

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL
EVALUATION AT SITE A,
YEATS CLOSE, ROYSTON,
HERTFORDSHIRE, SG8 5SZ**



SITE CODE: HROA14



REPORT NO: R11872

OCTOBER 2014



**PRE-CONSTRUCT
ARCHAEOLOGY**

**An Archaeological Evaluation at Site A, Yeats Close, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8
5SZ**

Site Code: HROA 14

Central National Grid Reference: TQ 3570 4230

Written and Researched by Joe Brooks

Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited, October 2014

Project Manager: Helen Hawkins

Commissioning Client: CgMs Consulting on behalf of Fairview New Homes Ltd

Contractor:

**Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited
Unit 54, Brockley Cross Business Centre
96 Endwell Road
Brockley
London
SE4 2PD**

Tel: 020 7732 3925

Fax: 020 7732 7896

E-mail: hhawkins@pre-construct.com

Website: www.pre-construct.com

© Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd

October 2014

© The material contained herein is and remains the sole property of Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited and is not for publication to third parties without prior consent. Whilst every effort has been made to provide detailed and accurate information, Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited cannot be held responsible for errors or inaccuracies herein contained.

DOCUMENT VERIFICATION


Site Name

Site A, Yeats Close, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 5SZ

Type of project

Archaeological Evaluation

Quality Control

Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited Project Code			K3328
	Name & Title	Signature	Date
Text Prepared by:	J Brooks		2.10.14
Graphics Prepared by:	J Simonson		2.10.14
Graphics Checked by:	J Brown	<i>Josephine Brown</i>	3.10.14
Project Manager Sign-off:	H Hawkins		3.10.14

Revision No.	Date	Checked	Approved
1 (HCC Comments)	10.11.2014	HH	HH

Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
Unit 54
Brockley Cross Business Centre
96 Endwell Road
London
SE4 2PD

CONTENTS

1	ABSTRACT.....	4
2	INTRODUCTION.....	5
3	PLANNING BACKGROUND.....	8
4	GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY.....	11
5	ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND.....	12
6	METHODOLOGY.....	14
7	ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE.....	14
8	PLATES.....	21
9	DISCUSSION & CONCLUSIONS.....	28
10	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	29
11	BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	30

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT INDEX.....	31
APPENDIX 2: TRENCH MATRIX.....	32
APPENDIX 3: OASIS ARCHAEOLOGICAL REPORT FORM.....	33
APPENDIX 4: HERTFORDSHIRE HER SUMMARY FORM.....	36

ILLUSTRATIONS

FIGURE 1: SITE LOCATION.....	6
FIGURE 2: TRENCH LOCATION.....	7
FIGURE 3. PLAN OF TRENCHES 2 & 6.....	17
FIGURE 4. PLAN OF TRENCHES 8 & 9.....	18
FIGURE 5: PLAN OF TRENCH 12.....	19
FIGURE 6: SECTIONS 1-4.....	20
PLATE 1. Trench 2 facing east.....	21
PLATE 2. Trench 5 facing south west.....	21
PLATE 3. Trench 6 facing north west.....	22
PLATE 4. Trench 7 facing south east.....	22
PLATE 5. Trench 8 facing west.....	23
PLATE 6. Trench 9 facing west.....	23
PLATE 7. Trench 10 facing north east.....	24
PLATE 8. Trench 11 facing south west.....	24

PLATE 9. Trench 12 facing north east.....	25
PLATE 10. Trench 13 facing north west	25
PLATE 11. Trench 14 facing west	26
PLATE 12. Trench 15 facing south west.....	26
PLATE 13. Trench 16 facing south	27
PLATE 14. Trench 17 facing west	27

1 ABSTRACT

- 1.1 This report details the results and working methods of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited of land at Site A, Yeats Close, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 5SZ.
- 1.2 Fifteen evaluation trenches were excavated across Site A in advance of redevelopment of the site for the construction of a housing estate.
- 1.3 The trenches were excavated to naturally occurring deposits, which was identified as Middle Chalk, consistent with the known natural stratigraphy. Within one trench a natural depression was filled with naturally accumulated colluvial deposits overlying the natural Middle Chalk.
- 1.4 A number of linear features, considered to be agricultural field boundaries, were recorded in several trenches in the centre and north of the site. The archaeological sequence was completed across the site by subsoil and modern topsoil.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited at Site A, Yeats Close, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 5SZ; in advance of redevelopment of the site.
- 2.2 The evaluation was conducted between 22nd and 26th September 2014 and was commissioned by Duncan Hawkins of CgMs Consulting on behalf of Fairview Homes.
- 2.3 Site A occupies a plot of land approximately 3.8 hectares in extent. It is bordered to the north by the A505 and is adjacent to Yeats Close in the south (Figure 1).
- 2.4 The National Grid Reference for Site A is TL 3570 4230.
- 2.5 The site was assigned the unique code HROA14.
- 2.6 The evaluation was supervised by Neil Hawkins and the project was managed by Helen Hawkins for Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. The work was monitored by Andy Instone, the Hertfordshire County Council Planning Archaeologist.

