

**LAND NORTH-EAST OF WITHAM
(RIVENHALL PARISH), PHASE II,
WITHAM, ESSEX: AN
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION**

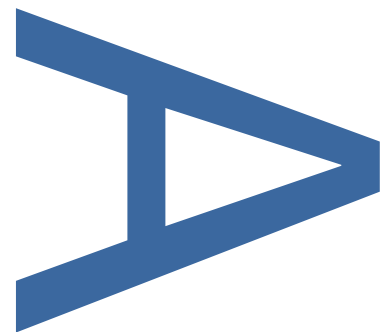
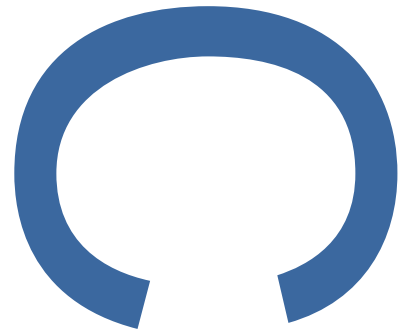
**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL
EVALUATION**

**LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY:
BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**PLANNING APPLICATION NUMBERS:
17/01092/FUL**

PCA REPORT NO: R13658

SITE CODE: WHFR15



LAND NORTH-EAST OF WITHAM
(RIVENHALL PARISH), PHASE II,
WITHAM, ESSEX:

AN
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Quality Control

Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd	
Project Number	K 6096
Report Number	R 13658

	Name	Signature	Date
Text Prepared by:	Lawrence Morgan- Shelbourne		April 2019
Graphics Prepared by:	Rosie Scales		April 2019
Graphics Checked by:	Rosie Scales		April 2019
Project Manager Sign-off:	Mark Hinman		April 2019

Revision No.	Date	Checked	Approved

Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited
The Granary
Rectory Farm
Brewery Road
Pampisford
Cambridgeshire
CB22 3EN

Land North-East of Witham (Rivenhall Parish), Phase II, Witham, Essex: An Archaeological Evaluation

Local Planning Authority: Braintree District Council

Planning Reference: 17/01092/FUL

Central National Grid Reference: NGR TL 8264 1627

Site Code: WHFR15

Report No. R13658

Written and researched by: Lawrence Morgan-Shelbourne

Project Manager: Mark Hinman

Commissioning Client: CgMs Ltd

Contractor: Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
Central Office
The Granary Rectory Farm
Brewery Road
Pampisford
Cambridgeshire
CB22 3EN

Tel: 01223 845522

E-mail: mhinman@pre-construct.com

Website: www.pre-construct.com

©Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd

April 2019

The material contained herein is and remains the sole property of Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd and is not for publication to third parties without prior consent.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

CONTENTS

CONTENTS	2
ABSTRACT	3
1 INTRODUCTION	4
2 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY	5
3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND.....	6
4 METHODOLOGY	11
5 QUANTIFICATION OF ARCHIVE.....	13
6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS BY TRENCH	14
7 DISCUSSION & CONCLUSIONS.....	15
8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	16
9 BIBLIOGRAPHY	17
10 FIGURES.....	19
11 APPENDIX 1: PLATES.....	22
12 APPENDIX 2: OASIS FORM	26
FIGURE 1 SITE LOCATION	19
FIGURE 2 DETAILED TRENCH LOCATION.....	20
FIGURE 3 RIVENHALL PARK, ARCHAEOLOGICAL PHASES	21
PLATE 1: THE SITE, VIEW NORTH.....	22
PLATE 2: TRENCH 1, VIEW NORTH	23
PLATE 3: TRENCH 2, VIEW WEST.....	24
PLATE 4: TRENCH 3, VIEW NORTH-EAST.....	25

ABSTRACT

The archaeological evaluation of the proposed area of a construction compound was carried out following on from previous programs of trial trenching and subsequent excavation carried out by Archaeology South-East (ASE), prior to a phased residential development ('Rivenhall Park', Phase I and II).

