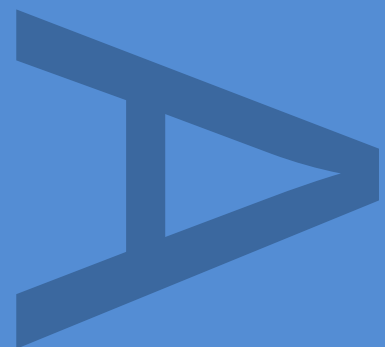


**Land at Oakington Road,  
Cottenham, Cambridgeshire:**

**An Archaeological Trial Trench  
Evaluation**

**June 2015**



**PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY  
R12117**

LAND AT OAKINGTON ROAD,  
COTTENHAM, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

**Quality Control**

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## Land at Oakington Road, Cottenham, Cambridgeshire:

### An Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation

**Local Planning Authority:** South Cambridgeshire District Council

**Planning Reference:** Pre-Determination

**Central National Grid Reference:** TL 4428 6702

**HER Number:** ECB4470

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## **ABSTRACT**

*This report describes the results of a twelve trench archaeological evaluation carried out by Pre-Construct Archaeology on Land at Oakington Road, Cottenham, Cambridgeshire, centred on Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference (NGR) TL 4428 6702) from the 26th of May to the 1st of June 2015. The archaeological work was commissioned by CgMs Consulting in advance of a planning application for residential development. The aim of the work was to characterise the location, date, extent, character, condition and quality of any archaeological remains on the site, to assess the significance of any such remains in a local, regional, or national context, as appropriate, and to assess the potential impact of the development proposals on the site's archaeology.*

*The evaluation identified a large watercourse or pond and a system of east to west and north-west to south-east aligned early Roman field boundaries located in the centre of the site. These ditches were likely associated with the Roman settlement site c.200m to the north-east on the higher ground. A north-west to south-east aligned system of post-medieval land management in the form of furrows and land drains was identified in the northern part of the site.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 An archaeological trial trench evaluation was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd (PCA) on land at Oakington Road, Cottenham Cambridgeshire, centred on Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference (NGR) TL 4428 6702) from the 26th of May to the 1st of June 2015 (Figure 1, Plate 1).
- 1.2 The archaeological work was commissioned by CgMs Consulting in advance of a planning application for residential development and carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by Taleyna Fletcher and Shannon Hogan of PCA (Fletcher & Hogan 2015). The project was monitored by Kasia Gdaniec of Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team (CCCHET).
- 1.3 The broad aim of the evaluation was to identify, excavate and record the location, date, extent, character, condition and quality of any archaeological remains on the site, to assess the significance of any such remains in a local, regional, or national context, as appropriate, and to assess the potential impact of the development proposals on the site's archaeology.
- 1.4 Further aims of the evaluation were to provide sufficient information to enable the formulation of a suitable management/investigation strategy for the site's heritage assets, in light of the current development proposals and to provide a predictive model of the archaeological remains present and likely to be present on the site and include an appraisal of their significance.
- 1.5 Twelve trial trenches totalling 400m were excavated and recorded during the evaluation (Figure 2).
- 1.6 This report describes the results of the evaluation and aims to inform the design of an appropriate archaeological mitigation strategy. The site archive will be deposited at the Cambridgeshire Archaeological Stores.

## **2 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY**

### **2.1 Geology**

- 2.1.1 The underlying bedrock geology of the site comprises Sandstone (mud, silt, sand and gravel) of the Woburn Sands Formation, a sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 100-125 million years ago (British Geological Survey).
- 2.1.2 Topsoil deposits (100) were identified as mid-dark brownish grey sandy clayey silt, while subsoil deposits (101) were identified as mid-reddish brown clayey silt.
- 2.1.3 The natural geological horizon (102) was identified as light-mid-orange brown sandy silty clay with high gravel inclusions in places.

### **2.2 Topography**

- 2.2.1 The site is located on the south-western edge of the Cambridgeshire village of Cottenham (Figure 1).
- 2.2.2 The site was bounded along its south-western edge by Oakington Road. A residential estate was located to the north-east of the site whilst the rest of the site was bounded by agricultural farmland.
- 2.2.3 The site was formally used as agricultural land and is currently covered by grass and scrub with young birch trees planted throughout.
- 2.2.4 The site is broadly flat, located at between 10.02m (South-west end of Trench 2) and 10.49m (Northern end of Trench 13) Over Datum (OD). A slight rise to the north and west was identified during the evaluation. This information is taken from survey data generated during the evaluation.



### **3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

#### **3.1 General**

- 3.1.1 There are no records of any archaeological surveys or investigations having been undertaken on the site. An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at Orchard Close c.50m to the east of the site. No significant archaeological remains were uncovered.
- 3.1.2 A desk-based assessment (DBA) for the site was undertaken (Harrison 2015) in advance of the work. This suggested a moderate potential for Roman remains on the site given the cropmarks located c.200m to the northwest thought to represent Roman settlement. However, due to the slightly elevated area in which the settlement cropmarks are located, any remains extending towards the site were thought to more likely to be field systems.
- 3.1.3 There was also a suggested line of a north-east to south-west aligned Roman Road or trackway running through the site (Harrison pers. comm.). This can be seen depicted as a field boundary on the pre-enclosure map (Harrison 2015, DBA Figure 5 dated as pre-1847) and reproduced in Figure 1 of the WSI (Fletcher & Hogan 2015).
- 3.1.4 The DBA concluded that the site had a low potential for evidence of significant other archaeological evidence, and that the site is highly unlikely to contain any archaeological remains that would constrain or prevent development.
- 3.1.5 The following background has been summarised from the Desk-Based Assessment for the site. The DBA provides a full and thorough assessment of the archaeological, historical and cartographic development of the site and the surrounding area.

#### **3.2 Prehistoric**

- 3.2.1 The Historic Environment Record (HER) contains no records of Prehistoric remains within the site.

3.2.2 Prehistoric finds are recorded from archaeological excavations in the Lordship Lane area (HER reference CB15521) and archaeological trial pits in Telegraph Street (HER MCB19210), both between 900-1000m northeast of the proposal site.

### **3.3 Roman**

3.3.1 An extensive area of settlement remains (HER reference 09547) has been identified from aerial photographs 200m northwest of proposal site; this may represent a settlement site of Roman date. The putative settlement site is located on a slightly elevated area in the landscape. It is likely that the settlement was located here as its relative elevation would have presented a more favourable location than the lower areas such as the site. Parts of the cropmarks are aligned with the site and may continue in this direction. If so, it is likely that any features running towards the site would form part of the agricultural hinterland of the settlement rather than an extension of the settlement.

3.3.2 There was also a suggested line of a north-east to south-west aligned Roman Road or trackway running through the site (Harrison pers. comm.). The Roman Road is thought to be a minor road, running from the A14, through Oakington to West Wick, and through Cottenham to the large Roman settlement at Bullocks Chase on the Car Dyke. This can be seen depicted as a field boundary on the pre-enclosure map (see DBA Figure 5 dated as pre-1847) and reproduced in Figure 1 in the WSI (Fletcher & Hogan 2015).

### **3.4 Anglo-Saxon**

3.4.1 Remains of an Anglo-Saxon settlement were identified at Lordship Lane (CB15522, CB15523), around 1000m northeast of the proposal site. Further Anglo-Saxon and medieval remains are known at Denmark Lane (CB15526), 600m northeast of the site.

3.4.2 The HER data suggests that significant Anglo-Saxon archaeological remains are located c.600-1000m to the northeast of the site, and are likely to represent the early core of Cottenham village.

### **3.5 Medieval**

- 3.5.1 Archaeological evidence for medieval settlement in Cottenham was recorded at a number of locations within the village core (e.g. CB15222, CB15525, CB15526, MCB19210, MCB19497) c.900m to the northeast. A large late medieval ditch was also identified during archaeological work at Moreton Close. The site was, however, anticipated to have lain outside the medieval settlement area within part of the surrounding agricultural fields.
- 3.5.2 Evidence for medieval agriculture (such as below ground remains of open field strip cultivation) was anticipated to be present within the site.

### **3.6 Post-Medieval and Modern**

- 3.6.1 Archaeological sites and finds of post-medieval and 19th Century date are well represented within the village and surrounding area. These records relate mainly to buildings or former buildings of a well-defined location and extent and add little to determining the archaeological potential of the site.
- 3.6.2 The earliest map that shows the site in any detail is the pre-enclosure map (Harrison 2015, DBA Figure 5). Although this map is undated, it would have been drawn prior to 1847 when the enclosure map was completed (Harrison 2015, DBA Figure 6). The pre-enclosure map depicts the site as located within Two Mill Field to the west of Cottenham. Annotation on the map indicates the proposed enclosure division of Two Mill Field, including parts of four regular straight-sided fields within the site area.
- 3.6.3 By 1847 the proposed four fields are not depicted on the enclosure map, and the site occupies a square plot of land. Much of the surrounding landscape has also been re-worked into rectangular and straight divisions. The site is labelled as belonging to Richard Papworth. The southwest corner of the site is depicted as subdivided into two small rectangular parcels.
- 3.6.4 The first edition OS map (1887; Harrison 2015, DBA Figure 7) depicts the site as a rectangular plot of land similar to that shown on the enclosure map (although the two small subdivisions in the southwest corner have been removed). To the east of the site orchards are depicted, whilst to the north field boundaries have been removed to create larger fields.

3.6.5 Subsequent OS maps depict the extents of the site as relatively similar, although by 1980 the shed within the centre southern part of the site has been constructed. Further buildings are depicted to the east and southwest of site, including a new housing estate within Orchard Close and along Rampton Road.