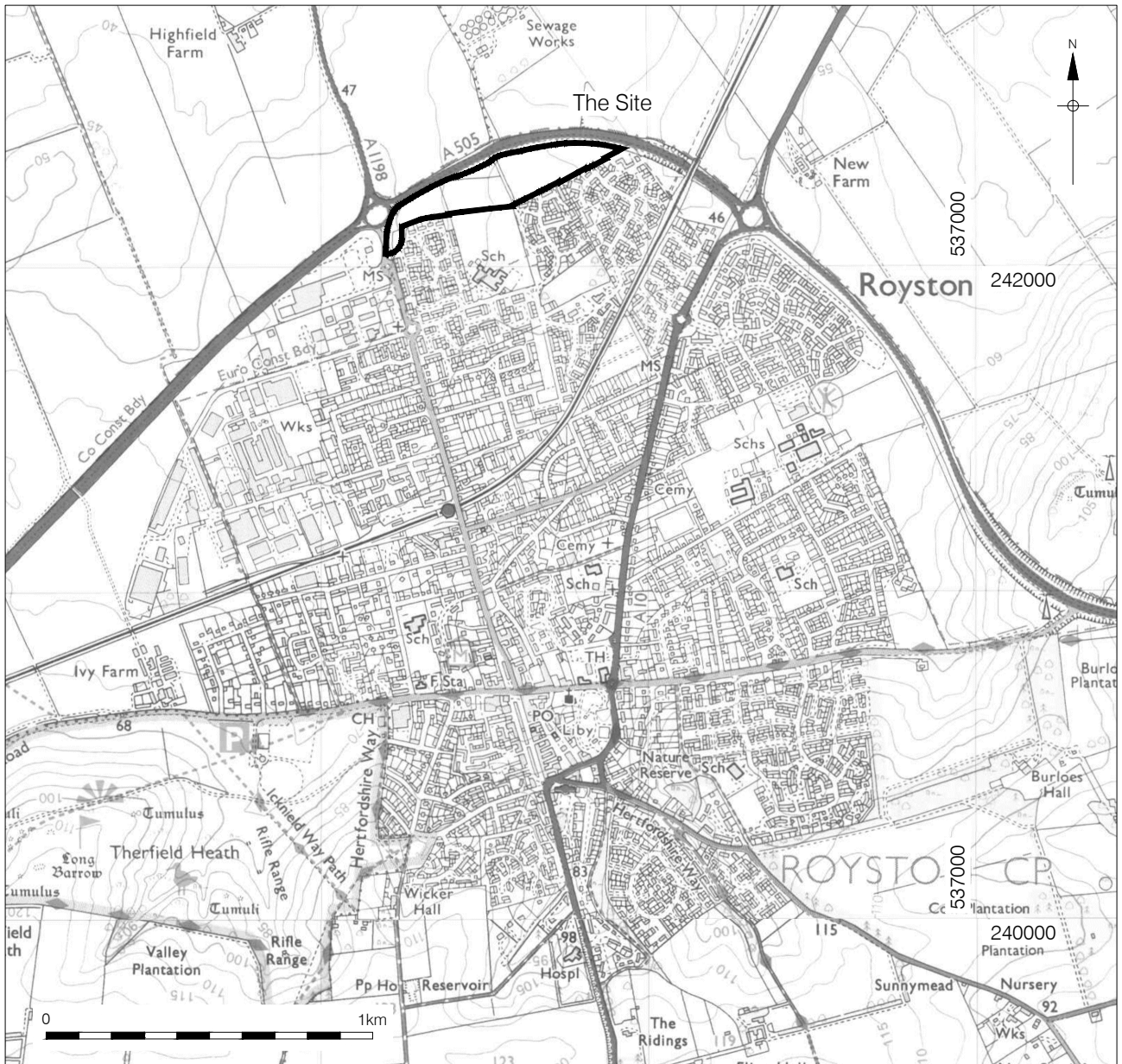
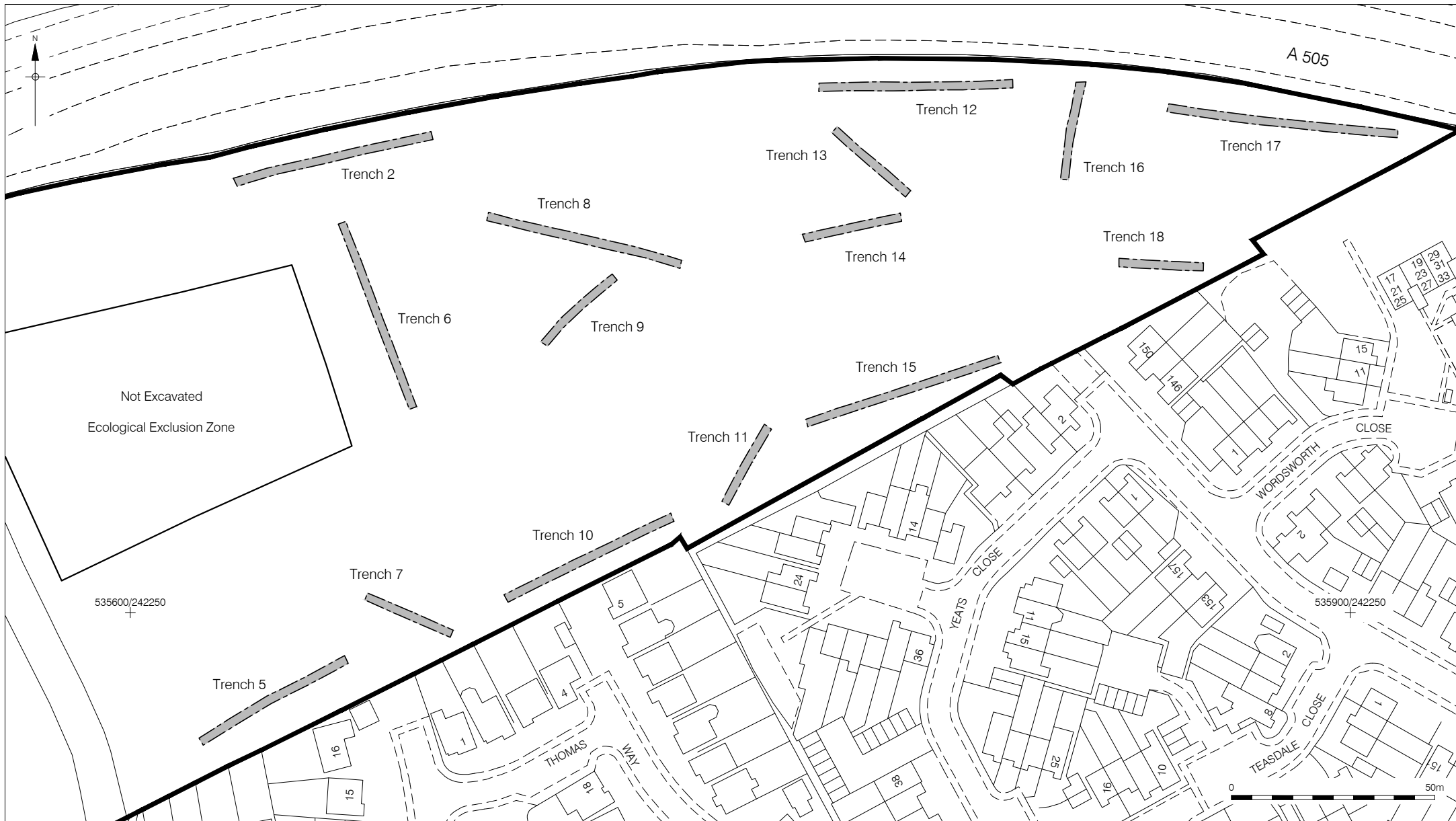


Figure 1
 Site Location
 1:2,000,000 and 20,000 at A4



© Crown copyright 2013. All rights reserved. License number PMP36110309

© Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd 2014
03/10/14 JS

Figure 2
Trench Location
1:1,250 at A4

3 PLANNING BACKGROUND

3.1 National Planning Policy Framework 2012-Section 12

3.1.1 The planning framework for archaeology is set out by the Department for Communities and Local Government in the NPPF (2012). This set out the Secretary of State's policy on archaeological remains on land. It provided recommendations, many of which have been integrated into county structure and local development plans.

3.2 In short, government guidance provides a framework which:

- Protects Scheduled Ancient Monuments
- Protects the settings of these sites
- Protects nationally important un-scheduled ancient monuments
- In appropriate circumstances seeks adequate information (from field evaluation) to enable informed planning decisions
- Provides for the excavation and investigation of sites not important enough to merit in-situ preservation.

3.3 In considering any planning application for development, the local planning authority will be guided by the policy framework set by government guidance, in this instance the NPPF, by current Development Plan policy and by other material considerations.

