually sloping sides to the east but the base was not reached. Two fragments of ceramic building material (CBM) were recovered from the fill.
- 1.4 In Trench 4 another north-south aligned ditch was recorded. This was 2.93m wide and 0.51m deep. It had an asymmetrical profile, with generally straight sides, sloping at c. 45° to the west, and more gently sloping, stepped sides to the east, becoming steeper towards the base. The base was generally flat and narrow. The primary fill produced a single, small sherd of pottery. The secondary and tertiary fills produced no finds. It is quite possible that the ditches recorded in Trenches 3 and 4 were sections of the same feature. No archaeological features, with the exception of modern truncations, were recorded in the remaining trenches.
- 1.5 The ditches in Trenches 3 and 4, and the subsoil in all other trenches were sealed by a layer of modern allotment topsoil. This comprised a loose, very dark greyish brown silt, with frequent inclusions of modern rubbish, including glass, metal, plastic and flower pot fragments. However, fragments of struck flint were recovered from Trenches 4 and 5.
- 1.6 Overall the evaluation revealed no archaeological features apart from the ditches in Trenches 3 and 4, and the dating and function of these was not entirely clear. A lack of residual archaeological material from elsewhere on the site may suggest that none had ever been present.

## **2 Introduction**

- 2.1 During the period, 3<sup>rd</sup> - 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2005 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. carried out an archaeological evaluation on former allotments at Hedgemans Road, Dagenham, London Borough of Barking and Dagenham (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Duncan Hawkins of CgMs Consulting on behalf of Abbey Developments Ltd., and carried out as part of a planning condition prior to the redevelopment of the site for residential use.
- 2.2 The evaluation consisted of the excavation and recording of 23 trial trenches (Fig. 2). The site was located adjacent to the north of Hedgemans Road, in an area which previous research had suggested, was of high archaeological potential. In particular, the remains of a prehistoric agricultural landscape were thought likely to be present
- 2.3 A specification for the archaeological evaluation was prepared by Duncan Hawkins (Hawkins, 2005). The site was supervised by Elliott Wragg and the author and project managed by Tim Bradley.



Figure 1  
Site Location  
1:10,000

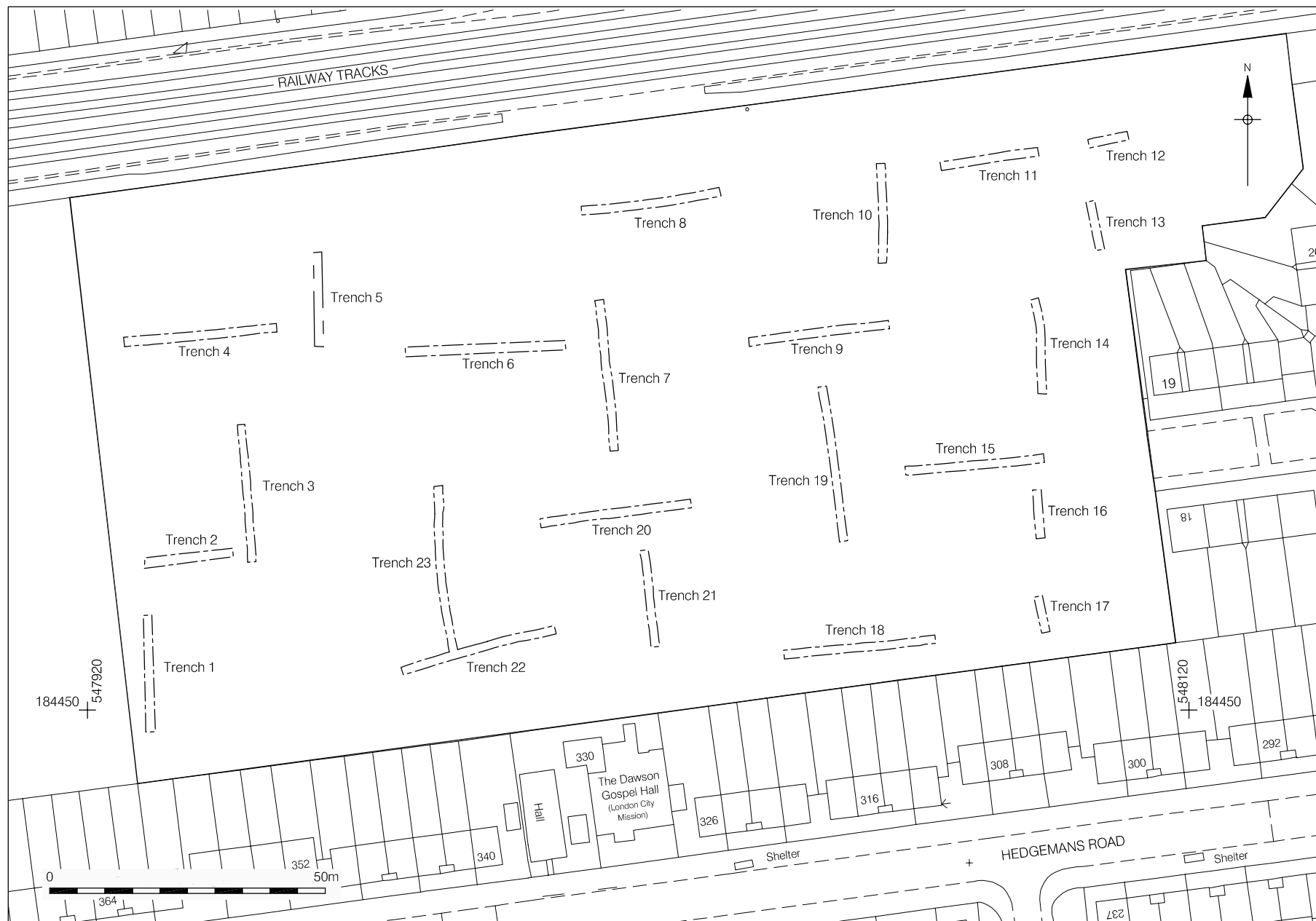


Figure 2  
Trench Location  
1:1000

### **3 Geology and Topography**

- 3.1 The underlying geology of the site is believed to consist of deposits of Taplow Gravels, overlying Eocene series London Clay.
- 3.1 The site is approximately rectangular in shape and extends to c. 2ha. It is essentially level, with surface elevations varying between c. 7.1m AOD and c. 6.5m AOD. The site is located on the Taplow Gravel Terrace some 2.5km to the north of the River Thames. South of the site the ground level falls away down to the valley of the Thames, and rises gradually to the north.
- 3.2 Prior to the archaeological evaluation, site investigation found that dark brown silty topsoil and made ground was present across the site, and up to 0.3m thick. This was underlain by approximately 6m of silty sand, brickearth and Taplow Gravel. This in turn was underlain by London Clay (Hawkins 2005, Appendix 1).
- 3.3 The site is centred at National Grid Reference TQ 48035 84544, and is bounded by railway lines to the north, Hedgemans Way to the east, houses fronting Hedgemans Road to the south and allotments to the west.

