NORTH WEALD BASSETT: AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

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LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY:
EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

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PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY

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ABSTRACT

An archaeological evaluation was carried out at North Weald Bassett in August and September 2018. PCA excavated fourteen trenches in order to inform the archaeological potential of the site ahead of a planning application.

The evaluation identified a possible early Roman ditch probably related to agricultural occupation in Trench 12. Two undated parallel ditches, visible in Trench 11, could be potentially linked to the Roman period, being either related to agricultural occupation or a possible trackway.

The most extensive remains found on the site were field boundary ditches dated to the post-medieval period, visible in Trenches 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8 and 10. The remains of possible post-medieval ponds were identified in Trenches 6, 7 and 14.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited was commissioned by CgMs Heritage (part of the RPS Group) on behalf of Countryside Properties UK (Limited) to undertake a programme of works on a site at North Weald Bassett, CM16 6EY in the county of Essex.

1.2 A archaeological trial trench evaluation was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd (PCA) on a area measuring approximately 36 ha, composed of five fields around Chase Farm, west of New House Lane, south of Vicarage Lane, east of Church Lane and north of the existing built development of North Weald Bassett, from 29th August.2018 to 4th September 2018. The central NGR for the site was TQ 495050, and the site was situated within the jurisdiction of Epping Forest District Council.

1.3 The archaeological work was commissioned by CgMs Heritage (part of the RPS Group) in advance of an Environmental Statement for a proposal for a residential development of the 36ha site with associated infrastructure, community facilities and landscaping associated with the growth of North Weald Bassett village. Pre-application discussions between CgMs Heritage (part of the RPS Group) and Maria Medlycott of Essex County Council Place Services (the archaeological advisors to the LPA) included a requirement for geophysical survey and targeted trial trenching based on the results of the geophysics (SUMO 2018) in order to inform the archaeological potential of the site ahead of a planning application.

1.4 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by Helen Hawkins (MCIFA) of PCA.

1.5 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.

1.6 A total of fourteen evaluation trenches were excavated, all measuring 1.8m in

width (Figure 2).

1.7 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 Epping Forest District Museum.

2 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

2.1 Geology

2.2 The underlying geology of the Site is predominantly composed of deposits of Boulder Clay of Pleistocene date (BGS Sheet 240, 1981) which comprises the dominant geology of the region. However, there are also more recent (but also Pleistocene) depositions of Head at the extreme western and south-western edge of the Site, with a larger area within the field to the south-east of Chase Farm. These drift deposits overlay London Clay of the Eocene.

2.3 Topography

2.4 The area of Chase Farm and the north-eastern area of the Site is on a plateau at c.78m with a fall to the stream to the west (c.72m OD) and to the south to the urban fringe of North Weald Bassett. The landscape rises from North Weald Bassett further to the south and a ridge high point of c.96m OD at Ongar Park, to 92m at High Road North Weald Bassett to the south-east of the Site. There is also a slight rise to the east to 87m at the junction of Vicarage Lane with High Road at Tyler's Green.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 The archaeological background is taken from the desk based assessment (CGMS Heritage part of the RPS Group 2018).

3.2 Palaeolithic and Mesolithic

3.3 There are no Palaeolithic or Mesolithic findspots or sites within the Study Area. This is probably a reflection of the dominant Boulder Clay geology in contrast to extensive Pleistocene gravel geology as associated with the Thames Valley within which Palaeolithic artefacts such as handaxes, are more commonly found.

3.4 Neolithic and Bronze Age

3.5 Although there are currently no known diagnostic artefacts or definite sites of these periods in the Study Area, archaeological trial trenching evaluations carried out in response to proposals to develop Ongar Radio Station at Great Ongar Park in 1993 found burnt flint of general prehistoric date across the parkland area to the east of North Weald Bassett. The material was concentrated in the upslope eastern area. However, the worked flint was sparsely spread with no foci of occupation suggested.

3.6 The geology mapping shows the site to be comprised of Boulder Clay and Head. Such geologies used to be considered to contain lower densities of prehistoric archaeology that the major gravel valleys and although to some extent this remains the case, Neolithic, Bronze Age and Iron Age settlements are found across the Boulder Clay regions of the County, most clearly at and around Stansted Airport. In this case the absence of known prehistoric archaeology is more likely to be the product of a paucity of archaeological fieldwork in the region than avoidance of the area by prehistoric settlers.

3.7 Aerial photographic assessment and rectification held by the EHER indicates four undated penannular rings within/beneath the modern farm buildings of Chase Farm within central area but excluded from the site). At first glance these appear similar in form to three extant Early Bronze Age bowl barrows c.4km to

the east on Shelley Common at Chipping Ongar which are afforded Scheduled Monument status. However, the EHER records the location as that of World War II heavy anti-aircraft battery Gun Site "A3 North Weald" which is no doubt their derivation.

3.8 Iron Age

3.9 There are currently no Iron Age site or finds within the study area.

3.10 Roman

3.11 The only Romano-British artefact recorded on the HER found within the site itself was a copper alloy brooch from the early period of c.AD 43-100. This may represent a casual loss or suggest settlement in the vicinity.

3.12 Roman archaeological evidence from the Study Area includes a Roman road line known as the London-Dunmow road that passes c.1.25km to the south-east of the Site. The route was seen as double-ditched cropmarks in 1951 ('London to Great Dunmow road') showing as a double ditched linear feature and is considered to run on a north-east/southwest alignment traced locally between Abridge just east of Loughton north-east to near Abbers road is suggested within Ongar Park. An archaeological evaluation for Ongar Radio Station (part of the former Ongar Great Park) took place on the line of the Roman road in 1993. Two trenches were cut specifically to identify the Roman road. One revealed a gravel spread with a sharply defined northern edge and the other a discontinuous spread of gravel with poorly defined edges. In neither case were flanking ditches or associated artefacts located. As such the road appears to have represented little more than a metalled track at this location but would have formed a key component in the local route network.

3.13 Phase 2 of the Ongar Radio Station evaluation project examined a large area to the south-east of the Site and North Weald Bassett in 2000. The magnetic susceptibility and selected magnetometer geophysical were carried out on the site of a proposed golf course. A number of field boundaries were identified but the Roman road was not found 'suggesting possible degradation by ploughing'.

3.14 Direct evidence for Romano-British settlements is sparse but an east-west aligned ditch of late Roman (4th century) date was identified at Little Weald Hall the golf course adjacent to the A414 during a watching brief in 1994. The ditch ran downslope from east to west and contained enough pottery and tile to suggest adjacent occupation. This late Roman occupation may have extended into the early Saxon period. It is also noteworthy that the Parish Church of St Andrews has Roman brick incorporated into its limestone and Clunch fabric. A hole drilled through the wall in 1990 encountered fabric of solid flint- in- mortar rubble with occasional fragments of Roman brick.

3.15 Other stray finds from the Study Area include a Roman coin from the built area of North Weald Bassett and a gold Quinarius coin of Tiberius (AD 14-37) was found to the east of the Site, although the EHER record suggests this is possibly a post-medieval copy.

3.16 Saxon

3.17 The 1994 watching brief that identified a late Roman ditch at the partially constructed golf course to the north of the Site also produced a large pit containing organic tempered pottery and a loomweight of Saxon/ early medieval date (c.AD500 to 1200). The EHER record suggests this may have been a sunken floored building which would be typical of the early Saxon period. If so some form of continuity at least in terms of settlement presence may be suspected between the 4th and 6th century at the associated settlement area.

3.18 Modern field boundaries in a sub-rectangular plan at Ongar Park to the south-east side of North Weald Bassett are suggested to possibly represent the outline of early Great Park. The EHER notes documentary evidence for its Saxon origin from a will of 1045 and as one of the 36 parks listed for the country in the Domesday Book of 1086.

