

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL
EVALUATION OF LAND AT
MILLFIELDS,
SAWBRIDGEWORTH,
HERFORDSHIRE**

Revised July 2010

PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY

DOCUMENT VERIFICATION

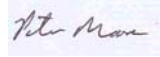
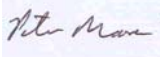
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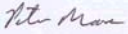
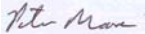
Land at Millfields, Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire

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An Archaeological Evaluation of Land at Millfields, Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire

Site Code: HMIL10

Central National Grid Reference: TL 48573 15398

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1 Abstract

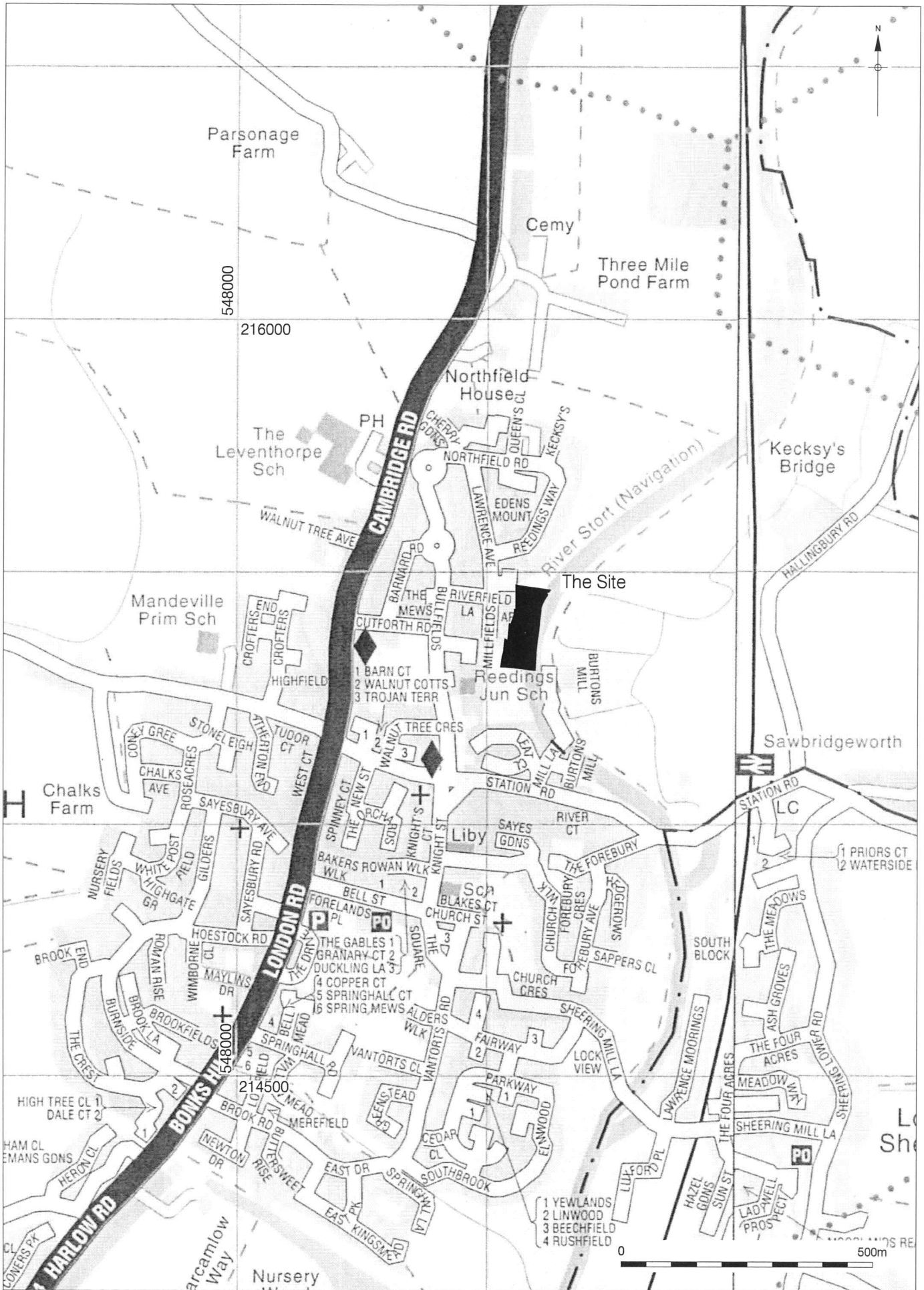
- 1.1 An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd at Land at Millfields, Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire, between the between 12th-16th April 2010. The work was commissioned by Duncan Hawkins of CgMs Consulting, on behalf of Barratt Homes.

