

**MILLS MEADOW RESIDENTIAL
HOME, FORE STREET,
FRAMLINGHAM, SUFFOLK, IP13
9DF**

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL
EVALUATION**

**LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY:
SUFFOLK COASTAL DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**PLANNING APPLICATION NUMBER:
C/13/0192/FUL
PCA REPORT NO: 11484**

SITE CODE: FML 076

AUGUST 2013



PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY

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SUFFOLK, IP13 9DF**

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Local Planning Authority: Suffolk Coastal District Council

Central National Grid Reference: TM 2857 6330

Site Code: FML 076

Planning Reference: C/13/0192/FUL

Report No. R.11484

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August 2013**

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August 2013

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PCA Report Number: R11484

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Abstract

This report documents the results of an archaeological evaluation at the Mills Meadow Residential Home, Fore Street, Framlingham. A single trench was machine excavated, revealing four ditches, two of which produced finds. One northeast-southwest aligned ditch contained a small assemblage of burnt flint, suggesting a later prehistoric date. The second ditch contained six sherds of Roman pottery dating to between the mid-1st to 3rd Century AD. This ditch was aligned northwest-southeast, as were the two remaining ditches, suggesting that they might be contemporary with the Roman ditch.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document reports the results of an archaeological evaluation undertaken at Mills Meadow Residential Home, Fore Street, Framlingham, IP13 9DF (Figure 1). This work was carried out between the 8th and 9th of August 2013.
- 1.2 The work was commissioned by AKA Planning on behalf of Castleoak in advance of proposed redevelopment of the existing care facilities. The Mill Meadows site presently comprises a large modern single storey residential care facility. The gardens/grassed areas are located to the east and west of the home which occupies a roughly central position. Fairfield Road forms the western boundary of the site and the rear gardens of a modern housing development, The Knoll, are located along its southern boundary.
- 1.3 The site is centred on OS National Grid Reference TM 2857 6330 and lies immediately south of Fore Street, Framlingham. The development area comprises the present Mills Meadow care home buildings with an area of open gardens.
- 1.4 A written scheme of investigation (WSI) for an archaeological evaluation within the proposed development area was prepared by Mark Hinman of Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. (August 2013) in response to a brief issued by Rachel Monk of Suffolk County Council Archaeological Services (August 2013, Planning Application C/13/0192).
- 1.5 The brief highlighted that the development was within the medieval core of Framlingham (SHER FML052) and was thus in an area of archaeological interest and potential.
- 1.6 The desk-based assessment has established that the site of the Mills Meadow Residential Care Home was open fields until its development as the Mills Grammar School for Girls during the early 20th century. The school gradually grew in size, particularly following World War II, until it closed in 1979 and was replaced by the present buildings during the 1980s (Garwood 2013).
- 1.7 The work reported upon here was designed to contribute to an understanding of the character, condition, date and extent of any archaeological remains within the development area, and to provide a comprehensive appraisal of the significance of any remains within a local, regional and national context as appropriate. This has been achieved through the recording of four ditches, at least one of which is certainly Romano-British in date, whilst two others are likely to be Romano-British, and the fourth is probably later prehistoric. Correspondingly, these results are of only local significance.