3.19 Medieval

3.20 North Weald Bassett is situated within the north-west extent of Ongar Hundred with the parish divided between Ongar and Harlow Hundreds. The place name derives from Old English for forest and although little woodland remains the

name is apt as in 1086 the parish was one of most heavily forested in Essex. At that time Peter de Valognes's manor alone contained sufficient pannage for 1500 pigs. It was mentioned in 1248 as the 'Wood of Henry of Essex', whilst the following Lord of the Manor, Philip Bassett, complained in 1260 of robberies in this wood (between Ongar and Waltham) as a reason to assart (i.e. clear woodland for agriculture) six acres of the wood. Assarting was a feature of the 13th century associated with the creation of several manors and by 1594 historic mapping does not show the parish to be heavily wooded, whilst there was virtually no woodland by 1777.

3.21 The lane system including Vicarage Lane, Church Lane and the bridleway to the east of the Site almost certainly dates to the medieval period. A possible homestead moat is implied by the Ordnance Survey 6 inch map to the south-east of Chase Farm, probably on and just beyond the extreme eastern edge of the Site, and is partially built over to the immediate east. The VCH (Powell 1956, 285) notes the presence of a 'homestead moat' 'opposite' 'Schoolgreen Farm' which may be a reference to this feature. However, the Ordnance Survey visited the location (west of former 'School Green Farm') in 1975 and found no traces. It was suggested that the features shown had been drainage field drainage ponds. Notably the L shaped form shown on the 1841 Tithe Map formed the north-west of a former field so may have been a pond cut into its ditch. No remains were noted on a site visit undertaken by RPS on 7th January 2014 and it is unclear from mapping whether the extreme western edge of the former feature had extended into the Site area.

3.22 The landscape of Essex is in general characterised by dispersed moated sites representing the elaborated homesteads of rural landowners. Several moated sites in the wider vicinity beyond the Study Area have been identified above due to their Scheduled status. The medieval manors houses within the parish were Weald Hall to the west of the church in the centre of the parish (labelled North Weald Hall on the 1777 map), 'Canes' to the c.1.7km to the north-west of the Site, and Marshall's near Hastingwood. All were moated but none were particularly close to the Site. The extant remains of 'Canes' a moated site are located in the gardens of the present establishment.

3.23 Ongar Park was referenced in 1243 as `Magno parco de Aungre'. By the 13th century c.500 ha park was of sub-rectangular plan and became the manor of Ongar Park. As a result of its status many of the park boundaries were retained into the post-medieval period and to the present day. The Scheduled element of Ongar Park Pale, as a sample of the better preserved earthworks, is 2.25km to the south of the Site. Ongar Park Hall within the park area to the south-east of the Study Area is also of medieval origin. An archaeological evaluation of the part of the park located features in only two comprising two intercutting ditches in TR 5 and another in TR 10. All were on the north-east to south-west alignments of the park and one produced medieval pottery and tile. The EHER states that 'as the site lies within the "deerhey" of Ongar Park it is thought that the ditches in TR 5 were possibly part of the park boundary while the ditch in TR 10 was probably a field boundary.'

3.24 The Church of St. Andrew, North Weald Bassett, just to the north-west of the Site, north of Vicarage Road is a Grade II* Listed Building. As noted above the nave, south chapel and south aisle were built c.1330 with the west brick tower added around AD 1500. The west tower is an unusually tall example constructed in four stages 'with an embedded parapet resting on a corbel table of small segmental arches...' (Powell 1956, 291).

3.25 However, a previous 12th century church is referred to by historical sources. The 1990 pipe trench dug around the church produced medieval tile. Roman brick used in the construction of the flint rubble nave, aisle and chapel were noted during the site visit.

3.26 Medieval finds within the site are restricted to two objects recovered by metal-detecting and listed by the Portable Antiquities Scheme in the north-western field south of Vicarage Lane. These are a rowel spur of c.AD 1500 found along with a latest medieval or post-medieval cloth seal of 1550 to 1750 and a further metal-detection find that is not identified on the EHER.

3.27 Features and finds within the Study Area include a sherd of medieval pottery found at the unfinished golf course area to the north of Vicarage Lane. An archaeological evaluation the former Ongar Great Park produced widespread

residual medieval pottery and tile with some small concentrations of 13th -15th century pottery in the northern area that may relate to manuring activities. Finally, a pond and boundary cropmarks at Weald Bridge Cottage 1.5km to the north-east of the Site may be of medieval date.

3.28 Post-Medieval

3.29 The post-medieval development of the site itself is largely traced by the historic mapping. The tithe apportionment shows a fairly even spread between pasture and arable in 1841 with no woodland. As noted many of the former field-boundaries on the tithe map have been lost although a basic frame of these boundaries remains. There were concentrations of houses around four commons in the parish in 1777. These included Thornwood Common to the west and Tylers Green to the east, whilst Weald Gullet Common was located to the south. The historic mapping also shows School Green Farm to the east side of the Site but there were no farms within the Site before the 20th century.

3.30 In 1873-4 the parish covered 3,433 acres (1,739 of which were in Ongar Hundred). In 1801 the population of the village was only 620, rising to 831 by 1831 and 1,135 by 1901 due to the arrival of the Epping-Ongar branch of the London North Eastern railway in 1865. Inclosure of commons in the mid 19th century also led to increased building and thus population at Thornwood and Hastingwood, Tylers Green and Weald Gullet. Steady rises through the early 20th century culminated with construction of housing estates to the south of the Site after 1945 and the population in 1953 was 3,200.

3.31 Finds from metal-detecting within the site include the lead cloth seal from the north-west field mentioned within the medieval section above and copper alloy buckle dated to AD 1550-1750 found to the south within the same field.

3.32 Within the Study Area the Ongar Radio Station evaluation recovered sparse finds of post-medieval pottery and tile of post-medieval date. The late post-medieval North Weald Brick and Tile works was located south of the site and at Ongar Park.

3.33 Post-Medieval/Modern Military

3.34 As noted above North Weald Redoubt on the higher ground to the south-east of the village is a Scheduled Monument (SM 1018456; formerly 29424). The redoubt was constructed in the 1890s as part of as a late Victorian and Edwardian military store and mustering station/mobilisation centre rather than a full fort for a defensive scheme for London. The SM includes the caretakers' cottages and external stores. It was the earliest fortified mobilisation centre to be constructed and the first north of the Thames.

3.35 The North Weald Airfield dominates a wide area to the west of the Site. The Airfield was first used in 1916 during World War I as a night landing ground for No.39 (HD) Squadron in 49th Wing, South East Area. The airfield covered 136 acres with clay surfaces that tended to become waterlogged in winter. Several other squadrons were stationed there before its closure as a military airfield in 1919. However, after 1922 two new aerodrome sheds replaced WWI sheds one of which (No.1) is still extant. The WWI flight station was subsumed into the later airfield which was reopened in 1927 but several of its buildings still remain.

3.36 The World War II airfield comprised two paved runways running north-south and east-west with the airfield occupying 400 acres. During the Battle of Britain Hurricanes of No. 56 and No. 151 Squadrons were stationed there, with the airfield a sector station of no. 11 Group. By the end of the war it housed more than 20 squadrons including Spitfires and US Mustangs.

3.37 Post-war runway extensions for jet aircraft followed. The airfield was transferred in 1966 to the Army Department but until 1979 the airfield was used mainly for gliders. It remains an active general aviation airport with c.20,000 movements per annum but also now houses leisure and sport facilities. In addition to the runways and perimeter track other elements of its infrastructure survive. One of the original 1927 Type A hangers and Operations block are considered to be of particular importance due to rarity value. The T2 hanger from Stansted is now located at the airfield.

3.38 There were three small circular ‘Pickett-Hamilton Counterbalance Fort’

pillboxes are located at the airfield designed for use on airfields. These were installed into the ground with roofs flush to ground level but could be raised and operated by a lifting mechanism if the airfield was attacked. One of these was raised and is in full working order. A series of fighter dispersal pens, mainly destroyed, are identified on the EHER. In addition to the aforementioned World War II heavy anti-aircraft battery formerly located at Chase Farm another was located at in the southern area of the airfield.