## 4 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 4.1 There is evidence within the vicinity of the site for human activity from the Palaeolithic to post-medieval periods. A number of Palaeolithic implements including 26 handaxes were found at Gale Street, to the west of the site (National Monuments Record (NMR) No: TQ 48 SE 101). They are believed to have been found either during the building of the Beacontree Estate, some distance to the north of the site, or from the pit that is now the ornamental pond in Parsloes Park, a short distance north of the railway, which borders the northern edge of the study site. A second assemblage of Palaeolithic implements, including 18 handaxes is also recorded from the Dagenham area, but poorly provenanced (NMR No: TQ 48 SE 104).
- 4.2 The evidence for the Mesolithic and Neolithic periods within the vicinity of the study site is rather sparse though an anthropomorphic wooden figurine recovered from Dagenham marshes, c. 1km southeast of the site, is believed to be of Late Neolithic or Early Bronze Age date (NMR NO: TQ 48 SE 3). Excavations at former playing fields adjacent to Dagenham Heathway, less than 2km northeast of the site also revealed limited evidence of Neolithic activity (Keith-Lucas 2005).
- 4.3 The evidence for Bronze Age activity in the Dagenham area is rather more extensive. The excavations at Dagenham Heathway revealed extensive evidence of Late Bronze Age activity, including a settlement enclosure, along with roundhouses and four-post structures (*ibid.*). A little over 1km southeast of the study site, excavations south of Ripple Road revealed a gravel, burnt flint and sand causeway of Bronze Age date, built upon, and later sealed by, natural peat formations (Divers 1993). At the former Digby Garden allotments, less than 1km ESE of the study site, three possible Bronze Age ditches were identified during an archaeological evaluation (Divers 2004). A small pit of Late Bronze Age to early Iron Age date was also identified at a former allotment site on Blackburne Road, a little over 1km east of the study site (Bazley 2004). At Church Lane, a little under 2km east of the site, a Late Bronze Age ditch was identified during an evaluation in 1998 (NMR No: 1255101).
- 4.4 Evidence of further prehistoric activity has come from a number of other locations, though specific dates are lacking. Excavations at the former Butterkist Factory on Blackburne Road, c. 1.5km east of the study site revealed a number of ditches, which were probably elements of a prehistoric field system (Hodkins 1993). Excavations nearby, at the former sports ground, Exeter Road, also revealed a ditch, which may have been part of a



prehistoric field system (Jarrett 1993). In Dagenham Old Park, some 1.5km ESE of the study site, a number of prehistoric features have been identified, including a ditched enclosure (Greater London Sites and Monuments Record (GLSMR) No: 061541), a ring ditch (GLSMR No: 061540) and trackways (GLSMR Nos: 061542, 061543). An undated ditch is also recorded nearby, at Morland Road (GLSMR No: 062139). An unclassified earthwork, probably of prehistoric date is recorded from Ivy Walk, a short distance to the north of the study site (GLSMR No: 060975) and prehistoric pottery is recorded from Ford Road, less than 1km ESE of the site (GLSMR No: 062698).

- 4.5 Evidence of Roman activity in the area is rather sparse, though residual Roman pottery was recovered from later features during the excavation at Dagenham Heathway (Keith-Lucas 2005) and a pottery vessel is recorded from Redbridge, less than 2km northwest of the study site (NMR No: TQ 48 NE 27).
- 4.6 Evidence of Anglo-Saxon activity is also somewhat sparse, though again, the excavations at Dagenham Heathway revealed a number of Saxon pits and a probable field system.
- 4.7 There is rather more evidence for medieval activity in the vicinity of the study site. Excavations at Ferry House, Crown Street, some 2km east of the site revealed postholes and ditches, suggesting a nearby medieval settlement (Jarrett 1992), and excavations in the same area, at Church Lane, revealed a medieval gravel pit (NMR No: 1255101). Medieval moated sites are recorded at Frizlands Lane, a little over 2km northeast of the study site (GLSMR No: 061103) and nearby at Sedgemoor Drive (GLSMR No: 06110401). Later medieval manor houses are recorded in Parsloes Park to the north of the study site (NMR No: TQ 48 SE 6) and adjacent to Gale Street, west of the park (NMR No: TQ 48 SE 1). A further example comes from near the junction of Dagenham Heathway and Ripple Road, some 1.5km southeast of the study site. Further medieval buildings are recorded at Gale Street (GLSMR Nos: 061079, 061083), Dagenham Heathway (GLSMR No: 061094) and Raydons Road, c. 1km north of the study site (GLSMR No: 060622).
- 4.8 Most records for the post-medieval period relate to historic buildings, though a number of post-medieval pits were recorded during the Ferry House excavations (Jarrett 1992) and features including a well and boundary ditch were recorded during the Church Lane evaluation (NMR No: 1255101). A Tudor brick kiln is also recorded from Parsloes Park (GLSMR No: 060496). Post-medieval buildings close to the study site include a manor house at Gale Street (GLSMR No: 060493) and former 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century buildings at Gale Street Farm, which once occupied the area directly to the west of the study site.

- 4.9 The study site does not appear to have ever been developed for anything other than agricultural and horticultural purposes. It was formerly occupied by farmland, possibly as early as the later prehistoric period, and remained as such until the 1930s when it became allotments, which occupied the area until very recently.

## **5 Planning Background and Research Objectives**

- 5.1 The study aims to satisfy the objectives of the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham Council, which fully recognises the importance of the buried heritage for which they are the custodians.
- 5.2 In considering any planning application for development, the local planning authority is bound by the policy framework set by government guidance, in this instance Department of the Environment, Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 (PPG 16), by current Development Plan Policy and by other material considerations.
- 5.3 The relevant Development Plan framework is provided by the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham Unitary Development Plan (UDP) adopted in October 1995. The plan contains the following policy, which provides a framework for the consideration of development proposals affecting archaeological and heritage features.