2 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 2.1 The underlying bedrock of the site comprises sands of the Crag Group, sedimentary bedrock made up of a suite of marine and estuarine sands, gravels, silts and clays. This is overlain by superficial deposits of the Lowestoft Formation (Diamicton), an extensive sheet of chalky till with outwash sands and gravels, silts and clays, characterised by its chalk and flint content (BGS Online Viewer, 2012).
- 2.2 The site of the present care home buildings are terraced into the natural slope of the river valley which falls away from east to west and to a lesser extent to the southwest down to the River Ore. This slope generally follows the fall of Fore Street but is more pronounced within the site boundary as it drops away considerably down to Fairfield Road from west of the care home. To the east of the care home and in the phase 1 development area only a narrow wedge of land remains unaffected by later terracing. This area along the eastern boundary (measuring approximately 5m wide in the north to 14m in the south) remains at the same height as the land level of the adjacent plots (Telephone Exchange and Cemetery) but is terraced away to its west, down to the level of the care home and adjacent car parking area. The site also falls away to the south from the level of Fore Street and down to the level of the care home buildings. This grading was partly created to facilitate vehicle access from Fore Street. An area of private car-parking (outside the development) is situated along the northern boundary. A modern wildlife pond is located within the south-eastern corner of the site and in an area which had been reduced through terracing.
- 2.3 The topsoil had an average depth of 0.17m across the site, and capped a deposit of subsoil, measuring up to 0.23m deep. This subsoil comprised a very firm orangey red/brown silty clay, with rare chalk flecks. The top of undisturbed geological deposits (referred to here as 'natural') was recorded at a maximum depth of 0.41m.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Suffolk County Council (henceforth SCC) maintains a database of known sites of archaeological or historical significance known as an Historic Environment Record (HER) or Sites and Monuments Record (SMR). Numerous HER records exist for the area surrounding the current site and the most significant are summarised below. The full set of results from the HER search are detailed in the desk-based assessment (Garwood 2013).
- 3.2 Evidence for prehistoric activity is limited to a redeposited Mesolithic arrowhead (FML 025 - MSF19108) and redeposited Neolithic material recovered during an archaeological evaluation in Church Street (FML 039 MSF3330).
- 3.3 Three records associated with the Roman period were present within the study area, two of which comprised re-deposited material occurring within later contexts. This includes pottery sherds found at land off New Road (FML 025 MSF19109) and Roman pottery recovered during an archaeological evaluation in Church Street (FML 039 MSF3330). A Roman Iron stylus was uncovered as a metal detectorist find at Framlingham Castle (FML 001 MSF 16349).
- 3.4 The medieval period was the best represented within the HER records. The town of Framlingham (FML 052 MSF 23904) is a landscape and townscape rich in historic buildings and monuments from the medieval period. The most significant of these is the scheduled 12th-century Framlingham Castle and earthworks (FML 001 MSF 3149). In addition to the castle, the church of St Michael is also listed (FML 009 MSF 1674), along with the historic core of the settlement, focused around the church and Market Hill and the Mere to the northwest of the castle.
- 3.5 Taken together, this previous work suggested that the current site had moderate to high potential to contain medieval archaeological remains.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The archaeological specification for this site had stated that four evaluation trenches were to be excavated. However, due to the modern landscaping of the care home gardens, including extensive terracing and a large pond (Plates 1 & 2), it was only possible to excavated one north to south aligned trench positioned in the east of the site, and measuring 39m in length (Trench 1, Figure 2).
- 4.2 The trenching was carried out under archaeological supervision using a 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a 2m wide toothless ditching bucket. Topsoil and subsoil deposits were removed in spits down to the level of the undisturbed natural geological deposits where potential archaeological features could be observed and recorded. Stripped topsoil and subsoil were stored separately for later reinstatement.
- 4.3 Heights above ordnance datum (m OD), and the locations of archaeological features and interventions were recorded using a Leica 1200 Global Positioning System (GPS) rover unit fitted with RTK differential correction, giving positional accuracy of less than 2cm.
- 4.4 Deposits or the removal of deposits judged by the excavating archaeologist to constitute individual events were each assigned a unique context number and recorded on individual pre-printed forms. Archaeological events recognised by the deposition of material are signified in this report by round brackets (thus), whilst events constituting the removal of deposits are referred to here as 'cuts' and signified by square brackets [thus]. The record numbers assigned to cuts and deposits are entirely arbitrary and in no way reflect the chronological order in which events took place. Artefacts recovered during excavation were assigned to the record number of the deposit from which they were retrieved.
- 4.5 Metal detecting was carried out during the stripping operation and archaeological features and spoil were scanned.
- 4.6 High resolution digital photographs were taken throughout the fieldwork (see Plates 1-6), and were used to keep a record of the evaluation.

