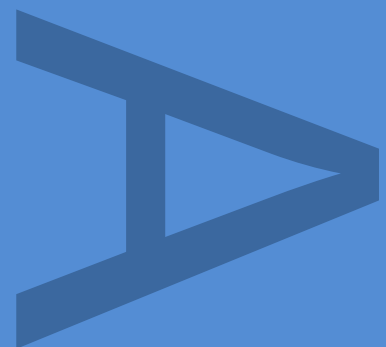


**LAND AT BERICOT WAY,  
WELWYN GARDEN CITY:  
AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
EVALUATION**

**NOVEMBER 2015**



**PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY  
R12288**

# LAND AT BERICOT WAY, WELWYN GARDEN CITY

## AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

### Quality Control

Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd	
Project Number	K4242
Report Number	R12288

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## Land at Bericot Way, Welwyn Garden City: An Archaeological Evaluation

**Local Planning Authority:** Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council

**Planning Reference:** N6/2014/2462/MA

**Central National Grid Reference:** TL 2660 1287

**Site Code:** HBWW15

**Report No.** R12288

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**November 2015**

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## **ABSTRACT**

*This report describes the results of an archaeological trial trench evaluation carried out by Pre-Construct Archaeology on land at Bericot Way, Welwyn Garden City (NGR TL 2660 1287) between the 10th and the 12th November 2015. The archaeological work was commissioned by CgMs Consulting Ltd in response to a planning condition attached to the construction of a 75 bed care home with associated landscaping. The aim of the work was to characterise the archaeological potential of the proposed development area.*

*The principal result of the evaluation was the discovery of a north-south aligned ditch and a series of northeast-southwest aligned ditches. All were undated and were cut through the subsoil, indicative of a post-medieval or modern date.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 An archaeological trial trench evaluation was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd (PCA) on land at Bericot Way, Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire (centred on Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference (NGR) TL 2660 1287) from the 10th to the 12th November 2015 (Figure 1).
- 1.2 The archaeological work was commissioned by CgMs Consulting in response to an archaeological planning condition attached to the construction of a 75 bed care home, with associated access, car-parking and landscaping (Planning Reference N6/2014/2462/MA).
- 1.3 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by Alexandra Thornton of CgMs Consulting Ltd (Thornton 2015a).
- 1.4 The aim of the evaluation was to determine 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.
- 1.5 A total of seven trial trenches were excavated and recorded.
- 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 Hertfordshire HER.

## **2 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY**

### **2.1 Geology**

2.1.1 The underlying geology of the site is Lewes Nodular Chalk Formation and Seaford Chalk Formation - Chalk (British Geological Survey; Website 1). A sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 84 to 94 million years ago in the Cretaceous Period when the local environment was dominated by warm chalk seas.

2.1.2 The superficial deposits are comprised of Kesgrave Catchment Subgroup - Sand and Gravel (BGS; Website 1). Superficial deposits formed up to 3 million years ago in the Quaternary Period when the local environment was dominated by rivers.

### **2.2 Topography**

2.2.1 The site is located within the eastern part of Welwyn Garden City and is bounded by Shackleton Way, Sylvan Way, Bericot Way and Waterbeach.

2.2.2 The site is generally flat and lies at c.79m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD).

### **3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

#### **3.1 General**

- 3.1.1 The site lies in an area of known archaeological significance, as recorded in the Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record (HER). This archaeological and historical background has been drawn from the Heritage Statement for the site (Thornton 2015b) and a search of the Hertfordshire HER.
- 3.1.2 There are several important Iron Age sites within 2km of the site, including a late Iron Age cemetery and 'chieftain's' burial, dated to the late 1st century BC (HER2815). The 'La Tene' burial contained a cremation with amphorae, 35 other pots, a silver cup, bronze vessels, a set of glass game counters and wooden vessels. The main grave formed part of a small cemetery including six further cremations in pots.
- 3.1.3 A late Iron Age enclosure and possible pottery kiln were excavated at Crookhams, Welwyn Garden City, approximately 1.7km to the north-west of the site (HER1142) and a late Iron Age enclosure is visible as a cropmark on an aerial photograph at Nutfield, Welwyn Garden City (HER2154). Another late Iron Age ditch was traced for 20ft when the Panshanger JMI school was built (HER2820).
- 3.1.4 Historical maps show that the site was part of enclosed fields until it became part of Panshanger Aerodrome in the mid-20th century. The housing developments around the site were built in the later 20th century.



## **4 METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1 Excavation and Sampling**

4.1.1 The Written Scheme of Investigation for the evaluation proposed the excavation of seven 50m trenches, distributed across the site (Figure 2). Due to space restrictions as a result of having to secure the site with fencing, Trenches 1 and 2 were only 45m and 42m long. The other trenches were unaffected.