## **4 METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1 General**

- 4.1.1 Twelve 2m wide trenches totalling 400m were investigated across the site (Figure 2).
- 4.1.2 The evaluation was originally intended to comprise 14 trenches. Due to The trees and thicker areas of scrub, Trench 9 was not machined whilst Trench 1 was not machined due to the eastern corner of the sites use as an allotment area (Plate 11). The trench omissions were agreed with Kasia Gdaniec (CCCHET) on site during the monitoring meeting.
- 4.1.3 The trees and thicker areas of scrub accounted for the relocation and shortening of some of the trenches from the original proposed layout.

### **4.2 Machining and Site Planning**

- 4.2.1 Each trench was excavated using a 22 tonne tracked mechanical excavator with a toothless ditching bucket (Plate 2). The overlying topsoil (100) and subsoil (101) deposits were excavated in spits down to the archaeological horizon or the natural geological horizon (102), whichever came first.
- 4.2.2 Exposed archaeological features and deposits were cleaned as necessary to define them using hand tools.
- 4.2.3 Metal-detecting was carried out on all stripped deposits throughout the evaluation process and all archaeological features and spoil heaps were surveyed by metal-detector as they were encountered.
- 4.2.4 Limits of all excavation areas, pre-excavation and post-excavation plans of archaeological features and heights above Ordnance Datum (m OD) were recorded using a Leica 1200 Global positioning System (GPS) rover unit with RTK differential correction, giving three-dimensional accuracy of 20mm or better.
- 4.2.5 Upon completion of the evaluation all twelve trenches were backfilled and reinstated (Plate 12).

### **4.3 Recording Methodology**

- 4.3.1 Field excavation techniques and recording methods are detailed in the PCA Fieldwork Induction Manual (Operations Manual I) by Joanna Taylor and Gary Brown (2009).
- 4.3.2 All features were investigated and recorded in order to properly understand the date and nature of the archaeological remains on the site and to recover sufficient finds assemblages to assess the chronological development and socio-economic character of the site over time.
- 4.3.3 Deposits or the removal of deposits judged by the excavating archaeologist to constitute individual events were each assigned a unique record number (often referred to within British archaeology as 'context numbers') and recorded on pre-printed forms (Taylor and Brown 2009). Archaeological processes recognised by the deposition of material are signified in this report by round brackets (thus), while events constituting the removal of deposits are referred to here as 'cuts' and signified by square brackets [thus]. These conventions are continued throughout the report.
- 4.3.4 Drawn records are in the form of survey plans, drawn plans and section drawings of all archaeological features at an appropriate scale (1:10, 1:20, 1:50) while all individual deposits and cuts were recorded as written records on PCA Pro-forma context sheets.
- 4.3.5 Linear features were investigated by means of slots excavated across their width, positioned to avoid areas of intercutting/disturbance in order to provide uncontaminated finds assemblages. If stratigraphic relationships between features were not visible in plan, slots were positioned to determine inter-feature relationships.
- 4.3.6 High-resolution digital photographs were taken at all stages of the evaluation process. Digital Photographs were taken of all archaeological features and deposits.
- 4.3.7 Artefacts were collected by hand and retained, receiving appropriate care prior to removal from site (ClfA 2014; Walker 1990; Watkinson 1981).

4.3.8 Following agreement on site with Kasia Gdaniec (CCCHET), no soil samples were taken for environmental processing or analysis.

## **5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

5.1.1 The trenches are described below in numerical order, with technical data tabulated. This includes information on depths of overlying deposits, lengths of trenches and heights over datum of the natural geological horizon. Topsoil and subsoil measurements represent the thickness of the deposit while the natural geological horizon is a measurement from the top of the topsoil to the base of the trench and therefore should equal the overlying deposits combined.

5.1.2 Features and deposits are described from west to east or south to north depending on the alignment of the trench. Where stratigraphic relationships exist between features they are discussed from the earliest feature to the latest feature. Archaeological features and deposits were sealed by the subsoil (101), unless otherwise stated.

5.1.3 The evaluation identified a large watercourse or pond and a system of east to west and north-west to south-east aligned early Roman field boundaries located in the centre of the site. These ditches were likely associated with the Roman settlement site c.200m to the north-east on the higher ground. A north-west to south-east aligned system of post-medieval land management in the form of furrows and land drains was identified in the northern part of the site.

### **5.2 Trench 1**

5.2.1 Trench 1 was intended to be located on the eastern side of the site but due to heavy overgrowth and the use of part of the site as a functioning allotment area it was decided that Trench 1 should be omitted. This was confirmed with Kasia Gdaniec (CCCHET) during the monitoring meeting upon assessment of the likelihood of significant archaeological remains.

### **5.3 Trench 2 (Figure 2)**

5.3.1 Trench 2 contained no archaeological features or deposits.

<b>TRENCH 2</b>	<b>Figure 2</b>	
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Trench Alignment: SW-NE	Length: 26.15m	Level of Natural(m OD): 9.10-9.25m	
Deposit	Context No.	Average Thickness/Depth (m)	
		SW End	NE End
Topsoil (T)	(100)	0.24m	0.33m
Subsoil (T)	(101)	0.24m	0.55m
Natural (D)	(102)	0.48m+	0.88m+
<b>Summary</b>			
Trench 2 was located in the south-eastern corner of the site. Trench 2 was only machined to a length of c.27m rather than the proposed 40m due to overgrowth of the scrub to the north east.			
Trench 2 contained no archaeological feature or deposits.			

(Subsequently (T)= Thickness (D)= Depth)

## 5.4 Trench 3 (Figure 2, Plate 9)

5.4.1 Trench 3 contained no archaeological features or deposits.

<b>TRENCH 3</b>	<b>Figure 2</b>	<b>Plate 9</b>	
Trench Alignment: NW-SE	Length: 31.97m	Level of Natural(m OD): 9.29-9.59m	
Deposit	Context No.	Average Thickness/Depth (m)	
		SE End	NW End
Topsoil (T)	(100)	0.45m	0.28m
Subsoil (T)	(101)	0.3m	0.3m
Natural (D)	(102)	0.75m+	0.58m+
<b>Summary</b>			
Trench 3 was located towards the south-eastern corner of the site. Trench 3 was only machined to a length of c.32m rather than the proposed 40m due to overgrowth of the south-western boundary.			
Trench 3 contained no archaeological feature or deposits.			

## 5.5 Trench 4 (Figure 2)

5.5.1 Trench 4 contained no archaeological features or deposits.

<b>TRENCH 4</b>	<b>Figure 2</b>	
Trench Alignment: NW-SE	Length: 37.51m	Level of Natural(m OD): 9.36-9.46m

Deposit	Context No.	Average Thickness/Depth (m)	
		SW End	NE End
Topsoil (T)	(100)	0.35m	0.3m
Subsoil (T)	(101)	0.5m	0.5m
Natural (D)	(102)	0.85m+	0.8m+
<b>Summary</b>			
Trench 4 was located towards the south-eastern corner of the site.			
Trench 4 contained no archaeological feature or deposits. A north-west to south-east aligned water pipe was identified at the north-eastern end of the trench.			

## 5.6 Trench 5 (Figure 2)

5.6.1 Trench 5 contained no archaeological features or deposits.

TRENCH 5	Figure 2	Plate 12	
Trench Alignment: NNW-SSE	Length: 18.43m	Level of Natural(m OD): 9.53-9.84m	
Deposit	Context No.	Average Thickness/Depth (m)	
		SSE End	NNW End
Topsoil (T)	(100)	0.32m	0.28m
Subsoil (T)	(101)	0.56m	0.52m
Natural (D)	(102)	0.88m+	0.9m+
<b>Summary</b>			
Trench 5 was located towards the south western boundary of the site. Trench 5 was rotated from its original proposed axis of north-east to south-west and shortened due to overgrowth of scrub and trees.			
Trench 5 contained no archeological features or deposits.			

## 5.7 Trench 6 (Figures 2-3, Plates 2-4)

5.7.1 Trench 6 contained a large feature that likely represents the location of an old water course.

5.7.2 Feature [104] (Figure 3, Plates 2-4) was located towards the south-western end of the trench and had an undefined shape in plan with moderately sloping sides and a concave base, measuring over 5m wide and over 1.1m deep. It had a single naturally formed fill (103) of dark brownish grey sandy silt with occasional stone and occasional manganese inclusions that

contained a single sherd (2g) of early Roman pottery (Anderson, Section 6.1). This feature was partially machined due to it not being identified as a feature distinct from the subsoil until the natural was identified on the north-western side. It was therefore recorded in section and within an intervention (Figure 3).

5.7.3 This feature is likely to be the remains of an old watercourse, possibly a pond or a channel. The fill of the pit appears to have been formed by silt accumulation over a long period of time. The pot is likely to represent a residual sherd of pottery and not indicative of nearby settlement or activity. It should be noted that this feature is located in close proximity to one of the 19th century field boundaries shown on the 1847 Inclosure map (Harrison 2015, DBA Figure 6) and may therefore may be a boundary ditch rather than a large pond or water course but based on the large size and nature of the fill if the feature this is less likely.

<b>TRENCH 6</b>	<b>Figures 2-3</b>	<b>Plates 2-4</b>	
Trench Alignment: NW-SE	Length: 38.11m	Level of Natural(m OD): 9.60m-9.82m	
<b>Deposit</b>	<b>Context No.</b>	<b>Average Thickness/Depth (m)</b>	
		<b>SE End</b>	<b>NW End</b>
Topsoil (T)	(100)	0.4m	0.4m
Subsoil (T)	(101)	0.65m	0.5m
Natural (D)	(102)	1.05m+	0.9m+
<b>Summary</b>			
Trench 6 was located towards the north-west of the site.			
Trench 6 contained Feature [104].			