3.4 The East of England Plan (formerly the Regional Spatial Strategy), published on 12th May 2008 sets out the spatial strategy to guide development in the East of England for at least the next 20 years. The East of England Plan includes Policy ENV6 relating to the Historic Environment:

POLICY ENV 6: THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

IN THEIR PLANS, POLICIES, PROGRAMMES AND PROPOSALS LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITIES AND OTHER AGENCIES SHOULD IDENTIFY, PROTECT, CONSERVE AND, WHERE APPROPRIATE, ENHANCE THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT OF THE REGION, ITS ARCHAEOLOGY, HISTORIC BUILDINGS, PLACES AND LANDSCAPES, INCLUDING HISTORIC PARKS AND GARDENS AND THOSE FEATURES AND SITES (AND THEIR SETTINGS) ESPECIALLY SIGNIFICANT IN THE EAST OF ENGLAND:

- **THE HISTORIC CITIES OF CAMBRIDGE AND NORWICH**
- **AN EXCEPTION NETWORK OF HISTORIC MARKET TOWNS**
- **A COHESIVE HIERARCHY OF SMALLER SETTLEMENTS RANGING FROM NUCLEATED VILLAGES, OFTEN MARKED BY ARCHITECTURALLY SIGNIFICANT MEDIEVAL PARISH CHURCHES, THROUGH TO A PATTERN OF DISPERSED HAMLETS AND ISOLATED FARMS;**
- **THE HIGHLY DISTINCTIVE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT OF THE COASTAL ZONE INCLUDING EXTENSIVE SUBMERGED PREHISTORIC LANDSCAPES, ANCIENT**

SALT MANUFACTURING AND FISHING FACILITIES, RELICT SEA WALLS, GRAZING MARSHES, COASTAL FORTIFICATIONS, ANCIENT PORTS AND TRADITIONAL SEASIDE RESORTS;

- **FORMAL PLANNED SETTLEMENTS OF THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY, INCLUDING THE EARLY GARDEN CITIES, AND FACTORY**
- **THE WIDE VARIETY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONUMENTS, SITES AND BURIED DEPOSITS WHICH INCLUDE MANY SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENTS AND OTHER NATIONALLY IMPORTANT ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSETS.**
- **CONSERVATION AREAS AND LISTED BUILDINGS, INCLUDING DOMESTIC, INDUSTRIAL AND RELIGIOUS BUILDINGS, AND THEIR SETTINGS, AND SIGNIFICANT DESIGNED LANDSCAPES;**
- **THE RURAL LANDSCAPES OF THE REGION, WHICH ARE HIGHLY DISTINCTIVE AND OF ANCIENT ORIGIN; AND**
- **THE WIDE VARIETY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONUMENTS, SITES AND BURIED DEPOSITS WHICH INCLUDE MANY SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENTS AND OTHER NATIONALLY IMPORTANT ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSETS.**

3.5 Since 1996, the North Hertfordshire District's planning policies have been contained in the District Local Plan No.2 with Alterations. Under the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, these policies expired on 27 September 2007; permission was however obtained from the Secretary of State to save a number of policies beyond this date. Permission was granted in respect of 33 of the policies, including Policy 16 relating to the treatment of archaeological issues.

POLICY 16: AREAS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE AND OTHER ARCHAEOLOGICAL AREAS

FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL AREAS, THE COUNCIL MAY REQUIRE A PRELIMINARY EVALUATION OF ANY POTENTIAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS BEFORE DECIDING TO PERMIT OR TO REFUSE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS. FOR AREAS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE, A PRELIMINARY EVALUATION WILL BE REQUIRED AS PART OF THE APPLICATION FOR DEVELOPMENT WHICH COULD DISTURB ANY POSSIBLE ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS. TO ASSESS THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL VALUE OF SPECIFIC SITES, THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK EXPERT ADVICE.

IF THE SITE IS JUDGED TO BE NATIONALLY IMPORTANT, AND THE REMAINS SHOULD BE LEFT UNDISTURBED, THE COUNCIL WILL NORMALLY REFUSE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS WHICH ADVERSELY AFFECT THE SITE OR ITS SETTING. ON OTHER SITES, THE COUNCIL MAY PERMIT DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS WITH CONDITIONS AND/OR A FORMAL OR INFORMAL AGREEMENT, DEPENDING ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL VALUE, TO PROVIDE:

I. AN EXCAVATION BEFORE DEVELOPMENT; AND/OR

II. FACILITIES AND AN AGREED PERIOD OF TIME FOR ACCESS TO THE SITE FOR AN INVESTIGATION AND/OR A FOR 'OBSERVATION' OF THE GROUNDWORKS AS DEVELOPMENT PROGRESSES BY SOMEONE APPOINTED BY THE COUNCIL; AND/OR

III. OTHER MEASURES AS NECESSARY; AND/OR

IV. A CONTRIBUTION FROM THE DEVELOPER TOWARDS THE FUNDING OF ANY RELEVANT INVESTIGATION

- 3.6 The LDF Development Plan documents which will replace the saved Local Plan are currently at Preferred Options stage. Consultation on the Preferred Options for the Development Policies DPD took place between September and October 2007. The proposed policy wording for 'Development Policy 3: Heritage' (Development Policies Preferred Options Paper September 2007) simply states in relation to archaeological matters:

"We will identify on the proposals maps areas of archaeological significance, areas of archaeological importance, ancient monuments and any other archaeological designations which are appropriate. Within such sites, appropriate measures will be taken to protect archaeology in accordance with the latest guidance."

4 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

4.1 Geology

4.1.1 The underlying geology of the study site is shown on the British Geological Survey (Sheet 204: Biggleswade: BGS 2002) as deposits of the Holywell Nodular Chalk Member, defined as 'chalk, shelly soft to hard, nodular', part of the Middle Chalk Formation.

4.1.2 Geotechnical investigations were undertaken on the site in 1989 and in 2000. The investigations recorded an outcrop of Middle Chalk within the western part of the study site and a brown silty fragmented chalk 1.25m to 2m thick, overlying Middle Chalk within the eastern part of the study site.

4.2 Topography

4.2.1 The site lies within an undulating landscape on a gradual northeast-facing slope. Levels within the study site fall from the south-western corner at c.46m OD to the north-eastern corner of the site at c.43m OD.

4.2.2 No watercourses, or geological anomalies, are thought to exist on or within the vicinity of the study site.

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

5.1 A desk-based assessment was conducted for the site (Dicks & Hawkins 2009). The following is a brief summary of that report.

5.2 Prehistoric

5.2.1 Within the study area, a Scheduled Ancient Monument comprising a causewayed enclosure and ring ditches, lies c. 600m east of the study site at New Farm.

5.2.2 The earliest recorded finds are those of a Mesolithic bone harpoon or spear point and five Mesolithic stone axes, both described as being found in Royston. The precise find spots are uncertain, but the HHER suggests the bone spear point may have been found north of Royston.

5.2.3 During the Neolithic and Bronze Age the establishment and expansion of arable and stock farming led to a gradual rise in population and in the areas of land exploited, cleared, settled and farmed. By the Late Bronze Age, the study site would have stood within a highly developed agricultural and ritual landscape, with the land divided between arable, pasture and woodland and interspersed with enclosed settlements, ritual enclosures and burial mounds.

5.2.4 It is evident that the ridge running north-eastwards from Therfield Heath towards Melbourn was a focus for burial and ritual activity during the Late Neolithic and Early Bronze Age, with six round barrows and a Neolithic long barrow on Therfield Heath, and with a causewayed enclosure and several ring ditches northeast and of Royston, within the study area.

5.2.5 Royston is located on the Icknield Way, a prehistoric trade route. The Icknield Way route is broadly followed by the Baldock road which passes c.1.5km to the south of the study site.

5.2.6 Evidence of Iron Age activity in the immediate area of the study site is restricted to the hillfort at Melbourn. Otherwise the closest evidence is that recovered during the excavation of the long barrow on Therfield Heath.

5.2.7 Aerial photographic survey identified a rectangular enclosure system immediately west of the study site. Although undated, the rectangular form of the enclosures suggests a late Iron Age or Roman date.