### **POLICY DE36**

**When any development is proposed on sites of archaeological significance or for any sites identified by English Heritage the council will seek to ensure that an early evaluation is carried out, and that the preservation in situ is given first consideration. However, if preservation in situ is not possible and the nature of the remains does not warrant a planning refusal, the council will require that adequate time, funding and resources are provided to enable archaeological investigation by an acceptable agent to take place during the process of development.**

### **POLICY DE37**

**The council will seek to ensure that the most important archaeological remains and their setting are preserved in situ (if possible for public access and display) and that where appropriate they are given statutory protection.**

### **POLICY DE38**

**The council will promote cooperation between landowners, developers and archaeological organisations in accordance with the British Archaeologists and Developers Liaison Group Code of Practice and the Confederation of British Industry Code of Practice on archaeological investigations.**

## **POLICY DE39**

**The council will notify English Heritage of planning applications found to correlate with sites as shown on the archaeological constraints map, as early as possible.**

- 5.4 The proposed development consists of a range of residential properties and associated services, together with surface parking and amenity areas.
- 5.5 It was believed that degradation of archaeological deposits during previous development would have been minimal. Impacts through previous agricultural and horticultural usages are only likely to have been localised and of a shallow nature.
- 5.6 It was thought that proposed development on the site could potentially cause severe archaeological impacts through the cutting of footings and service runs in previously undisturbed areas.
- 5.7 Given the archaeological potential of the site, it was thus recommended that an archaeological evaluation be carried out in line with guidance contained within PPG 16 and the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham UDP.
- 5.8 The evaluation aimed to determine, as far as was reasonably possible, the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains liable to be threatened by the proposed development. The evaluation also sought to clarify the nature and extent of existing disturbance and intrusions and hence assess the degree of archaeological survival of buried deposits and any surviving structures of archaeological significance.
- 5.9 Within these parameters, and given the archaeological and historical background, the evaluation presented the opportunity to address a number of research themes:
- Was there any evidence for late prehistoric settlement or agricultural activity in the area of the study site, and if so, was there any evidence for temporal changes within this period?
  - Was there evidence for continuity of land use or settlement from the late prehistoric into the Roman period?
  - What evidence was there for post-Roman occupation and/or activity on the site?

## **6 Methodology**

- 6.1 The evaluation was carried out according to an archaeological specification (Hawkins, 2005) and conformed to the IFA code of conduct.
- 6.2 The evaluation consisted of the excavation of 23 trial trenches (Fig. 2), measuring between 7m and 30m in length and 2m wide. The trenches were spread across the site to give as full a coverage as possible of the range of likely underlying deposits
- 6.3 All trenches were machine excavated to the base of modern, unconsolidated deposits, or the top of archaeological deposits. All machining was undertaken by a 180° wheeled excavator using a toothless bucket, under archaeological supervision. The longitudinal sections and bases of the trenches were then cleaned, and sample sections and base plans recorded. Sample excavation of cut features was then carried out by hand and these recorded. Spoil heaps were also checked in order to collect any dateable evidence and assess the extent of residual finds preservation. A written, drawn and photographic record of archaeological features was made, and the location of each trench was recorded and tied into local and national grids.
- 6.4 Two temporary benchmarks were set up on the site, one at the southwest corner of the site (value: 6.89m AOD) and the other at the eastern edge of the site (value: 7.12m AOD). These were levelled in from a previously established survey pin located beyond the eastern boundary of the site (value: 6.856m AOD), which had itself been levelled in from an Ordnance Survey Benchmark on the corner of No. 352 Hedgemans Road (value: 7.06m AOD).

## **7 Archaeological Sequence**

### **7.1 TRENCH 1**

- 7.1.1 This trench was aligned north-south and located in the southwestern corner of the site. The basal deposit was a natural, firm and well compacted, mid brownish orange silty sand, with very gravelly patches, becoming sandy gravel with depth [3] (upper elevation, 6.14m AOD). This was overlain by a layer of moderately firm, light, slightly orangey, greyish brown silt, up to 0.22m thick, containing very occasional, small, sub-rounded to sub-angular stones [2]. This has been interpreted as a subsoil. Above this was modern allotment topsoil [1], up to 0.34m thick. No archaeological features or finds were present.

### **7.2 TRENCH 2**

- 7.2.1 This trench was aligned east-west and located a short distance to the north of Trench 1. The basal natural deposit was a firm and well compacted, mid brownish orange silty sand, with very gravelly patches, becoming sandy gravel with depth [6] (upper elevation, 6.24m AOD). There were a number of subtle changes in texture and colour and locally variable drying of the deposit. This was overlain by a layer of moderately firm, light, slightly orangey, greyish brown silt subsoil, up to 0.21m thick, containing very occasional, small, sub-rounded to sub-angular stones [5]. Above this was modern allotment topsoil [4], up to 0.34m thick. No archaeological features or finds were present, though a modern intrusion associated with former allotment activity, was noted on the south side of the trench.

### **7.3 TRENCH 3 (Fig. 3)**

- 7.3.1 This trench was aligned north-south, with its southern end being located a short distance northeast of the eastern end of Trench 2. The basal deposit was a firm and well compacted, mid brownish orange silty sand, with very gravelly patches, becoming sandy gravel with depth [9] (upper elevation, 6.31m AOD). This was overlain by a layer of moderately firm, light, slightly orangey, greyish brown silt subsoil, up to 0.14m thick, containing very occasional, small, sub-rounded to sub-angular stones [8]. The subsoil was cut by a north-south aligned, linear ditch [18], which extended the full length of the trench and beyond (25m+). It was at least 1.45m wide, extending beyond the western

edge of the trench and at least 0.35m deep. It had a gently sloping eastern edge, but the base was not reached. The fill [17] was a soft, mid orangey brown sandy silt, which contained two very small abraded fragments of tile (probably post-medieval) and a fragment of post-medieval brick (London Fabric 3039) (J. Brown, pers. comm.), but no other dateable finds. The ditch was sealed by modern allotment topsoil [7], up to 0.24m thick.

