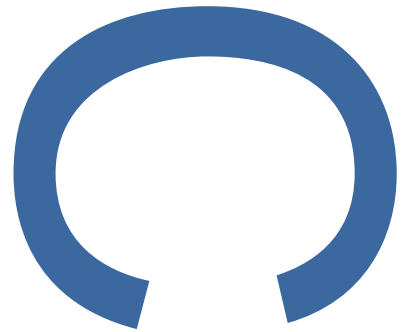


**THE BERRIES,
STANFORD ROAD,
SWINFORD,
LEICESTERSHIRE:**

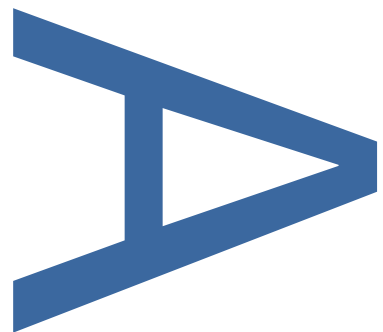


**A TOPOGRAPHIC EARTHWORK
SURVEY**



**PLANNING AUTHORITY:
HARBOROUGH DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**PLANNING REFERANCE:
16/01285/FUL**



**REPORT NUMBER:
R12953**

JULY 2017

PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY

DOCUMENT VERIFICATION

THE BERRIES, STANFORD ROAD, SWINFORD,
LEICESTERSHIRE

A TOPOGRAPHIC EARTHWORK SURVEY

Quality Control

Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd	
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	Name & Title	Signature	Date
Text Prepared by:	Nathalie Barrett		19/07/2017
Graphics Prepared by:	Nathalie Barrett & Charlotte Faiers		19/07/2017
Graphics Checked by:	Josephine Brown		19/07/2017
Project Manager Sign-off:	Kevin Trott		19/07/2017

Revision No.	Date	Checked	Approved

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

The Berries, Stanford Road, Swinford, Leicestershire:

A TOPOGRAPHIC EARTHWORK SURVEY

Local Planning Authority: Harborough District Council

Central National Grid Reference: SP 57020 79126

Planning Reference: 16/01285/FUL

Written and researched by: Nathalie Barrett

Project Manager: Kevin Trott

Commissioning Client: Andrew Granger & Co. Land & New Homes Ltd

Contractor: Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
Midlands Office
17-19 Kettering Road
Little Bowden
Market Harborough
Leicestershire
LE16 8AN

Tel: 01858 468333

E-mail: ktrott@pre-construct.com

Website: www.pre-construct.com

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July 2017

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PCA Report Number: R12953

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Abstract

Earthworks were recorded by topographic survey at The Berries Farm, in a field south of the historic settlement core of Swinford. This small field is a component of the pattern of earlier open fields that would have surrounded the settlement in the medieval and post-medieval period. While ridge and furrow which is evident in the adjacent field has not survived in this plot due to later disturbance, a small enclosure of probable post medieval date was recorded. This piecemeal survival of the historic landscape has now been preserved by record through topographical survey and evaluation.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 PLANNING BACKGROUND

1.1.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd was appointed by Andrew Granger & Co. Land & New Homes Ltd on behalf of Mr & Mrs Walker, to undertake an archaeological evaluation and earthwork survey on Land South of The Berries Stanford Road, Swinford, Leicestershire (Figure 1) as part of a planning condition (16/01285/FUL) for the erection of nine houses, an associated services and access. This work follows recommendations of appropriate archaeological intervention by the Planning Archaeologist for Leicestershire County Council, Sophie Clarke.

1.1.2 The site lies within the civil parish of Swinford and within the administration of Harborough District Council and is located at the southern edge of Swinford Village. The proposed development site is immediately south of The Berries Farm and is bounded by agricultural fields to the west and south, Stanford Road to the east and The Berries Farm to the north. The site is centred at NGR SP 57020 79126.

1.2 TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

1.2.1 The development site is situated in a small field located immediately south of The Berries farm buildings (Figure 2). To the west and south of the site are large fields containing preserved remains of medieval ridge and furrow. The site is currently used as pasture but was formerly an orchard. It is broadly flat at c 111m aOD with a slight slope towards the west and is bound by a mixed hedgerow which contains some mature trees (Plate 1).

