

**COLEMAN'S LAND, BELLS LANE,  
HOO ST WERBURGH,  
KENT ME3 9JA**

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING  
BRIEF**

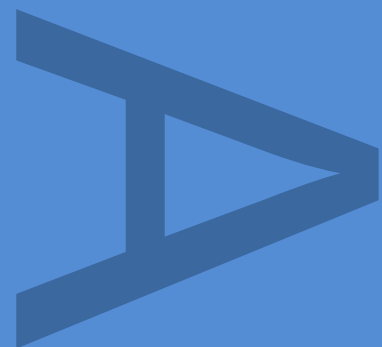
**LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY:  
MEDWAY COUNCIL**

**APPLICATION REF: MC/13/0751**

**PCA REPORT NO: 11666**

**SITE CODE: KCBH14**

**MARCH 2014**



**PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY**



DOCUMENT VERIFICATION

COLEMAN'S LAND, BELLS LANE,  
HOO ST WERBURGH, KENT ME3 9JA

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

Quality Control

Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd	
Project Number	K3414
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**Coleman's Land, Bells Lane, Hoo St Werburgh, Kent ME3 9JA**

**An Archaeological Watching Brief**

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**Site Code:** KCBH14

**Local Planning Authority:** Medway Council

**Application Ref:** MC/13/0751

**Central National Grid Reference:** TQ 7802 7306 (578029,173068)

**Written and Researched by:** Guy Seddon

Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited, March 2014

**Project Manager:** Chris Mayo

**Commissioning Client:** CgMs Consulting  
on behalf of  
Bellway Homes (Thames Gateway)

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**March 2014**

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PCA Report No: R11666

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## **1 ABSTRACT**

- 1.1 This report details the results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken on Coleman's Land, Bells Lane, Hoo St Werburgh, Kent by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. The monitoring took place between 17th February and 13th March 2014.
- 1.2 The watching brief consisted of archaeological monitoring during ground reduction and the excavation of service trenches and roads across the study site.
- 1.3 No features or finds of archaeological significance were discovered. No further archaeological work is considered necessary for this project, and this report forms the archival report necessary to satisfy the condition.

## **2 INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 An archaeological watching brief was completed by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd on Coleman's Land at Bells Lane, Hoo St. Werburgh, Kent ME3 9JA (Figure 1). The fieldwork was undertaken between the 17th February and 13th March 2014, and monitored site preparation works and other groundworks including soil-stripping for haul roads and drainage excavations. The work was completed prior to the development of the site for residential use, and was necessitated by a planning condition attached to the sites planning permission (reference MC/13/0751).
- 2.2 The archaeological investigation was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd, under the supervision of Neil Hawkins and Guy Seddon and the project management of Chris Mayo. The work was monitored by Ben Found of Kent County Council and was commissioned by Richard Meager of CgMs Consulting on behalf of the client, Bellway Homes (Thames Gateway).
- 2.3 The site occupies a piece of land centred at TQ 7802 7306 (578029,173068). It was bordered to the southwest by Bells Lane, to the southeast by new properties fronting Belfry Drive, to the northeast by agricultural land and to the northwest by new properties fronting Pepperidge Way. It comprised open land with a detached dwelling with ancillary buildings in the northwestern corner; the remainder of the site comprised pastoral land.
- 2.4 No features or finds of archaeological significance were discovered. No further archaeological work is considered necessary for this project, and this report forms the archival report necessary to satisfy the condition.
- 2.5 The fieldwork was undertaken following an approved Specification for the archaeological work, prepared by CgMs (Meager 2013b). Prior to this a Desk-Based Assessment had been prepared to research the site's heritage potential (Meager 2013a).
- 2.6 The site was allocated the site code **KCBH14**. Once completed the entire project archive will be donated to the local museum.

### 3 PLANNING BACKGROUND

3.1 Planning permission has been granted by Medway Council for the development (Application Ref MC/13/0751).

3.2 The scheme will see the: "Redevelopment of the site to provide 119 dwellings, comprising 88 houses and 31 flats in buildings extending between two and three storeys in height, including affordable housing, together with hard and soft landscaping, open space, parking provision and associated infrastructure works." The consent includes an archaeological condition (number 14) requiring an archaeological watching brief.

14) No development shall take place until the developer has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written specification and timetable which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved specification.