- 1.2 The natural geology encountered on site seemed to vary somewhat from north to south. The south of the site was characterized by light yellowish brown 'Boulder Clay' with a high chalk content. Towards the north of the site, however, the Boulder Clay had been truncated mostly like as a result of construction work associated with the adjacent housing estate in the 1960's. Redeposited alluvium was seen overlying the London Clay towards the north, its presence most likely derived from one or more incidents of dredging of the River Stort at some time in the past. Towards the south, despite a concentration of tree related features towards the north-west of this part of the site, little else of archaeological interest was observed save for the large cut feature to the south which could represent an incidence of land terracing that took place at some unknown point in the past. Alternatively it could form a natural decline in the geology of the site. The subsoil contained a number of fragments of post-medieval peg tile and one fragment of fired clay which could feasibly have dated anytime from the Roman period onwards. The presence of such material supports the already established notion that this land was utilised for agricultural purposes throughout the post-medieval period, and possibly earlier.

No archaeological features or deposits were observed in any of the trenches.

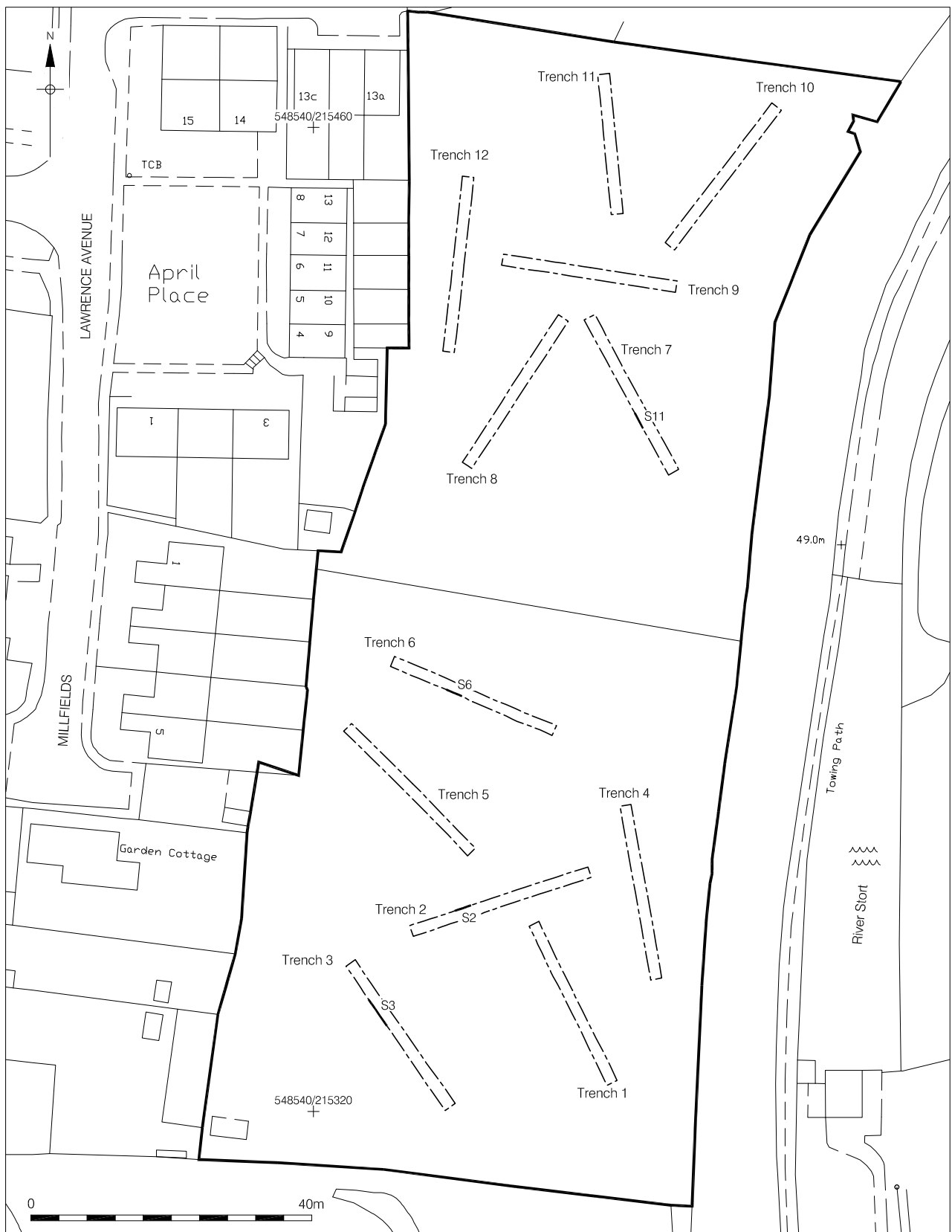
2 Introduction

- 2.1 An archaeological evaluation was conducted between 12th-16th April 2010 by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited (PCA) at Land at Millfields, Sawbridgeworth, in advance of residential development. The National Grid Reference of the site is TL 48573 15398.
- 2.2 The evaluation was commissioned by Duncan Hawkins, CgMs Consulting, on behalf of Barratt Homes, following a planning condition applied by the East Herts District Council stipulating that a programme of archaeological work be implemented prior to any construction works being undertaken on site. The field investigation, was supervised by Iain Bright and project managed by Peter Moore for Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited. All work was undertaken following English Heritage (GLAAS) guidelines. The site works were monitored by Alison Tinniswood, the Archaeological advisor to Hertfordshire County Council.
- 2.3 The site had previously been the subject of a desk-based assessment (Smith 2007), which set out the detailed archaeological background to the site. It concluded that no certain archaeological potential existed, although a broad background potential for the late Prehistoric and Roman periods was possible.
- 2.4 The site was broadly rectangular in shape, extending to 1.1 hectares in size. It sloped down from 55.30m AOD in the south-west to 48.60m AOD in the north east, adjacent to the River Stort. The site was formally utilised for agricultural purposes but has long since been disused.
- 2.5 The evaluation comprised of 12 trenches measuring 25m by 1.80m (Hawkins 2010); covering slightly over 5% of the total site area. Care was taken with trench positioning in order to avoid two known active badger setts located toward the centre and south of the site.
- 2.6 The completed archive comprising written, drawn and photographic records and artefactual material will be deposited at Hertford Museum under the site code **HMIL10**.



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Figure 1
 Site Location
 1:10,000 at A4



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Figure 2
 Trench Location
 1:800 at A4

3 Planning Background

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 The investigation aims to satisfy the objectives of the East Herts District Council, which fully recognises the importance of the buried heritage for which they are the custodians. The districts 'adopted local plan' (ALP) (implemented in 2007) contains policy statements in respect of protecting the buried archaeological resource.

3.2 East Herts District Council Adopted Local Plan 2007

3.2.1 Below is an extract taken from the East Herts District Council Adopted Local Plan (ibid). The ALP mirrors advice contained in the Communities and Local Government document; "Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (PPS5)". Although the ALP is currently being replaced by the Local Development Framework, the policies contained within it remain in force.

Archaeology

9.3.1 Archaeological remains form the oldest element of our built heritage and are often the only evidence of that part of our history for which no written records exist. There are over 1200 individual records of known archaeological sites and finds in the District, some of national or regional importance.