1.2.2 The British Geological Survey (BGS) indicates a solid geology of Charmouth Mudstone Formation. Sedimentary Bedrock formed approximately 183 to 197 million years ago in the Jurassic Period. Overlying the bed rock is the superficial deposit of Oadby Member – Diamicton, formed up to 2 million years ago in the Quaternary Period when the local environment was dominated by ice age conditions (BGS Viewer).

1.2.3 This was confirmed during the evaluation trenching (PCA 2017): natural deposits across the site generally consisted of a firm-friable mid blue grey mottled with orange sandy clay. A layer of colluvium was adjacent observed adjacent to the slope along the eastern edge of the site.

1.3 HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

1.3.1 The archaeological and historic background has been previously described in a desk-based assessment carried out by ACD Environmental (2016). This suggested that there is relatively little evidence for Roman or prehistoric activity in the study area. As the medieval core of the settlement of Swinford lies to the north and fields surrounding the site contain the earthwork

remains of ridge and furrow (associated with medieval and early post-medieval cultivation practices) this suggests that the area of the site itself was beyond the extent of medieval settlement.

- 1.3.2 The first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1885 depicts the development site as an orchard. On the 1901 and 1952 maps, the same landscape layout is apparent, with no change to surrounding fields, farm or roads (ACD Environmental 2016).
- 1.3.3 This report should be read in conjunction with the recent evaluation report (PCA 2017) which identified below-ground features and examined the nature of the visible earthworks (Figure 2).

2. METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 The survey was undertaken using a Leica Smartrover RTK GPS, recorded in real-time National Grid co-ordinates via the Smartnet reference station network. Data was gathered by surveying the tops and bottoms of visible earthwork features and taking additional spot-heights across the survey area. The data was processed in Survey Control Centre and exported into AutoCAD for illustration production.

3. THE RESULTS

- 3.1 The best surviving feature on site is bank **a** (see Figure 3), a curvilinear bank which runs firstly north-south parallel with the eastern boundary of the site for a distance of 35m before then curving to follow the boundary for a further 41m as it turns in a south-westerly direction and extending into the southern boundary of the site. It generally stands at 30cm high to a maximum height of 80cm and varies from 3 to 3.75m in width. It stands out quite prominently from the gate in the south-east corner of the site due to ditch **d** which runs along a section of it (see Plate 1 and below). During excavation it was found however to be rather insubstantial in composition (evaluation Trench 5, for location see Figure 2).
- 3.2 This bank appears from form and location likely to be a former field boundary and disturbance from rooting found during the excavation reinforces this interpretation. The curving nature may indicate some time depth and possible relationship to former cultivation of an open field system, although the furrows which were excavated in Trenches 3 and 4 follow a different alignment.
- 3.3 A low mound (at **b**, Figure 3), standing 20 to 25 cm high and measuring 7m north-south and 5m east-west, just overlies the western edge of the bank. Its proximity to the gate and the change in the fence-line suggests a modern feature.

- 3.4 In the south-west corner of the site a second oval mound **c**, 11m north-south and 8m east-west, stands to a height of 20 to 30 cm. It is covered in vegetation and is of quite modern appearance (foreground of Plate 2).
- 3.5 The eastern edge of the field slopes down from the boundary with a scarp forming a ditch **d** or possibly a former trackway towards the farm and settlement to the north. It varies from 2 to 3m in width and is well defined along bank **a** to an occasional depth of 80cm.
- 3.6 The curvilinear bank at **e** defines the north-western portion of the site and was identified in the desk-based assessment (ACD Environmental 2016) as a probable post-medieval enclosure and the field survey concurs with this. It runs north-south for 29m before turning west towards the fence-line for 31m. The overall bank width varies from 7 to 9m in width and the south-east corner stands quite prominently as can be seen in Plate 3, although the height of the bank itself is only of 40cm. It is slightly less defined at the northern end, dropping to a height of 20 to 25 cm (Plate 4). There is a possible entrance in the east-west portion of the feature identified by two terminal ends of banks with a gap of 75cm at the base.
- 3.7 A shallow hollow or depression (at **f**) measuring 8m east-west by 6m north-south and only 5 to 10 cm deep lies at a possible entrance to the enclosure. It may be erosion at the enclosure entrance or may even be recent erosion caused by the location of a feeding or water trough such as that seen in Plate 5.
- 3.8 A further similar hollow, c 10 cm deep, lies immediately to the north at **g**. Again difficult to interpret, its cause may be a trough location; an alternative for both depressions would be tree bowls but the size of them would infer substantial trees which are no longer apparent in the current landscape. Tree bowls form the orchard phase of the site found during the evaluation were of much smaller size.
- 3.9 Ridge and furrow is visible in the field to the west of the site, however in the survey area itself the ground is generally undulating with no distinguishable ridges or furrows recorded (Plate 5), no doubt due to later use of the site. Traces of the furrows were noted and samples taken in the evaluation trenches which may yet yield further evidence.

4. CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 The relatively small surface area of earthworks that was surveyed and the apparent level of disturbance due to the use of the site as an orchard and more recently pasture, has not allowed for a great deal of interpretation from a topographical point of view. However, the site has benefited from investigation through evaluation trenching as well as earthwork recording, confirming the former presence of furrows and the characteristics of the earthwork evidence.

4.2 The survey has led to the existence and layout of this small surviving portion of the Swinford fieldscape being preserved by record.

5. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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

6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Pre-construct Archaeology Ltd would like to thank Andrew Granger & Co. Ltd for commissioning the work on behalf of Mr & Mrs Walker. Thanks to Charlotte Faiers for undertaking the field survey and Kevin Trott of PCA Midlands for managing the site and editing this report. Figures accompanying this report were prepared by Nathalie Barrett and Charlotte Faiers of PCA's Survey and Graphics department.

APPENDIX 1. PLATES



Plate 1: View north-west across site with bank a in the foreground



Plate 2: View north-east across the site from mound c



Plate 3: View east across linear a and enclosure e



Plate 4: View south-west to linear a and enclosure e



Plate 5: View south-east across site

APPENDIX 2. OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-290741

Project details

Project name	The Berries, Stanford Road, Swinford, Leicestershire
Short description of the project	Earthworks were recorded by topographic survey at The Berries Farm, in a field south of the historic settlement core of Swinford. This small field is a component of the pattern of earlier open fields that would have surrounded the settlement in the medieval and post-medieval period. While ridge and furrow which is evident in the adjacent field has not survived in this plot due to later disturbance, a small enclosure of probable post medieval date was recorded. This piecemeal survival of the historic landscape has now been preserved by record through topographical survey and excavation.
Project dates	Start: 04-04-2017 End: 19-07-2017
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Cultivated Land 1 - Minimal cultivation
Monument type	FIELD BOUNDARY Uncertain
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	"Part Survey"
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF

Project location

Country	England
Site location	LEICESTERSHIRE HARBOROUGH SWINFORD The Berries, Stanford Road, Swinford, Leicestershire
Study area	0 Square metres
Site coordinates	SP 57020 79126 52.406787342575 -1.161709482362 52 24 24 N 001 09 42 W Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd.
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	Nathalie Barrett
Project director/manager	Kevin Trott