3.39 There are a number of other pillboxes recorded including a now destroyed hexagonal Type FW3/22 in front of the "The Squadron" flying club, a cantilever pillbox south of the Epping Road, a 6-sided pillbox and now destroyed formerly connected Battle HQ building on the north side of the road, a destroyed polygonal pillbox site and another extant example to the south, hexagonal examples and a rare cantilever form to the east side of the airfield and south-west of the Site, three hexagonal example east of the Site and west of Church Lane, a very large hexagonal example within the airfield further west of Church Lane and a poorly preserved example in an open area of the field east of Church Lane to the north-east.

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 General

4.1.1 The archaeological evaluation comprised fourteen trenches, all 1.8m wide and ranging in length between 6m and 20m. These were mostly targeted on geophysics anomalies and areas of potential archaeological interest.

4.2 Excavation methodology

4.2.1 Ground reduction during the evaluation was carried out using a JCB wheeled excavator. Topsoil and other overburden of low archaeological value was removed in spits down to the level of the undisturbed natural geological deposits where potential archaeological features could be observed and recorded.

4.2.2 Exposed surfaces were cleaned by trowel and hoe as appropriate and all further excavation was undertaken manually using hand tools. The features that were clearly post-medieval or later date were excavated by mechanical means.

4.3 Recording and Finds Recovery

4.3.1 The limits of excavations, heights above Ordnance Datum (m OD) and the locations of archaeological features and interventions were recorded using a Leica GS14 GPS rover unit with RTK differential correction, giving three-dimensional accuracy of 20mm or better.

4.3.2 Deposits or the removal of deposits judged by the excavating archaeologist to constitute individual events were each assigned a unique record number and recorded on individual pre-printed forms. 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]. Where more than one slot was excavated through an individual feature, each intervention was assigned additional numbers for the cutting event and for the deposits it contained (these deposits within cut features being referred to here as ‘fills’). The record numbers assigned to cuts, deposits and groups are entirely arbitrary and in no way reflect the chronological order in which events took place. All features and deposits excavated during the evaluation and excavation are listed in Appendix

2. Artefacts recovered during excavation were assigned to the record number of the deposit from which they were retrieved.

4.3.3 High-resolution digital photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits and were used to keep a record of the excavation process.

4.4 Sampling Strategy

4.4.1 Discrete features were half-sectioned, photographed and recorded by a cross-section scaled drawing at an appropriate scale (either 1:10 or 1:20).

4.4.2 Linear features were investigated by slots to gain a sufficient sample appropriate to their length and position within the trench.

4.5 Environmental Sampling

4.5.1 No environmental samples were taken, in consultation with the archaeological adviser to ECC.

5 QUANTIFICATION OF ARCHIVE

5.1 Paper Archive (Format Style: Heading 2)

Context register sheets	2
Context sheets	33
Plan registers	1
Plans at 1:50	12
Plans at 1:20	0
Plans at 1:10	0
Plans at 1:5	0
Section register sheets	1
Sections at 1:10 & 1:20	7
Trench record sheets	14
Photo register sheets	2
Small finds register sheets	0
Environmental register sheets	0

5.2 Digital Archive

Digital photos	59
GPS survey files	1
Digital plans	1
GIS project	0
Access database	1

5.3 Physical Archive

Struck flint	0
Burnt flint	0
Pottery	5g
Ceramic building material (CBM)	438g
Glass	0
Briquetage	0
Small Finds	0
Slag	0
Animal bone	0
Shell	0
Environmental bulk samples	0
Environmental bulk samples (10 litre buckets)	0
Monolith samples	0
Other samples (specify)	0
Black and white films	0
Colour slides	0

6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 The trenches are described below in numerical order, with technical data tabulated (Appendix 2). Features and deposits are first split into feature type, and then described in numerical cut order. Archaeological features and deposits were sealed by the topsoil or subsoil, unless otherwise stated. The principal result of the fieldwork was the identification of a series of ditches, the full extents of which could not be defined within the excavated area. Most of the recovered material was datable to the post-medieval and modern period, although some Roman material was also present on the site.

6.2 Trench 1

6.2.1 Trench 1 contained one ditch, aligned approximately east - west. The trench also contained one pit, the full extents of which could not be defined within the trench area.

6.2.2 Ditch [20] (Plate 4, Figure 5) was located in the southern end of the trench and was aligned east-west, extending beyond the limits of excavation in both directions. It was shallow, measuring c. 0.82m wide by 0.28m deep. The ditch contained one fill (21), a compact mid-greyish-brown silty clay which contained medieval/post-medieval CBM and some pieces of barbed wire. This ditch was noted on the 1841 Tithe map but not later (see CgMs Heritage part of the RPS Group 2018, Figure 5)

6.2.3 Pit [22] (Plate 4, Figure 5) was located immediately north of Ditch [20] and was not fully visible in plan. The pit measured c. 1.30m wide by 0.34m deep and extended beyond the limits of excavation to the east. The pit had a single fill (23), a mid-greyish brown silty clay which contained medieval or post-medieval CBM.

6.3 Trench 2

6.3.1 Trench 2 contained two ditches, both aligned approximately east - west.

6.3.2 Ditch [27] (Figure 3) was located at the southern end of the trench, and was aligned east west, extending beyond the limits of excavation in both directions.

The ditch was wide and deep, measuring c. 2.05m wide and more than 1m deep. It contained one fill (26), compact mid-greyish-brown silty clay which contained modern material. The ditch was truncated by a modern drain, 0.90m deep, the cut of which was not visible in either plan or section.

6.3.3 Ditch [29] (Figure 3) was located further south within the trench, and was aligned east-west, extending beyond the limits of excavation in both directions. It was wide and deep, measuring c. 3.05m wide and more than 1m deep. The ditch contained one fill (28), compact mid-greyish-brown silty clay which contained post-medieval bricks. These ditches were shown on the 1874 OS map.

6.4 Trench 3

6.4.1 Trench 3 contained one ditch, aligned east -west.

6.4.2 Ditch [31] (Figure 5) was located in the north of the trench, and was aligned east - west, extending beyond the limits of excavation in both directions. It was wide and deep with steep sides, measuring c. 3.05m wide by more than 1m deep. It contained one fill (30), a compact mid-greyish-brown silty clay which contained machine made bricks at the top. This ditch was noted on the 1841 Tithe map but not later (see CgMs Heritage part of the RPS Group 2018, Figure 5).

6.5 Trench 4

6.5.1 Trench 4 contained no features or deposits of archaeological significance despite the trench targeting a possible ditch shown on the geophysics (that seemed to correspond with the general post-medieval field pattern).

6.6 Trench 5

6.6.1 Ditch [25] (Figure 3) was located in the north of the trench and was aligned east - west, extending beyond the limits of excavation in both directions. It measured c. 2m wide by 0.8m deep. The ditch contained one fill (24), a compact mid-greyish-brown silty clay. This ditch is shown on the first edition Ordnance Survey map (O.S. 1875-1879) as a field boundary ditch (Figure 6).

6.7 Trench 6

6.7.1 Trench 6 contained one large pit [13]. The trench was not fully excavated due to onsite conditions, including potential asbestos material in the backfill which was immediately covered over.

6.7.2 Pit [13] (Plate 2, Figure 3) was not fully excavated. This was backfilled in the twentieth century and contained a large variety of modern demolition and refuse. This pit was visible on the geophysical survey and the first edition Ordnance Survey map (OS 1875-1879) as a wide, "L" shaped feature (Figure 6), presumably a pond. The pond feature was clearly filled in during the modern era.

6.8 Trench 7

6.8.1 Trench 7 contained one ditch [15], aligned east -west.

6.8.2 Ditch [15] (Figure 3) was located in the centre of the trench and was aligned approximately east - west, extending beyond the limits of excavation in both directions. It was wide and deep, measuring c. 8m wide by more than 0.8m deep. It had a single fill (14), a mid-greyish brown silty clay which contained post medieval CBM. The ditch was interpreted as a possible backfilled east-west ditch, as identified on the geophysical survey (SUMO 2018).