5.3 Roman

5.3.1 The route of a major Roman road, Ermine Street, passes north-south through Royston. The route is followed by the modern A1198 which lies c.400m west of the study site. Icknield Way also remained in use as a communication route in the Roman period, and the HHER maps the route of a Roman road running west from Royston along the line of Baldock Road c.1.5km south of the study site. The crossing point of Ermine Street and Icknield Way make it a likely focus for Roman period settlement in this area.

5.3.2 Within the study area, with the exception of the Roman Road, there are no other HER entries dated to this period. However, as mentioned above, a rectangular enclosure system, immediately west of the study site, may be evidence of late Iron Age or Roman occupation or activity.

5.4 **Saxon & Medieval**

5.4.1 There is little recorded evidence to indicate the nature or location of Saxon period settlement in the Royston area. There is no mention of a late Saxon settlement at Royston in the 11th century Domesday Survey and the first documentary references to the town date from the 12th Century. However on the basis of the burial sites in the area, there is likely to have been some form of a small hamlet in the area from at least the 6th to the 9th Century, perhaps located at or close to the junction of the earlier Ermine Street and Icknield Way, in the area of Royston's Medieval and later town core c. 1.5km south of the study site.

5.4.2 During the medieval period the study site lay within open fields in agricultural use. An aerial photographic survey identified a series of linear cropmarks to the north and east of the study site. These linear features are thought to be evidence of a medieval field system.

5.5 **Post-Medieval**

5.5.1 Pre-19th century maps, despite their small scale, illustrate that the site lay within agricultural land close to the County boundary.

5.5.2 The 1891 Ordnance Survey shows the study site comprising empty fields with Royston some distance to the south.

5.5.3 Little change is recorded on the site between 1891 and the present day. By the 1980s the A505 dual carriageway had been constructed within a cutting to the north of the study site. More recently the county boundary shifted northwards to the north side of the A505 and as a result the study site moved into the county of Hertfordshire.

6 METHODOLOGY

- 6.1 The evaluation was conducted according to the Specification prepared by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd following consultation with the Hertfordshire County Council Archaeological Monitor, Andy Instone (Mayo 2009).
- 6.2 The machining of 15 trenches measuring up to 50m by 2m at ground level was undertaken using a 360° HYMAC-type machine. Three trenches (Trenches 1, 3 and 4, Figure 2) at the west end of the site were not excavated as they were located within an ecological reception zone. The mechanical excavator used a toothless ditching bucket to remove undifferentiated soils or overburden under the supervision of an archaeologist, acting as the banksman. Spoil was mounded at least 2m from the edges of the trench.
- 6.3 Machine excavation continued in spits of 100mm at a time until either natural ground or significant archaeological strata was found.
- 6.4 Following machine excavation, relevant faces of the trench that require examination or recording were cleaned using appropriate hand tools. The majority of the investigation of archaeological levels was by hand, with cleaning, examination and recording both in plan and in section.
- 6.5 Archaeological evaluation requires work by 'pick and shovel' or occasionally by further use of the machine. Such techniques were used only for the removal of homogeneous and 'low grade' layers where it can reasonably be argued that more detailed attention would not produce information of value. They were not employed on complex stratigraphy, and the deposits that were to be removed were properly recorded first.
- 6.6 All archaeological features (stratigraphical layers, cuts, fills, structures) were evaluated by hand tools and recorded in plan at 1:20 or in section at 1:10 using standard single context recording methods. Photographs were also be taken as appropriate.
- 6.7 Trench locations were positioned to test the results of the geophysical survey and to provide good coverage across the site.

7 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

- 7.1 The following description of the stratigraphy details the main characteristics of each context and its position within the phased stratigraphic matrix, as encountered during the archaeological evaluation.
- 7.2 Trenches 5, 7, 10, 11, 15, 18, 17 16 13, and 2 contained no archaeological features. The stratigraphic characteristics and levels of each trench has been summarised below.

7.3 Phase 1: Natural

7.3.1 The earliest deposit found on site was natural chalk which was discovered in all the trenches across the evaluation area at levels between 38.91 and 46.46 m OD. This disparity in the level of the chalk can be attributed to the natural topography of the site, which slopes significantly from the south-west corner down towards the north-east. The friability of the chalk varied across the site and numerous natural depressions and striations filled with colluvial material were observed.

7.3.2 A large natural feature, possibly an extinct watercourse, was identified in Trench 2 (Figure 3; Plate 1). This palaeochannel measured 6.20m wide, 2m north-south and was 0.82m deep. It was filled with colluvial material devoid of cultural intrusions.

7.4 Phase 2: Undated archaeological features

7.4.1 A linear cut [2] was observed at 45.94 m OD traversing the south end of Trench 6 with a north-east/south-west trajectory (Figure 3; Plate 3). The feature was c.0.90m wide and 0.33m deep and truncated natural chalk to a depth of 45.58m OD. The ditch was naturally backfilled with [1] a dark yellowish brown sandy silt colluvium containing frequent inclusions of small chalk fragments.

7.4.2 To the east, in the middle of Trench 9, a linear feature [10] with similar dimensions and fill [9] was noted at 44.52m OD (Figure 4; Plate 6).

7.4.3 A further linear feature was seen in the eastern end of Trench 8 at 43.41m OD truncating the natural chalk to a depth of 43.09m OD (Figure 4; Plate 5). In this trench the linear cut [6] was slightly narrower at c.0.60m wide, but continued to a depth of 0.33m.

7.4.4 This series of linear features [2], [6] and [10] exhibited similar trajectories, profiles, dimensions and stratigraphic properties to each other (Figure 3, Figure 4). It is therefore postulated that they represent the same feature, probably an agricultural boundary ditch, which traversed north-east by south-west across the site. No artefactual evidence was recovered from slots excavated in this ditch and therefore no date can be attributed as to when this feature was in use.

7.4.5 A further linear cut [8] was identified in Trench 12 toward the north-east corner of the site (Figure 5; Plate 9). It was recorded at a height of 40.45m OD and was 0.75 m wide by 0.20m deep. The backfill [7] consisted of naturally deposited dark yellowish brown sandy silt devoid of any artefacts.

7.4.6 It is unlikely that this feature had any relationship to the ditch recorded in Trenches 6, 9 or 8 as, if it did, one would expect to see this feature continuing through Trench 13 (Plate 10), in which no linear features were discovered.