Project supervisor Nathalie Barrett

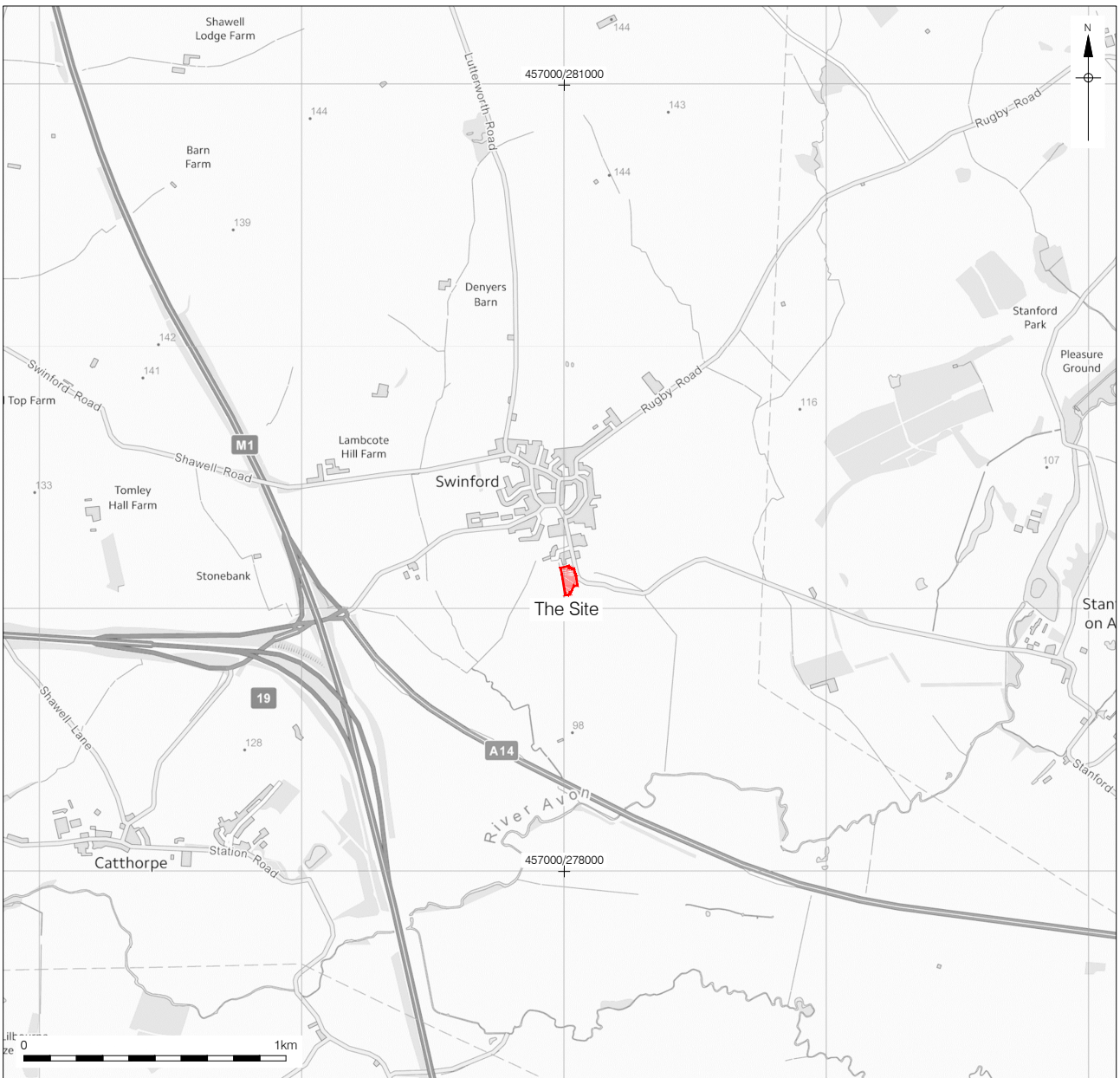
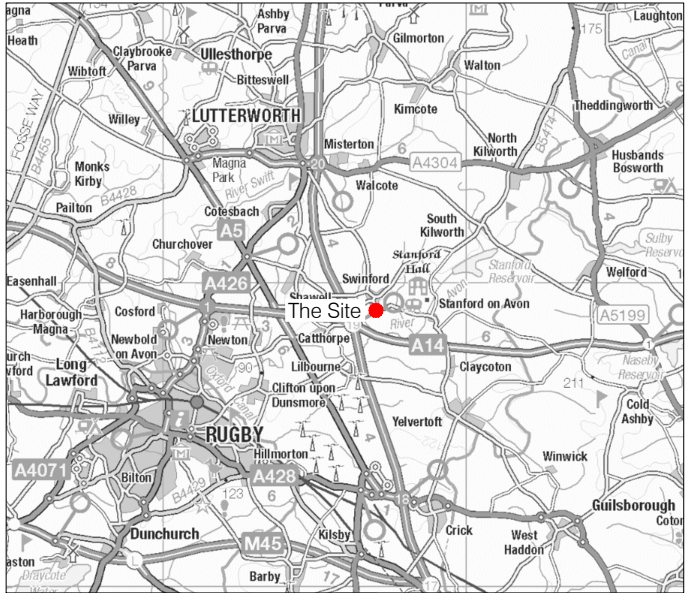
Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	X.A23.2017
Digital Contents	"other"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography", "Survey", "Text"
Paper Archive recipient	X.A23.2017
Paper Contents	"other"
Paper Media available	"Survey ", "Unpublished Text"