4.1.2 Ground reduction was carried out under archaeological supervision using a 7-ton wheeled mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.8m-wide toothless ditching bucket. Topsoil and subsoil deposits were removed in spits down to the level of the undisturbed natural geological deposits where potential archaeological features could be observed and recorded. Exposed surfaces were cleaned by trowel and hoe as appropriate and all further excavation was undertaken manually using hand tools. Overburden deposits were set aside beside each trench and examined visually and with a metal-detector for finds retrieval.

4.1.3 Metal-detecting was carried out during the topsoil and subsoil stripping and throughout the excavation process. Archaeological features and spoilheaps were scanned by metal-detector as they were encountered/ created.

4.1.4 Field excavation techniques and recording methods are detailed in the PCA Fieldwork Induction Manual (Operations Manual I) by Joanna Taylor and Gary Brown (2009).

4.1.5 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.

### **4.2 Recording Methodology**

4.2.1 The limits of excavations, heights above Ordnance Datum (m OD) and the locations of archaeological features and interventions were recorded using a Leica 1200 GPS rover unit with RTK differential correction, giving three-

dimensional accuracy of 20mm or better.

- 4.2.2 Manual section drawings of archaeological features and deposits were drawn at an appropriate scale (1:10).
- 4.2.3 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 individual 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]. The record numbers assigned to cuts and deposits are entirely arbitrary and in no way reflect the chronological order in which events took place. All features and deposits recorded during the evaluation are listed in Appendix 2. Artefacts recovered during excavation were assigned to the record number of the deposit from which they were retrieved.
- 4.2.4 High-resolution digital photographs were taken at all stages of the evaluation process. Digital photographs were taken of all archaeological features and deposits.

## 5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

### 5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 The trenches are described below in numerical order, with technical data tabulated. Features and deposits are described from west to east or south to north depending on the alignment of the trench. Archaeological features and deposits were sealed by the subsoil, unless otherwise stated.

### 5.2 Trench 1

5.2.1 No archaeological features were present in Trench 1.

<b>TRENCH 1</b>	<b>Figure 2</b>		<b>Plate N/A</b>	
Trench Alignment: NW-SE	Length: 45m	Level of Natural (m OD): 78.7-78.72m		
<b>Deposit</b>	<b>Context No.</b>	<b>Average Depth (m)</b>		
		<b>NW End</b>	<b>SE End</b>	
Topsoil	(100)	0.28m	0.25m	
Subsoil	(101)	0.47m	0.38m	
Natural	(102)	0.47m+	0.38m+	
<b>Summary</b>				
No archaeological features were present in Trench 1.				

### 5.3 Trench 2

5.3.1 No archaeological features were present in Trench 2.

<b>TRENCH 2</b>	<b>Figure 2</b>		<b>Plate N/A</b>	
Trench Alignment: N-S	Length: 42m	Level of Natural (m OD): 78.46-78.57m		
<b>Deposit</b>	<b>Context No.</b>	<b>Average Depth (m)</b>		
		<b>S End</b>	<b>N End</b>	
Topsoil	(100)	0.2m	0.24m	
Subsoil	(101)	0.34m	0.37m	
Natural	(102)	0.34m+	0.37m+	
<b>Summary</b>				
No archaeological features were present in Trench 2.				

## 5.4 Trench 3

5.4.1 The trench contained a single north-south aligned undated ditch.

5.4.2 Ditch [104] (Figure 3, Section 1) was 0.59m wide and 0.38m deep, with a steeply-sloping rounded profile and a single fill of mid yellowish-brown silty clay (103). Ditch [104] was visible at the level of and truncated the subsoil (101).

TRENCH 3	Figures 2-3		Plates 2-3	
Trench Alignment: NW-SE	Length: 50m	Level of Natural (m OD): 78.61-78.98m		
Deposit	Context No.	Average Depth (m)		
		NW End	SE End	
Topsoil	(100)	0.15m	0.12m	
Subsoil	(101)	0.26m	0.25m	
Made Ground	(107)	N/A	N/A	
Natural	(102)	0.26m+	0.25m+	
<b>Summary</b>				
Trench 3 contained an undated north-south aligned undated ditch which truncated the subsoil.				

## 5.5 Trench 4

5.5.1 The trench contained a single northeast-southwest aligned ditch terminus.

5.5.2 Ditch [110] (Figure 3, Section 2) was 1.58m wide and 0.5m deep, with a steeply-sloping rounded profile and a single fill of mid greyish-brown silty clay (109). Ditch [110] truncated the subsoil (101).