6.9 Trench 8

6.9.1 Trench 8 contained one ditch, aligned east -west.

6.9.2 Ditch [17] (Figure 3) was located in the centre of the trench and was aligned approximately north-east south-west., extending beyond the limits of excavation in both directions. The ditch measured c. 2.25m wide by 0.7m deep. It contained one fill (16), a compact mid-greyish-brown silty clay which contained medieval/post-medieval CBM, two iron pipes (0.50m long by 0.10m in diameter) and a small piece of pottery dated to the earlier Roman period (AD50-150). The location is consistent with that of a ditch shown on the 1874 map.

6.10 Trench 9

6.10.1 Trench 9 contained no features or deposits of archaeological significance.

6.11 Trench 10

6.11.1 Ditch [5] (Figure 4) was located in the south of the trench, and was aligned north - south, extending beyond the limits of excavation in both directions. It had steep sides, measuring c. 1.55m wide by 0.70m deep. The ditch contained one fill (4), a compact mid-greyish-brown silty clay which contained post-medieval CBM and glass. The ditch was located close to a field boundary ditch shown on the Ordnance Survey map (1875-1879, Figure 6) and therefore may represent this feature.

6.12 Trench 11

6.12.1 Trench 11 contained two parallel ditches, aligned north - south, located approximately 7m apart.

6.12.2 Ditch [9] (Figure 4) was located in the west of the trench, and was aligned north - south, extending beyond the limits of excavation in both directions. It was shallow, measuring c. 0.40m wide by 0.13m deep. The ditch contained one undated fill (8), a compact, light-yellowish-brown clay.

6.12.3 Ditch [11] (Figure 4) was located in the east of the trench, and was aligned north - south, extending beyond the limits of excavation in both directions. It was shallow, measuring c. 0.40m wide by 0.15m deep. The ditch contained one undated fill (10), a compact, light-yellowish-brown clay.

6.12.4 Although Ditches [9] and [11] were undated, the ditches could be potentially linked to the Roman period or later, due to the fill composition being similar with the Roman or later dated Ditch [12] visible in Trench 12, being either related to agricultural occupation or a possible trackway.

6.13 Trench 12

6.13.1 Ditch [7] (Figure 4) was located along the trench line, and was aligned north-east - south-west, extending beyond the limits of excavation in both directions. It was shallow, measuring c. 0.40m wide by 0.10m deep. The ditch contained one fill (6), a compact light-yellowish-brown clay which contained two small Roman pottery body sherds dated as earlier Roman (AD50-150) and therefore the ditch dates to the Roman period or later.

6.14 Trench 13

6.14.1 Trench 13 contained one ditch, aligned north - south.

6.14.2 Ditch [33] (Plate 3, Figure 5) was located in the centre of the trench and was aligned approximately north - south, extending beyond the limits of excavation in both directions. It was shallow, measuring c. 0.40m wide by 0.10m deep. The ditch contained one fill (32), a compact mid-greyish-brown silty clay which contained one small piece of possible Roman CBM. The ditch is aligned next to a post-medieval field boundary that runs north south through the site. The ditch was clearly shown by the geophysical survey and appears to twin the post-medieval boundary ditch as the east side of a post-medieval trackway.

6.15 Trench 14

6.15.1 Ditch [19] (Figure 3) was located in the centre of the trench and was aligned approximately east - west, extending beyond the limits of excavation in both directions. It was wide and deep, measuring c. 2.5m wide by 1.20m deep. It had a single fill (18), a mid-greyish brown silty clay which contained post-medieval CBM. The ditch was probably the same as Ditch [15], visible in Trench 7. This ditch, as with that in Trench 7, seems to represent a post-medieval ditch but may pre-date 1841 as it is not shown on the tithe map or later mapping.

7 THE FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

7.1 Pottery Assessment

By Katie Anderson

7.1.1 Three small sherds of Roman pottery weighing 5g, were recovered from the evaluation. Context (6)/[7] contained two body sherds (4g) from a micaceous sand reduced ware vessel, which dates to the earlier Roman period (c.AD40-150). A single coarse sandy greyware rim sherd (2g) from an everted rim small beaker or jar was recovered from context (16)/[17], also dating to the earlier Roman period (AD50-150).

7.2 CBM Assessment

By Katie Anderson

7.2.1 A small assemblage of ceramic building material (CBM) was collected from six contexts, totalling 15 fragments weighing 438g. The majority of the assemblage is medieval/post medieval in date, including one piece with a square peg hole (18)/[19]. One possible fragment of Roman CBM was collected from context (32)/[33].

Context	Cut	No.	Wt(g)	Date
32	33	1	9	Roman?
21	20	1	5	Unknown
17	16	1	19	Med/post med
4	5	4	10	Med/post med
23	22	1	58	Med/post med
18	19	7	337	Med/post med - 1 with square peg hole

Table 1: Quantification of the CBM

8 DISCUSSION

8.1 Roman (43-400AD)

8.1.1 Little Roman evidence was recovered from the site, represented by three pottery sherds, all dated in the early Roman period (50-150AD). Previously, a copper alloy brooch was discovered (recorded on the EHER), also early Roman in date c.AD 43-100, and was discovered within the site boundaries (CGMS 2015).

8.1.2 Two small shallow ditches, probably related to agricultural occupation, could be dated to the Roman period. However, the two sherds found were very small and the ditch may also be of a later date.

8.1.3 The Roman evidence present on the site therefore appears to be more agricultural in nature. It is also noteworthy that the Parish Church of St Andrews has Roman brick incorporated into its limestone and Church fabric (CGMS 2015).

8.2 Medieval

8.2.1 There was no evidence that the pond shown on the 1874 OS map was related to a former medieval moated site (a possibility suggested by the EHER – See CgMs Heritage part of the RPS Group 2018) as the pond encountered in Trench 6 was infilled with modern material and a perpendicular section of east-west ditch to the north side (as defined by geophysics and sampled in trenches 7 and 14) contained post-medieval material and was also too narrow to have formed a moat.

8.3 Post medieval

8.3.1 The most extensive remains found on the site were field boundary ditches dated in the post medieval period.

8.3.2 Most of these ditches are present in the in the first edition of the OS map (Ordnance Survey 1875-1879) (Figure 6) and in the geophysical survey (SUMO 2018).

9 CONCLUSIONS

9.1.1 The evaluation identified a possible early Roman ditch probably related to agricultural occupations in Trench 12. Two parallel ditches, visible in Trench 11, although undated, could be potentially linked to the Roman period, being either related to agricultural occupation or a possible trackway.

9.1.2 The most extensive remains found on the site were field boundary ditches dated to the post-medieval period, visible in Trenches 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8 and 10. Large pits were encountered in Trenches 6, 7 and 14, which may represent former large ponds on the site. These pits contained a variety of modern demolition and refuse. The ditch features visible in Trenches 2, 5, 6, 8 and 10 are also shown on the first edition of the Ordnance Survey map (OS 1875-1879, Figure 6).

10 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

10.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd would like to thank CgMs Heritage (part of the RPS Group) for commissioning and funding the work on behalf of Countryside Properties UK (Limited), and William Wood of Countryside Properties for his help in setting the project up and on site. PCA are also grateful to Maria Medlycott of Essex County Council Place Services for monitoring the work on behalf of the Local Planning Authority. The project was managed for PCA by Helen Hawkins and was supervised by Tiberiu Nica. The author would like to thank Mark Hinman, Jon House and Matt Jones for their support. Figures accompanying this report were prepared by PCA's CAD Department.