Project bibliography 1

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Figure 1
 Site Location
 1:2,000,000; 1:250,000 & 1:25,000 at A4

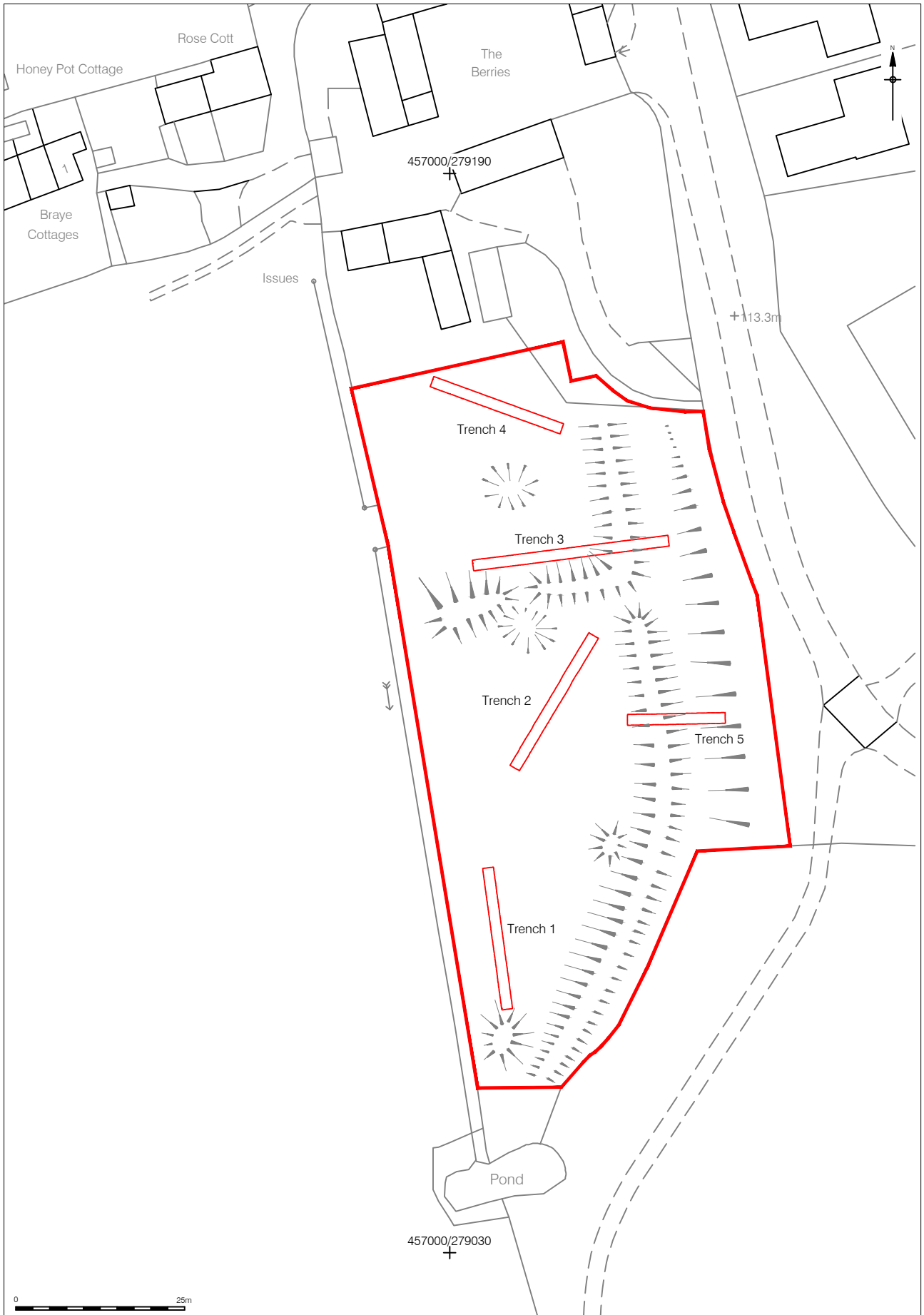


Figure 2
 Earthwork Survey and Trench Location
 1:800 at A4