TRENCH 4	Figures 2-3		Plates 4-5	
Trench Alignment: NW-SE	Length: 50m	Level of Natural (m OD): 78.46-79m		
Deposit	Context No.	Average Depth (m)		
		NW End	SE End	
Topsoil	(100)	0.19m	0.12m	
Subsoil	(101)	0.44m	0.54m	
Natural	(102)	0.44m+	0.54m+	
<b>Summary</b>				
Trench 4 contained an undated northeast-southwest aligned ditch terminus which				

truncated the subsoil.

## 5.6 Trench 5

- 5.6.1 Three undated northeast-southwest aligned ditches were located in the south-eastern end of the trench.
- 5.6.2 Ditch [112] (Figure 3, Section 3) was 0.78m wide and 0.57m deep, with a steeply-sloping rounded profile and a single fill of mid greyish-brown silty clay (111). Ditch [112] truncated the subsoil (101) and was truncated by Ditch [114].
- 5.6.3 Ditch [114] (Figure 3, Section 3) was 0.97m wide and 0.5m deep, with a steeply-sloping rounded profile and a single fill of mid greyish-brown silty clay (113). Ditch [114] truncated Ditch [112].
- 5.6.4 Ditch [116] (Figure 3, Section 3) was 1.4m wide and 0.56m deep, with a steeply-sloping rounded profile and a single fill of mid greyish-brown silty clay (115). Ditch [116] truncated the subsoil (101).

<b>TRENCH 5</b>	<b>Figures 2-3</b>	<b>Plates 6-7</b>	
Trench Alignment: NW-SE	Length: 50m	Level of Natural (m OD): 78.58-78.62m	
<b>Deposit</b>	<b>Context No.</b>	<b>Average Depth (m)</b>	
		<b>NW End</b>	<b>SE End</b>
Topsoil	(100)	0.24m	0.18m
Subsoil	(101)	0.64m	0.56m
Natural	(102)	0.64m+	0.56m+
<b>Summary</b>			
Trench 5 contained three undated northeast-southwest aligned ditches which all truncated the subsoil (101).			

## 5.7 Trench 6

- 5.7.1 No archaeological features were present in Trench 6.

<b>TRENCH 6</b>	<b>Figure 2</b>	<b>Plate N/A</b>	
Trench Alignment: NW-SE	Length: 50m	Level of Natural (m OD): 78.7-78.8m	
<b>Deposit</b>	<b>Context No.</b>	<b>Average Depth (m)</b>	

		<b>NW End</b>	<b>SE End</b>
Topsoil	(100)	0.29m	0.2m
Subsoil	(101)	0.66m	0.74m
Natural	(102)	0.66m+	0.74m+
<b>Summary</b>			
No archaeological features were present in Trench 6.			

## 5.8 Trench 7

5.8.1 No archaeological features were present in Trench 7.

<b>TRENCH 7</b>	<b>Figure 2</b>		<b>Plate N/A</b>	
Trench Alignment: NE-SW	Length: 50m	Level of Natural (m OD): 78.72-78.93m		
<b>Deposit</b>	<b>Context No.</b>	<b>Average Depth (m)</b>		
		<b>NE End</b>	<b>SW End</b>	
Topsoil	(100)	0.25m	0.22m	
Subsoil	(101)	0.49m	0.53m	
Natural	(102)	0.49m+	0.53m+	
<b>Summary</b>				
No archaeological features were present in Trench 7.				

## **6 DISCUSSION & CONCLUSIONS**

- 6.1 The evaluation identified a north-south aligned ditch and a series of northeast-southwest aligned ditches. Though undated, all of the ditches were cut through the subsoil, which suggests they may not be of an early date. No field boundaries are shown within this field on 19th and 20th century Ordnance Survey maps, and by the mid-20th century the site was part of Panshanger Aerodrome until it was surrounded by housing developments in the late 1980s. Although the ditches are not visible on any cartographic sources, they are likely to date to the post-medieval or modern period and are perhaps associated with drainage of the land.
- 6.2 The results of the evaluation are in keeping with the rural nature of this area prior to redevelopment in the mid-20th century and are of local interest.

## **7 FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7.1 The evaluation found no significant archaeological remains or finds and no further archaeological mitigation is likely to be required. It is considered likely that the planning condition will be discharged, but this is awaiting confirmation from the county archaeologist.



## **8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

- 8.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd would like to thank CgMs Consulting Ltd for commissioning the work and Kelter Plant for operating the excavator. PCA is also grateful to Andy Instone of Hertfordshire County Council Historic Environment Team for his advice and for monitoring the work. The author would like to thank Shannon Hogan for managing the project, Stephanie Emra for her hard work on site, and finally PCA's CAD department for preparing the figures.