## 5.8 Trench 7 (Figures 2 & 4, Plate 5)

5.8.1 Trench 7 contained the north-west to south-east aligned Ditch [110].

5.8.2 Ditch [110] (Figure 4, Plate 5) was north-west to south-east aligned, located towards the north eastern end of the trench and was linear with near vertical sides and a concave base, measuring 0.67m wide and 0.26m deep. It had a single naturally formed fill (109) of dark grey silt sand with moderate stone and occasional manganese inclusions that contained no finds.

5.8.3 Ditch [110] is undated but is on the same alignment of the post-medieval furrows in Trenches 10 and 12 to the north and is therefore likely to be post-medieval.

TRENCH 7	Figures 2 & 4		Plate 5	
Trench Alignment: NE-SW	Length: 27.16m	Level of Natural(m OD): 9.77m-9.88m		
Deposit	Context No.	Average Thickness/Depth (m)		
		SW End	NE End	
Topsoil (T)	(100)	0.35m	0.32m	
Subsoil (T)	(101)	0.52m	0.27m	
Natural (D)	(102)	0.87m+	0.59m+	
<b>Summary</b>				
Trench 7 was located towards the centre of the site. Trench 7 was rotated from its original proposed axis of east to west and shortened due to overgrowth of scrub and trees.				
Trench 7 contained a single north-west to south-east aligned ditch.				

## 5.9 Trench 8 (Figure 2, Plates 10)

5.9.1 Trench 8 contained no archaeological features or deposits.

TRENCH 8	Figure 2		Plate 10	
Trench Alignment: NW-SE	Length: 34.51m	Level of Natural(m OD): 9.54m-9.68m		
Deposit	Context No.	Average Thickness/Depth (m)		
		SE End	NW End	
Topsoil (T)	(100)	0.17m	0.45m	
Subsoil (T)	(101)	0.4m	0.23m	
Natural (D)	(102)	0.57m+	0.68m+	
<b>Summary</b>				
Trench 8 was located towards the centre of the site of the site.				
Trench 8 contained no archaeological features or deposits.				

## 5.10 Trench 9

5.10.1 Trench 9 was initially planned to be located towards the north-eastern corner of the site but due to heavy overgrowth and trees it was decided Trench 9 should be omitted. This was confirmed with Kasia Gdaniec (CCCHET) during the monitoring meeting upon assessment of the likelihood of

significant archaeological remains.

## 5.11 Trench 10 (Figures 2 & 5)

5.11.1 Trench 10 contained the north-west to south-east aligned Furrows [106] and [108]. The furrows were found alongside three north-west to south-east aligned plough scars.

5.11.2 Furrow [106] (Figure 5) was north-west to south-east aligned, located towards the southern end of the trench and was linear with imperceptible sides and a shallow concave base, measuring 1.4m wide and 0.16m deep. It had a single naturally formed fill (105) of mid-red brown sandy clayey silt rare stone inclusions that contained a single sherd (8g) of modern pottery and two fragments (9g) of post-medieval to modern ceramic building material (CBM). Furrow continues to the north-west into Trench 12 and was recorded as Furrow [124].

5.11.3 Furrow [108] (Figure 5) was north-west to south-east aligned, located towards the northern end of the trench and was linear with imperceptible sides and a flat base, measuring 1.5m wide and 0.13m deep. It had a single naturally formed fill (107) of dark brownish grey sandy clay silt with rare stone inclusions that contained no finds.

5.11.4 The two furrows and the three plough scars were both likely visible due to the relatively shallow depth of Trench 10. These agricultural features demonstrate an arable farming background to the site in the post-medieval through to modern period.

<b>TRENCH 10</b>		<b>Figures 2 &amp; 5</b>	
Trench Alignment: N-S		Length: 25.91m	Level of Natural(m OD): 9.74m-9.88m
<b>Deposit</b>	<b>Context No.</b>	<b>Average Thickness/Depth (m)</b>	
		<b>S End</b>	<b>N End</b>
Topsoil (T)	(100)	0.34m	0.36m
Subsoil (T)	(101)	-	-
Natural (D)	(102)	0.34m+	0.36m+
<b>Summary</b>			
Trench 10 was located towards the north-east of the site.			

Trench 10 contained two north-west to south-east aligned furrows and three north-west to south-east aligned plough scars.

## 5.12 Trench 11 (Figures 2 & 6, Plate 6)

5.12.1 Trench 11 contained the north-west to south-east aligned Ditches [120] and [122].

5.12.2 Ditch [120] (Figures 6, Plate 6) was north-west to south-east aligned, located towards the centre of the trench and was linear with sharply sloping sides and an irregular concave base, measuring 1.1m wide and 0.2m deep. It had a single naturally formed fill (119) of dark brownish grey sandy silt with no inclusions that contained no finds.

5.12.3 Ditch [122] (Figures 6, Plate 6) was north-west to south-east aligned, located towards the northern end of the trench and was linear with a sharply sloped and moderately sloped side and a concave base, measuring 1.5m wide and 0.26m deep. It had a single naturally formed fill (121) of dark brownish grey sandy silt with rare stone inclusions that contained a single sherd (3g) of early Roman pottery (Anderson, Section 6.1).

5.12.4 Both ditches [120] and [122] were originally thought to be the continuations of the east to west aligned ditches in Trenches 13 and 14 to the east but following the formation of the site plan it is clear that these ditches represent a different, north-west to south-east aligned boundary. The early Roman date ascribed to Ditch [122] should be considered tentative based on the small size of the pot sherd recovered and its location in the upper part of the fill of the ditch.

TRENCH 11	Figures 2 & 6	Plate 6	
Trench Alignment: NE-SW	Length: 39.37m	Level of Natural(m OD): 9.52m-9.66m	
Deposit	Context No.	Average Thickness/Depth (m)	
		SW End	NE End
Topsoil (T)	(100)	0.31m	0.34m
Subsoil (T)	(101)	0.5m	0.37m
Natural (D)	(102)	0.81m+	0.71m+
<b>Summary</b>			

Trench 11 was located towards the centre of the site.

Trench 11 contained no archaeological features or deposits.

### 5.13 Trench 12 (Figures 2 & 5)

5.13.1 Trench 12 contained the north-west to south-east aligned Furrow [124] and a north-west to south-east aligned land drain.

5.13.2 The topsoil at the south-western end of Trench 12 yielded a single fragment (153g) of lava quern stone.

5.13.3 Furrow [124] (Figure 5) was north-west to south-east aligned, located towards the northern end of the trench and was linear with imperceptible sides and a shallow flat base, measuring 0.77m wide and 0.1m deep. It had a single naturally formed fill (123) of dark brownish grey sandy clay silt with no inclusions that contained no finds.

5.13.4 The north-west to south-east aligned Furrow [124] is likely a continuation of Furrow [106] to the south-east in trench 10 and part of the arable land management on the site in the post-medieval period.

<b>TRENCH 12</b>		<b>Figures 2 &amp; 5</b>	
Trench Alignment: NE-SW		Length: 43.37m	Level of Natural(m OD): 9.75m-9.77m
<b>Deposit</b>	<b>Context No.</b>	<b>Average Thickness/Depth (m)</b>	
		<b>SW End</b>	<b>NE End</b>
Topsoil (T)	(100)	0.4m	0.32m
Subsoil (T)	(101)	0.4m	0.3m
Natural (D)	(102)	0.8m+	0.62m+
<b>Summary</b>			
Trench 12 was located towards the north-east corner of the site.			
Trench 12 contained a single north-west to south-east aligned furrow.			

### 5.14 Trench 13 (Figures 2 & 7)

5.14.1 Trench 13 contained the east to west aligned Ditches [116] and [118] (Figure 7) which extended into, and excavated and recorded in Trench 14 to the west and subsequently discussed in Section 5.15.

<b>TRENCH 13</b>	<b>Figures 2 &amp; 7</b>			
Trench Alignment: NNE-SSW	Length: 39.8m	Level of Natural(m OD): 9.61m		
<b>Deposit</b>	<b>Context No.</b>	<b>Average Thickness/Depth (m)</b>		
		<b>S End</b>	<b>N End</b>	
Topsoil (T)	(100)	0.3m	0.29m	
Subsoil (T)	(101)	0.49m	0.24m	
Natural (D)	(102)	0.79m+	0.53m+	
<b>Summary</b>				
Trench 13 was located towards the north-west corner of the site.				
Trench 13 contained two archaeological features: the east to west aligned continuations of Ditches [116] and [118].				

### 5.15 Trench 14 (Figures 2 & 7, Plates 7-8)

5.15.1 Trench 14 contained the east to west aligned ditches [114], [116] and [118] as well as a possible furrow [112].

5.15.2 Furrow [112] was north-west to south-east to west aligned, located towards the centre of the trench and was linear with imperceptibly sloping sides and a concave base, measuring 1.82m wide and 0.14m deep. It had a single naturally formed fill (111) of mid-brown sandy silt with no inclusions and no finds. Furrow [112] was truncated by Ditch [114].

5.15.3 Ditch [114] (Figure 7) was north-west to south-east aligned, located towards the centre of the trench and was linear with moderately sloping sides and a concave base, measuring 1.3m wide and 0.24m deep. It had a single naturally formed fill (113) of mid-grey brown sandy silt with no inclusions that contained no finds. Ditch [114] truncated Furrow [112].