The trenches described within this report consist of the final, northernmost trenches encompassed within the scheme of the Phase II Evaluation. The other 27 trenches comprising this phase of work were excavated by ASE in June 2018.

The evaluation revealed no archaeological features and deposits.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 A programme of archaeological trial trench evaluation was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd (PCA) on land North-East of Witham (Rivenhall Parish), Witham, Essex CM8 3HJ (centred on Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference (NGR) TL 8264 1627) on the 1st of April 2019 (Figure 1; Plate 1).
- 1.2 The archaeological work was commissioned by CgMs Ltd on behalf of their client, Bellway Homes Essex, in response to an archaeological planning condition attached to the development of 163 residential dwellings, with associated parking, roads, landscaping, public open space and allotments (Planning Reference:17/01092/FUL). This was due to high archaeological significance of the proposed development area (PDA). The work was undertaken in line with National Planning Policy Framework 2018, Section 16 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment'.
- 1.3 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by ASE (ASE 2017b) in response to a request for archaeological evaluation issued by Braintree District Council, as advised by Essex County Council's (ECC) Place Services.
- 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 three 1.8m x 30m evaluation trenches totalling 162m² were excavated and recorded (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 Braintree Museum.

2 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

2.1 Geology

2.2 The solid geology of the site is mapped by the British Geological Survey (BGS, Website 1) as London Clay. This is capped by superficial deposits of glacial till of the Lowestoft Formation (Diamicton). These deposits were present during the course of the evaluation as (102), a firm, light to mid-yellowish-grey clay-with-chalk.

2.3 The site is located on gently sloping ground, falling from c.34m in the north to c.33m in the south. The site was previously part of Rivenhall Oaks Golf Course and therefore was heavily landscaped. The topsoil deposits associated with the fairway of the golf course had been stripped prior to the excavation of the trenches.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

General

- 3.1 The information below is taken from the Phase II Evaluation Report (ASE 2018), which itself utilizes a search of the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER), as well as the Phase I Post-Excavation Assessment (ASE 2017b) and the Heritage Statement (ASE 2015) produced for the site.
- 3.2 There are no nationally designated heritage assets located within the Phase I site itself; however, Rivenhall Old Rectory (EHER 28993, List No. 1122557), a 16th to 17th-century timber-framed house, is located c.200m to the north-west of the development site.

Site Specific Background

- 3.3 Below-ground heritage assets (i.e. archaeological remains) have previously been identified within the Phase I site, the most significant of these being a series of cropmark features located in its southern part, to the north of Yew Close. These comprised part of a sub-rectangular enclosure with an annexe, overlain by later rectilinear field boundaries and possible Great War practice trenches (EHER 14122). Although undated and un-investigated prior to the Phase I evaluation, the cropmark enclosure and annexe were thought likely to be of Iron Age or Roman date.
- 3.4 The Heritage Statement highlighted that the site was potentially underlain by geological/lacustrine deposits associated with a former lake present during the Hoxnian interglacial period, with the potential to contain material of Palaeolithic and paleoenvironmental interest.
- 3.5 A geoarchaeological survey was conducted at Coleman's Farm, c.900m southeast of the site, which revealed a deposit sequence of Palaeolithic/Pleistocene interest (EHER 48682; Bates 2014). Three groups of deposits were found, consisting of Anglian and pre-Anglian sediments (Chelmsford Gravels, Springfield/Anglian Till), interglacial lacustrine sediments and fluvial sediments of the Blackwater system (river gravel terraces). At the western end, lacustrine deposits were present beneath the terrace flat, where

fluvial gravels overlies lacustrine sediments.