5 RESULTS

- 5.1 Four ditches were identified within the evaluation trench (Figure 2). 1m wide slots were excavated across each of the four ditches.
- 5.2 Ditch [101] was a northwest-southeast aligned linear, measuring 0.16m deep and 0.67m wide, with shallow sides and a flat base. It contained a single fill (105): an orange-brown silty clay with rare to occasional flint and chalk inclusions. No finds were recovered from this feature and therefore the date of this ditch is uncertain, although it is on the same alignment as Ditch [103], which suggests that it is possibly contemporary.
- 5.3 Ditch [102] was northwest-southeast aligned, measuring 0.48m deep and 1.08m wide with moderately steep sides and a flat base, comprising two fills (Figure 3). Primary fill (112) was a dark red-brown silty clay with rare to occasional small flint inclusions. The western edge of Ditch [102] truncated an earlier feature, Ditch [103]. A small assemblage of Roman pottery totalling four sherds, weighing 14g was recovered, comprising three sandy greyware body sherds and a rim sherd from a beaded rim jar, dating to between the mid-1st to 3rd century AD. Upper fill (111) comprised a red-brown silty clay with occasional to moderated chalk inclusions. A further two sherds (28g) of Roman pottery were recovered from this fill, comprising one sandy greyware jar base with sooting on the exterior and one sandy greyware body sherd. The pottery dates to the mid-1st to 3rd century AD. A single fragment of animal bone was also collected from this fill.
- 5.4 Northeast-southwest aligned ditch [103] measured 1.04m wide and 0.28m deep, with moderately steep sides and a flat base and comprised three fills (Figure 3). Primary, lower fill (108) comprised a firm orange-brown clay, with occasional flint and chalk inclusions. No finds were recovered from this fill. Overlying (108) was fill (107), a dark grey-brown moderately silty clay with occasional to moderate small flint inclusions. A small assemblage of burnt flint was recovered from this fill. Upper fill (106) comprised a firm orangey/red-brown silty clay with occasional to moderate small flint inclusions. The burnt flint recovered from fill (107) suggests that this ditch was later prehistoric in date, a view which is supported by the stratigraphic evidence, as Ditch [103] was truncated by the Romano-British Ditch [102] on its north-eastern edge.
- 5.5 Ditch [104] comprised a northwest-southeast aligned ditch, measuring 0.66m wide and 0.16m deep. It contained a single fill (109), a firm red/orangey-brown silty clay with rare chalk fleck. No finds were recovered from this feature, but the alignment of this ditch is the same as Ditch [102], and it is therefore interpreted here as being probably Roman in date.

6 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 The archaeological evaluation identified four ditches within Trench 1, the earliest of which is Ditch [103], which is dated as later prehistoric. This dating is based on the small assemblage of burnt flint recovered from the middle fill of the ditch (107), as well as its stratigraphic relationship with Roman ditch [102], which cuts Ditch [103] on the north-eastern edge.
- 6.2 Ditch [102] has been dated as Romano-British and contained six sherds of Roman pottery (42g) from two of its three fills. The pottery was fairly small and abraded, thus could only be broadly dated to between the mid-1st to 3rd century AD. However, it does provide the best dating evidence from the site. That Ditch [102] cuts Ditch [103] is of note and supports the view that the latter is prehistoric in date.
- 6.3 Although the remaining two ditches [101] and [104] did not contain any finds, it is tentatively suggested that these may also be Roman in date, given that they are on the same alignment as [102] and contained similar fills.
- 6.4 Overall the evaluation has provided limited, yet important evidence for later prehistoric and Roman activity in Framlingham. These periods have had limited representation within the archaeological record for the town to date, comprising primarily isolated findspots. The identification of cut features and associated finds of later prehistoric and Roman date is therefore of importance.
- 6.5 However, since so little of the features was revealed by the evaluation, it is unclear what the exact function of these ditches was, and while boundary/enclosures are the most likely, this is not definite. Given the limited nature of this data, the results reported here are of only local significance.
- 6.6 The modern landscaping of the remainder of the Mills Meadow Residential Home gardens is likely to have had an impact on these ditches in other parts of the site. It is therefore questionable how much, if any, of these features remain, and to what extent they would be able to further contribute to the understanding/interpretation of the site in the later prehistoric and Roman periods.
- 6.7 While it was anticipated that medieval remains were most likely to be encountered given the site's location, no evidence of activity relating to this period was identified.