## **9 BIBLIOGRAPHY**

### **9.1 Printed Sources**

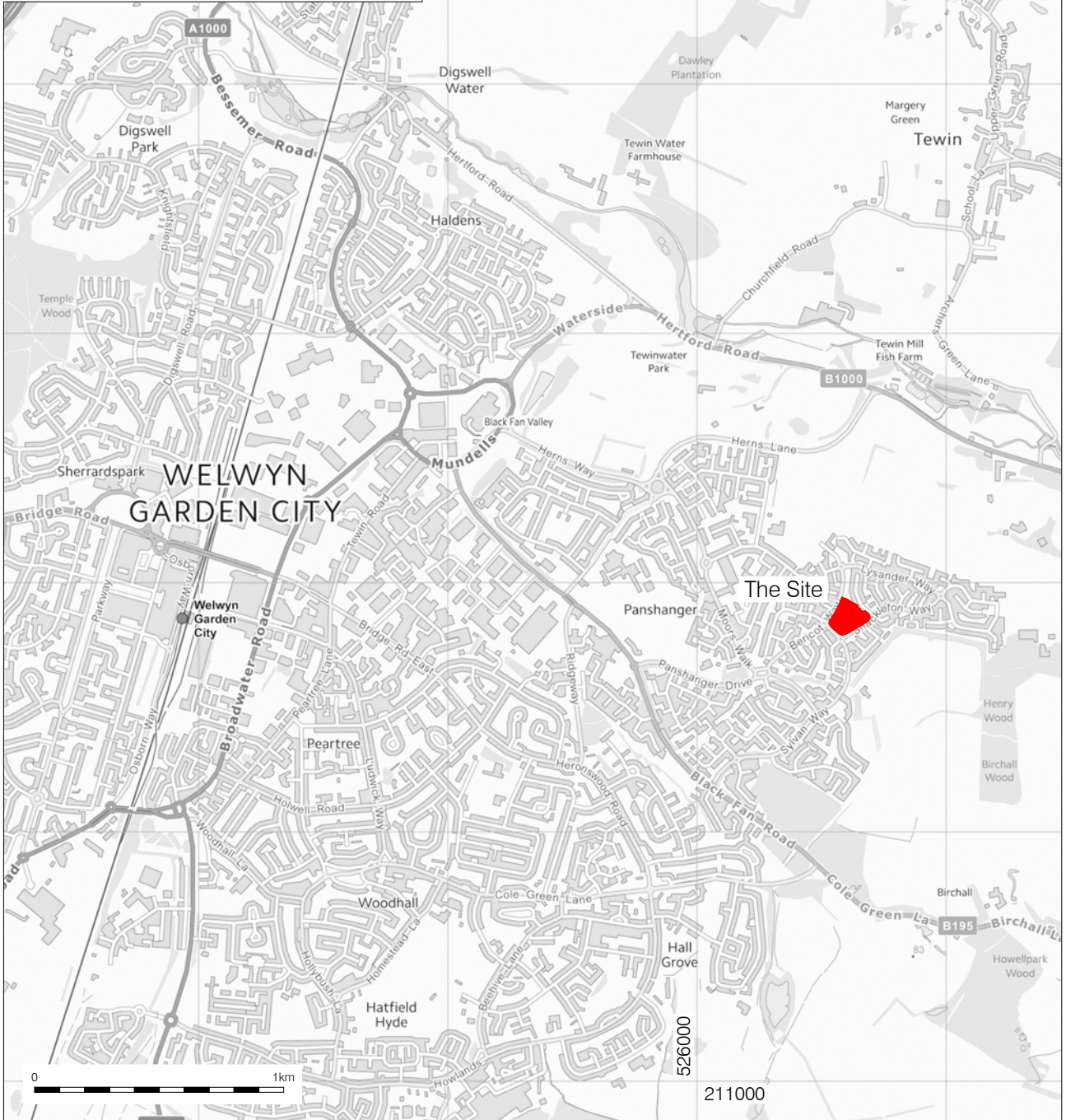
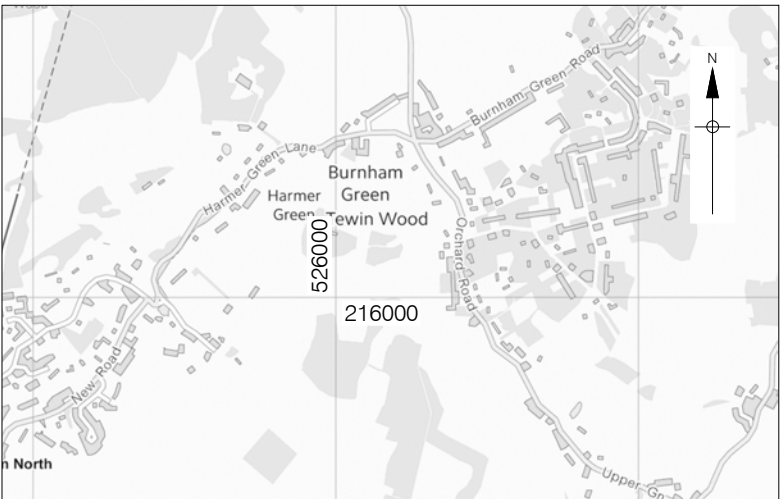
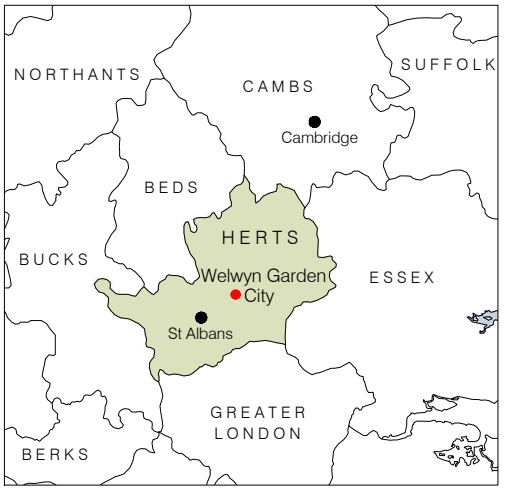
Thornton, A. 2015a Specification for a Programme of Archaeological Works (Trial Trenching), Land at Bericot Way Welwyn Garden City. CgMs Consulting Ltd (unpublished)