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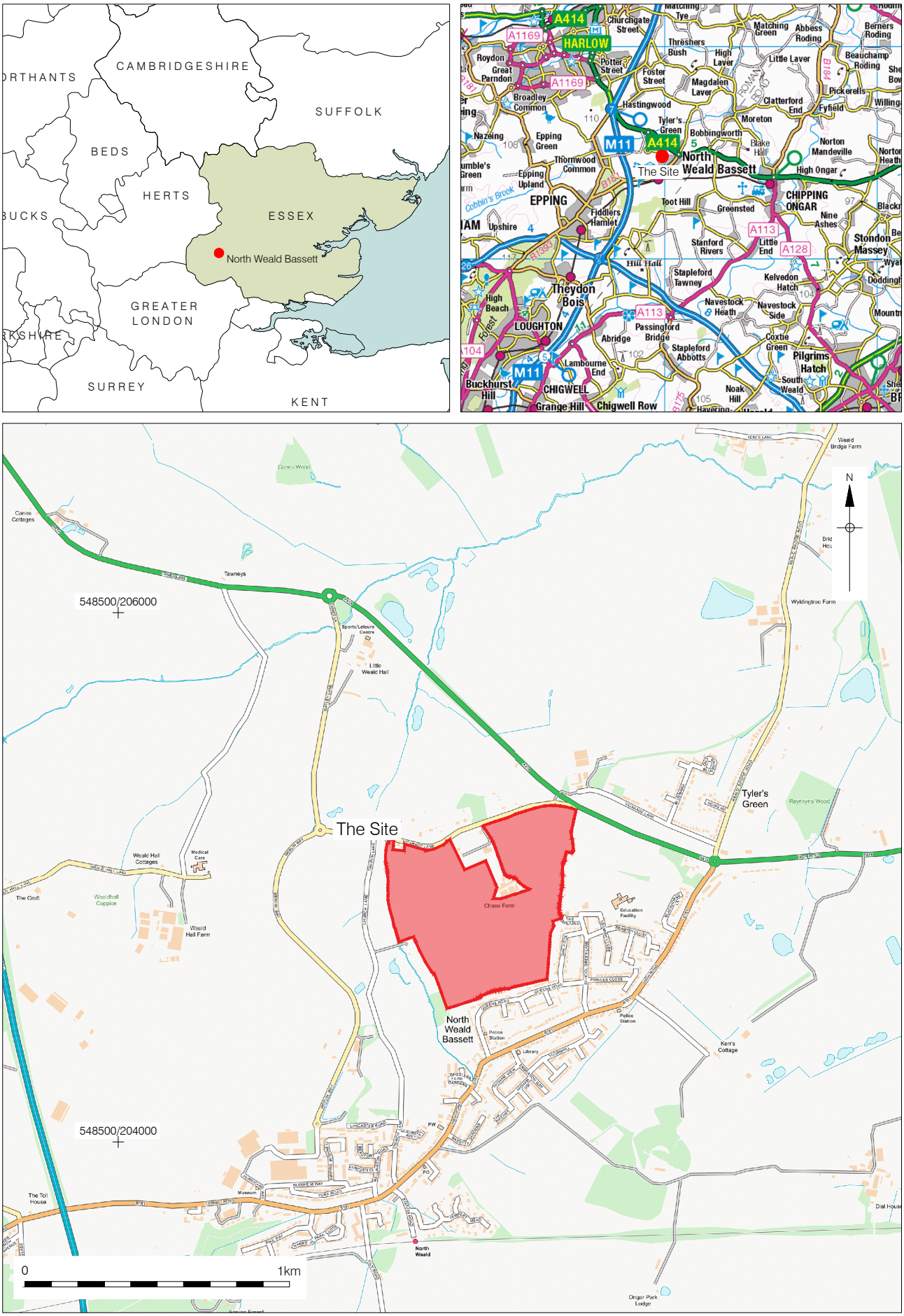
Hawkins, H PCA, 2018, NORTH WEALD BASSETT, ESSEX CM16 6EY, WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION unpublished report.

.

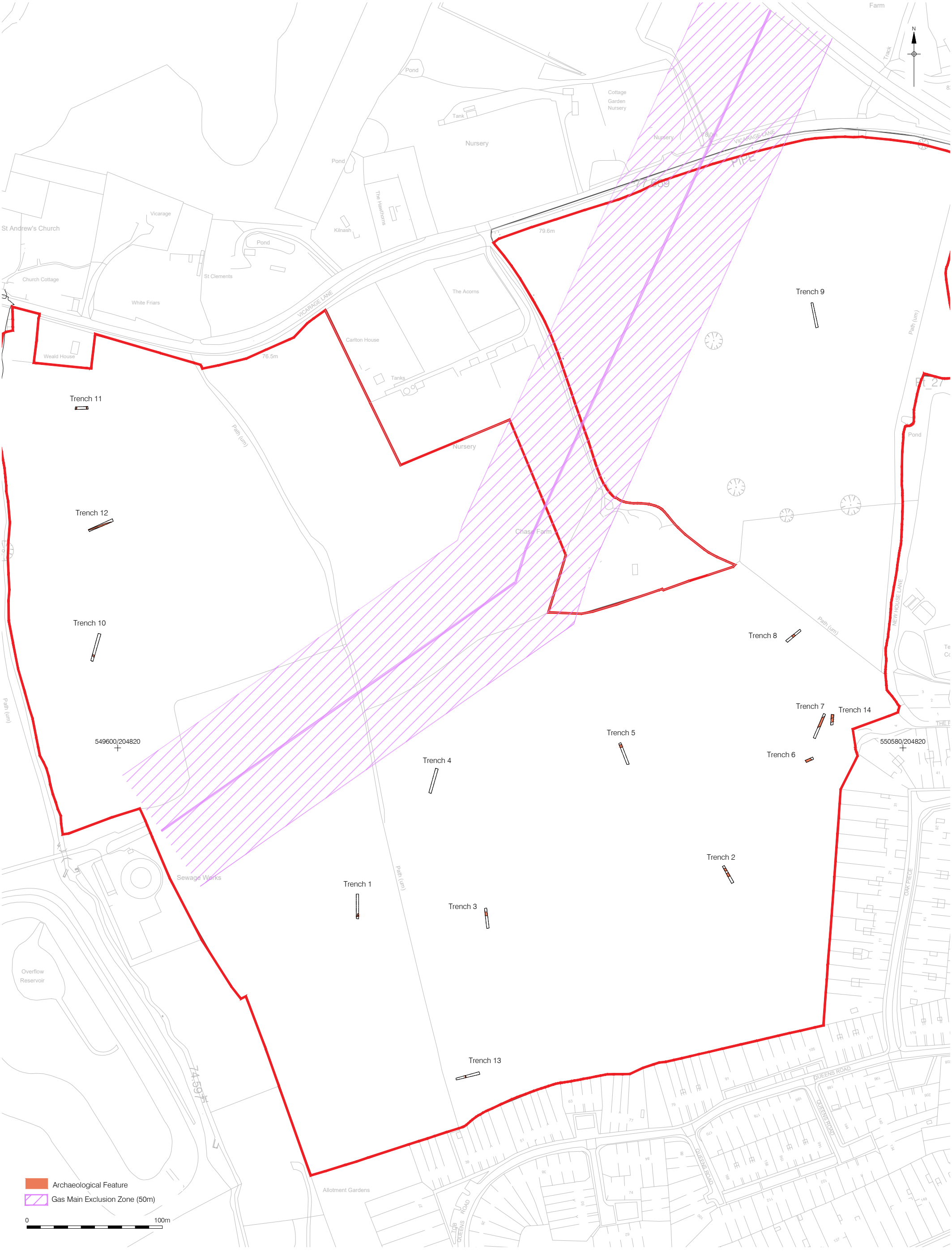
Ordnance Survey County Series ESSEX, 1875-1879; 1:2500

SUMO 2018, North Weald Bassett, Essex: Geophysical Survey Report unpublished client report



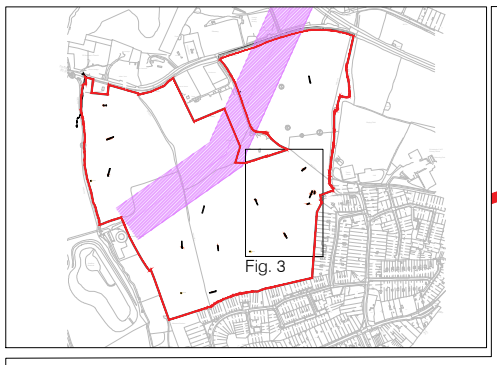
10/09/18 RS

Figure 1
Site Location
1:2,000,000, 1:250,000 & 1:20,000 at A4



10/09/18 RS

Figure 2
Trench Plan
1:2,500 at A3



N

Path (um)