#### 7.4 TRENCH 4 (Figs. 3 & 4)

- 7.4.1 This trench was aligned parallel with, and some 30m north of, Trench 2. The basal deposit was a firm and well compacted, mid brownish orange silty sand, with very gravelly patches, becoming sandy gravel with depth [12] (upper elevation, 6.26m AOD). This was overlain by a layer of moderately firm, light, slightly orangey, greyish brown silt subsoil, up to 0.15m thick, containing very occasional, small, sub-rounded to sub-angular stones [11]. A very small sherd of Roman greyware pottery (B. Sudds, pers. comm.) was also recovered. The subsoil was cut by a north-south aligned ditch [16], which extended beyond the northern and southern edges of the trench. It was 2.93m wide and 0.51m deep, with a decidedly asymmetrical profile. The western side was generally straight and sloping at c. 45° to the base. The eastern side was much more gently sloping and stepped, becoming steeper towards the base, which was generally flat. The nature of the profile effectively meant that a small gully was present in the base of the feature. The primary fill [15] was a firm and well-compacted, dark greyish brown, sandy, silty gravel, up to 0.22m thick, and contained a single, tiny, abraded sherd of pottery. This has been identified as a medieval red sandy fabric (Essex Fabric 21), dated to c. AD 1200 - 1400 (B. Sudds, pers. comm.). Above the primary fill was a 0.31m thick deposit of slightly friable, mid greyish brown silt [14], which appeared to be a deposit, which had slumped into the eastern side of the ditch, possibly from an associated bank. This was overlain by a 0.30m thick deposit of moderately compacted, mid greyish brown silt [13], which appeared to have been deliberate backfilling from the western side. Neither the slumped deposit nor the deliberate backfilling contained any dateable finds. No other archaeological features were identified and the ditch was sealed by modern allotment topsoil [10], up to 0.37m thick. This contained three possible struck flints, though these were undiagnostic, and if deliberately struck, would have dated to the Bronze Age or later (J. Leary, pers. comm.).

## 7.5 TRENCH 5

- 7.5.1 Trench 5 was aligned north-south, a short distance east of Trench 4. The basal deposit was a natural, firm and well compacted, mid brownish orange silty sand, with very gravelly patches, becoming sandy gravel with depth [21] (upper elevation, 6.34m AOD). This was overlain by a layer of moderately firm, light, slightly orangey, greyish brown silt subsoil, up to 0.28m thick, containing very occasional, small, sub-rounded to sub-angular stones [20]. A fragment of burnt flint was also present, which had been heavily and probably deliberately burnt, and may represent evidence of later prehistoric activity in the area (J. Leary, pers. comm.). Above this was modern allotment topsoil [19], up to 0.37m thick, which contained a possible struck flint, though this was wholly undiagnostic (J. Leary, pers. comm.). A modern posthole, with remnants of an *in situ* post, was observed in the centre of the trench, but no archaeological features or further finds were present.

## 7.6 TRENCH 6

- 7.6.1 Trench 6 was located some 10m east of Trench 5 and aligned east-west. The basal deposit was a natural, firm and well compacted, mid brownish orange silty sand, with very gravelly patches, becoming sandy gravel with depth [24] (upper elevation, 6.32m AOD). This was overlain by a layer of moderately firm, light, slightly orangey, greyish brown silt subsoil, up to 0.26m thick, containing very occasional, small, sub-rounded to sub-angular stones [23]. A number of recent truncations were noted, cut into the top of the subsoil, including possible ploughmarks, which probably related to agricultural activity on the site prior to it becoming an allotment in the 1930s. The stratigraphic sequence was completed by modern allotment topsoil [22], up to 0.40m thick. No archaeological features or finds were present.

## 7.7 TRENCH 7

- 7.7.1 This trench was aligned north-south and located to the east of Trench 6. The basal deposit was a natural, firm and well compacted, mid brownish orange silty sand, with very gravelly patches, becoming sandy gravel with depth [27] (upper elevation, 6.35m AOD). This was overlain by a layer of moderately firm, light, slightly orangey, greyish brown silt subsoil, up to 0.22m thick, containing very occasional, small, sub-rounded to sub-angular stones [26]. A single modern feature was cut into the top of the subsoil towards the



northern end of the trench, on its eastern side. Above this was modern allotment topsoil [25], up to 0.38m thick. No archaeological features or finds were present.

## 7.8 TRENCH 8

- 7.8.1 Trench 8 was located to the north of Trench 7 and aligned east-west, parallel to the northern site edge. The basal deposit was a natural, firm and well compacted, mid brownish orange silty sand, with very gravelly patches, becoming sandy gravel with depth [30] (upper elevation, 6.29m AOD). This was overlain by a layer of moderately firm, light, slightly orangey, greyish brown silt subsoil, up to 0.27m thick, containing very occasional, small, sub-rounded to sub-angular stones [29]. Above this was modern allotment topsoil [28], up to 0.45m thick. No archaeological features or finds were present.

## 7.9 TRENCH 9

- 7.9.1 This trench was located to the southeast of Trench 8 and aligned east-west. The basal deposit was a natural, firm and well compacted, mid brownish orange silty sand, with very gravelly patches, becoming sandy gravel with depth [33] (upper elevation, 6.31m AOD). This was overlain by a layer of moderately firm, light, slightly orangey, greyish brown silt subsoil, up to 0.23m thick, containing very occasional, small, sub-rounded to sub-angular stones [32]. Above this was modern allotment topsoil [31], up to 0.37m thick. There was a modern, north-south linear truncation at the western end of the trench, but no archaeological features or finds were present.

## 7.10 TRENCH 10

- 7.10.1 Trench 10 was aligned north-south and located to the north of Trench 9. The basal deposit was a natural, firm and well compacted, mid brownish orange silty sand, with very gravelly patches, becoming sandy gravel with depth [36] (upper elevation, 6.36m AOD). This was overlain by a layer of moderately firm, light, slightly orangey, greyish brown silt subsoil, up to 0.22m thick, containing very occasional, small, sub-rounded to sub-angular stones [35]. Above this was modern allotment topsoil [34], up to 0.34m thick. No archaeological features or finds were present.

## 7.11 TRENCH 11

- 7.11.1 This trench was located to the northeast of Trench 10, and followed an east west alignment, parallel with the northern site boundary. The basal deposit was a natural, firm and well compacted, mid brownish orange silty sand, with very gravelly patches, becoming sandy gravel with depth [43] (upper elevation, 6.37m AOD). This was overlain by a layer of moderately firm, light, slightly orangey, greyish brown silt subsoil, up to 0.19m thick, containing very occasional, small, sub-rounded to sub-angular stones [42]. Above this was modern allotment topsoil [41], up to 0.33m thick. No archaeological features or finds were present.

## 7.12 TRENCH 12

- 7.12.1 This was a short trench, located to the east of Trench 11, and continuing the same east-west alignment. The basal deposit was a natural, firm and well compacted, mid brownish orange silty sand, with very gravelly patches, becoming sandy gravel with depth [46] (upper elevation, 6.34m AOD). This was overlain by a layer of moderately firm, light, slightly orangey, greyish brown silt subsoil, up to 0.15m thick, containing very occasional, small, sub-rounded to sub-angular stones [45]. Above this was modern allotment topsoil [44], up to 0.45m thick. No archaeological features or finds were present.