Thornton, A. 2015b Cultural Heritage Statement: Bericot Way Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire. CgMs Consulting Ltd (unpublished)

### **9.2 Websites**

1) British Geological Survey (Accessed 012/11/2015)

<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>

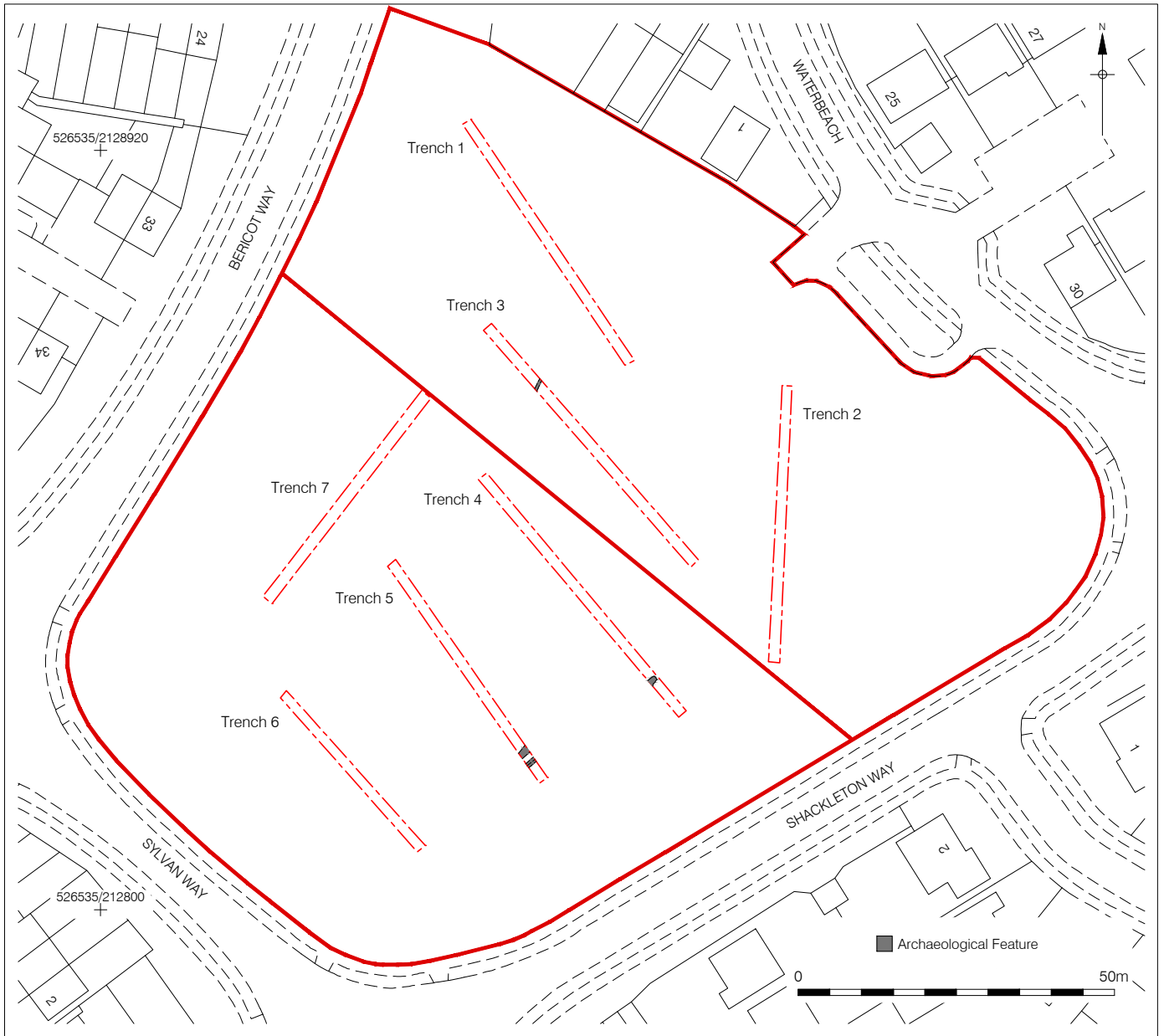


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25/11/15 JS

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

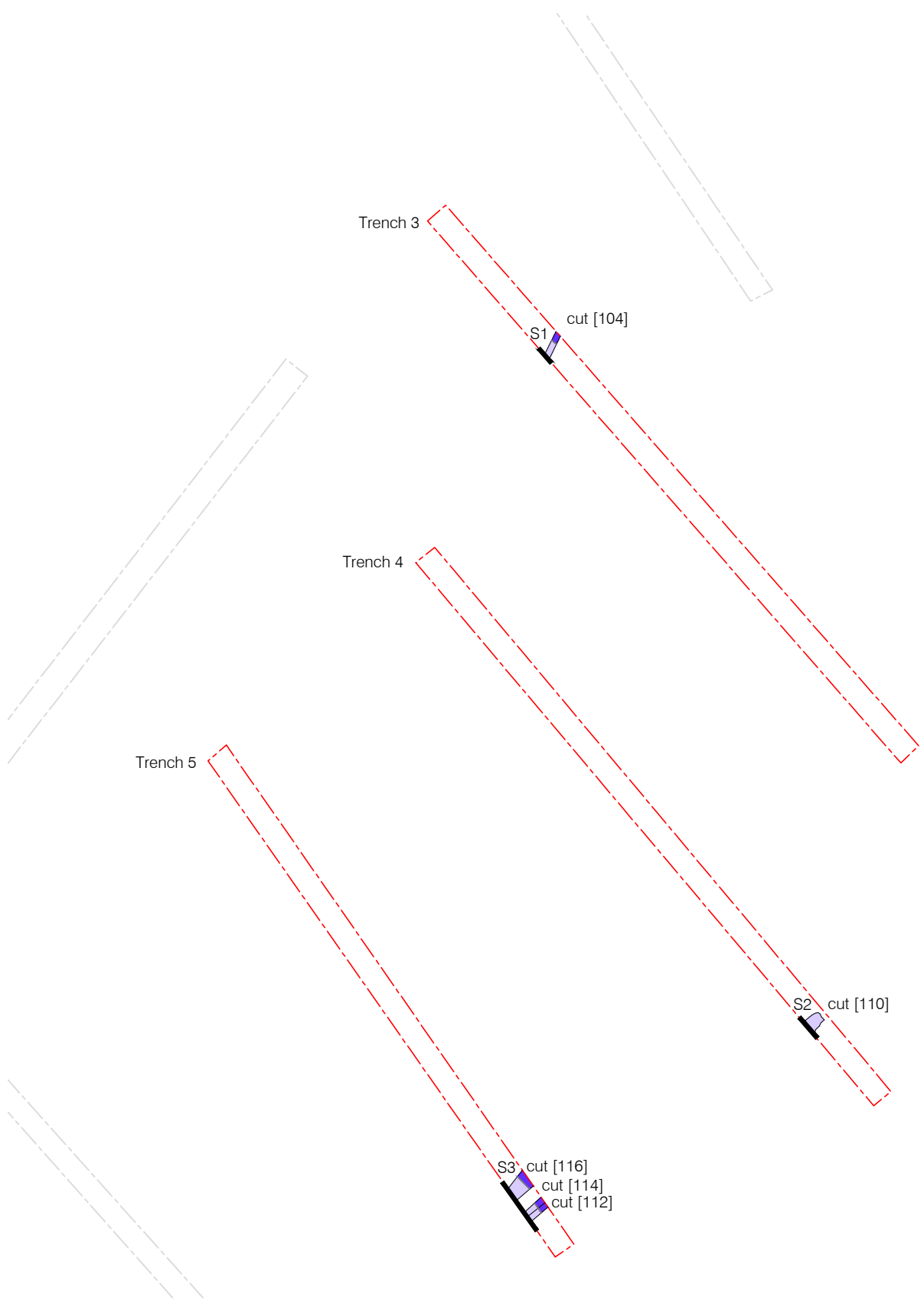


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Figure 2  
Trench Location  
1:1,000 at A4