5.15.4 Ditch [114] is undated, containing no finds. The relationship between Ditch [114] and the feature identified as Furrow [112] as well as the north-west to south-east alignment suggests this ditch is likely to be post-medieval.

5.15.5 Ditch [116] (Figure 7, Plate 7) was east to west aligned, located towards in the centre of the trench and was linear with sharply sloping sides and a concave base, measuring 1.67m wide and 0.27m deep. It had a single naturally formed fill (115) of mid-brown sandy clay silt with no inclusions that



contained a single sherd (12g) of an early Roman necked, everted rim jar (Anderson, Section 6.1).

5.15.6 Ditch [118] (Figure 7, Plate 8) was east-south-east to west-north-west aligned, located towards in the north-eastern end of the trench and was linear with sharply sloping sides and a flat base, measuring 3.1m wide and 0.38m deep. It had a single naturally formed fill (117) of mid-grey brown clay silt with no inclusions that contained no finds although a single fragment of animal Bone (2.5g) was recovered from the spoil heap adjacent to Ditch [118].

5.15.7 Ditches [116] and [118] both appear to be components of a broadly east to west aligned early Roman field system. Both ditches continue into Trench 13 to the east. These ditches may relate to the possible Roman settlement site to the north-west of the site (HER reference 09547).

TRENCH 14	Figures 2 & 7		Plates 7-8	
Trench Alignment: NE-SW	Length: 36.28m	Level of Natural(m OD): 9.78-9.87m		
Deposit	Context No.	Average Thickness/Depth (m)		
		SW End	NE End	
Topsoil (T)	(100)	0.3m	0.35m	
Subsoil (T)	(101)	0.3m	0.4m	
Natural (D)	(102)	0.6m+	0.75m+	
<b>Summary</b>				
Trench 14 was located in the north-western corner of the site.				
Trench 14 contained four archeological features: Two east to west aligned ditches, a north-west to south-east aligned ditch and a north-west to south-east aligned furrow.				

## 6 THE FINDS EVIDENCE

### 6.1 Roman Pottery

By Katie Anderson

- 6.1.1 A small assemblage of Roman pottery, totalling four sherds weighing 20g was recovered from the evaluation. All of the pottery was examined and recorded in accordance with the guidelines laid out by the Study Group for Roman Pottery (Perrin 2011) and using the standard terminology and codes advocated by the Museum of London Archaeology Service (Symonds 2002).
- 6.1.2 The assemblage comprised small, fragmented sherds, which were noted as being abraded, reflected in the low mean weight of 5g. All of the pottery dates to the early Roman period, with a suggested date range of AD40-100. This comprised one grog-tempered sherd weighing 2g (103), a sandy buff ware sherd, weighing 3g (100), a coarse sandy reduced ware sherd, weighing (3g, (121)) and a coarse sandy greyware rim sherd from a necked, everted rim jar (12g, (115)).
- 6.1.3 The quantity of the material recovered suggests a limited activity in the early Roman period, with a possibility that the pottery may be residual, based on the abraded condition of all of the sherds.

Context	No.	Wt(g)	Context Spotdate
100	1	3	AD50-100
103	1	2	AD40-70
115	1	12	AD50-100
121	1	3	AD40-70

**Table 1: All Roman Pottery by Context**

## **7 DISCUSSION & CONCLUSIONS**

7.1.1 The archaeological evaluation identified limited evidence for archaeological activity across the site at Cottenham of Early Roman and post-medieval date.

### **7.2 Undated**

7.2.1 Despite containing a small sherd of early Roman pottery, Feature [104] is likely a naturally formed pond or old watercourse that slowly filled it up and may have still been partially filled in and visible in the early Roman period hence the deposition of the Roman pottery.

### **7.3 Early Roman**

7.3.1 Ditches [116] and [118] in Trenches 13 and 14 likely relate to the possible Roman settlement site to the north-west of the site identified in cropmarks (HER reference 09547) and likely form field boundaries related to the settlement.

7.3.2 Although on a differing alignment to the ditches in Trenches 13 and 14, Ditches [120] and [122] in Trench 11 demonstrate further evidence for early Roman field boundaries that may associate to the settlement area to the north-west.

7.3.3 The worn condition and small size of the early Roman sherds of pottery indicate that the ditches on the site outside of any settlement activity.

7.3.4 These features are most likely related to an extensive area of settlement remains (HER reference 09547) which has been identified from aerial photographs 200m northwest of the site, thought to be of Roman date. As it is likely that the settlement was located on the higher ground, the features found during this evaluation may represent part of the agricultural hinterland.

### **7.4 Post-Medieval**

7.4.1 The post-medieval activity on the site was predominantly located in the northern half of the site in Trenches 10 and 12 where the relative shallow depth of the trenches demonstrated a north-west to south-east alignment of furrows and plough scars indicative of an arable agricultural land use on the

site during the post-medieval period.

- 7.4.2 An undated north-west to south-east ditch in the centre of the site in Trench 7 has been attributed to the post-medieval period based on similarity of alignment as the furrows and plough scars to the north and is likely the remains of a now defunct field boundary or drainage ditch.

## **7.5 Conclusions**

- 7.5.1 The evaluation identified a large watercourse or pond and a system of east to west and north-west to south-east aligned early Roman field boundaries located in the centre of the site. These ditches were likely associated with the Roman settlement site c.200m to the north-east on the higher ground. A north-west to south-east aligned system of post-medieval land management in the form of furrows and land drains was identified in the northern part of the site.
- 7.5.2 The archaeology at Cottenham is therefore defined as early Roman field boundaries and post-medieval to modern rural land management and is of local significance.

## **8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

8.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd would like to thank Myk Flitcroft of CgMs for commissioning the work on behalf of Endurance Estates Strategic Land Ltd. and to Anthill Plant Hire for providing the machine during the evaluation. PCA are also grateful to Kasia Gdaniec for her advice and for monitoring the work. The author would like to thank Taleyna Fletcher for managing the project. The author would also like to thank Steve Porter for his hard work throughout the project, and finally PCA's CAD department for preparing the figures.

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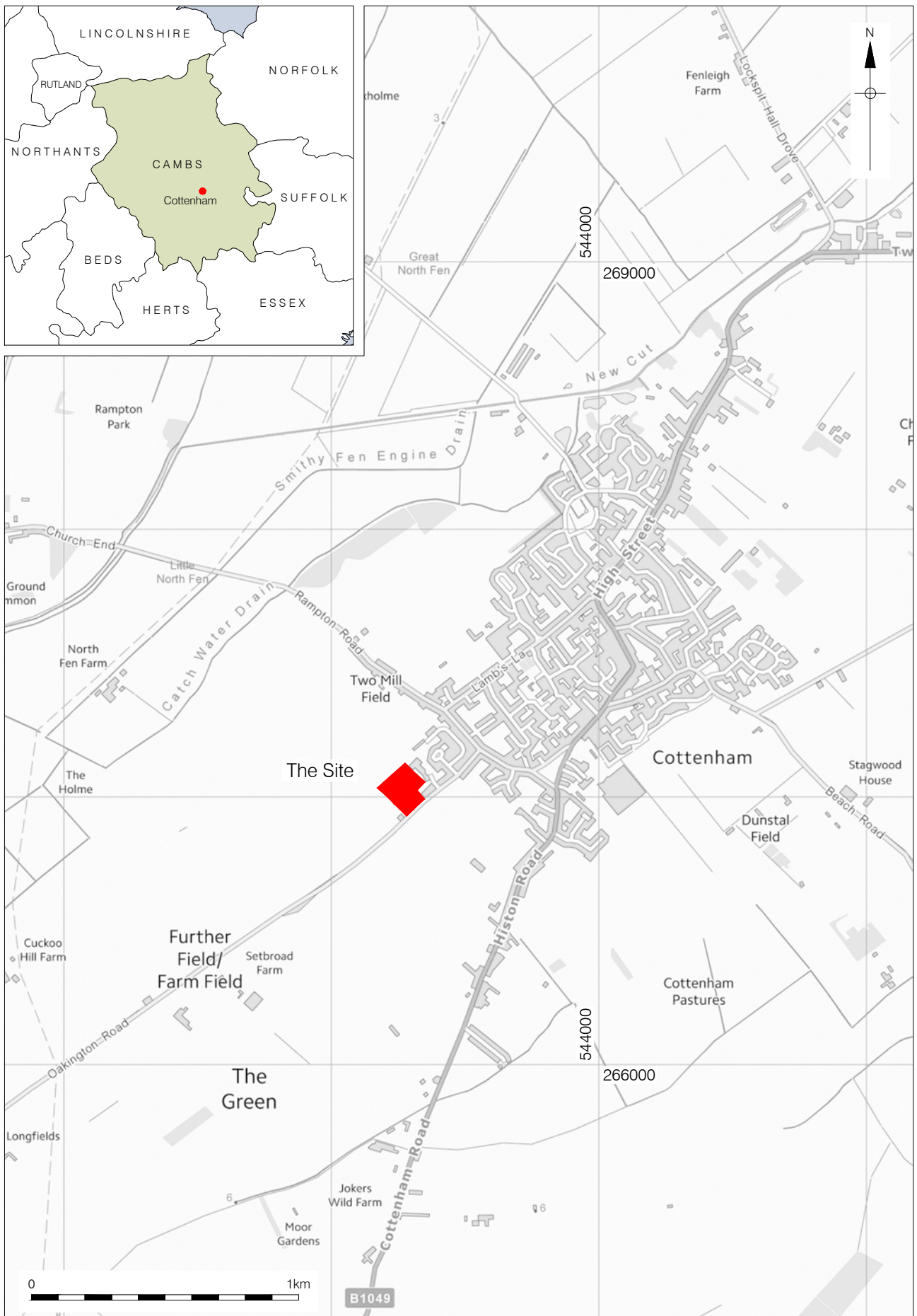
Medlycott, M. 2011. (ed.) Research and Archaeology Revisited: A revised framework for the East of England. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 24

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<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>. Accessed 29/05/15.