## 7.13 TRENCH 13

- 7.13.1 Trench 13 was aligned north-south and located to the south of Trench 12. The basal deposit was a natural, firm and well compacted, mid brownish orange silty sand, with very gravelly patches, becoming sandy gravel with depth [49] (upper elevation, 6.37m AOD). This was overlain by a layer of moderately firm, light, slightly orangey, greyish brown silt subsoil, up to 0.18m thick, containing very occasional, small, sub-rounded to sub-angular stones [48]. Above this was modern allotment topsoil [47], up to 0.29m thick. No archaeological features or finds were present.

#### 7.14 TRENCH 14

- 7.14.1 This trench was located to the south of Trench 13 and also aligned north-south. The basal deposit was a natural, firm and well compacted, mid brownish orange silty sand, with very gravelly patches, becoming sandy gravel with depth [52] (upper elevation, 6.35m AOD). This was overlain by a layer of moderately firm, light, slightly orangey, greyish brown silt subsoil, up to 0.40m thick, containing very occasional, small, sub-rounded to sub-angular stones [51]. Above this was modern allotment topsoil [50], up to 0.29m thick. No archaeological features or finds were present.

#### 7.15 TRENCH 15

- 7.15.1 Trench 15 was located south of Trench 14 and extended westwards on an east-west alignment. The basal deposit was a natural, firm and well compacted, mid brownish orange silty sand, with very gravelly patches, becoming sandy gravel with depth [55] (upper elevation, 6.42m AOD). This was overlain by a layer of moderately firm, light, slightly orangey, greyish brown silt subsoil, up to 0.30m thick, containing very occasional, small, sub-rounded to sub-angular stones [54]. Above this was modern allotment topsoil [53], up to 0.36m thick. No archaeological features or finds were present.

#### 7.16 TRENCH 16

- 7.16.1 This trench was located towards the eastern edge of the site and aligned north-south. The basal deposit was a natural, firm and well compacted, mid brownish orange silty sand, with very gravelly patches, becoming sandy gravel with depth [58] (upper elevation, 6.31m AOD). This was overlain by a layer of moderately firm, light, slightly orangey, greyish brown silt subsoil, up to 0.22m thick, containing very occasional, small, sub-rounded to sub-angular stones [57]. Above this was modern allotment topsoil [56], up to 0.42m thick. No archaeological features or finds were present.

#### 7.17 TRENCH 17

- 7.17.1 Trench 17 was aligned north-south and located towards the southeastern corner of the site. The basal deposit was a natural, firm and well compacted, mid brownish orange silty

sand, with very gravelly patches, becoming sandy gravel with depth [70] (upper elevation, 6.27m AOD). This was overlain by a layer of moderately firm, light, slightly orangey, greyish brown silt subsoil, up to 0.23m thick, containing very occasional, small, sub-rounded to sub-angular stones [69]. Above this was modern allotment topsoil [68], up to 0.41m thick. No archaeological features or finds were present.

#### 7.18 TRENCH 18

7.18.1 This trench was located to the west of Trench 17 and aligned east-west, parallel with the southern site boundary. The basal deposit was a natural, firm and well compacted, mid brownish orange silty sand, becoming sandy gravel with depth [39] (upper elevation, 6.04m AOD). There were also a number of coarse gravel lenses [40]. These were overlain by a layer of moderately firm, light, slightly orangey, greyish brown silt subsoil, up to 0.18m thick, containing very occasional, small, sub-rounded to sub-angular stones [38]. Above this was modern allotment topsoil [37], up to 0.40m thick. Apart from some modern disturbance at the western end of the trench, no archaeological features or finds were present.

#### 7.19 TRENCH 19

7.19.1 Trench 19 was aligned north-south and located to the north of Trench 18. The basal deposit was a natural, firm and well compacted, mid brownish orange silty sand, with very gravelly patches, becoming sandy gravel with depth [67] (upper elevation, 6.33m AOD). This was overlain by a layer of moderately firm, light, slightly orangey, greyish brown silt subsoil, up to 0.15m thick, containing very occasional, small, sub-rounded to sub-angular stones [66]. Above this was modern allotment topsoil [65], up to 0.26m thick. No archaeological features or finds were present.

#### 7.20 TRENCH 20

7.20.1 This trench was located to the west of Trench 19 and aligned east-west. The basal deposit was a natural, firm and well compacted, mid brownish orange silty sand, with very gravelly patches, becoming sandy gravel with depth [61] (upper elevation, 6.29m AOD). This was overlain by a layer of moderately firm, light, slightly orangey, greyish brown silt subsoil, up to 0.12m thick, containing very occasional, small, sub-rounded to sub-angular

stones [60]. Above this was modern allotment topsoil [59], up to 0.23m thick. No archaeological features or finds were present.

#### 7.21 TRENCH 21

- 7.21.1 This trench was located to the south of Trench 20 and aligned north-south. The basal deposit was a natural, firm and well compacted, mid brownish orange silty sand, with very gravelly patches, becoming sandy gravel with depth [64] (upper elevation, 6.21m AOD). This was overlain by a layer of moderately firm, light, slightly orangey, greyish brown silt subsoil, up to 0.15m thick, containing very occasional, small, sub-rounded to sub-angular stones [63]. Above this was modern allotment topsoil [62], up to 0.26m thick. No archaeological features or finds were present.

#### 7.22 TRENCH 22

- 7.22.1 Trench 22 was located to the west of Trench 21 and was aligned east-west, parallel with the southern boundary of the site. The basal deposit was a natural, firm and well compacted, mid brownish orange silty sand, with very gravelly patches, becoming sandy gravel with depth [73] (upper elevation, 6.29m AOD). This was overlain by a layer of moderately firm, light, slightly orangey, greyish brown silt subsoil, up to 0.12m thick, containing very occasional, small, sub-rounded to sub-angular stones [72]. Above this was modern allotment topsoil [71], up to 0.25m thick. No archaeological features or finds were present.

#### 7.23 TRENCH 23

- 7.23.1 This trench extended northwards from the northern edge of Trench 22. The basal deposit was a natural, firm and well compacted, mid brownish orange silty sand, with very gravelly patches, becoming sandy gravel with depth [76] (upper elevation, 6.26m AOD). This was overlain by a layer of moderately firm, light, slightly orangey, greyish brown silt subsoil, up to 0.30m thick, containing very occasional, small, sub-rounded to sub-angular stones [75]. Above this was modern allotment topsoil [74], up to 0.30m thick. Apart from a modern truncation at the northern end of the trench, no archaeological features or finds were present.