**Reason:** To safeguard the archaeological interest in the site in accordance with Policy BNE21 of the Medway Local Plan 20033.3

3.3 The site does not lie within an Area of Archaeological Potential as defined by the LPA. There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments or listed buildings within the site.

## **4 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY**

*The following is summarized from the Desk-Based Assessment prepared for the site (Meager 2013a).*

### **4.1 Geology**

4.1.1 The British Geological Survey of England and Wales (Sheet 272) states that the underlying geology of the site comprises Head deposits, described as 'undifferentiated, pebbly sandy clay, some gravel'. Archaeological fieldwork immediately to the north and to the south of the study site revealed c.0.2-0.4m of topsoil and plough soil above the natural clay (Meager 2013b).

4.1.2 This current investigation concurred with the previous archaeological fieldwork in the area, revealing c.0.2-0.4m of topsoil and plough soil above the natural clay.

### **4.2 Topography**

4.2.1 The study site encompassed an area of c. 3.2 hectares of open farmland situated to the north-east of Bells Lane, Hoo St Werburgh, Kent and was situated near the top of a hill, sloping downwards from a height of 51.27m OD in the western corner to 46.95m OD in the north-east and 48.57m OD in the south-east (Meager 2013a).

4.2.2 No watercourses or naturally occurring bodies of water are known within the vicinity of the study site. A pond was formerly present on the western boundary and is shown on Ordnance Surveys up until the 2012 edition (Meager 2013a).



## **5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

*The following is summarized from the Desk-Based Assessment prepared for the site (Meager 2013a).*

### **5.1 Prehistoric: Palaeolithic and Mesolithic**

5.1.1 No finds of Palaeolithic or Mesolithic date have been identified within a one kilometre radius of the study site.

### **5.2 Neolithic, Bronze Age and Iron Age**

5.2.1 A series of ditches, interpreted as a field system, was identified on land immediately north of the study site. Four ditches were found, together with two postholes, and pottery dating from the late Bronze Age to the Iron Age. The site had been heavily truncated due to ploughing (HER TQ77SE190, TQ77885 73126; Seddon 2010).

5.2.2 Archaeological work immediately south revealed no evidence of archaeology (Wessex Archaeology 2006).

### **5.3 Roman**

5.3.1 Cropmarks interpreted as either a possible Roman site or modern field drains have been identified to the northeast of the site (HER TQ77SE30, TQ7860 7336).

5.3.2 Metal detector surveys along the line of the A228, west of the study site, revealed a limited amount of Roman material including a lead alloy lion head from a decorative object, a copper alloy fragment and a possible coin (HER TQ77SE166, TQ7728 7288).

5.3.3 Three residual sherds of greyware pottery were identified within colluvial deposits immediately south of the study site (HER TQ77SE189, TQ7817 7295; Wessex Archaeology 2006).

### **5.4 Anglo Saxon/Early Medieval/Medieval**

5.4.1 No finds of clearly diagnostic Anglo-Saxon date have been identified within a one kilometre radius of the study site. The historic core of Hoo St Werburgh, concentrated around the church to the south of the site, probably developed from the manor of Hoo in existence before Domesday (Meager 2013a).

5.4.2 Archaeological works along the line of the A228 to the north of the site revealed Medieval finds and features including probable ridge and furrow, together with quantities of residual pottery (HER TQ77SE167, TQ7728 7288).

5.4.3 A medieval lead seal was found at Walters Road Hoo, southwest of the study site (HER TQ77SE33, TQ7808 7267), and a single residual piece of pottery was found on land immediately north of the study site (HER TQ77SE191, TQ77863 73147; Seddon 2010).

5.4.4 Taken together the above finds are not indicative of extensive activity within the study area during the Anglo-Saxon and medieval periods. It is likely that the site remained in open land throughout these periods, and as such a generally low archaeological potential is identified.

While evidence of agricultural activity and land division could conceivably be present, it is important to note that similar remains clearly of Anglo- Saxon/medieval were not identified during the archaeological works immediately north and south of the site.