Trench 8
[17]

Trench 7
[15]

Trench 14
[19]

Trench 6
[13]

Trench 5
[25]

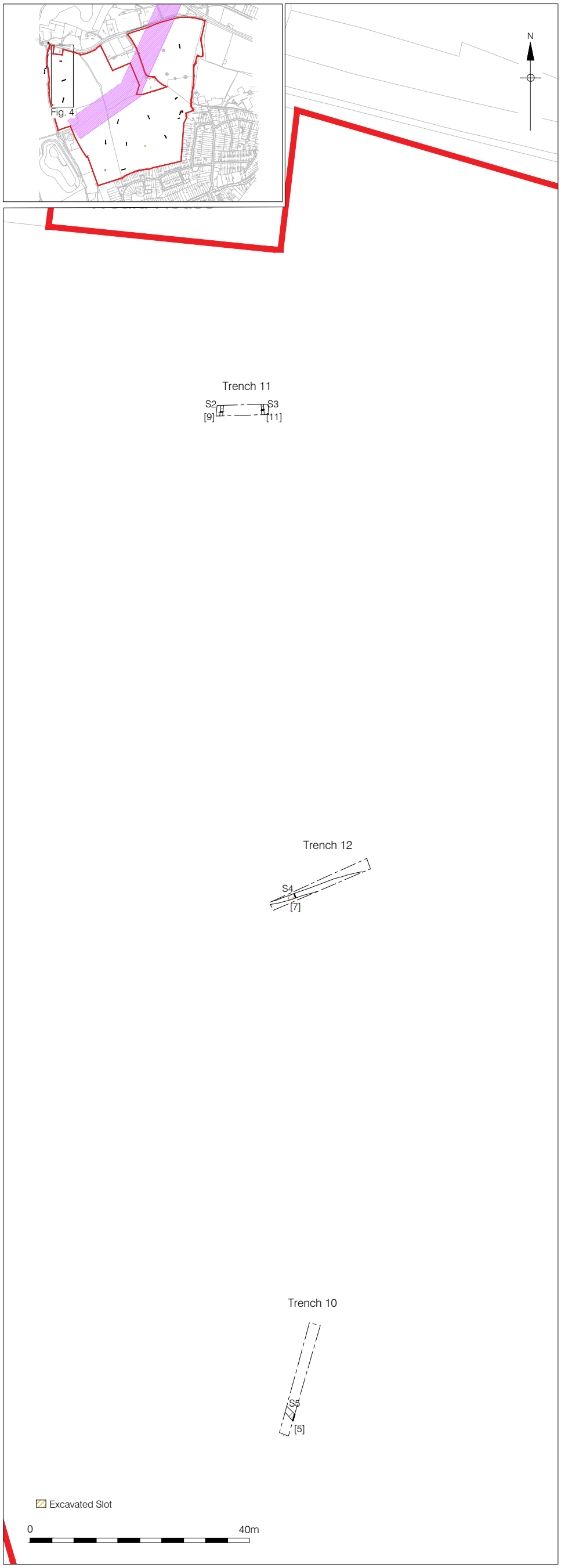
Trench 2
[27]
[29]

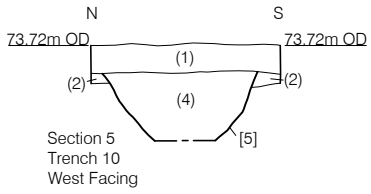
Excavated Slot

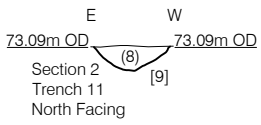
0
40m

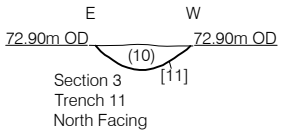
10/09/18 RS

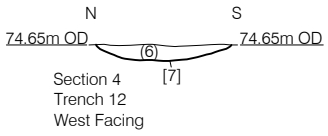
Figure 3
Trench 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 14 detailed plan
Inset 1: 20,000; Plan 1:800 at A3





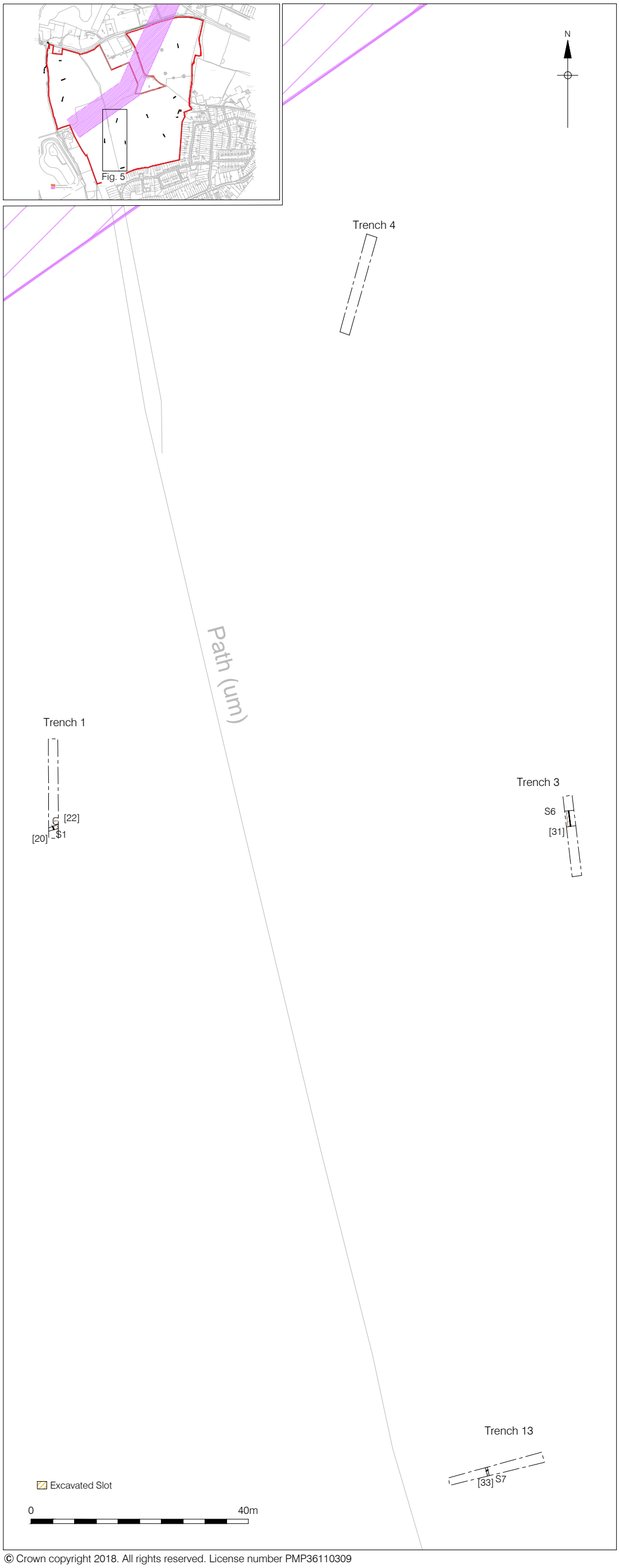


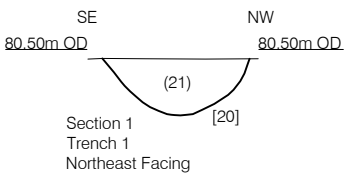




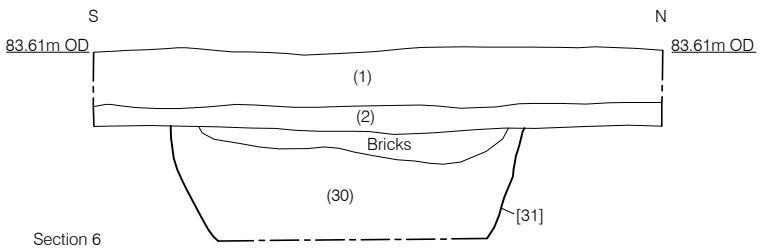
10/09/18 RS

Figure 4
Trench 10, 11, 12 plan and sections
Inset 1: 20,000; Plan 1:800; Sections 1:40 at A3