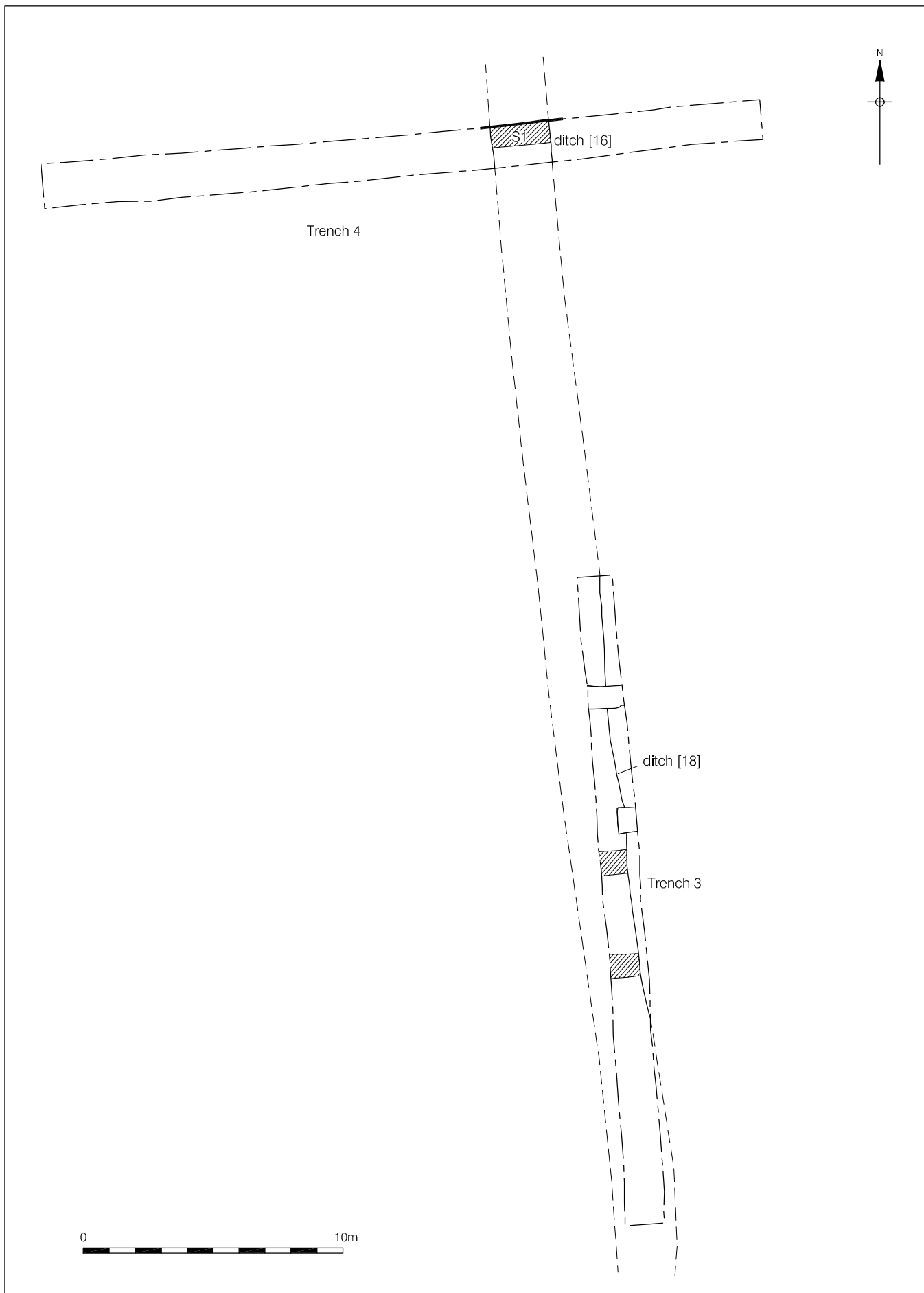


Figure 3  
Trenches 3 and 4  
1:200

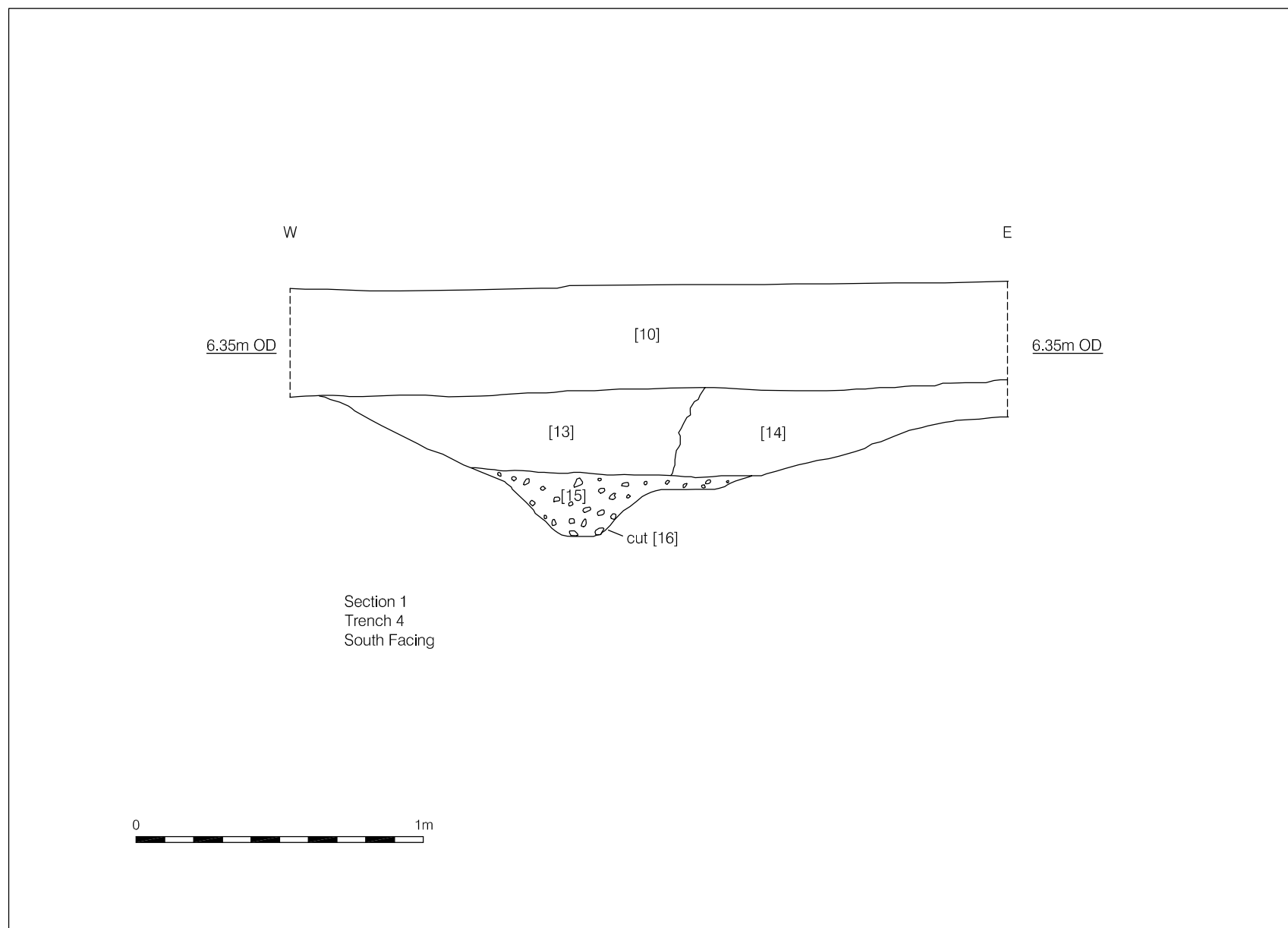


Figure 4  
Section 1  
1:20

## **8 Discussion and Conclusions**

- 8.1 Despite the archaeological potential of the site and its lack of previous development, very little evidence of activity pre-dating the modern period was found. Only two trenches, both located towards the western end of the development, revealed earlier features. These were both north-south aligned ditches. Only a partial profile of the ditch in Trench 3 was extant so its exact form could not be ascertained. The full profile of the ditch in Trench 4 was exposed, revealing a rather asymmetrical feature with a possible bank to the east. It is possible that the ditches in the two trenches were elements of the same feature. It probably dated to the post-medieval period, but its function, however, is unclear.
- 8.2 If the ditch were a simple field boundary ditch then a more regular profile would be expected. Furthermore, as the evaluation provided such wide coverage of a large site, then further such features could be expected in other areas of the site, but none were identified. It seems likely that the ditch may have been associated with activity to the west of the development area and therefore in the area of the former Gale Street Farm. The farm dated back to at least the 16<sup>th</sup> century and possibly earlier. Given the other minimal dating evidence it is again suggested that the ditch may also have dated to the post-medieval period.
- 8.3 Overall the evaluation recorded very few cut features, and very few finds were recovered, even from residual contexts. No evidence for the exploitation of the landscape for prehistoric agricultural purposes was found, indeed negligible evidence was found for any prehistoric activity. The evidence for Roman and Anglo-Saxon activity was also negligible, though a single sherd of possible Roman pottery was recovered. The earliest human activity on the site has been tentatively dated to the late medieval or early post-medieval period, and comes from probably a single feature. It seems likely that intensive agricultural exploitation of the site did not start until the 19<sup>th</sup> century at the earliest, virtually all materials observed on site being associated with activity post-dating the conversion of the site to allotments in the 1930s.