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2014

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



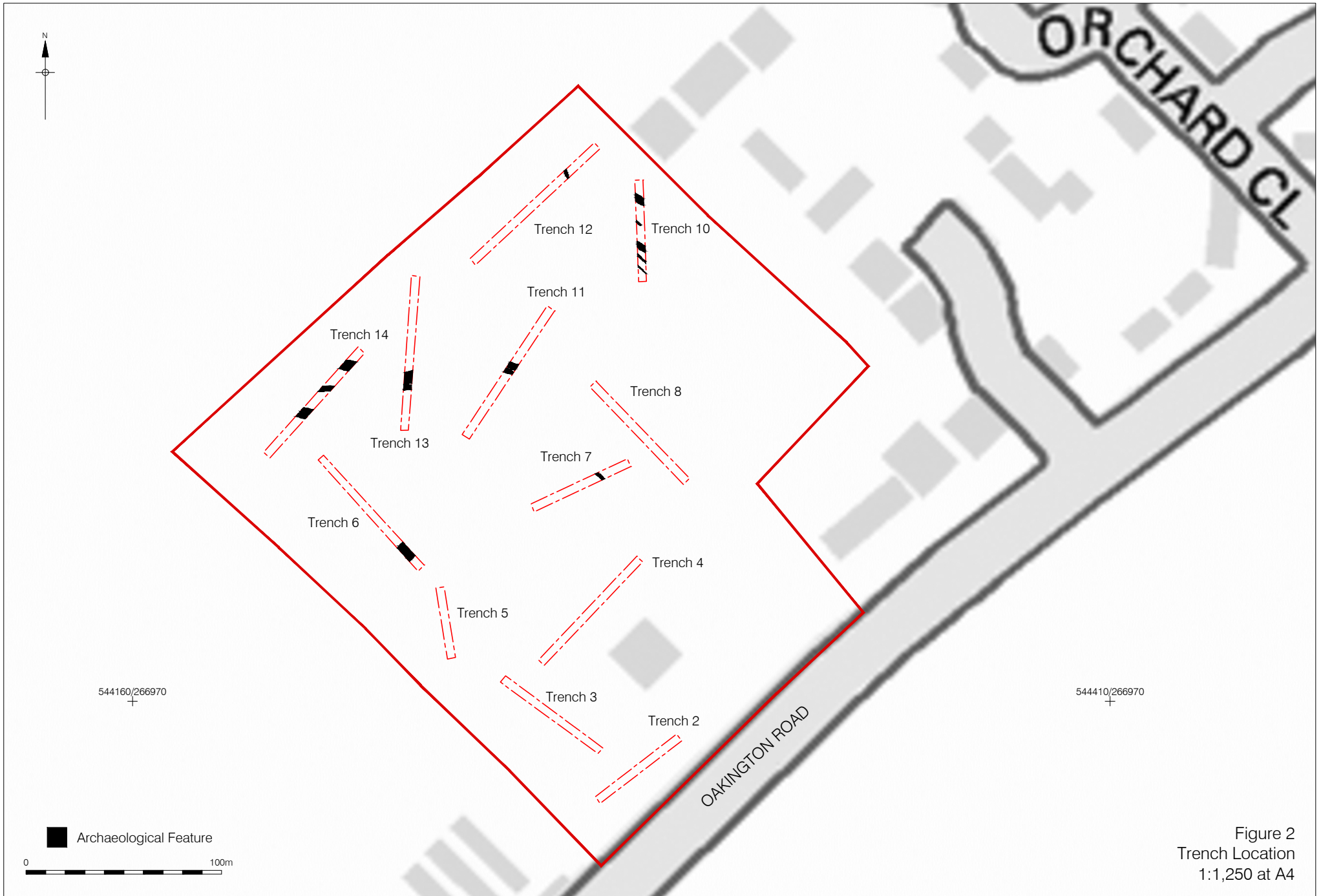


Figure 2  
Trench Location  
1:1,250 at A4

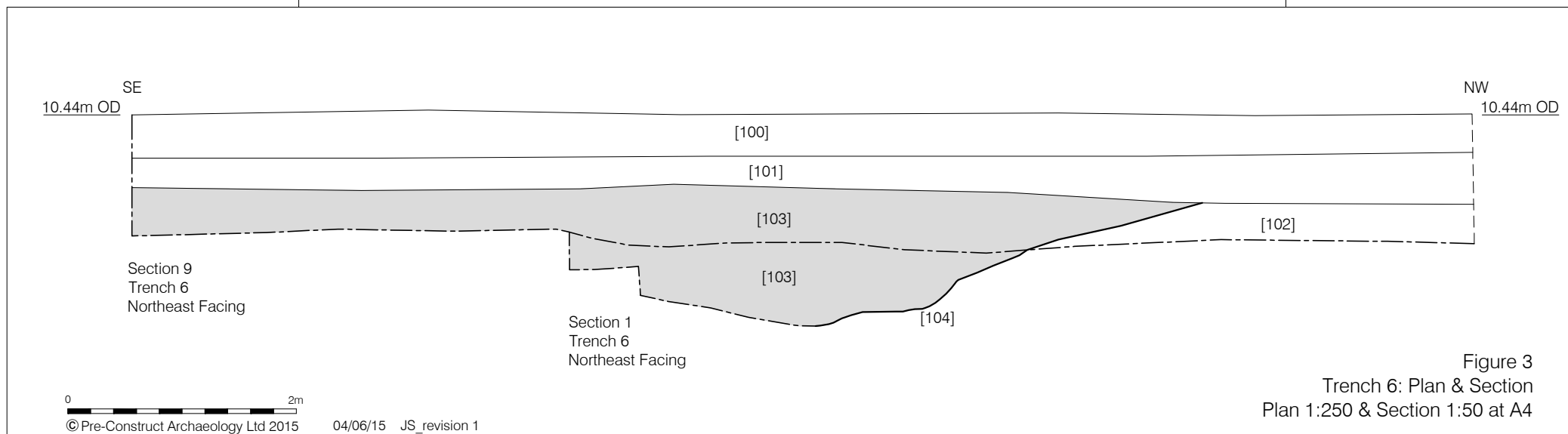
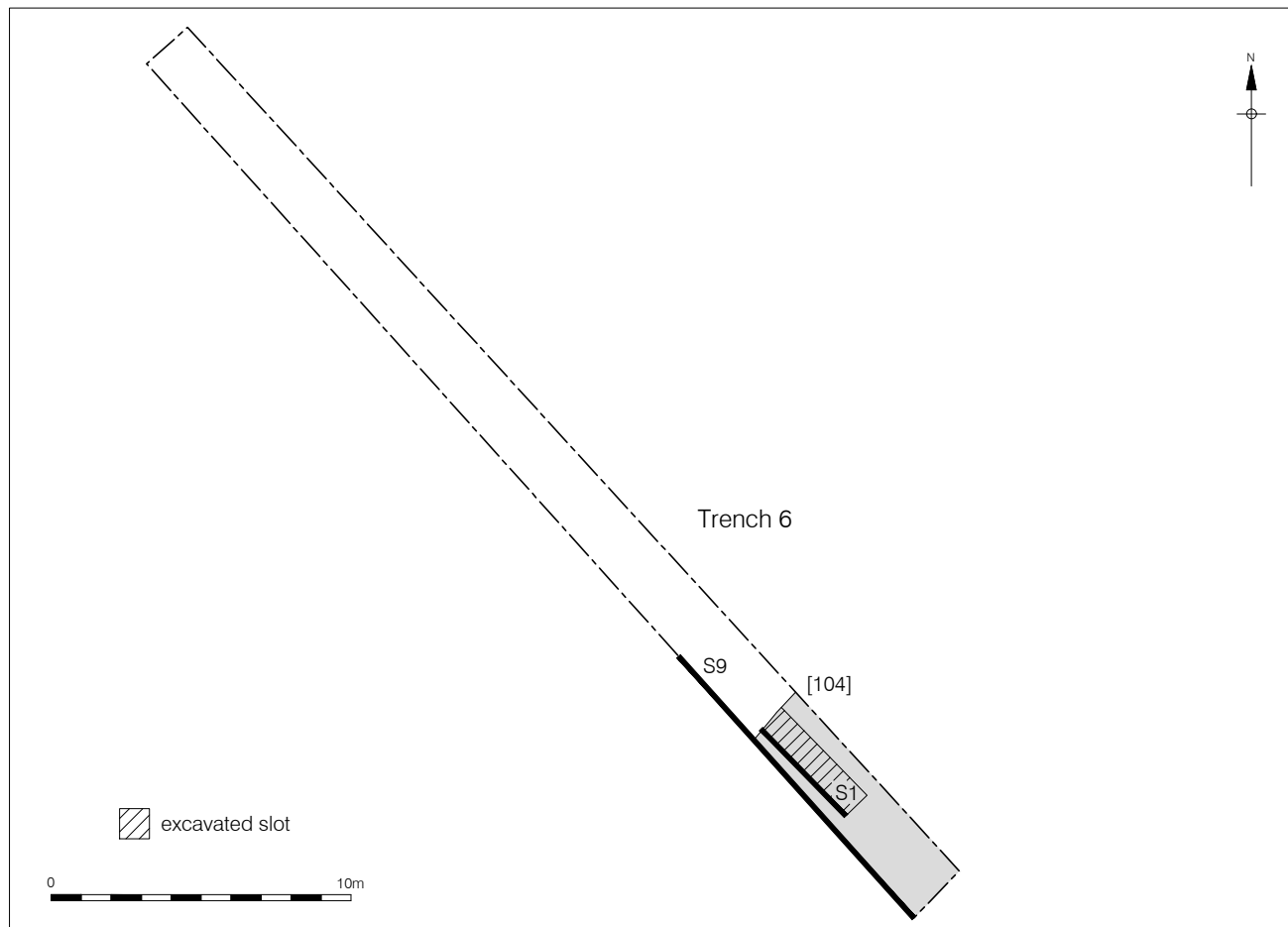