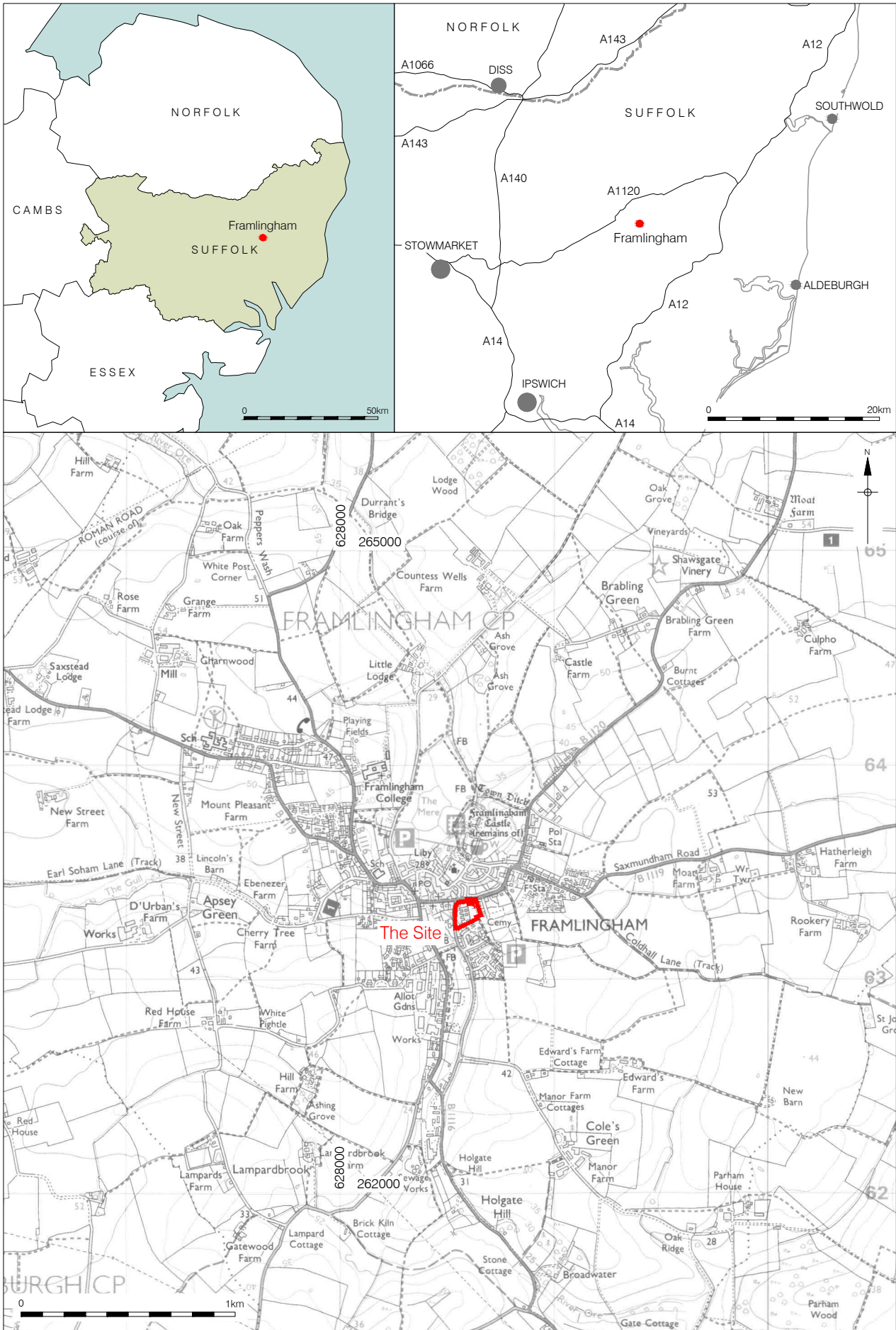
7 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

PCA would like to thank AKA Planning for commissioning to work. Adam Garwood supervised and excavated the site with the assistance of Karl Hanson, who also surveyed the site. Thanks to Josephine Brown of the PCA CAD Department for preparing the figures.

8

REFERENCES

Garwood, A. 2013. Mills Meadow Residential Care Home, Fore Street, Framlingham Suffolk, IP13 9DF: An Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment. Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. Unpublished report.