- 3.6 Stray finds of prehistoric material recorded within the vicinity of the site include a Late Bronze Age socketed axe (EHER 8453) found off Rickstones Road, c.600m to the west of the development site.
- 3.7 Three sherds of prehistoric pottery and a scatter of worked flint and fire-cracked flint (EHER 14449) were found during fieldwalking on the site of the adjacent golf course. The same fieldwork also produced sherds of 2nd- to 4th-century Roman pottery (EHER 14450), medieval pottery (EHER 14451) and post-medieval pottery and tile (EHER 14452). No definite concentrations were noted and the material is conjectured to have been deposited during agricultural activity.
- 3.8 Roman coins have been found c.500m west of the development site, adjacent to Rickstones Road (EHER 8364).
- 3.9 Cropmarks (EHER 14121) have also been recorded c.450m to the north of the development area, east of Rickstone's Farm. These comprise field boundaries and associated ponds (most of which are shown on historic OS maps) overlying a large circular enclosure containing three roughly circular features of potentially prehistoric or Roman date. Another possible cropmark (EHER 8298) is recorded at Hornbeam Walk, c.400m south of the development site.
- 3.10 A geophysical survey (magnetometer) carried out in October 2003 (Saunders and Clark 2004) on land at Coleman's Farm, Rivenhall End, c.400m to the south-east of the development area, identified a number of archaeological features, including a large enclosure with an annex and prominent linear features, and a possible kiln (EHER 48338). The results from an earlier watching brief (ECC FAU 2003) enabled the dating of some of the features, which ranged from the Late Iron Age to Roman Periods.
- 3.11 Watching brief works in the Coleman's Farm area, along a 150m length of Transco Pipeline located immediately alongside the A12 (ECC FAU 2003), recorded a series of ditches and gullies (generally NW/SE orientated), which may have related to land division and field drainage. Large pits located among

these linear features contained large quantities of pottery, animal bone, oyster shell and other refuse, indicating domestic settlement in the vicinity (EHER 45900). Dating evidence from some of the features ranged from the Late Iron Age to Roman periods.

- 3.12 Evidence for Roman settlement on the site would not be unexpected, as the A12 trunk road follows the line of the Roman road from London to Colchester, while a second Roman road is suggested to lie to the east of the development area, running between Little Braxted and Rivenhall.
- 3.13 A fieldwalking exercise immediately north of the London–Colchester railway line, in the vicinity of Mulberry Gardens, recorded a surface scatter of human bone and artefacts (EHER 8398) in an area where human and animal bone had previously been discovered. Other finds from this area included Roman pottery (EHER 8399) and a single sherd of possible 13th-century medieval pottery (EHER 8400). This site has tentatively been interpreted as either a cemetery, potentially of Roman date, or a medieval plague pit.
- 3.14 Few remains of medieval date have been identified in the vicinity of the site, which appears to lie away from any settlement core of that period and to have been predominantly in agricultural use. Medieval and post-medieval pottery was recovered in the Eastways area (EHER 8031, 8032 and 8033) but, as with the finds of pottery of this date recorded from the golf course, this material has most likely made its way on to the fields during agricultural manuring.
- 3.15 In addition to the infilled historic field boundary ditches seen as cropmarks (2.2.2) and depicted on historic OS maps, other medieval/post-medieval features in the area include the Burgate Field Enclosure (EHER 14045), at Rivenhall End, the suggested site of an enclosure bank shown on the 1716 estate map.

Previous Work on the Site (Phase I)

- 3.16 Trial trench evaluation of the c.6.5ha Phase I development site, in 2015 (ASE 2016), confirmed the presence of archaeological remains, including an Iron Age ditched enclosure and remains of a WW1 practice trench, previously identified

as cropmarks from aerial photography.