## **9 Acknowledgements**

- 9.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited would like to thank Abbey Developments Ltd. for funding the work, and acknowledges Duncan Hawkins of CgMs Consulting for commissioning the project. The author wishes to thank Tim Bradley for his project management and editing, Elliott Wragg for supervising the initial stages of the evaluation, Mike Bazley for his assistance on site, Hayley Baxter for the illustrations, and Berni Suds and Jim Leary for assessing the finds.

## 10 Bibliography

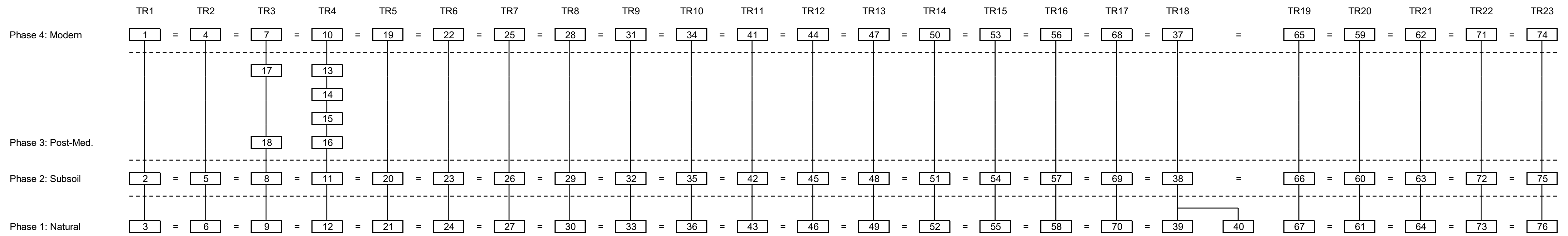
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## APPENDIX 1 – Context Index

Context No.	Trench	Type	Plan	Section	Photo	Sample	Phase	Comments
1	1	Layer	*	2	Yes	*	4	Topsoil
2	1	Layer	*	2	Yes	*	2	Subsoil
3	1	Layer	TR1	2	Yes	*	1	Natural sand and gravel
4	2	Layer	*	3	Yes	*	4	Topsoil, same as [1]
5	2	Layer	*	3	Yes	*	2	Subsoil, same as [2]
6	2	Layer	TR2	3	Yes	*	1	Natural, same as [3]
7	3	Layer	*	5	Yes	*	4	Topsoil, same as [1]
8	3	Layer	*	5	Yes	*	2	Subsoil, same as [2]
9	3	Layer	TR3	5	Yes	*	1	Natural, same as [3]
10	4	Layer	*	1	Yes	*	4	Topsoil, same as [1]
11	4	Layer	*	1	Yes	*	2	Subsoil, same as [2]
12	4	Layer	TR4	1	Yes	*	1	Natural, same as [3]
13	4	Fill	TR4	1	Yes	*	3	Upper fill of ditch [16]
14	4	Fill	TR4	1	Yes	*	3	Middle fill of ditch [16]
15	4	Fill	*	1	Yes	*	3	Primary fill of ditch [16]
16	4	Cut	TR4	1	Yes	*	3	N-S ditch
17	3	Fill	TR3	*	Yes	*	3	Fill of ditch [18]
18	3	Cut	TR3	*	Yes	*	3	N-S ditch
19	5	Layer	*	4	Yes	*	4	Topsoil, same as [1]
20	5	Layer	*	4	Yes	*	2	Subsoil, same as [2]
21	5	Layer	TR5	4	Yes	*	1	Natural, same as [3]
22	6	Layer	*	6	Yes	*	4	Topsoil, same as [1]
23	6	Layer	*	6	Yes	*	2	Subsoil, same as [2]
24	6	Layer	TR6	6	Yes	*	1	Natural, same as [3]
25	7	Layer	*	7	Yes	*	4	Topsoil, same as [1]
26	7	Layer	*	7	Yes	*	2	Subsoil, same as [2]
27	7	Layer	TR7	7	Yes	*	1	Natural, same as [3]
28	8	Layer	*	8	Yes	*	4	Topsoil, same as [1]
29	8	Layer	*	8	Yes	*	2	Subsoil, same as [2]
30	8	Layer	TR8	8	Yes	*	1	Natural, same as [3]
31	9	Layer	*	9	Yes	*	4	Topsoil, same as [1]
32	9	Layer	*	9	Yes	*	2	Subsoil, same as [2]
33	9	Layer	TR9	9	Yes	*	1	Natural, same as [3]
34	10	Layer	*	10	Yes	*	4	Topsoil, same as [1]
35	10	Layer	*	10	Yes	*	2	Subsoil, same as [2]
36	10	Layer	TR10	10	Yes	*	1	Natural, same as [3]
37	18	Layer	*	11	Yes	*	4	Topsoil, same as [1]
38	18	Layer	*	11	Yes	*	2	Subsoil, same as [2]
39	18	Layer	TR18	11	Yes	*	1	Natural, same as [3]
40	18	Layer	TR18	11	Yes	*	1	Natural gravel lens
41	11	Layer	*	12	Yes	*	4	Topsoil, same as [1]
42	11	Layer	*	12	Yes	*	2	Subsoil, same as [2]
43	11	Layer	TR11	12	Yes	*	1	Natural, same as [3]
44	12	Layer	*	13	Yes	*	4	Topsoil, same as [1]
45	12	Layer	*	13	Yes	*	2	Subsoil, same as [2]