## **5.5 Post Medieval and Modern**

- 5.5.1 The Andrews, Dury and Herbert Map of Kent (1769) shows the site in open land northeast of the village of Hoo (Meager 2013a).
- 5.5.2 The First Edition Ordnance Survey (1863) shows the site remaining in open land, with a pond on the western boundary. No change is shown on the Second Edition Ordnance Survey (1895).
- 5.5.3 The Third Edition Ordnance Survey (1907) shows the eastern part of the site planted out as orchard. The Revised Ordnance Survey (1930) shows the presence of a building in the north-western corner of the site (Meager 2013a).
- 5.5.4 The 1961-1963 Ordnance Survey shows the presence of Rayes Lodge in the north-western corner of the site, comprising a single house with an ancillary building to the rear. Aerial photos dated to 1967 and 1972 show the field to the west of the study area and the orchard to the east.
- 5.5.5 The 2012 Ordnance Survey shows the expansion of the Rayes Lodge building, and the absence of the orchard to the east (Meager 2013a).

## **6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY**

- 6.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd supervised the excavation, by 360° tracked excavator, of groundworks including the stripping of subsoils, ground reduction above the natural deposits, roadway excavations and the excavation of service trenches. The machine was fitted with flat bladed ditching buckets, and removed the earth in spits of no more than 100mm per pass.
- 6.2 After the removal of each distinguishable soil layer the areas of excavation were examined for archaeological artefacts, features, structures and deposits. The spoil heaps were also examined for artefacts.
- 6.3 The faces of the trenches that required examination and recording were cleaned using appropriate hand tools. All investigation of archaeological levels was by hand.
- 6.4 All recording systems employed were fully compatible with those used elsewhere in Kent; that is those developed out of the Department of Urban Archaeology Site Manual, and presented in PCAs Operations Manual 1 (Taylor 2009). Individual descriptions of archaeological strata and features excavated and/or exposed were entered onto pro-forma recording sheets. All plans and sections of archaeological deposits were recorded on polyester based drawing film, the plans being drawn at a scale of 1:50, 1:100, and 1:200, and the sections at 1:20 and 1:10, as appropriate. The recording system used was a combination of single or multi-context plans complemented by sections, where appropriate.
- 6.5 A photographic record of the investigations was prepared in line with the Written Scheme of Investigation (Meager 2013b).
- 6.6 The completed archive, including all written, drawn and photographic records, will be deposited with the local museum identified with site code KCBH14.

## **7 ARCHAEOLOGICAL PHASE DISCUSSION**

### **7.1 Phase 1: Natural Deposits**

7.1.1 The earliest deposits encountered on site were the natural Weald deposits of silty clay, [2]. This followed the natural topography of the site, falling away towards the northeast and southeast. It was recorded at heights ranging from a maximum height of 51.02m OD in the western corner of the site falling to 49.81m OD further to the northeast and 48.41m OD in the southeast.

### **7.2 Phase 2: Post-Medieval Deposits**

7.2.1 Overlying the clay was a layer of firmly compacted mid brown silty clay, [1], c. 0.26m which has been interpreted as a probable plough-soil, the formation of which could well date back to the post-medieval period when the study area was farmed.

7.2.2 Sealing the plough-soil was a layer of topsoil, c. 0.20m thick.

*Plate 1: Western Corner of site, road strip. Looking northeast.*



*Plate 2: Section 10 (see Figure 2)*



*Plate 3: Southern road strip. Looking southeast*



*Plate 4: Section 11*



Plate 5: Pipe trenching in area of section 8 (see Figure 2)



Plate 6: Pipe trenching in area of section 10 (see Figure 2)



## **8 INTERPRETATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS**

- 8.1 No archaeological features were identified during the watching brief.
- 8.2 The earliest deposit observed during the evaluation were the natural clay deposits [2], overlain by plough-soil layer [1] which was in turn sealed by topsoil.
- 8.3 All sediments were thoroughly examined on site and none were considered suitable or necessary for sampling or further investigation.
- 8.4 Although this study found no archaeological remains or significant deposits, pre-development investigations in 2010 by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd in the adjacent field to the north discovered the remnants of a Late Bronze Age-Middle Iron Age field system. In 2006, however, investigations by Wessex Archaeology in the field immediately to the south of the study site found no archaeology.
- 8.5 It is the case that no archaeological presence or survival has been observed within this site, leading to the conclusion that archaeology such as was found to the north either did not extend into Coleman's Land, or was so shallow and ephemeral that agricultural activity in the post-period has completely truncated it. That said, no artefactual material was found during the investigation, implying that the site is archaeologically sterile.
- 8.6 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd considers that the work has been undertaken in accordance with all relative Specifications and industry standards, and is fully confident in the results contained within this document.
- 8.7 Upon approval of this report by KCC, the completed archive, including all written, drawn and photographic records, will be deposited with the local museum identified with site code KCBH14.