7.5 Phase 3: Naturally deposited sub-soil and top-soil

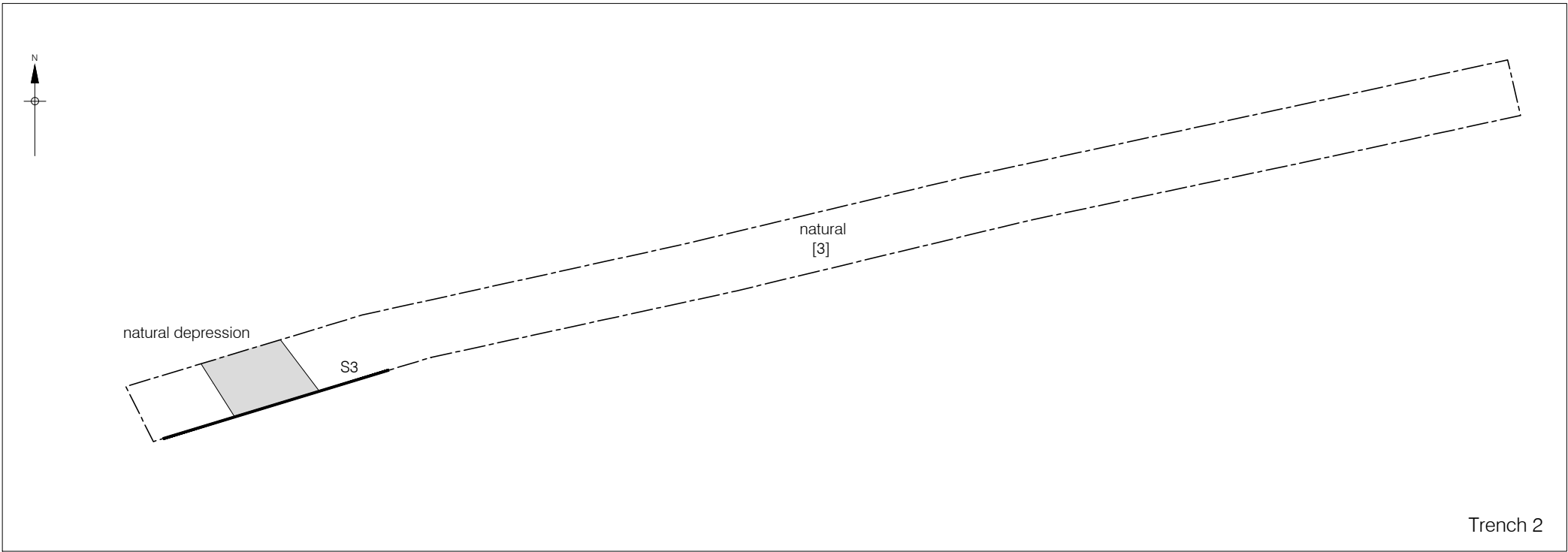
7.5.1 Sealing the chalk and the linear features where present was a dark yellowish brown sub-soil layer which was encountered between 0.15m and 0.20m below ground level. No cultural material was discovered within this layer.

7.5.2 Top soil, constituting the current ground surface, lay above the sub-soil layer. The current ground level sloped from c.46.77m OD in the south-west of the site to c.39.22m OD in the north-east.

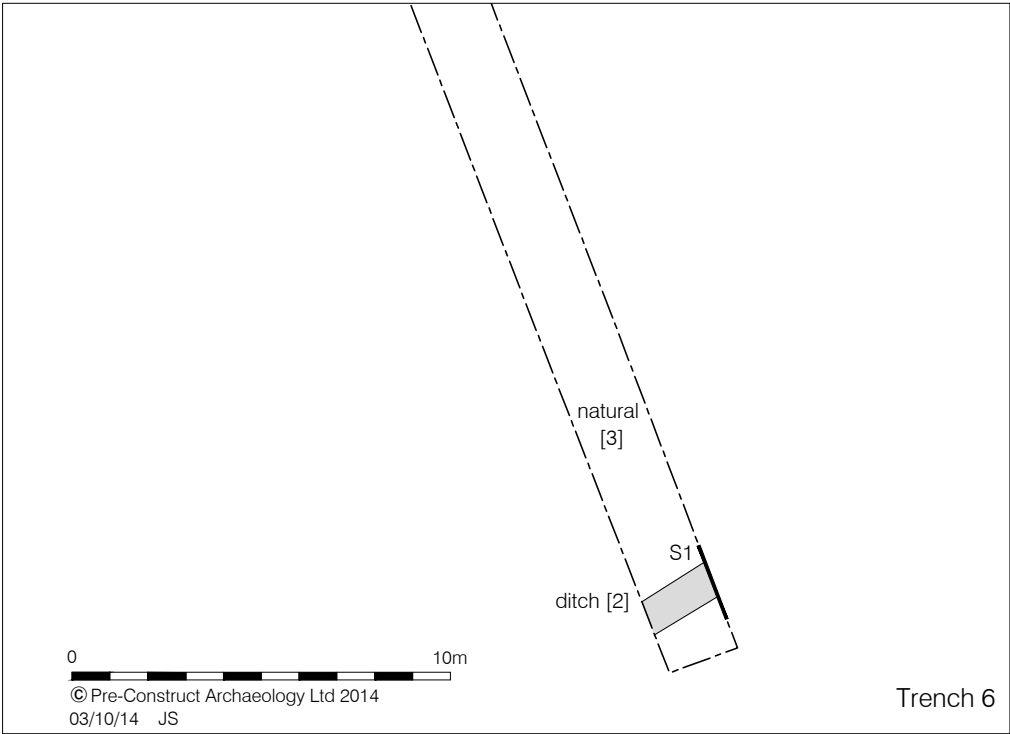
7.5.3 In Trenches 2, 5, 7, and 12 (Figure 2; Plates 1, 2, 4, 15) no sub-soil was present and it is assumed that at some point landscaping may have taken place in these areas.

Table 1: Trench Descriptions and OD heights

Trench	Modern Ground Level (m OD)	Level on natural deposits (m OD)	Level on archaeological horizon (m OD)	Maximum depth of trench	Notes
Trench 1					Not excavated
Trench 2	44.62 - 47.42	44.21 - 44.88	44.47 - 47.27	44.88	
Trench 3					Not excavated
Trench 4					Not excavated
Trench 5	46.58 - 46.77	46.39 - 46.46	46.43 - 46.62	46.39	
Trench 6	45.53 - 46.35	45.47 - 45.86	45.28 - 46.52	45.47	
Trench 7	46.47 - 46.63	46.10 - 46.34	46.27 - 46.43	46.1	
Trench 8	43.64 - 44.93	43.23 - 44.57	46.34 - 44.63	43.23	
Trench 9	44.38 - 45.27	44.13 - 44.90	44.08 - 44.97	44.13	
Trench 10	45.26 - 46.41	44.89 - 45.93	44.86 - 46.01	44.89	
Trench 11	44.07 - 44.99	43.69 - 44.53	43.72 - 44.64	43.69	
Trench 12	40.35 - 41.38	40.06 - 41	40.15 - 41.18	40.06	
Trench 13	41.42 - 41.73	41.20 - 41.24	41.12 - 41.43	41.2	
Trench 14	41.68 - 42.33	41.35 - 41.91	41.38 - 42.03	41.35	
Trench 15	42.15 - 43.78	41.92 - 43.38	41.9 - 42.53	41.92	
Trench 16	40.11 - 40.74	39.81 - 40.48	39.81 - 40.44	39.81	
Trench 17	39.22 - 39.75	38.91 - 39.18	37.52 - 39.05	38.91	
Trench 18	40.6 - 41.01	40.01 - 40.53	40.30 - 40.71	40.01	