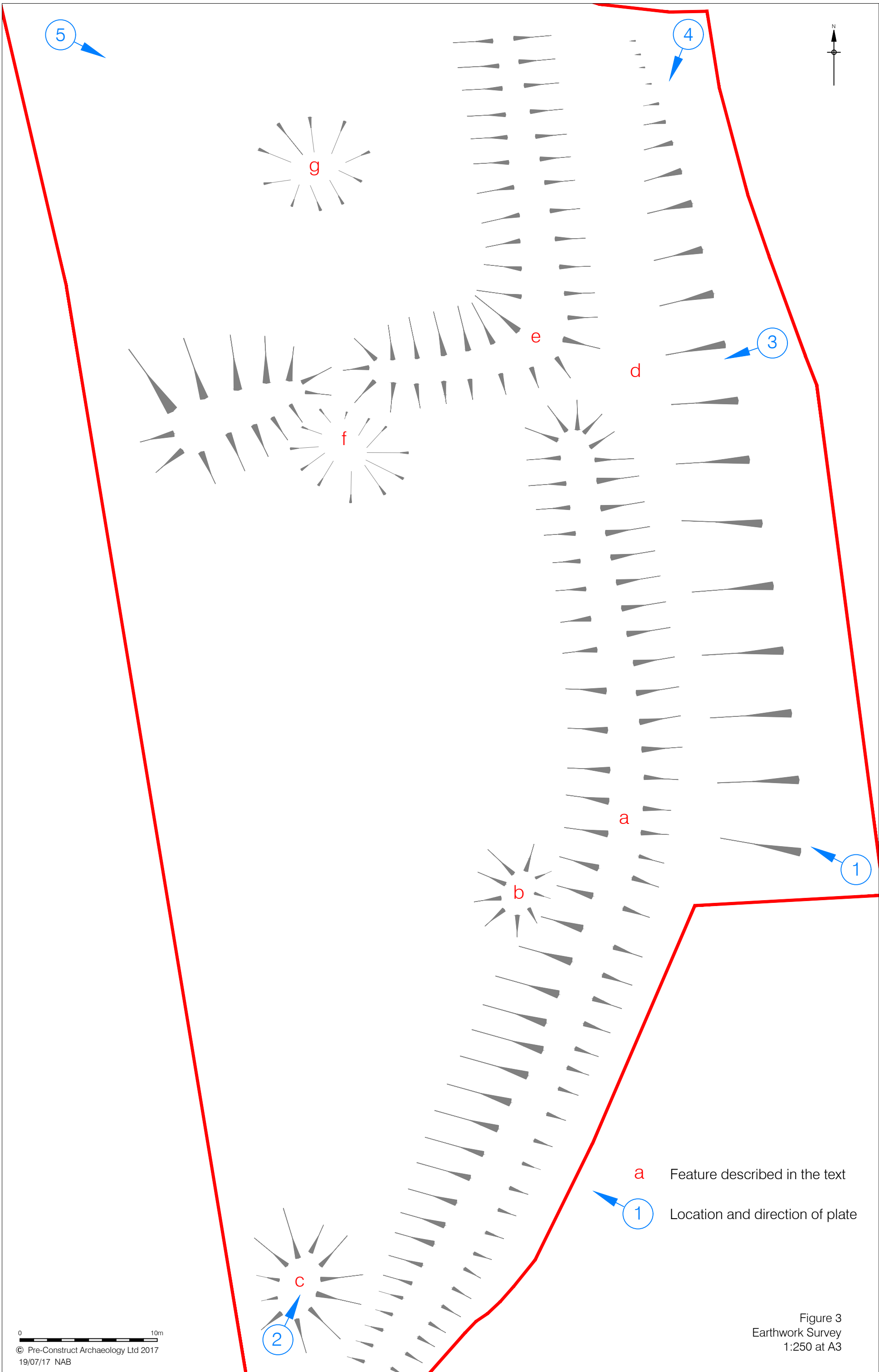


Figure 3
 Earthwork Survey
 1:250 at A3

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

THE GRANARY, RECTORY FARM
BREWERY ROAD, PAMPISFORD
CAMBRIDGESHIRE CB22 3EN
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