## **9 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

- 9.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology would like to thank Richard Meager of CgMs Consulting for commissioning the work on behalf of Bellway Homes (Thames Gateway). Thanks also to Ben Found for monitoring the project on behalf of Kent County Council.
- 9.2 The author would like to thank Chris Mayo for his project management and editing of this report, and all the staff on site from HGH Groundworks for their helpfulness and assistance during the course of the project. The first phase of watching brief was undertaken by Neil Hawkins of PCA; the illustrations herein were prepared by Jennifer Simonson.

## **10 BIBLIOGRAPHY**

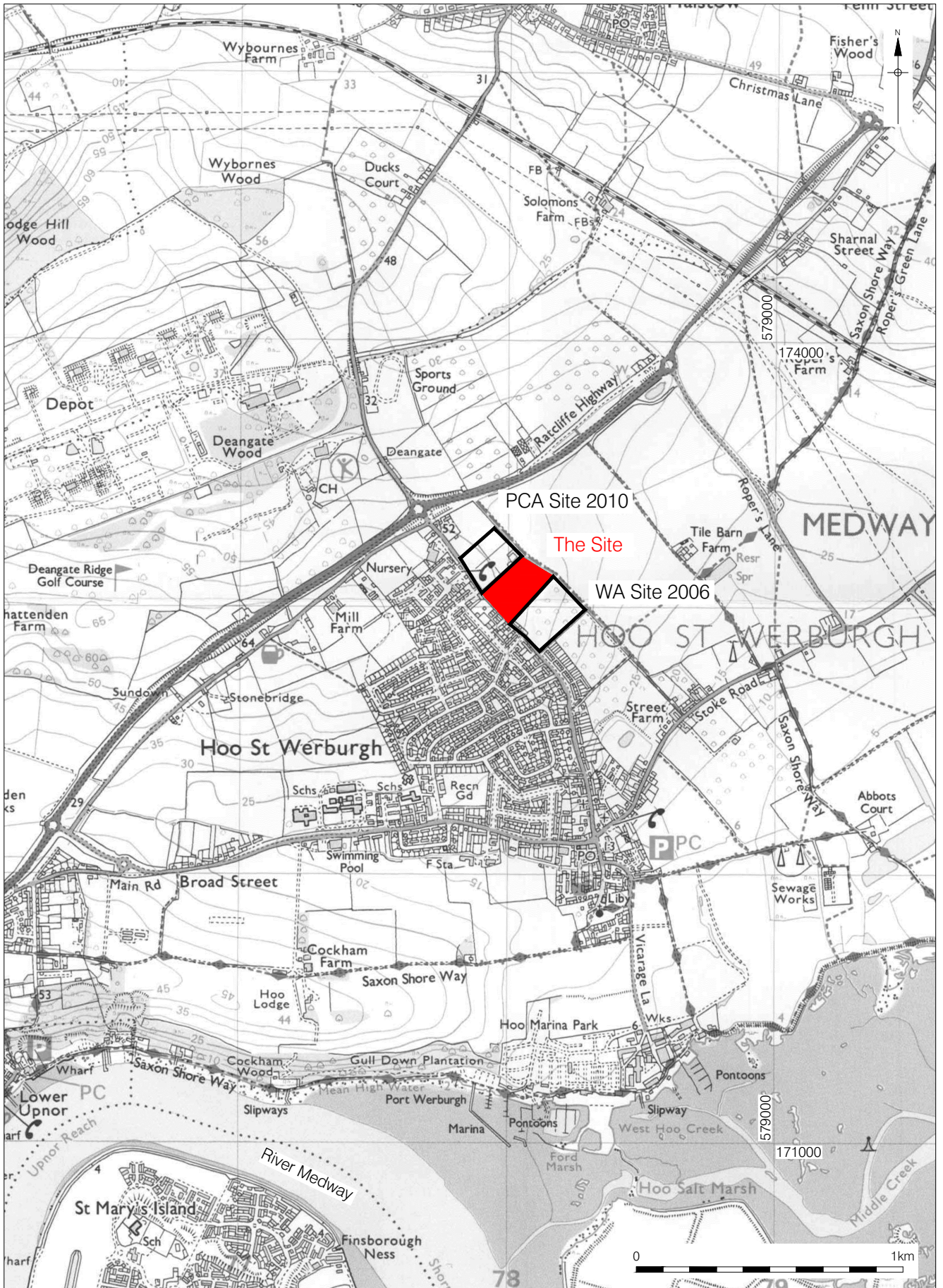
Meager, R 2013a 'Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment, Coleman's Land, Bells Lane, Hoo St Werburgh, Kent', unpublished report for CgMs Consulting Ref RM/15018