Figure 3  
Trench 6: Plan & Section  
Plan 1:250 & Section 1:50 at A4

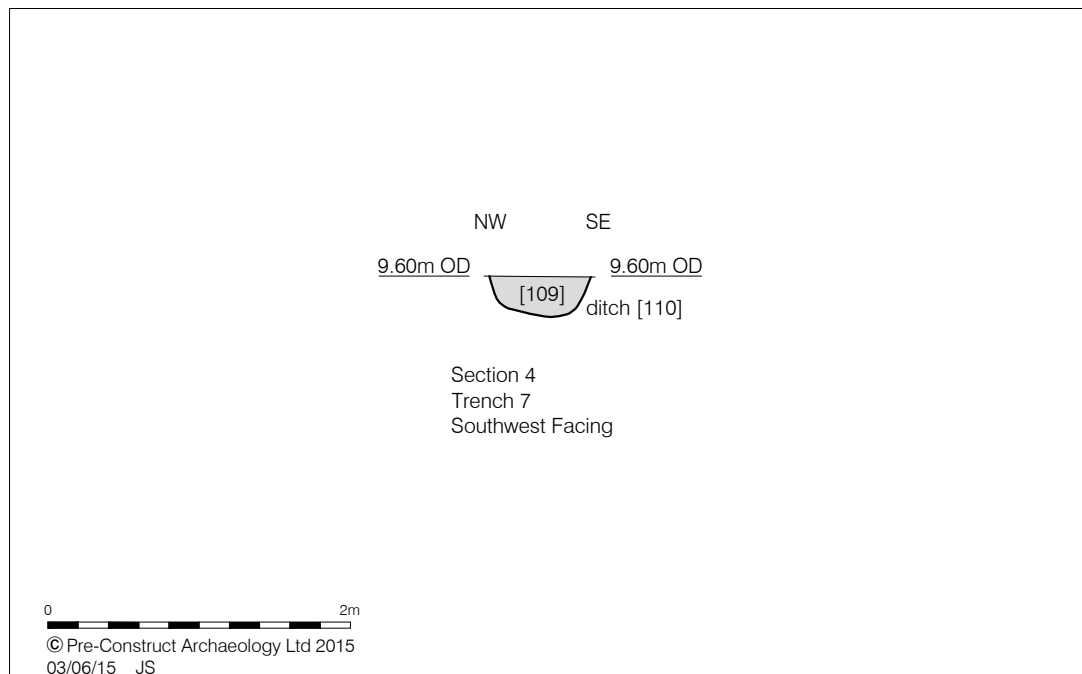
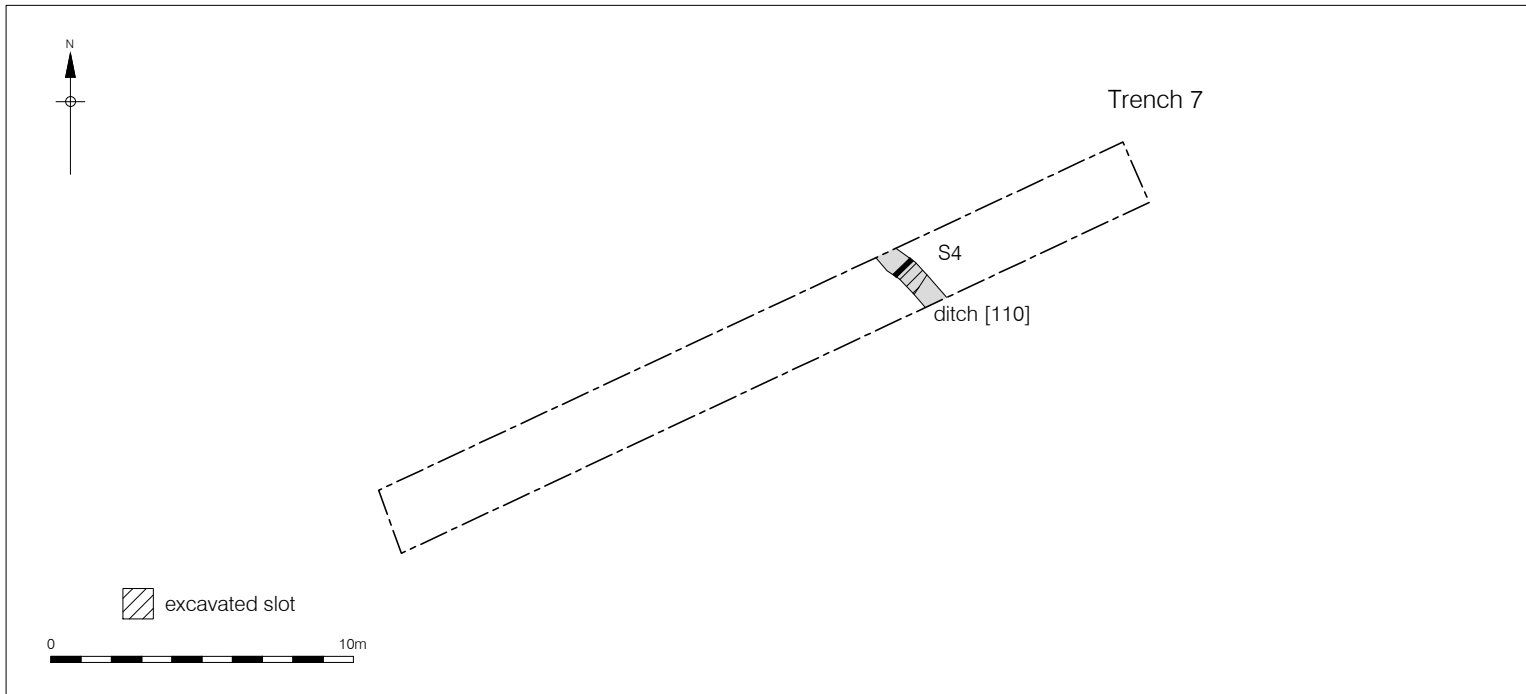
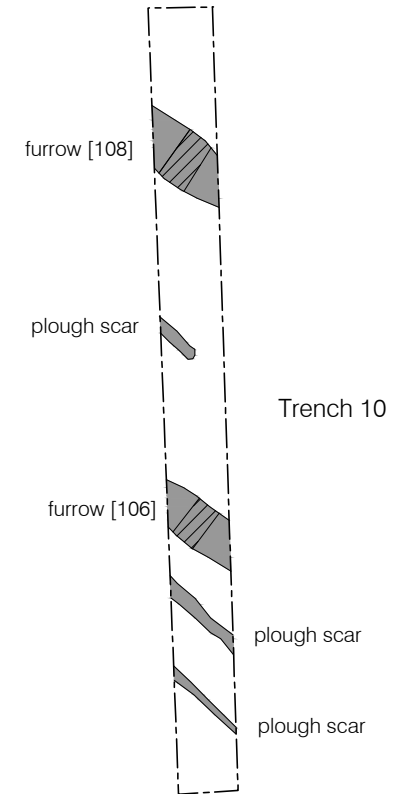
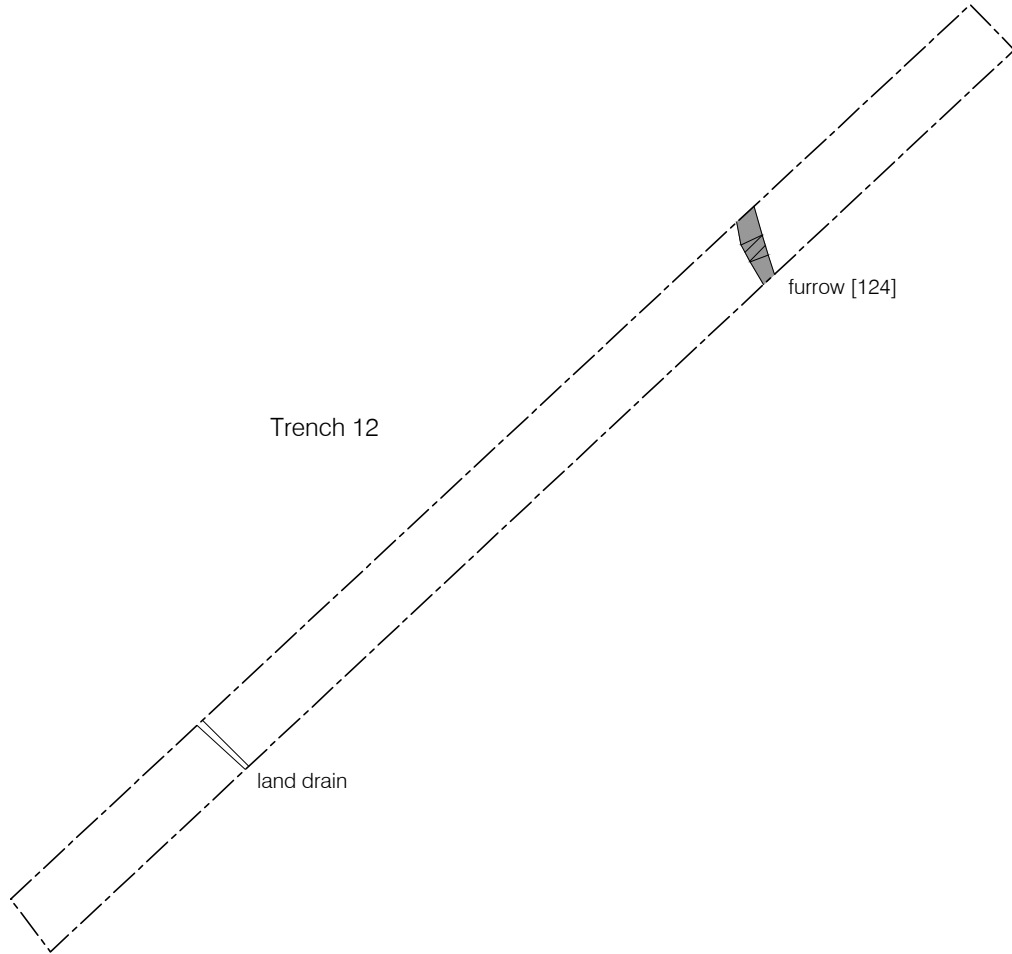