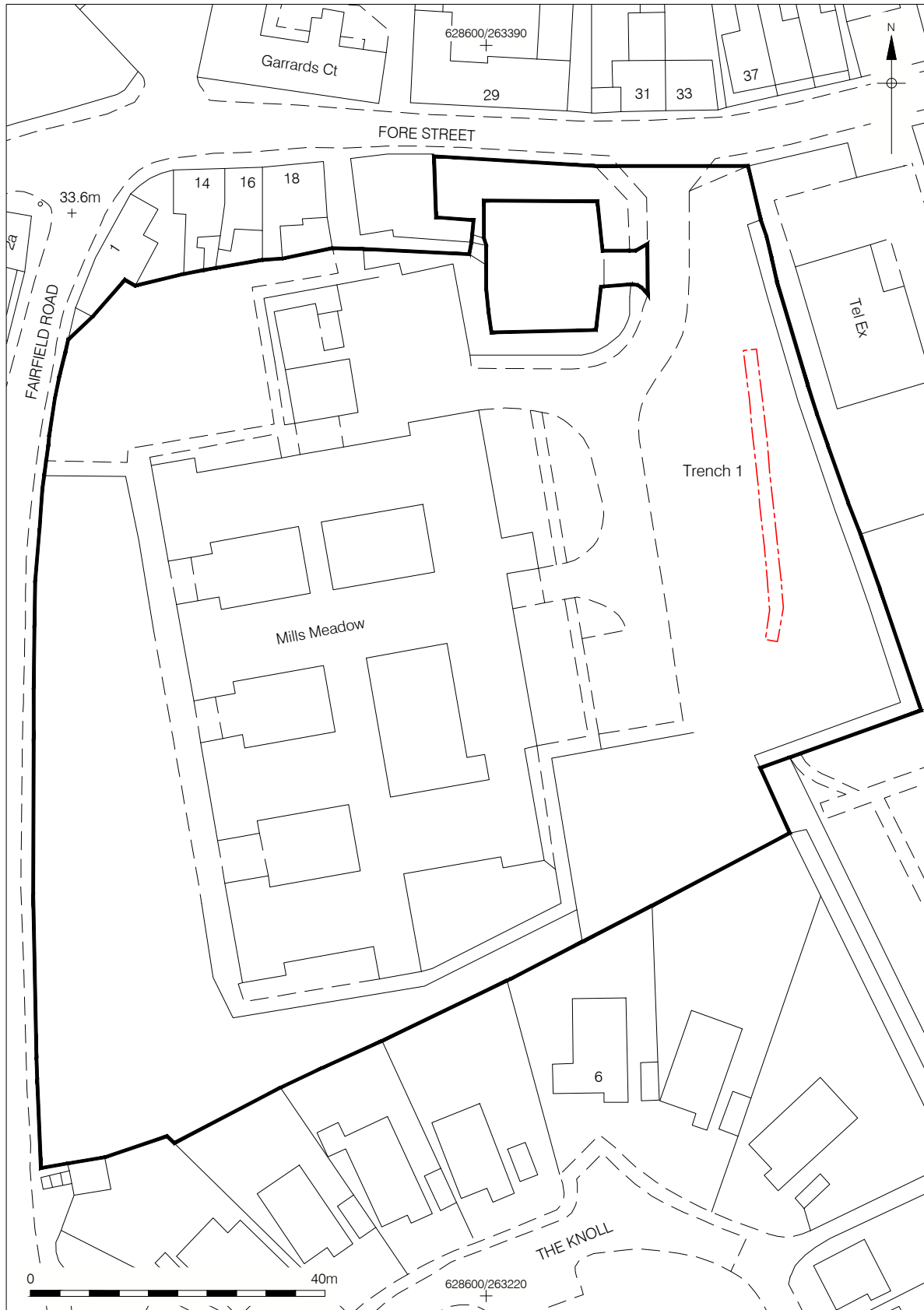


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Figure 1
 Site Location
 1:2,000,000; 625,000 & 25,000 at A4

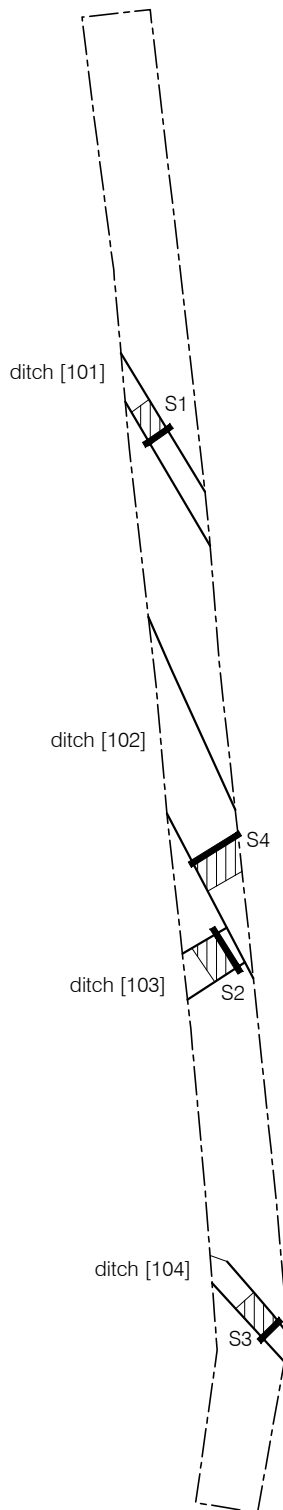


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Figure 2
 Trench Location
 1:800 at A4