- 3.17 Six test pits (at the end of Trenches 8, 21, 23, 29, 42 and 46) were investigated as part of the Phase I evaluation (a planned seventh test pit was in fact located in Phase II). No archaeological remains or significant deposits with potential to preserve paleoenvironmental evidence were observed, and no Head deposits, identified as being of high potential by ECC Place Services, was encountered (ASE 2016, 23-7).
- 3.18 Two areas were subsequently selected for mitigation excavation (ASE 2017a) in the south and west of the Phase I development site, focusing on possible Iron Age field boundaries (Area 1) and the cropmark enclosure (Area 2). A third location was investigated within a single additional trial trench to elucidate the nature of a probable pond found at the northern end of the site during the evaluation.
- 3.19 Prehistoric remains predating the Iron Age were restricted only to a small quantity of artefacts judged to be residual in later features.
- 3.20 A high density of Early to Middle Iron Age remains, mostly ditches, gullies, pits and postholes, were present across the eastern half of Area 2. These defined various phases of unenclosed and then enclosed settlement dating to c.800-300 BC. This included the cropmark enclosure (EHER 14122), the full extents of which were exposed and recorded. However, a western annex identified from aerial photographic cropmarks was not identified as a below-ground archaeological feature. Outlying ditches in both Areas 1 and 2 are interpreted as the remains of contemporary field systems surrounding the Iron Age settlement.
- 3.21 The enclosed settlement appears to have been abandoned by the end of the Middle Iron Age. Although there is some slight evidence for continued land use in the Late Iron Age/Early Roman period, including probable use of the residual remains of the enclosure, concerted activity in this landscape is not evident again until the post-medieval period.
- 3.22 A number of ditches mark the boundaries of the later post-medieval field

system, into which a WW1 practice trench was inserted and then dismantled/backfilled.

Previous Work on the Site (Phase II)

- 3.23 The initial part of the Phase II evaluation (ASE 2018) established the presence of a low density of archaeological remains of Early Iron Age and Roman date, broadly located in the north-east of the Phase II development area. Further south, only one or two undated ditches were present and there is a noticeable absence of archaeological remains in the southernmost trenches closest to the Phase I settlement area.
- 3.24 Most of these recorded archaeological remains are likely to be associated with agricultural activity. The sherds of pottery recovered from the excavated features were comparatively low in number and small in size implying that they may have travelled some distance from potential areas of occupation. The occurrence of other material/artefact types was minimal.
- 3.25 The Phase II evaluation also confirmed that the cropmark plot overlying the area indicates the position of a field system of late 19th-century to mid-20th-century date. This was evidenced by the recovery of finds of this date and the fact that the field boundary ditches correlate with those depicted on historic OS mapping.

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 General

- 4.1.1 The archaeological evaluation comprised three 1.8m x 30m trial trenches, totalling 162m². These were distributed evenly across the area of the proposed construction compound in order to provide a representative sample of the development area.

4.2 Excavation methodology

- 4.2.1 Ground reduction during the evaluation was carried out using a 14 ton 360° tracked mechanical excavator. Topsoil and the upper portion of the subsoil deposits had been removed prior to the excavation of the trenches. The remaining part of the subsoil 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.

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 GS014 GPS rover unit with RTK differential correction, giving a three-dimensional accuracy of 20mm or better.
- 4.3.2 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]. All features and deposits excavated during the evaluation are listed in Appendix 1.
- 4.3.3 Metal-detecting was carried out during subsoil stripping and throughout the excavation process. Spoil heaps were scanned by metal-detector periodically.

No objects were found.

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

5 QUANTIFICATION OF ARCHIVE

5.1 Paper Archive

Context register sheets	1
Context sheets	3
Plan registers	0
Plans at 1:50	0
Plans at 1:20	0
Plans at 1:10	0
Plans at 1:5	0
Section register sheets	0
Sections at 1:10 & 1:20	0
Trench record sheets	3
Photo register sheets	1
Small finds register sheets	0
Environmental register sheets	0

5.2 Digital Archive

Digital photos	33
GPS survey files	1
Digital plans	1
GIS project	0
Access database	1

5.3 Physical Archive

Struck flint	0
Burnt flint	0
Pottery	0
Ceramic building material (CBM)	0
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 BY TRENCH

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 The trenches are described below in numerical order, with technical data tabulated. Features and deposits are first split into feature type, and then described in numerical cut order. No archaeological features or deposits were uncovered.

TRENCH 1	Figure 2		Plate 2	
Trench Alignment: N-S	Length: 30m	Level of Natural (m OD): 34.39-34.69m		
Deposit	Context No.	Maximum Depth (m)		
		N End	S End	
Subsoil	(101)	0.1m	0.14m	
Natural	(102)	0.12m+	0.20m+	
Summary				
Trench 1 was located in the north-western part of the site.				
The trench contained no archaeologically significant features or deposits.				