Meager, R 2013b 'Specification for an Archaeological Monitoring Exercise, Coleman's Land, Bell Lane, Hoo St Werburgh, Kent', unpublished report for CgMs Consulting Ref RM/15018

Seddon, G 2010 'Land at Bells Lane, Hoo St Werburgh, Kent ME3 9LZ, An Archaeological Investigation', unpublished report for PCA

Taylor, J with Brown, G 2009, Fieldwork Induction Manual: Operations Manual 1, Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd.

Wessex Archaeology, 2006 'Bells Lane Hoo St Werburgh Kent (Phase 1) Pro-active Archaeological Monitoring Report', unpublished document



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21/03/14 JS

Figure 1  
Site Location  
1:20,000 at A4

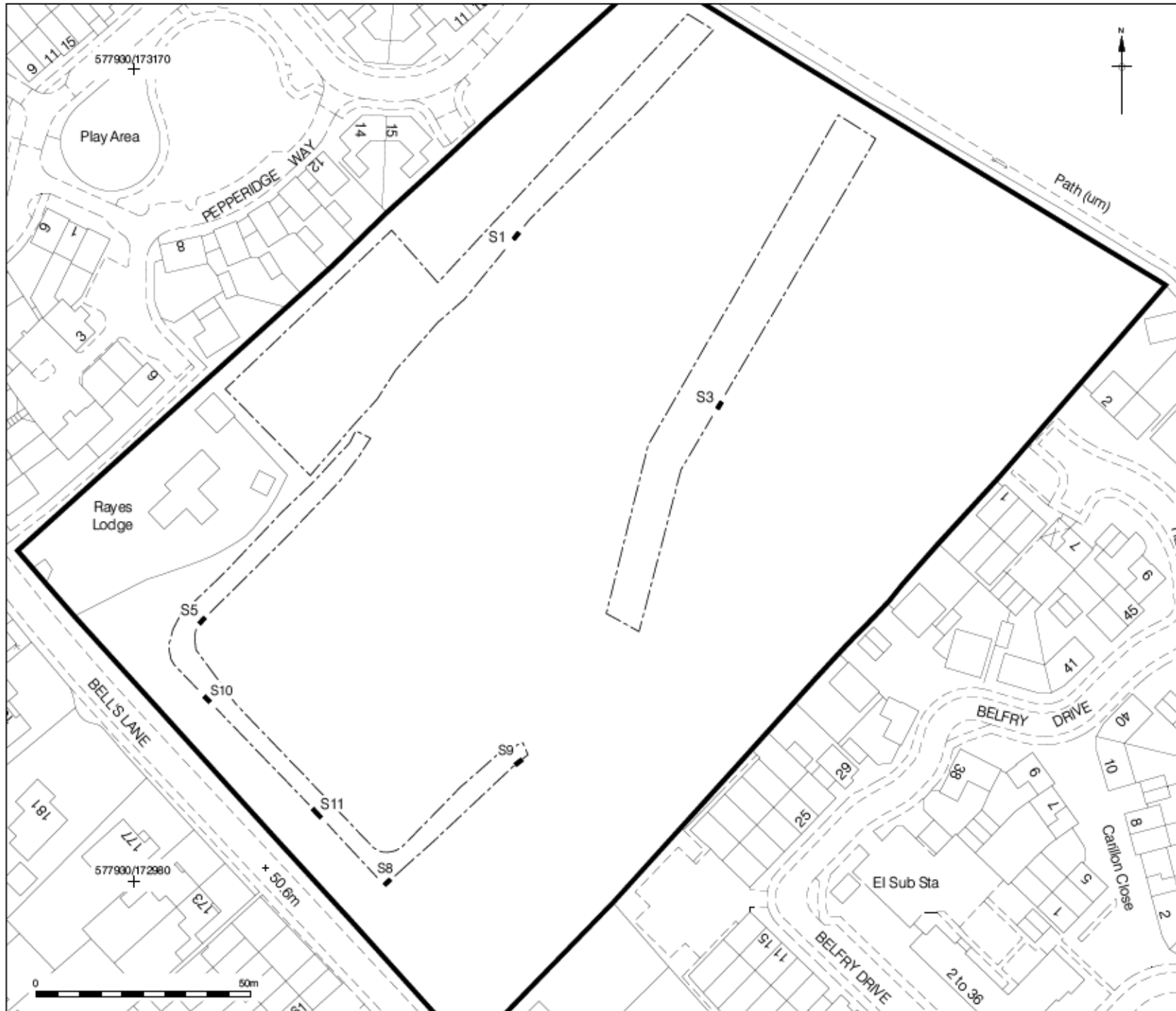
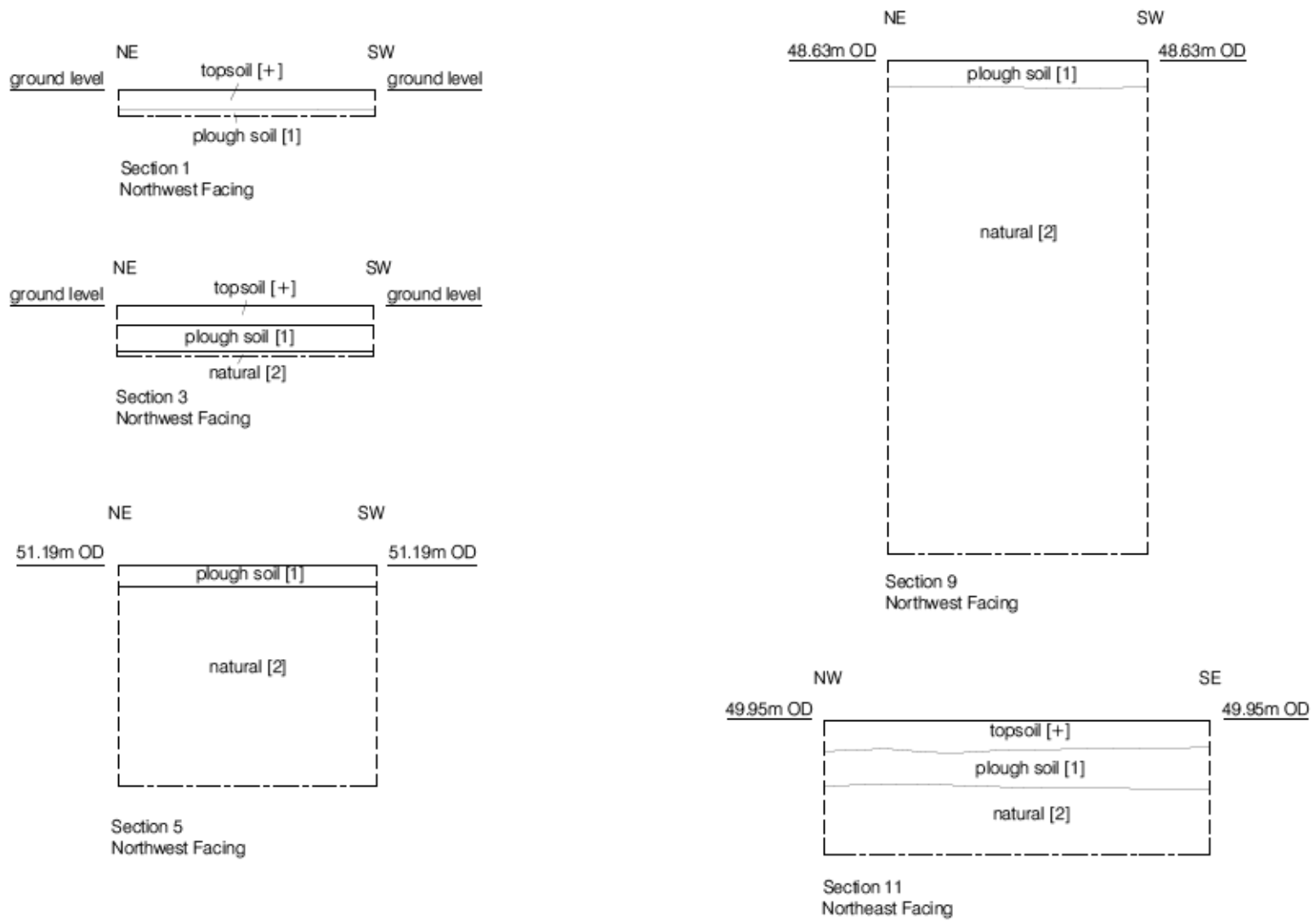