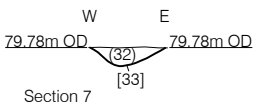




Section 1
Trench 1
Northeast Facing



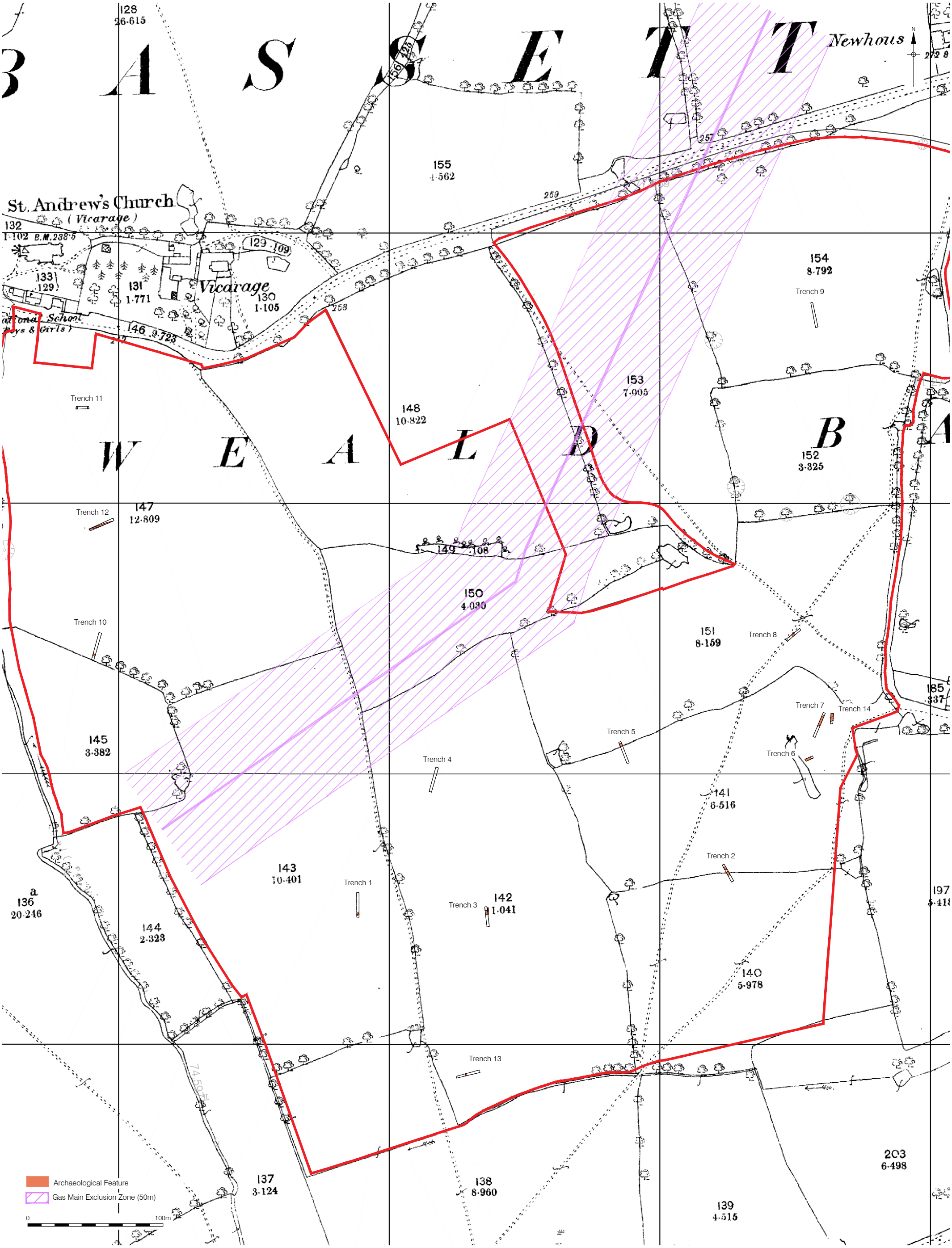
Section 6
Trench 3
West Facing



Section 7
Trench 13
South Facing

10/09/18 RS

Figure 5
Trench 1, 3, 4, 13 plan and sections
Inset 1: 20,000; Plan 1:800; Sections 1:40 at A3



10/09/18 RS

Figure 2
1875-1879 1:2,500 First Edition OS Map, 1:2,500
1:2,500 at A3

APPENDIX 1: PLATES

Plate 1 Trench 12, Ditch [7]; view east.

Plate 2 Trench 6; view west.

Plate 3 Trench 13, Ditch [33] view north

Plate 4 Trench 1, Ditch [20], Pit [22]; view north

APPENDIX 2: TRENCH DETAILS AND CONTENTS INDEX

Trench	1		**End 1**	**End 2**
Alignment	N-S	**Topsoil depth (m)**	0.3	0.3
Trench length (m)	19	**Subsoil depth (m)**	0.1	0.1
Max machine depth (m)	0.4	**Natural depth (m OD)**	80.556	80.567

Summary of archaeological features

1 post-medieval ditch and 1 post-medieval pit

Context	Cut	Type	Category	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description
1	1	Layer	Topsoil	0	0	0.3	Loose, mid greysh brown silt
2	2	Layer	Subsoil	0	0	0.1	Compact, mid yellowish brown silty clay
3	3	Layer	Natural	0	0	0	Compact, light yellowish brown clay
20	20	Cut	Ditch	1.9	0.82	0.28	Linear in plan, steep sides, concave base
21	20	Fill	Ditch	1.9	0.82	0.28	Compact, mid greysh brown silty clay
22	22	Cut	Pit	1.3	1	0.34	Sub-circular in plan, steep sides, concave base
23	22	Fill	Pit	1.3	1	0.34	Compact, mid yellowish brown silty clay

			End 1	End 2
Trench	2			
Alignment	N-S	**Topsoil depth (m)**	0.3	0.3
Trench length (m)	17	**Subsoil depth (m)**	0.1	0.1
Max machine depth (m)	0.4	**Natural depth (m OD)**	86.27	86.4

Summary of archaeological features

1 post-medieval ditch and 1 modern ditch

Context	Cut	Type	Category	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description
26	27	Fill	Ditch	1.8	2.05	0.9	Compact, mid greysh brown silty clay
27	27	Cut	Ditch	1.8	2.05	0.9	Linear in plan
28	29	Fill	Ditch	1.8	3.05	1	Compact, mid greysh brown silty clay
29	29	Cut	Ditch	1.8	3.05	1	Linear in plan

Trench	3		**End 1**	**End 2**
Alignment	N-S	**Topsoil depth (m)**	0.3	0.3
Trench length (m)	15	**Subsoil depth (m)**	0.1	0.1
Max machine depth (m)	0.4	**Natural depth (m OD)**	83.21	83.21

Summary of archaeological features

1 post-medieval ditch

Context	Cut	Type	Category	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description
30	31	Fill	Ditch	1.8	3.07	0.95	Compact, mid greysh brown silty clay
31	31	Cut	Ditch	1.8	3.07	0.95	Linear in plan, steep sides

Trench	4		**End 1**	**End 2**
Alignment	N-S	**Topsoil depth (m)**	0.3	0.3
Trench length (m)	20	**Subsoil depth (m)**	0.1	0.1
Max machine depth (m)	0.4	**Natural depth (m OD)**	83.67	83.6