TRENCH 2	Figure 2		Plate 3	
Trench Alignment: E-S	Length: 30m	Level of Natural (m OD): 33.93-34.23m		
Deposit	Context No.	Maximum Depth (m)		
		E End	W End	
Subsoil	(101)	0.27m	0.16m	
Natural	(102)	0.3m+	0.18m+	
Summary				
Trench 2 was located in the southern part of the site.				
The trench contained no archaeologically significant features or deposits.				

TRENCH 3	Figure 2		Plate 4	
Trench Alignment: NE-SW	Length: 30m	Level of Natural (m OD): 34.14-34.23		
Deposit	Context No.	Maximum Depth (m)		
		NE End	SW End	
Subsoil	(101)	0.1m	0.14m	
Natural	(102)	0.12m+	0.16m+	
Summary				
Trench 3 was located in the north-eastern part of the site.				
The trench contained no archaeologically significant features or deposits.				

7 DISCUSSION & CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1.1 No archaeological features or deposits were uncovered during the evaluation. This parallels the absence of archaeology apparent in Trench 76, excavated as part of the Phase II evaluation and located directly to the south of the compound area.

8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 8.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd would like to thank CgMs for commissioning and funding the work on behalf of Bellway Homes. The project was managed for PCA by Mark Hinman and was supervised by Lawrence Morgan-Shelbourne. Figures accompanying this report were prepared by Rosie Scales of PCA's CAD Department.

9 BIBLIOGRAPHY

9.1 Printed Sources

ASE 2015. Heritage Statement: Land to the North-East of Witham (Rivenhall Parish), Essex. (Unpublished)

ASE 2016. Archaeological Evaluation Report: Land North-East of Witham (Rivenhall Parish) Phase 1, Witham, Essex. (Unpublished) ASE rep. No. 2015469

ASE 2017a. Archaeological excavation: Phase 1, land northeast of Witham, Essex. Post-excavation assessment and updated project design report. (Unpublished) ASE rep. No. 2017011

Archaeology South-East, 2017b. Written Scheme of Investigation, Land Northeast of Witham (Rivenhall Parish) Phase 2, Witham, Essex (Unpublished)