Trench 2

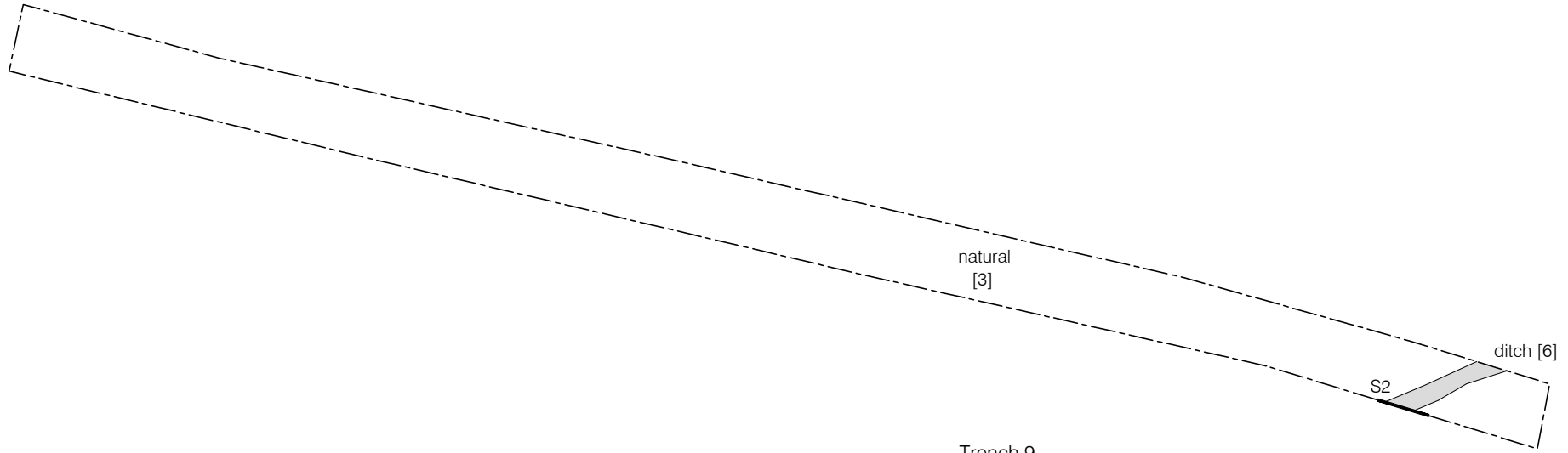


Trench 6

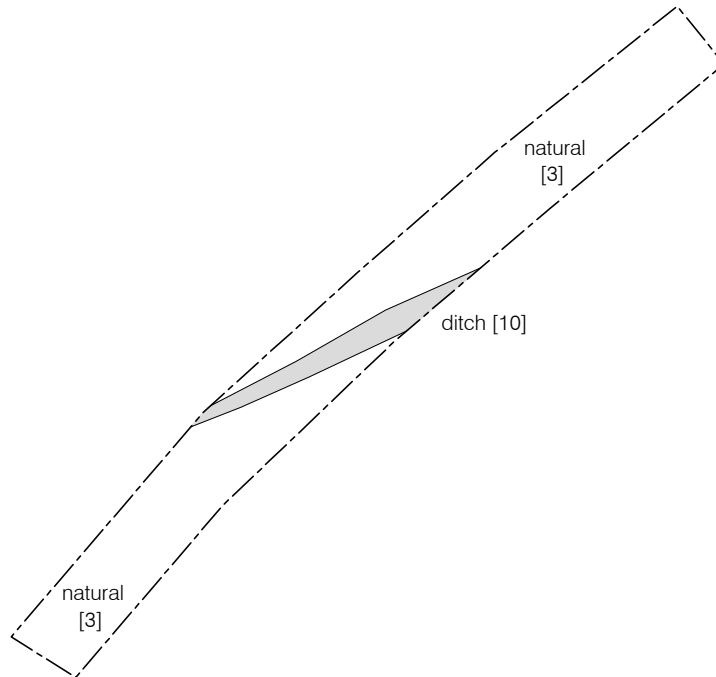
Figure 3
Plan of Trenches 2 & 6
1:200 at A4



Trench 8

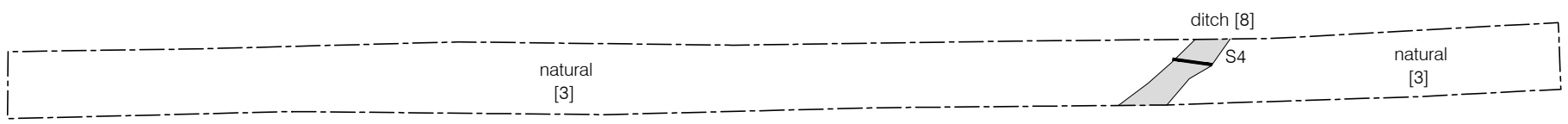


Trench 9



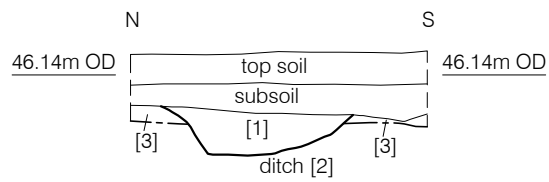
© Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd 2014
03/10/14 JS