Summary of archaeological features

No archaeology revealed

Context	Cut	Type	Category	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description

Trench	5		**End 1**	**End 2**
Alignment	N-S	**Topsoil depth (m)**	0.3	0.3
Trench length (m)	15	**Subsoil depth (m)**	0.1	0.1
Max machine depth (m)	0.4	**Natural depth (m OD)**	79.88	80.41

Summary of archaeological features

1 post-medieval ditch

Context	Cut	Type	Category	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description
24	25	Fill	Ditch	1.8	2.1	0.8	Compact, mid greysh brown silty clay
25	25	Cut	Ditch	1.8	2.1	0.8	Linear in plan

Trench	6		**End 1**	**End 2**
Alignment	E-W	**Topsoil depth (m)**	0.3	0.3
Trench length (m)	6.65	**Subsoil depth (m)**	0.1	0.1
Max machine depth (m)	0.4	**Natural depth (m OD)**	86.55	

Summary of archaeological features

1 modern large pit

Context	Cut	Type	Category	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description
12	13	Fill	Pit	1.8	6		Loose, mid greysh brown silt
13	13	Cut	Pit	1.8	6		Wide spread modern disturbance

Trench	7		**End 1**	**End 2**
Alignment	NE-SW	**Topsoil depth (m)**	0.3	0.3
Trench length (m)	20	**Subsoil depth (m)**	0.1	0.1
Max machine depth (m)	0.4	**Natural depth (m OD)**	86.4	86.4

Summary of archaeological features

1 post-medieval ditch

Context	Cut	Type	Category	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description
14	15	Fill	Ditch	1.8	8	0.8	Compact, mid greysh brown silty clay
15	15	Cut	Ditch	1.8	8	0.8	Linear in plan, moderate sides

Trench	8		**End 1**	**End 2**
Alignment	NE-SW	**Topsoil depth (m)**	0.3	0.3
Trench length (m)	13	**Subsoil depth (m)**	0.1	0.1
Max machine depth (m)	0.4	**Natural depth (m OD)**	84.7	85.88

Summary of archaeological features

1 post-medieval ditch

Context	Cut	Type	Category	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description
16	17	Fill	Ditch	1.8	2.5	0.7	Compact, mid greysh brown silty clay
17	17	Cut	Ditch	1.8	2.5	0.7	Linear in plan

Trench	9		**End 1**	**End 2**
Alignment	N-S	**Topsoil depth (m)**	0.3	0.3
Trench length (m)	19.5	**Subsoil depth (m)**	0.1	0.1
Max machine depth (m)	0.4	**Natural depth (m OD)**	82.1	82.1

Summary of archaeological features

No archaeology revealed

Context	Cut	Type	Category	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description

			End 1	End 2
Trench	10			
Alignment	N-S	**Topsoil depth (m)**	0.3	0.3
Trench length (m)	20	**Subsoil depth (m)**	0.1	0.1
Max machine depth (m)	0.4	**Natural depth (m OD)**	74.03	74.03

Summary of archaeological features

1 post-medieval ditch

Context	Cut	Type	Category	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description
4	5	Fill	Ditch	0.8	1.55	0.7	Compact, mid greysh brown silty clay
5	5	Cut	Ditch	0.8	1.55	0.7	Linear in plan, steep sides

Trench	11		**End 1**	**End 2**
Alignment	E-W	**Topsoil depth (m)**	0.3	0.3
Trench length (m)	10	**Subsoil depth (m)**	0.1	0.1
Max machine depth (m)	0.4	**Natural depth (m OD)**	74	74

Summary of archaeological features

2 undated shallow ditches

Context	Cut	Type	Category	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description
8	9	Fill	Ditch	1.8	0.4	0.13	Compact, light yellowish brown clay
9	9	Cut	Ditch	1.8	0.4	0.13	Linear in plan, gentle sides, concave base
10	11	Fill	Ditch	1.8	0.4	0.15	Compact, light yellowish brown clay
11	11	Cut	Ditch	1.8	0.4	0.15	Linear in plan, gentle sides, concave base

			End 1	End 2
Trench	12			
Alignment	E-W	**Topsoil depth (m)**	0.3	0.3
Trench length (m)	20	**Subsoil depth (m)**	0.1	0.1
Max machine depth (m)	0.4	**Natural depth (m OD)**	74.65	74.2

Summary of archaeological features

1 roman ditch

Context	Cut	Type	Category	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description
6	7	Fill	Ditch	15	0.4	0.1	Compact, light yellowish brown clay
7	7	Cut	Ditch	15	0.4	0.1	Linear in plan, gentle sides, concave base

			End 1	End 2
Trench	13			
Alignment	E-W	**Topsoil depth (m)**	0.3	0.3
Trench length (m)	10.5	**Subsoil depth (m)**	0.1	0.1
Max machine depth (m)	0.4	**Natural depth (m OD)**	79.65	79.91

Summary of archaeological features

1 post-medieval ditch

Context	Cut	Type	Category	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description
32	33	Fill	Ditch	1.8	0.4	1	Compact, mid greysh brown silty clay
33	33	Cut	Ditch	1.8	0.4	1	Linear in plan, gentle sides, concave base

Trench	14		**End 1**	**End 2**
Alignment	NE-SW	**Topsoil depth (m)**	0.3	0.3
Trench length (m)	8	**Subsoil depth (m)**	0.1	0.1
Max machine depth (m)	0.4	**Natural depth (m OD)**	86.2	86.35

Summary of archaeological features

1 post-medieval ditch

Context	Cut	Type	Category	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description
18	19	Fill	Ditch	1.8	2.5	1.2	Compact, mid greysh brown silty clay
19	19	Cut	Ditch	1.8	2.5	1.2	Linear in plan

APPENDIX 3: OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-328231

Project details	
Project name	North Weald Bassett: An Archaeological Evaluation © Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited, September 2018
Short description of the project	An archaeological evaluation was carried out at North Weald Bassett. Fourteen trenches were excavated in order to inform an Environmental Statement. The evaluation identified a possible early Roman ditch probably related to agricultural occupation in Trench 12. The most extensive remains found on the site were field boundary ditches dated to the post-medieval period, visible in Trenches 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8 and 10. The remains of possible post-medieval ponds were identified in Trenches 6, 7 and 14. The ponds had been backfilled in the 20th century.
Project dates	Start: 29-08-2018 End: 04-09-2018
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	ENWB18 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Cultivated Land 4 - Character Undetermined
Monument type	DITCH Roman
Monument type	DITCH Post Medieval
Monument type	DITCH Modern
Significant Finds	POTTERY Roman
Significant Finds	CBM Post Medieval
Methods & techniques	"Targeted Trenches"
Development type	Rural residential
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF

Position in the planning process	Pre-application
Project location	
Country	England
Site location	ESSEX EPPING FOREST NORTH WEALD BASSETT North Weald Bassett, ESSEX CM16 6EY
Postcode	CM16 6EY
Study area	36 Hectares
Site coordinates	TL 549542 205097 51.861151732348 0.250544915477 51 51 40 N 000 15 01 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 72m Max: 78m
Project creators	
Name of Organisation	PCA Central
Project brief originator	Maria Medlycott
Project design originator	CGMS HERITAGE
Project director/manager	Helen Hawkins
Project supervisor	Tiberiu Nica
Type of sponsor/funding body	House builder
Name of sponsor/funding body	Countryside Properties
Project archives	
Physical Archive recipient	Epping Forest District Museum
Physical Archive ID	ENWB18

Physical Contents	"Ceramics"
Digital Archive recipient	Epping Forest District Museum
Digital Archive ID	ENWB18
Digital Media available	"Database","Images raster / digital photography","Survey","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Epping Forest District Museum
Paper Archive ID	ENWB18
Paper Media available	"Report","Section","Survey ","Unpublished Text","Context sheet","Plan"

Project bibliography 1	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	NORTH WEALD BASSETT, ESSEX CM16 6EY: AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Nica, T
Date	2018
Issuer or publisher	PCA London
Place of issue or publication	PCA London