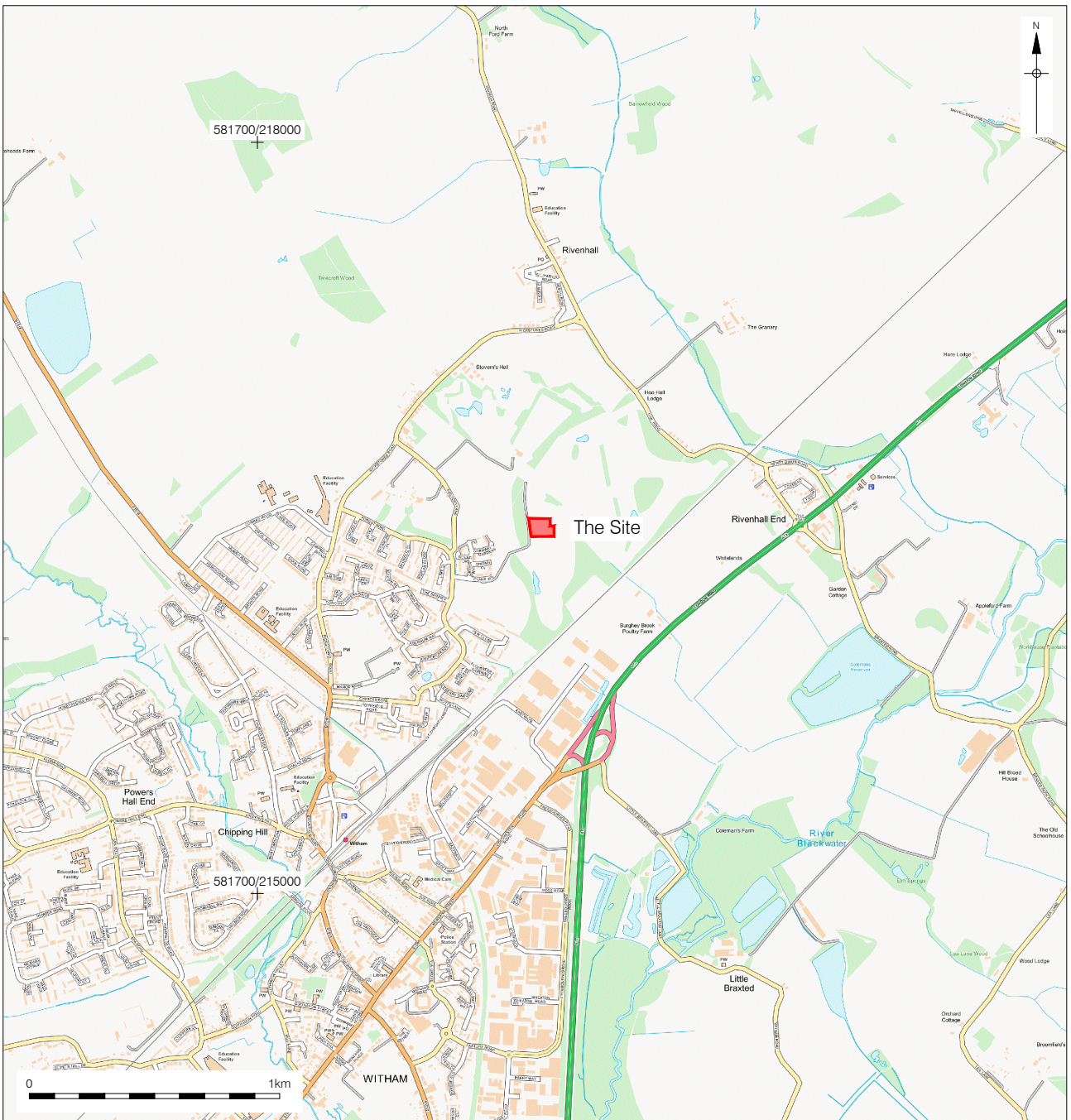
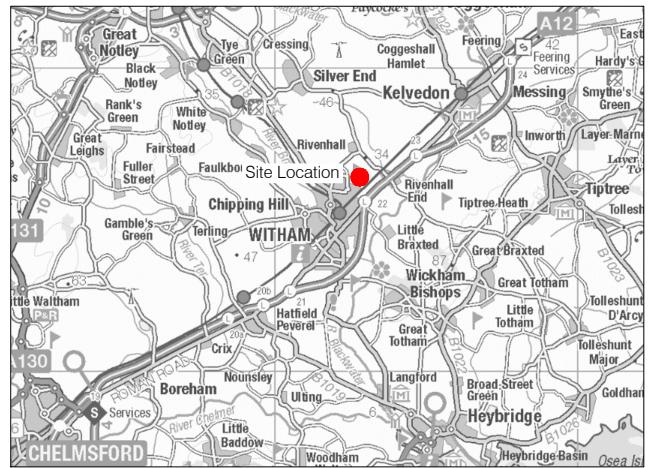
Archaeology South-East, 2018. Archaeological Evaluation, Land Northeast of Witham (Rivenhall Parish) Phase 2, Witham, Essex. (Unpublished) ASE rep. No. 2018219