Context No.	Trench	Type	Plan	Section	Photo	Sample	Phase	Comments
46	12	Layer	TR12	13	Yes	*	1	Natural, same as [3]
47	13	Layer	*	14	Yes	*	4	Topsoil, same as [1]
48	13	Layer	*	14	Yes	*	2	Subsoil, same as [2]
49	13	Layer	TR13	14	Yes	*	1	Natural, same as [3]
50	14	Layer	*	15	Yes	*	4	Topsoil, same as [1]
51	14	Layer	*	15	Yes	*	2	Subsoil, same as [2]
52	14	Layer	TR14	15	Yes	*	1	Natural, same as [3]
53	15	Layer	*	16	Yes	*	4	Topsoil, same as [1]
54	15	Layer	*	16	Yes	*	2	Subsoil, same as [2]
55	15	Layer	TR15	16	Yes	*	1	Natural, same as [3]
56	16	Layer	*	17	Yes	*	4	Topsoil, same as [1]
57	16	Layer	*	17	Yes	*	2	Subsoil, same as [2]
58	16	Layer	TR16	17	Yes	*	1	Natural, same as [3]
59	20	Layer	*	18	Yes	*	4	Topsoil, same as [1]
60	20	Layer	*	18	Yes	*	2	Subsoil, same as [2]
61	20	Layer	TR20	18	Yes	*	1	Natural, same as [3]
62	21	Layer	*	19	Yes	*	4	Topsoil, same as [1]
63	21	Layer	*	19	Yes	*	2	Subsoil, same as [2]
64	21	Layer	TR21	19	Yes	*	1	Natural, same as [3]
65	19	Layer	*	23	Yes	*	4	Topsoil, same as [1]
66	19	Layer	*	23	Yes	*	2	Subsoil, same as [2]
67	19	Layer	TR19	23	Yes	*	1	Natural, same as [3]
68	17	Layer	*	20	Yes	*	4	Topsoil, same as [1]
69	17	Layer	TR17	20	Yes	*	2	Subsoil, same as [2]
70	17	Layer	TR17	20	Yes	*	1	Natural, same as [3]
71	22	Layer	*	21	Yes	*	4	Topsoil, same as [1]
72	22	Layer	*	21	Yes	*	2	Subsoil, same as [2]
73	22	Layer	TR22	21	Yes	*	1	Natural, same as [3]
74	23	Layer	*	22	Yes	*	4	Topsoil, same as [1]
75	23	Layer	*	22	Yes	*	2	Subsoil, same as [2]
76	23	Layer	TR23	22	Yes	*	1	Natural, same as [3]

## APPENDIX 2: SITE MATRIX



## APPENDIX 3 - OASIS Form

**OASIS ID: preconst1-10892**

### Project details

Project name	Land at Hedgemans Road, Dagenham
Short description of the project	<p>An archaeological evaluation took place during October 2005 on former allotments at Hedgemans Road, Dagenham. The evaluation comprised 23 trenches spread over an area of some two hectares. North-south ditches were found in two trenches near the western edge of the site and may in fact have been part of the same feature. Where a full ditch profile was visible the ditch was shown to be asymmetrical with a possible bank to the east. The dating and function of the ditches was unclear, but they may have been associated with Gale Street Farm, formerly located to the west of the site. A tentative late medieval or post-medieval date for the ditches is suggested. Elsewhere on the site the only evidence for activity was associated with the former allotments, dating from the 1930s onwards.</p>
Project dates	Start: 03-10-2005 End: 24-10-2005
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	FAH 05 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Vacant Land 2 - Vacant land not previously developed
Monument type	DITCH Medieval
Monument type	DITCH Post Medieval
Methods & techniques	'Sample Trenches'
Development type	Urban residential (e.g. flats, houses, etc.)
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - Direction 4
Position in the planning process	Not known / Not recorded

### Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON BARKING AND DAGENHAM DAGENHAM Land at Hedgemans Road, Dagenham
Postcode	RM9
Study area	2.00 Hectares
National grid reference	TQ 48035 84544 Point
Height OD	Min: 6.42m Max: 5.96m

### Project creators

Name of Organisation	Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
Project brief originator	CgMs Consultants Ltd
Project design originator	CgMs Consultants Ltd
Project director/manager	Tim Bradley
Project supervisor	Peter Boyer
Sponsor or funding body	Abbey Developments

### Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	LAARC
Physical Contents	'Ceramics','Worked stone/lithics'
Digital Archive recipient	LAARC
Digital Contents	'Ceramics','Stratigraphic','Survey','Worked stone/lithics'
Digital Media available	'Spreadsheets','Survey','Text'

Paper Archive recipient	LAARC
Paper Contents	'Ceramics','Stratigraphic','Survey','Worked stone/lithics'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet','Diary','Drawing','Matrices','Photograph','Plan','Report','Section','Survey','Unpublished Text'

### Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	An Archaeological Evaluation on Former allotments at Hedgemans Road, Dagenham, London Borough of Barking and Dagenham
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Boyer, P.
Date	2005
Issuer or publisher	Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd.
Place of issue or publication	London
Description	Unpublished Evaluation Report

Entered by	Peter Boyer (pboyer@pre-construct.com)
Entered on	26 October 2005

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