Figure 4
Plan of Trenches 8 & 9
1:200 at A4

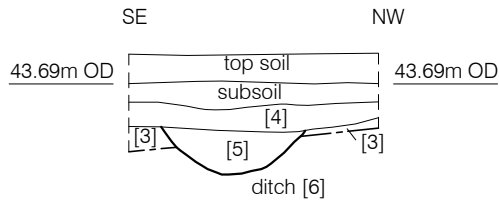


© Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd 2014
03/10/14 JS

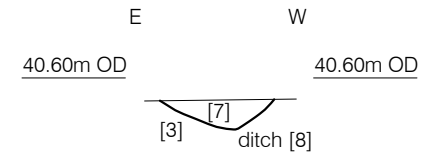
Figure 5
Plan of Trench 12
1:200 at A4



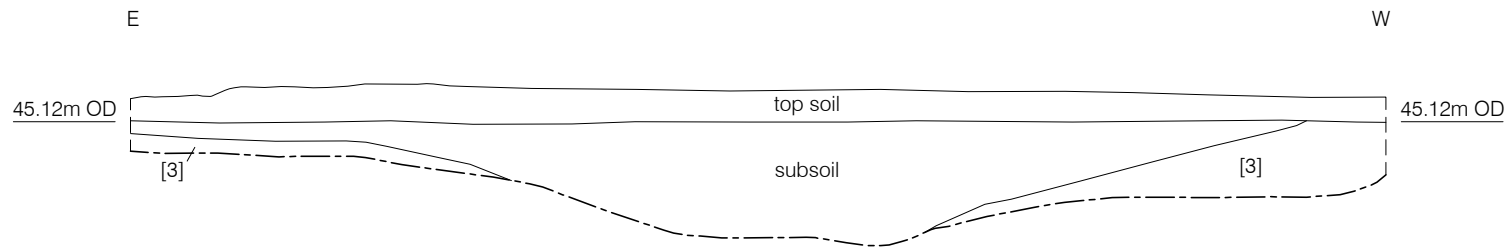
Section 1
Trench 6
West Facing



Section 2
Trench 8
Northeast Facing



Section 4
Trench 12
North Facing



Section 3
Trench 2
North Facing

8 PLATES

PLATE 1. Trench 2 facing east



PLATE 2. Trench 5 facing south west



PLATE 3. Trench 6 facing north west

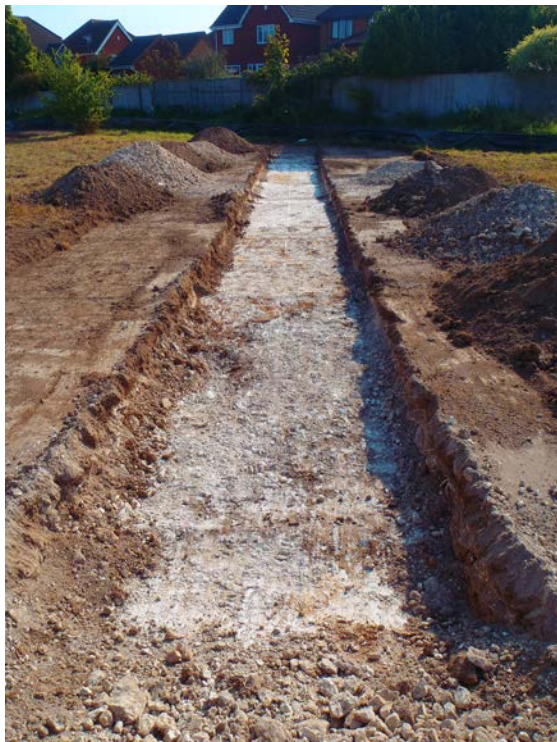


PLATE 4. Trench 7 facing south east



PLATE 5. Trench 8 facing west



PLATE 6. Trench 9 facing west



PLATE 7. Trench 10 facing north east



PLATE 8. Trench 11 facing south west



PLATE 9. Trench 12 facing north east



PLATE 10. Trench 13 facing north west



PLATE 11. Trench 14 facing west

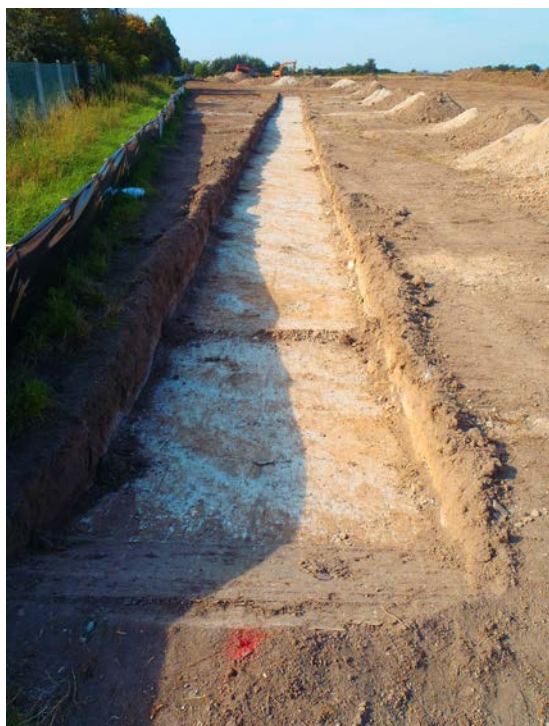


PLATE 12. Trench 15 facing south west



8.1.1

PLATE 13. Trench 16 facing south



PLATE 14. Trench 17 facing west



9 DISCUSSION & CONCLUSIONS

- 9.1 Natural Middle Chalk was recorded throughout all fifteen evaluation trenches. This was consistent with the known natural stratigraphy as indicated by the British Geological Survey (Sheet 204: Blggleswade). The natural topography of the chalk sloped from the south-west corner to the north and north-east. The friability of the chalk varied across the site and in some trenches a series of natural striations, presumably the consequence of surface runoff, were discernible. A large depression within the chalk, discovered in Trench 2 located in the north-west of the site was identified as a possible palaeochannel. The backfill of the channel appeared to consist of colluvium and was totally sterile, containing no anthropogenic material.
- 9.2 Sealing the natural chalk throughout the majority of the trenches was a layer of sub-soil between 0.10m and 0.45m thick. This layer was thickest in Trench 17, located at the bottom of the sloping topography in the north-east corner of the site.
- 9.3 The only archaeological features recorded during the evaluation were a series of linear cuts observed in Trenches 6, 9 and 8, located in the centre of the site, and in Trench 12 to the north. As no dating evidence was recovered from the backfill of any of these features it is impossible to speculate on their date. However, it is most likely that these features represent agricultural field boundaries.
- 9.4 It is suggested that the linear features encountered in Trenches 6, 9 and 8 constitute the same boundary ditch as they possess similar trajectories, dimensions and stratigraphic make up. These linear features were all filled with colluvial material.
- 9.5 The linear cut in Trench 12 appeared to be isolated from the features in Trenches 6, 9 and 8, but probably also constituted a field boundary.
- 9.6 In Trenches 5, 7, 2 and 12 a thin layer of top-soil was found to lie directly above the chalk. The absence of sub-soil in these trenches implies that at some point artificial modification to the landscape may have taken place in these areas.
- 9.7 The archaeological evaluation supports cartographic sources which suggest that the site was open ground used for agricultural purposes in the past at least until the late 19th Century.

10 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 10.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited would like to thank Duncan Hawkins of CgMs Consulting for commissioning the project and Andy Instone of Hertfordshire County Council for monitoring the work.
- 10.2 The author would like to thank Neil Hawkins for supervising the evaluation and John Joyce for his assistance on site. Helen Hawkins managed and edited the project.

11 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bunn, D. 2009. 'Geophysical Survey. Land North of Yeats Close, Royston, Hertfordshire' Pre-Construct Geophysics, unpublished report

Cussans, J.E., 1881., 'History of Hertfordshire. Vol 1'. London: Chatto and Windus

Dicks, S. & Hawkins, D. 2009 'Archaeological Desk Based Assessment: Sites B & C, Land North of Yeats Close, Royston, Hertfordshire', CgMs Consulting, unpublished report

Margary, I.D., 1955. 'Roman Roads in Britain Vol. 1. South of the Foss Way - Bristol Channel'. London: Phoenix House.

Mayo, C. 2009 'Written Scheme of Investigation For an Archaeological Evaluation at Sites B & C, Land North of Yeats Close, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 5SZ' Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd, unpublished report

Morris, J., 1976. 'Domesday Book No. 12, Hertfordshire'. Chichester: Phillimore.

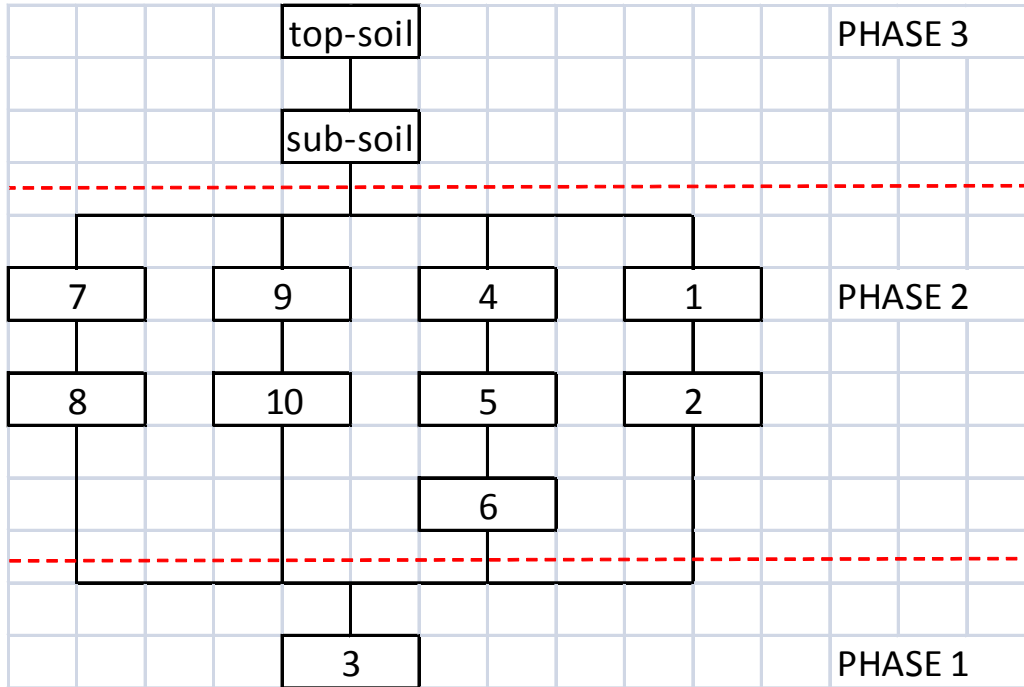
Smith, N & Ransom, C., 2001. 'Royston. Extensive Urban Survey Project'. Assessment Report Hertfordshire County Council