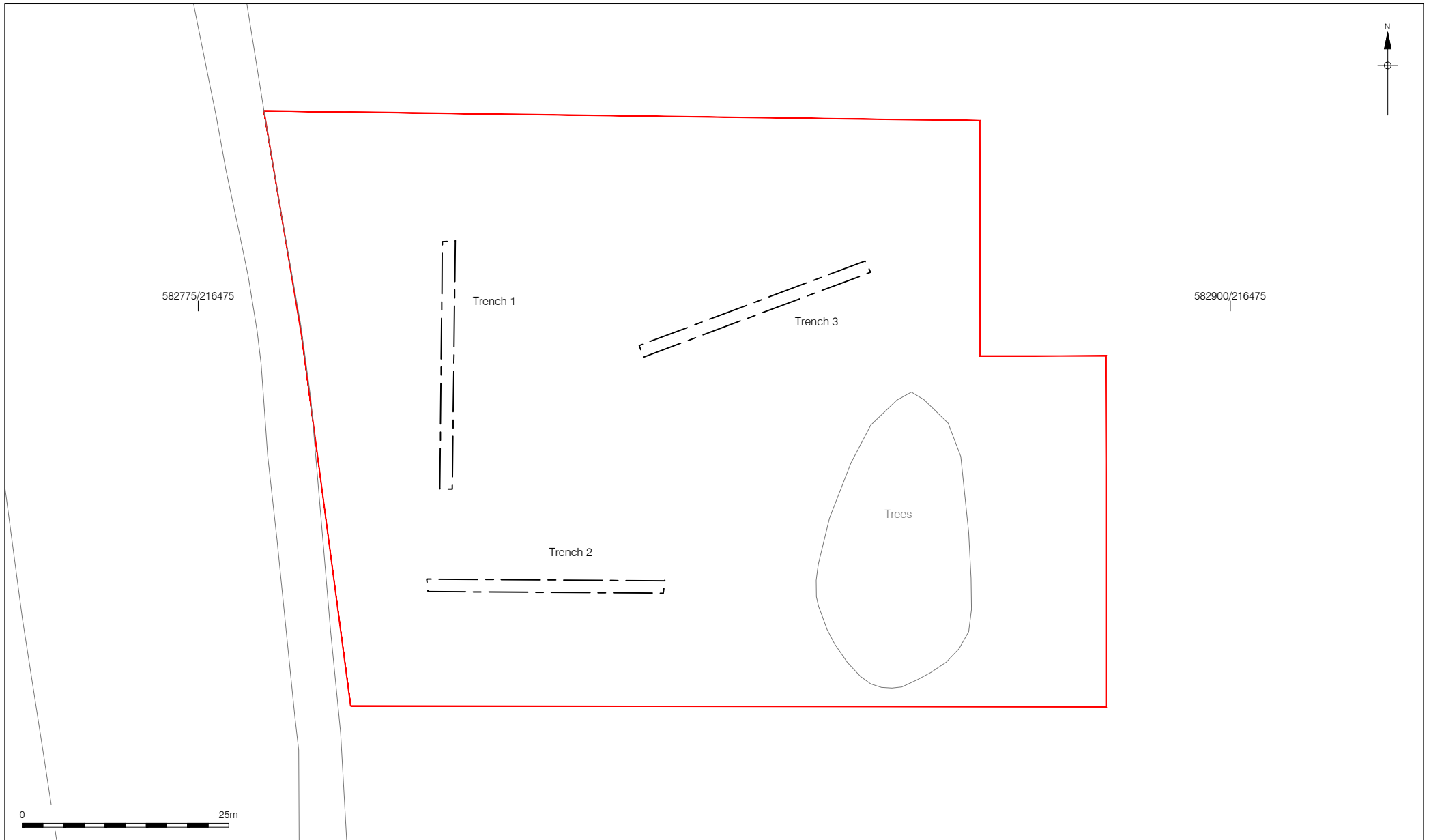
ECC FAU 2003. Transco Pipeline, Coleman's Farm, Rivenhall End, Essex: Archaeological Monitoring and Excavation. (Unpublished) ECC FAU Rep. 1284

Saunders, H. & Clarke, V. 2004. Coleman's Farm, Witham, Essex: Geophysical Survey Report. (Unpublished)

9.2 Online Sources

British Geological Survey, 2018. Geology of Britain Viewer <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html?location=CM83HJ>. Accessed 12/04/18