Figure 2  
Areas Monitored  
1:1,250 at A4



0 2m

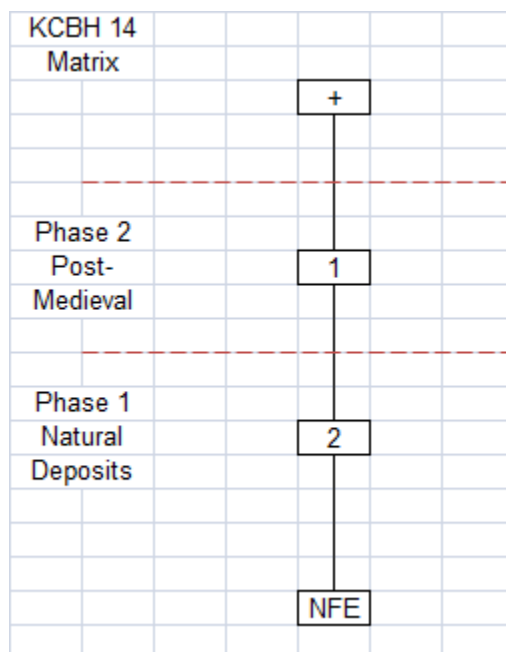
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Figure 3  
Sections  
1:50 at A4

## APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT INDEX

Site Code	Context No.	Trench	Plan	Section / Elevation	Type	Description	Date	Phase
KCBH 14	1	WB	*	1-11	Layer	Subsoil/Ploughsoil	Post Med	2
KCBH 14	2	WB	*	2, 3, 5-11	Layer	Natural Clay	Natural	1

## APPENDIX 2: STRATIGRAPHIC MATRIX



## APPENDIX 3: OASIS FORM

**OASIS ID: preconst1-174950**

### Project details

Project name	Coleman's Land, Bells Lane, Hoo St Werburgh, Kent ME3 9JA: An Archaeological Watching Brief
Short description of the project	An archaeological watching brief was undertaken on Coleman's Land, Bells Lane, Hoo St Werburgh, Kent by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd, between 17th February and 13th March 2014. The watching brief consisted of archaeological monitoring during ground reduction and the excavation of service trenches and roads across the study site. No features or finds of archaeological significance were discovered.
Project dates	Start: 17-02-2014 End: 13-03-2014
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	KCBH 14 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	MC/13/0751 - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Cultivated Land 3 - Operations to a depth more than 0.25m
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Planning condition

### Project location

Country	England
Site location	KENT MEDWAY HOO ST WERBURGH Coleman's Land, Bells Lane, Hoo St Werburgh, Kent
Postcode	ME3 9JA
Study area	3.20 Hectares
Site coordinates	TQ 7802 7306 51.4279987292 0.561065240986 51 25 40 N 000 33 39 E Point
Lat/Long Datum	Unknown
Height OD / Depth	Min: 48.41m Max: 51.02m

### Project creators

Name of Organisation	Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited
Project brief originator	CgMs Consulting
Project design originator	Richard Meager
Project director/manager	Chris Mayo
Project supervisor	Guy Seddon
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Bellway Homes (Thames Gateway)

### Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Local museum
Digital Archive ID	KCBH14
Digital Contents	"Stratigraphic"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography", "Images vector", "Spreadsheets", "Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Local Museum

Paper Archive ID	KCBH14
Paper Contents	"Stratigraphic"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Miscellaneous Material", "Plan", "Section", "Unpublished Text"

#### **Project bibliography 1**

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Coleman's Land, Bells Lane, Hoo St Werburgh, Kent ME3 9JA: An Archaeological Watching Brief
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