628625/263345
+



628625/263310
+

 Excavated Slot

0  10m

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Figure 3
Plan of Trench 1
1:200 at A4

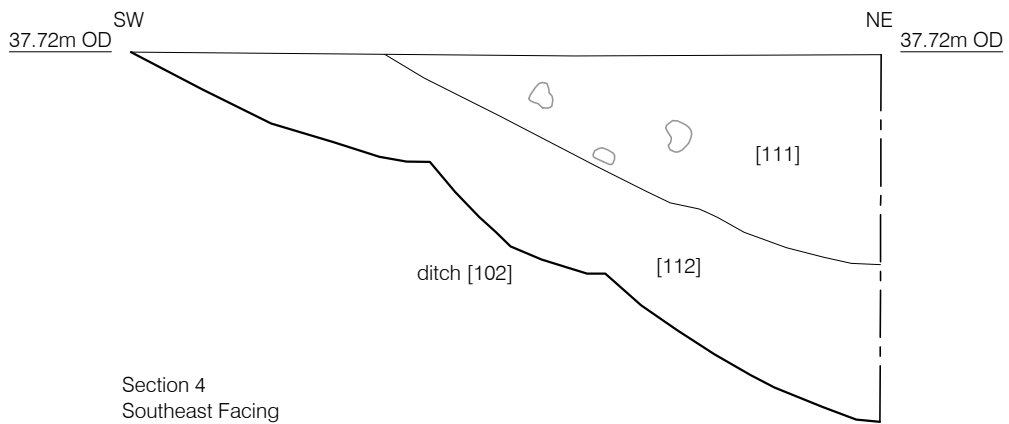
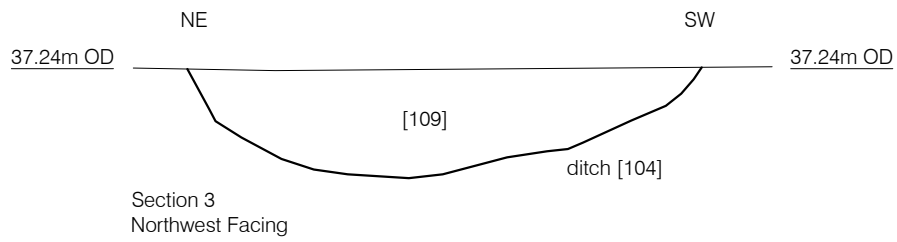
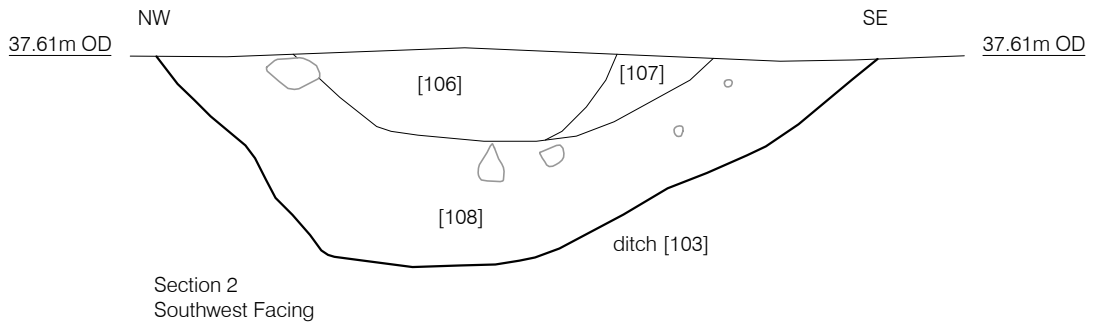
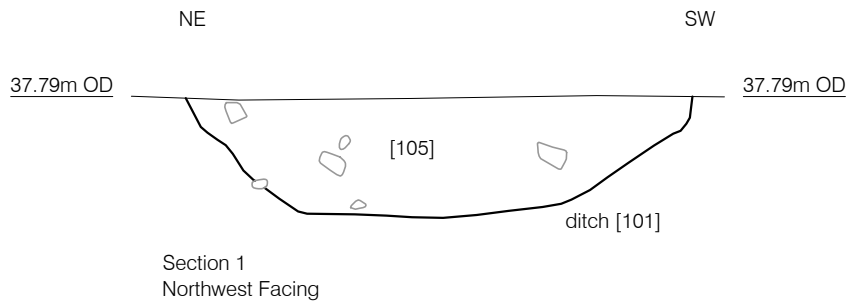