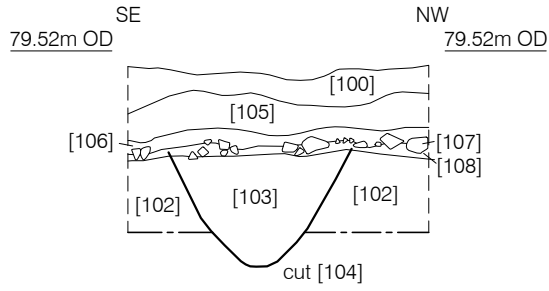


- Archaeological Feature
- Excavated Slot

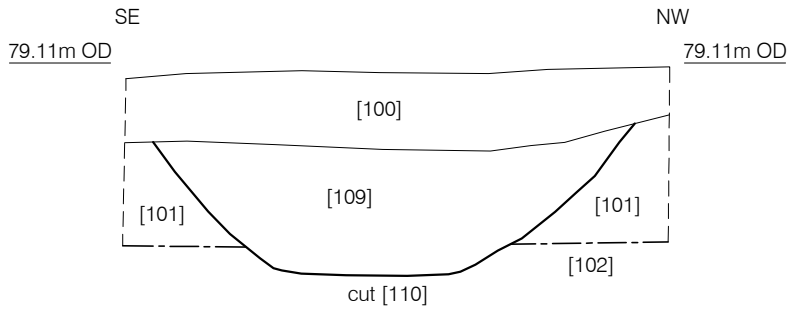


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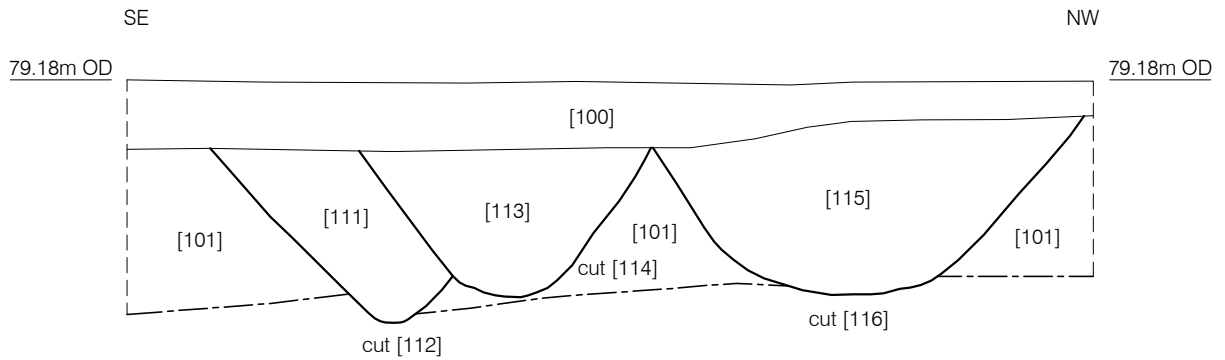
Figure 3  
Plan of Trenches 3, 4 & 5  
1:400 at A4



Section 1  
Trench 3  
Northeast Facing



Section 2  
Trench 4  
Northeast Facing



Section 3  
Trench 5  
Northeast Facing



Figure 4  
Sections 1 - 3  
1:25 at A4

**10 APPENDIX 1: PLATES**



Plate 1: The site, view south-west



Plate 2: Trench 3, view north-west





Plate 3: Ditch [104], view south-west



Plate 4: Trench 4, view south-east



Plate 5: Ditch [110], view south-west



Plate 6: Trench 5, view north-west



Plate 7: Ditches [112], [114] and [116], view south-west

## 11 APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT INDEX

Context	Cut	Type	Category	Interpretation	Trench Number
100	N/A	Layer		Topsoil	1-7
101	N/A	Layer		Subsoil	1-7
102	N/A	Layer		Natural	1-7
103	104	Fill	Ditch	Post-medieval/modern	3
104	104	Cut	Ditch	Post-medieval/modern	3
105				VOID	
106				VOID	
107	N/A	Layer	Made ground	Modern tarmac and brick	3, 7
108				VOID	
109	110	Fill	Ditch	Post-medieval/modern	4
110	110	Cut	Ditch	Post-medieval/modern	4
111	112	Fill	Ditch	Post-medieval/modern	5
112	112	Cut	Ditch	Post-medieval/modern	5
113	114	Fill	Ditch	Post-medieval/modern	5
114	114	Cut	Ditch	Post-medieval/modern	5
115	116	Fill	Ditch	Post-medieval/modern	5
116	116	Cut	Ditch	Post-medieval/modern	5