11 APPENDIX 1: PLATES



Plate 1: The site, view north



Plate 2: Trench 1, view north



Plate 3: Trench 2, view west



Plate 4: Trench 3, view north-east

12 APPENDIX 2: OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-348842

Project details

Project name Land North-East of Witham (Rivenhall Parish), Phase II, Witham, Essex: An Archaeological Evaluation

Short description of the project The archaeological evaluation of the proposed area of a construction compound was carried out following on from previous programs of trial trenching and subsequent excavation carried out by Archaeology South-East (ASE), prior to a phased residential development ('Rivenhall Park', Phase I and II). The trenches described within this report consist of the final, northernmost trenches encompassed within the scheme of the Phase II Evaluation. The other 27 trenches comprising this phase of work were excavated by ASE in June 2018. The evaluation revealed no archaeological features and deposits.

Project dates Start: 01-04-2019 End: 01-04-2019

Previous/future work Yes / Not known

Any associated project reference WHFR15 - Sitecode codes

Type of project Field evaluation

Site status None

Current Land use Other 14 - Recreational usage

Methods & techniques "Sample Trenches"

Development type Housing estate

Prompt Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16

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

Project location

Country England

Site location ESSEX BRAINTREE RIVENHALL Land North-East of Witham (Rivenhall Parish), Phase II, Witham, Essex: An Archaeological Evaluation

Postcode CM8 3HJ

Study area 162 Square metres

Site coordinates TL 8264 1627 51.814666410641 0.649984451417 51 48 52 N 000 38
59 E Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 0.12m Max: 0.3m

Project creators

Name of
Organisation PCA

Project brief
originator Essex County Council

Project design
originator CGMS HERITAGE

Project
director/manager Mark Hinman

Project supervisor Lawrence Morgan-Shelbourne

Type of
sponsor/funding Developer
body

Name of
sponsor/funding Bellway Homes Essex
body

Project archives

Physical Archive
Exists? No

Digital Archive
recipient Braintree District Museum

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

Paper Archive
recipient Braintree District Museum

Paper Media
available "Context sheet","Report","Section","Survey ","Unpublished Text"

Project bibliography

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)		
Title	Land North-East of Witham (Rivenhall Parish), Phase II, Witham, Essex: An Archaeological Evaluation		
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Morgan-Shelbourne, L		
Date	2019		
Issuer or publisher	PCA Central		
Place of issue or publication	Pampisford		
Description	29 A4 pages, bound, front and back cover. 3 Figures, 4 Plates		
Entered by	Lawrence	Morgan-Shelbourne	(lmorgan-shelbourne@pre-construct.com)
Entered on	12 April 2019		

PCA

PCA CAMBRIDGE

THE GRANARY, RECTORY FARM
BREWERY ROAD, PAMPISFORD
CAMBRIDGESHIRE CB22 3EN
t: 01223 845 522
e: cambridge@pre-construct.com

PCA DURHAM

UNIT 19A, TURSDALE BUSINESS PARK
TURSDALE
DURHAM DH6 5PG
t: 0191 377 1111
e: durham@pre-construct.com

PCA LONDON

UNIT 54, BROCKLEY CROSS BUSINESS CENTRE
96 ENDWELL ROAD, BROCKLEY
LONDON SE4 2PD
t: 020 7732 3925
e: london@pre-construct.com

PCA NEWARK

OFFICE 8, ROEWOOD COURTYARD
WINKBURN, NEWARK
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE NG22 8PG
t: 01636 370410
e: newark@pre-construct.com

PCA NORWICH

QUARRY WORKS, DEREHAM ROAD
HONINGHAM
NORWICH NR9 5AP
T: 01223 845522
e: cambridge@pre-construct.com

PCA WARWICK

UNIT 9, THE MILL, MILL LANE
LITTLE SHREWLEY, WARWICK
WARWICKSHIRE CV35 7HN
t: 01926 485490
e: warwick@pre-construct.com

PCA WINCHESTER

5 RED DEER COURT, ELM ROAD
WINCHESTER
HAMPSHIRE SO22 5LX
t: 01962 849 549
e: winchester@pre-construct.com