Figure 4  
Trench 7: Plan & Section  
Plan 1:250 & Section 1:50 at A4



 excavated slot

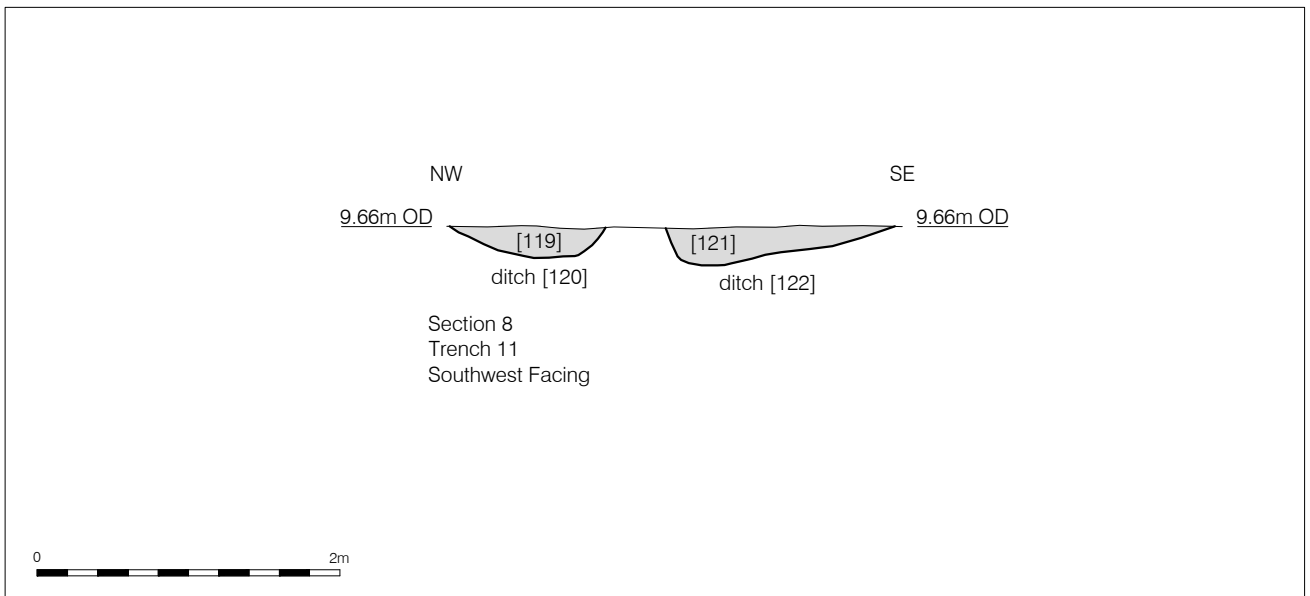
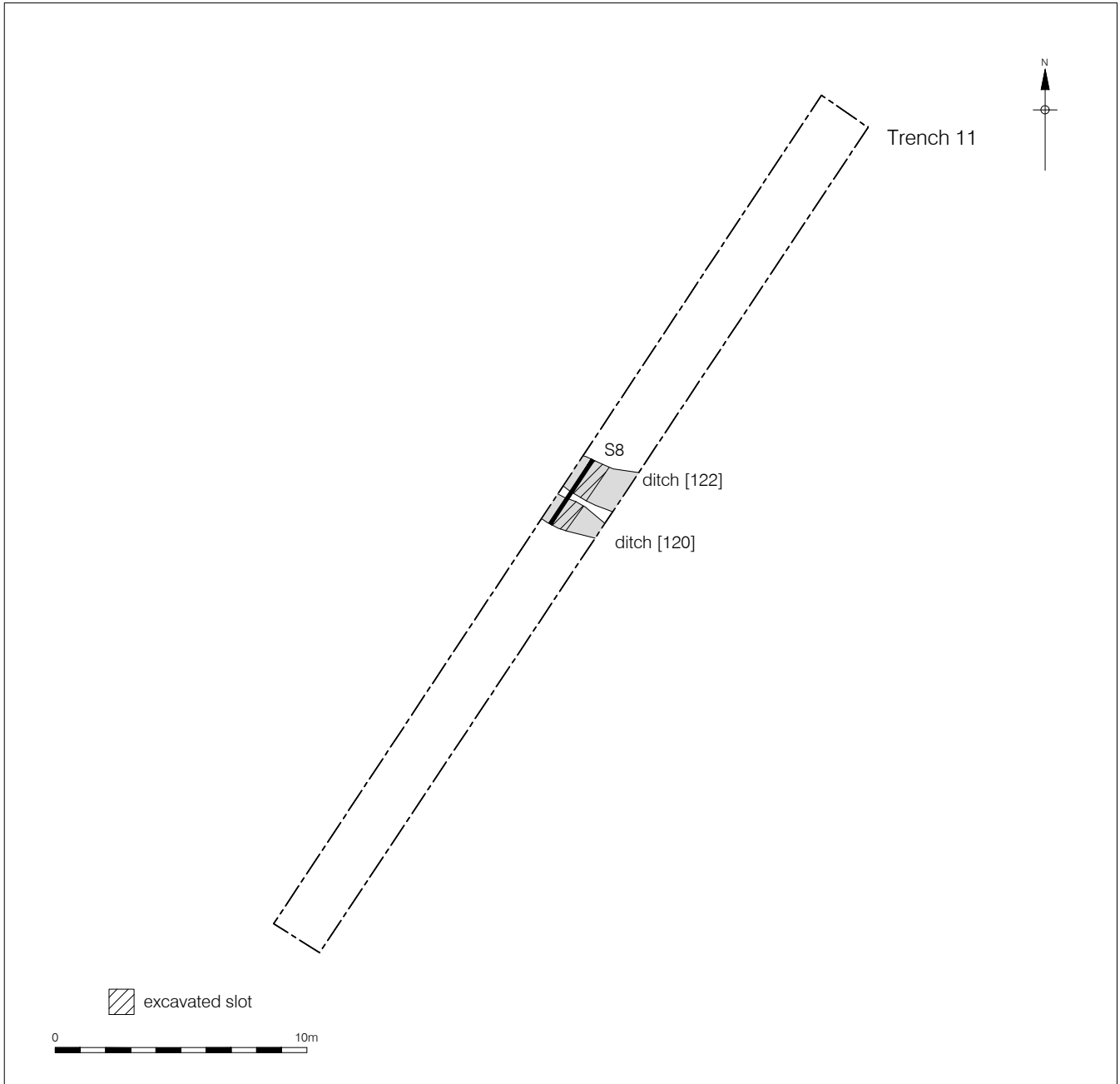
0 10m

A scale bar showing 0 to 10 meters.

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Figure 5  
Trenches 10 and 12  
1:250 at A4