## 12 APPENDIX 3: OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-228624

### Project details

Project name Land at Bericot Way, Welwyn Garden City: An Archaeological Evaluation

Short description of the project This report describes the results of an archaeological trial trench evaluation carried out by Pre-Construct Archaeology on land at Bericot Way, Welwyn Garden City (NGR TL 2660 1287) between the 10th and the 12th November 2015. The archaeological work was commissioned by CgMs Consulting Ltd in response to a planning condition attached to the construction of a 75 bed care home with associated landscaping. The aim of the work was to characterise the archaeological potential of the proposed development area. The principal result of the evaluation was the discovery of a north-south aligned ditch and a series of northeast-southwest aligned ditches. All were undated and were cut through the subsoil, indicating a post-medieval or modern date.

Project dates Start: 10-11-2015 End: 12-11-2015

Previous/future work No / Not known

Any associated project reference codes HBWW15 - Sitecode

Type of project Field evaluation

Site status None

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

Monument type DITCH Post Medieval

Monument type DITCH Modern

Significant Finds NONE None

Methods & techniques & "Sample Trenches"

Development type    Urban residential (e.g. flats, houses, etc.)

Prompt                    Planning condition

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

---

#### Project location

Country                    England

Site location            HERTFORDSHIRE WELWYN HATFIELD WELWYN GARDEN CITY  
Land at Bericot Way, Welwyn Garden City

Study area                1.4 Hectares

Site coordinates        TL 2660 1287 51.799663496907 -0.163810842209 51 47 58 N 000  
09 49 W Point

---

#### Project creators

Name                      of Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited  
Organisation

Project                    brief    Andy Instone, Hertfordshire County Council Planning Archaeologist  
originator

Project                    design    CgMs Consulting Ltd.  
originator

Project                    Shannon Hogan  
director/manager

Project supervisor    Mary-Anne Slater

Type                      of Consultant  
sponsor/funding  
body

---

#### Project archives

Physical    Archive    No  
Exists?

Digital            Archive    Hertford Museum



recipient

Digital Archive ID HBWW15

Digital Contents "none"

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

Paper Archive Hertford Museum  
recipient

Paper Archive ID HBWW15

Paper Contents "none"

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

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Project bibliography

1

Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Publication type

Title Land at Bericot Way, Welwyn Garden City: An Archaeological  
Evaluation

Author(s)/Editor(s) Slater, M.

Date 2015

Issuer or publisher Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd

Place of issue or Cambridge  
publication

## APPENDIX 4: HER SUMMARY SHEET

<b>Site name and address:</b> Land at Bericot Way, Welwyn Garden City		
<b>County:</b> Hertfordshire	<b>District:</b> Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council	
<b>Village/Town:</b> Welwyn Garden City	<b>Parish:</b>	
<b>Planning application reference:</b> N6/2014/2462/MA		
<b>HER Enquiry reference:</b> 270/15		
<b>Funding source:</b> Developer funded		
<b>Nature of application:</b> Residential Development (Care home)		
<b>Present land use:</b> Open grassland		
<b>NGR (to 8 figures minimum):</b> TL 2660 1287		
<b>Site code (if applicable):</b> HBWW15		
<b>Site director/Organization:</b> Mary-Anne Slater, Pre-construct Archaeology Ltd		
<b>Type of work:</b> Archaeological Evaluation		
<b>Date of work:</b>	<b>Start:</b> 10/11/2015	<b>Finish:</b> 12/11/2015
<b>Location of site archive:</b> Hertford Museum		
<b>Related HER Nos:</b>	<b>Periods represented:</b> Undated	
<b>Relevant previous summaries/reports. /</b>		
<p><b>Summary of fieldwork results:</b></p> <p>This report describes the results of an archaeological trial trench evaluation carried out by Pre-Construct Archaeology on land at Bericot Way, Welwyn Garden City (NGR TL 2660 1287) between the 10th and the 12th November 2015. The archaeological work was commissioned by CgMs Consulting Ltd in response to a planning condition attached to the construction of a 75 bed care home with associated landscaping. The aim of the work was to characterise the archaeological potential of the proposed development area. The principal result of the evaluation was the discovery of a north-south aligned ditch and a series of northeast-southwest aligned ditches. All were undated and were cut through the subsoil, indicating a post-medieval or modern date.</p>		
<b>Author of summary:</b> M-A Slater	<b>Date of summary:</b> November 2015	

# PCA

---

## **PCA SOUTH**

UNIT 54  
BROCKLEY CROSS BUSINESS CENTRE  
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