Taylor, A., 1997. 'Archaeology of Cambridgeshire, Vol. 1: South West Cambridgeshire'. Cambridge: Cambridgeshire County Council.

APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT INDEX

Context	Type	Trench	Interpretation
1	Fill	6	Fill of [2]
2	Cut	6	Linear feature
3	Natural	6	Natural chalk
4	Layer	8	Sub-soil
5	Fill	8	Fill of [6]
6	Cut	8	Linear feature
7	Fill	12	Fill of [8]
8	Cut	12	Linear feature
9	Fill	9	Fill of [10]
10	Cut	9	Linear feature

APPENDIX 2: TRENCH MATRIX



APPENDIX 3: OASIS ARCHAEOLOGICAL REPORT FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-191582

Project details

Project name An Archaeological Evaluation at Site A, Land Adjacent to Yeats Close, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 5SZ

Short description of the project:

Fifteen evaluation trenches were excavated across Site A in advance of redevelopment for the construction of a housing estate. The trenches were excavated to naturally occurring deposits, which was identified as Middle Chalk, consistent with the known natural stratigraphy. Within one trench a natural depression was filled with naturally accumulated colluvial deposits overlying the natural Middle Chalk. A number of linear features, considered to be agricultural field boundaries, were recorded in several trenches in the centre and north of the site. The archaeological sequence was completed across the site by subsoil and modern topsoil.

Project dates Start: 22-09-2014 End: 26-09-2014

Previous/future work Yes / Not known

Any associated project reference codes Site Code: HRHB 10 and HRHC 10 - Sitecode

Type of project Field evaluation

Site status Local Authority Area of Archaeological interest

Current Land use Vacant Land 2 - Vacant land not previously developed

Monument type N/A None

Significant Finds N/A None

Methods & techniques "Targeted Trenches"

Development type Housing estate

Prompt Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16

Position in the planning process After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country England

Site location HERTFORDSHIRE NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE ROYSTON Site A, Yeats Close, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 5SZ

Postcode SG8 5SZ

Study area 3.80 Hectares

Site coordinates TL 357 423 52.0619971244 -0.0202992036614 52 03 43 N 000 01 13 W Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 38.91m Max: 46.46m

Project creators

Name of Organisation Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd

Project brief originator CgMs Consulting

Project design originator Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd

Project director/manager Helen Hawkins

Project supervisor Neil Hawkins

Type of sponsor/funding body Fairview New Homes Ltd.

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No

Digital Archive recipient Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies

Digital Contents "none"

Digital Media available "Database","Spreadsheets","Survey","Text"

Paper Archive recipient Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies

Paper Contents "none"

Paper Media available "Section"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title Geophysical Survey. Land North of Yeats Close, Royston, Hertfordshire'

Author(s)/Editor(s) Bunn, D

Date 2009

Issuer or publisher Pre-Construct Geophysics

Place of issue or publication London

Project bibliography 2

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title Desk Based Assessment: Sites B and C, Land North of Yeats Close, Royston, Hertfordshire

Author(s)/Editor(s) Dicks, S. and Hawkins, D

Date 2009

Issuer or publisher CgMs Consulting, unpublished report

Place of issue or publication London

Entered by Joe Brooks (pra04jgb@hotmail.co.uk)
Entered on 2 October 2014

APPENDIX 4: HERTFORDSHIRE HER SUMMARY FORM

HERTFORDSHIRE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD SUMMARY SHEET

Site name and address: Site A, Yeats Close, Royston, Hertfordshire SG8 5SZ		
County: Hertfordshire		District: North Hertfordshire District Council
Village/Town: Royston		Parish: Royston
Planning application reference: 1/01577/14		
HER Enquiry reference: 221/14		
Funding source: Private Developer		
Nature of application: After full determination (eg. As a condition)		
Present land use: Farmland		
Size of application area: 3.80ha		Size of area investigated:
NGR (to 8 figures minimum): TL 3570 4230		
Site code (if applicable): HROA14		
Site director/Organization: Neil Hawkins of PCA		
Type of work: Archaeological Trial-Trench Evaluation		
Date of work:	Start: 22 nd September 2014	Finish: 26 th September 2014
Location of finds & site archive/Curating museum: Hertfordshire Museum		
Related HER Nos: N/A		Periods represented: Post-medieval to modern
Relevant previous summaries/reports:		
<p>Summary of fieldwork results:</p> <p>Fifteen evaluation trenches were excavated across Site A in advance of redevelopment for the construction of a housing estate. The trenches were excavated to naturally occurring deposits, which was identified as Middle Chalk, consistent with the known natural stratigraphy. Within one trench a natural depression was filled with naturally accumulated colluvial deposits overlying the natural Middle Chalk. A number of linear features, considered to be agricultural field boundaries, were recorded in several trenches in the centre and north of the site. The archaeological sequence was completed across the site by subsoil and modern topsoil.</p>		
Author of summary: Helen Hawkins of PCA		Date of summary: 07/11/14

PCA

PCA SOUTH

UNIT 54
BROCKLEY CROSS BUSINESS CENTRE
96 ENDWELL ROAD
BROCKLEY
LONDON SE4 2PD
TEL: 020 7732 3925 / 020 7639 9091
FAX: 020 7639 9588
EMAIL: info@pre-construct.com

PCA NORTH

UNIT 19A
TURSDALE BUSINESS PARK
DURHAM DH6 5PG
TEL: 0191 377 1111
FAX: 0191 377 0101
EMAIL: info.north@pre-construct.com

PCA CENTRAL

7 GRANTA TERRACE
STAPLEFORD
CAMBRIDGESHIRE CB22 5DL
TEL: 01223 845 522
FAX: 01223 845 522
EMAIL: info.central@pre-construct.com

PCA WEST

BLOCK 4
CHILCOMB HOUSE
CHILCOMB LANE
WINCHESTER
HAMPSHIRE SO23 8RB
TEL: 01962 849 549
EMAIL: info.west@pre-construct.com

PCA MIDLANDS

17-19 KETTERING RD
LITTLE BOWDEN
MARKET HARBOROUGH
LEICESTERSHIRE LE16 8AN
TEL: 01858 468 333
EMAIL: info.midlands@pre-construct.com