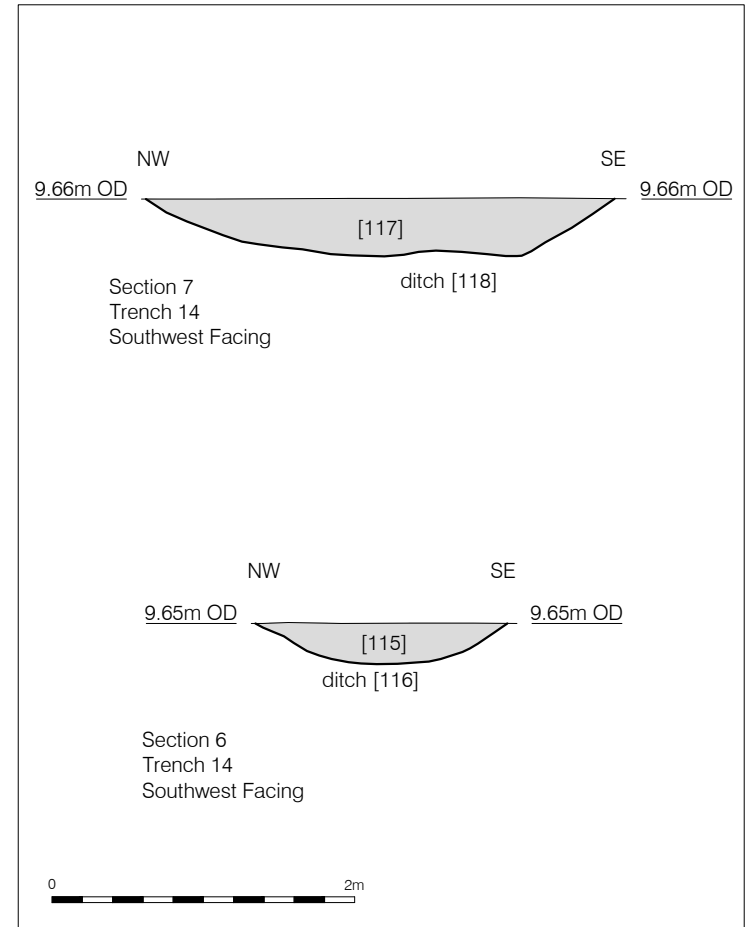
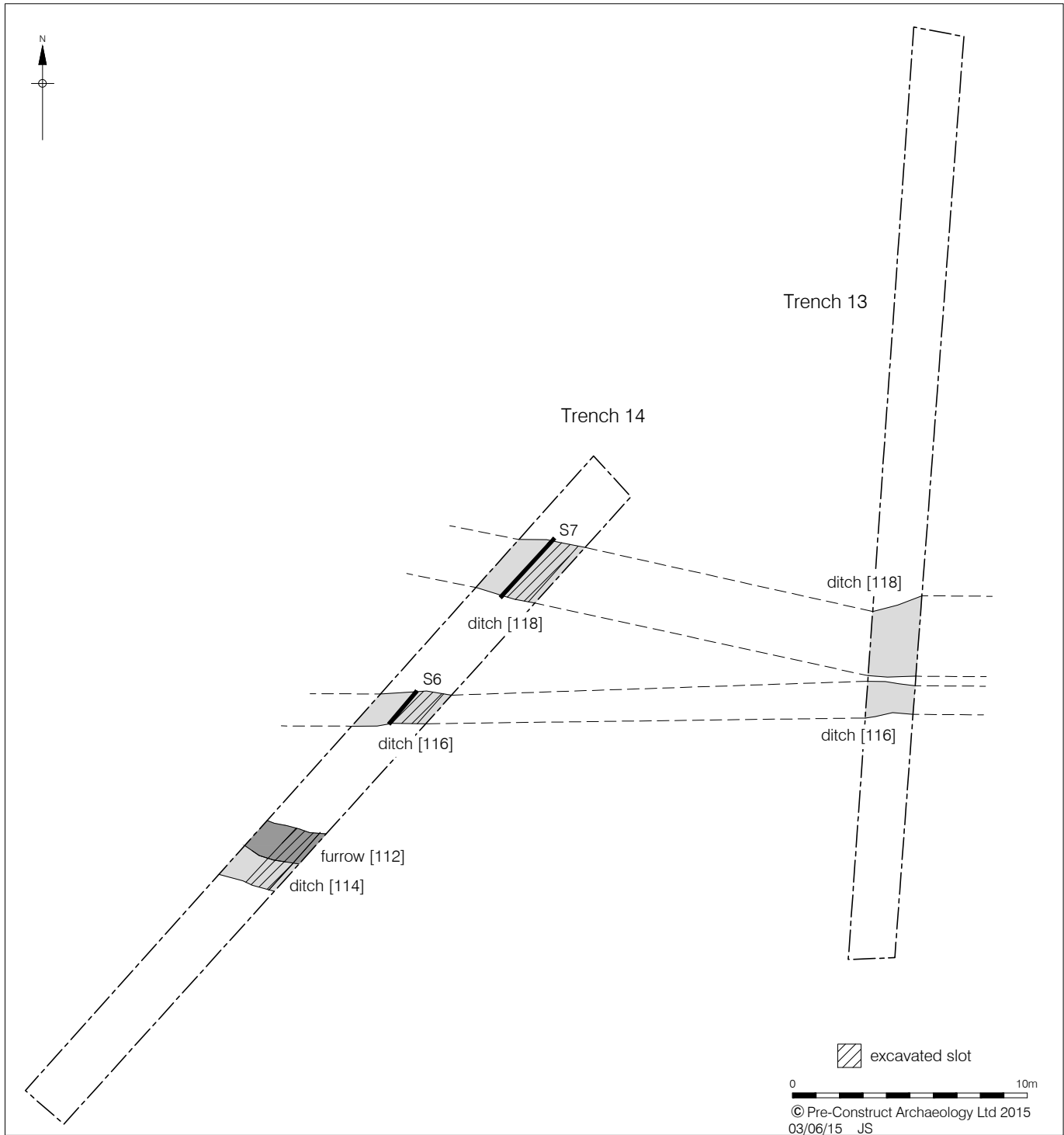


Figure 7  
Trenches 13 & 14: Plans & Sections  
Plan 1:250 & Section 1:50 at A4

## APPENDIX 1: PLATES



Plate 1: S facing view of site from Trench 12



Plate 2: Trench 6, NE facing view of Trench pre-excitation



Plate 3: Trench 6, SW facing view of [104]



Plate 4: Trench 6, S facing view of [104]





Plate 5: Trench 7, NW facing view of Ditch [110]



Plate 6: Trench 11, NW facing view of Ditches [120] & [122]



Plate 7: Trench 14, W facing view of Ditch [116]



Plate 8: Trench 14, W facing view of Ditch [118]



Plate 9: Trench 3, NW facing view of Trench 3



Plate 10: Trench 8, NW facing view of Trench 8



Plate 11: NE facing view of allotment area



Plate 12: Trench 5, S facing view following reinstatement

## APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT INDEX

Context	Cut	Type	Category	Interpretation	Trench
100	-	Layer	Topsoil	Topsoil	2-14
101	-	Layer	Subsoil	Subsoil	2-14
102	-	Layer	Natural	Natural Geological Horizon	2-14
103	104	Fill	Pit	Fill of large Pit [104]	6
104	104	Cut	Pit	Cut of large Pit	6
105	106	Fill	Furrow	Fill of Furrow [106]	10
106	106	Cut	Furrow	Cut of Furrow	10
107	108	Fill	Furrow	Fill of Furrow [108]	10
108	108	Cut	Furrow	Cut of Furrow	10
109	110	Fill	Ditch	Fill of Ditch [110]	7
110	110	Cut	Ditch	Cut of Ditch	7
111	112	Fill	Furrow	Fill of Furrow [112]	14
112	112	Cut	Furrow	Cut of Furrow	14
113	114	Fill	Ditch	Fill of Ditch [114]	14
114	114	Cut	Ditch	Cut of Ditch	14
115	116	Fill	Ditch	Fill of Ditch [116]	14
116	116	Cut	Ditch	Cut of Ditch	14
117	118	Fill	Ditch	Fill of Ditch [118]	14
118	118	Cut	Ditch	Cut of Ditch	14
119	120	Fill	Ditch	Fill of Ditch [120]	11
120	120	Cut	Ditch	Cut of Ditch	11
121	122	Fill	Ditch	Fill of Ditch [122]	11
122	122	Cut	Ditch	Cut of Ditch	11
123	124	Fill	Furrow	Fill of Furrow [124]	12
124	124	Cut	Furrow	Cut of Furrow	12

### APPENDIX 3: OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-212827

#### Project details

Project name Land at Oakington Road, Cottenham, Cambridgeshire: An Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation

Short description of the project 12 trench archaeological evaluation off Oakington Road Cottenham revealing early Roman ditches and post-medieval furrows and plough scars as well as a large feature that was likely the remains of an old watercourse.

Project dates Start: 26-05-2015 End: 01-06-2015

Previous/future work No / Not known

Any associated project reference codes ECB4470 - HER event no.

Any associated project reference codes CORC15 - Sitecode

Type of project Field evaluation

Site status None

Current Land use Woodland 7 - Scrub

Current Land use Cultivated Land 1 - Minimal cultivation

Monument type DITCH Roman

Monument type DITCH Post Medieval

Monument type DITCH Modern

Monument type PIT Uncertain

Significant Finds POTTERY Roman

Significant Finds POTTERY Post Medieval

Significant Finds CBM Post Medieval

Significant Finds ANIMAL BONE Uncertain

Significant Finds STONE Uncertain

Methods & "Sample Trenches", "Targeted Trenches"  
techniques

Development type Rural residential

Prompt Planning condition

Position in the Pre-application  
planning process

---

Project location

Country England

Site location CAMBRIDGESHIRE SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE COTTENHAM  
Land at Oakington Road, Cottenham, Cambridgeshire

Postcode CB24 8TW

Study area 1.89 Hectares

Site coordinates TL 4428 6702 52.2819416577 0.115296942709 52 16 54 N 000 06  
55 E Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 9.00m Max: 11.00m

---

Project creators

Name of Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd  
Organisation

Project brief CCC Historic Environment Team  
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Project design CgMs Consulting  
originator

Project Mark Hinman  
director/manager

Project supervisor Matthew Lees

Type of Private Developer  
sponsor/funding body

---

#### Project archives

Physical Archive CCC County Archaeology Store  
recipient

Physical Archive ID CORC15

Physical Contents "Animal Bones","Ceramics"

Digital Archive CCC County Archaeology Store  
recipient

Digital Archive ID CORC15

Digital Contents "none"

Digital Media "Images raster / digital photography","Survey"  
available

Paper Archive CCC County Archaeology Store  
recipient

Paper Archive ID CORC15

Paper Contents "none"

Paper Media "Context sheet","Plan","Report","Section","Survey "  
available

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#### Project bibliography 1

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Entered on 3 June 2015

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