Figure 4
Sections
1:10 at A4

APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT INDEX

Context No.	Cut	Type	Description	Finds?
101	101	Cut of Ditch	NW-SE aligned, with shallow sides and a flat base. 0.67m wide by 0.16m deep.	n/a
102	102	Cut of Ditch	NW-SE aligned ditch, 1.08m wide and 0.48m deep. Moderately steep sides with a flat base.	n/a
103	103	Cut of Ditch	NE-SW aligned. 1.04m wide by 0.28m deep. Steep sides with a flat base	n/a
104	104	Cut of Ditch	NW-SE aligned. 0.66m wide by 0.16m deep. Shallow sides with a flat base	n/a
105	101	Single fill of Ditch	Firm orange-brown silty clay with moderate flint and chalk inclusions	x
106	103	Upper fill of Ditch	Very compacted orange red-brown silty clay with rare to occasional small flint inclusions	x
107	103	Mid fill of Ditch	Compacted dark grey-brown silty clay with moderate small flint inclusions. Small assemblage of burnt flint	7 burnt flints (127g)
108	103	Lower fill of Ditch	Firm orange-brown clay with occasional flint and chalk inclusions	x
109	104	Single fill of Ditch	Firm red/orange-brown silty clay with rare chalk inclusions.	x
110	n/a	Subsoil	Orange reddy-brown very firm silty clay measuring between 0.21-0.22m in depth.	x
111	102	Upper fill of Ditch	Red-brown firm silty clay with moderate to common chalk lumps. Two sherds of pottery recovered	2 sherds of RB pot (28g), 1x Animal bone
112	102	Lower fill of Ditch	Dark red brown firm silty clay, occasional small flint inclusions. 4 sherds of pottery	4 x RB pot (14g)

APPENDIX 2: PLATES

Plate 1: Site prior to stripping, showing the extent of the landscaping/terracing



Plate 2: Showing the existing pond in the southeast of the site



Plate 3:: Trench 1, facing north



Plate 4: Section through Ditch [104], southeast facing



Plate 5: Section through Ditch [101], southeast facing



Plate 6: Section through Ditch [103], east facing



Plate 7: Section through Ditch [102]. North-west facing



APPENDIX 3: OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-157379

Project details

Project name	Mills Meadow Residential Home, Fore Street, Framlingham, an Archaeological Evaluation
Short description of the project	A single trench was machine excavated, revealing four ditches, two of which produced finds. One northeast-southwest aligned ditch contained a small assemblage of burnt flint, suggesting a later prehistoric date. The second ditch contained six sherds of Roman pottery dating mid-1st-3rd Century AD. This ditch was aligned northwest-southeast, as were the two remaining ditches, thus suggesting that they might be contemporary with the Roman ditch.
Project dates	Start: 08-08-2013 End: 09-08-2013
Previous/future work	Not known / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	FML076 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Residential 2 - Institutional and communal accommodation
Monument type	DITCH Late Prehistoric
Monument type	DITCH Roman
Monument type	DITCH Uncertain
Significant Finds	POT Roman
Significant Finds	BURNT FLINT Late Prehistoric
Methods & techniques	"Metal Detectors","Targeted Trenches"
Development type	Small-scale extensions (e.g. garages, porches, etc.)
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country	England
Site location	SUFFOLK SUFFOLK COASTAL FRAMLINGHAM Mills Meadows Residential Home
Postcode	IP13 9DF
Study area	1.00 Hectares

Site coordinates TM 2857 6330 52 1 52 13 11 N 001 20 48 E Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd

Project brief originator Rachel Monk

Project design originator Mark Hinman

Project director/manager Mark Hinman

Project supervisor Adam Garwood

Type of sponsor/funding body Developer

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient Suffolk County Council

Physical Contents "Ceramics","other"

Digital Archive recipient Suffolk County Council

Digital Contents "none"

Digital Media available "Text"

Paper Archive recipient Suffolk County Council

Paper Contents "none"

Paper Media available "Context sheet","Drawing","Photograph","Plan","Report"

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