9.3.2 This is reflected in the District's 42 Scheduled Monuments, protected by law as sites of national importance. Around a further 300 sites are identified as 'Areas of Archaeological Significance' where there is particular evidence to indicate that significant remains are likely to exist.

9.3.3 The nature of archaeological evidence means that all areas of high potential may not have yet been identified. Important archaeological evidence may exist on any site, and thus may be at risk from proposed developments. The District Council, in conjunction with the County Archaeologist and relevant bodies, is determined to identify and protect all important remains through the use of appropriate policies and their implementation through the development control process.

9.3.4 PPG16 establishes how archaeological remains and interests should be taken into account by the planning system. Part A points out that remains are a finite, non-renewable resource vulnerable to damage and destruction in the development process. Part B of PPG16 requires Local Plans to include policies for the protection, preservation and enhancement of archaeological sites. Paragraph 21 of PPG16 points out that where important archaeological remains are likely to exist, it is reasonable for the planning authority to request a field evaluation be carried out prior to determining a planning application.

9.3.5 Not all surviving archaeological remains are of equal importance and Policies BH1 and BH2 reflect this hierarchy. Policy BH1 contains a presumption against development that will adversely affect a site containing archaeological remains of national importance. Where locally important archaeology is deemed by way of an assessment to be rare in regional or local terms, then the Council will decide whether to protect the site and its setting from development or to record the remains prior to development, in accordance with the provisions of Policy BH2.

BH1 Archaeology & New Development

Development will not be permitted where the Council considers that it will adversely affect archaeological sites of national importance, whether scheduled or unscheduled, and their setting.

BH2 Archaeological Evaluations and Assessments

On sites where it is demonstrated that there are remains of archaeological importance, whether of national or local significance, the applicant will be expected to provide the results of an archaeological evaluation and/or assessment prior to the determination of an application. The evaluation and/or assessment should seek to define:

the nature and condition of any archaeological remains within the application site; and

the likely impact of the proposed development on such features.

On the basis of the results of the evaluation and/or the assessment, the Council will consider the most appropriate means of mitigating the impact of the development on the historic environment in order to achieve preservation in situ or, where this is not merited, the measures needed to secure the recording of any remains prior to development.

BH3 Archaeological Conditions and Agreements

Where development is permitted on sites containing archaeological remains, any planning permission will be subject to conditions and/or formal agreements requiring appropriate excavation and recording in advance of development and the publication of the results.

The enhancement of archaeological remains and their setting will be sought by way of a planning obligation in circumstances where such works are necessary and relevant to the development proposed.

4 Geology and Topography

4.1 Geology

- 4.1.1 The underlying geology comprises London Clay, overlain with till (Boulder Clay) with isolated gravel deposits (Smith 2007).

4.2 Topography

- 4.2.1 The proposed development area lies to the north of Sawbridgeworth town centre immediately west of the River Stort. The site slopes down from 55.30m AOD in the south-west to 48.60m AOD in the north east, adjacent to the River.
- 4.2.2 The site is roughly divided through the centre by a tree line located on lower ground that is likely to be the remains of an old field boundary. The southern half of the site slopes from west to east towards the River Stort, whilst the northern half, although uneven, is relatively flat in comparison with only a gentle slope west-east.

5 Archaeological and Historical Background

5.1 The following section of this report comprises a summary of the archaeological and historical background of the site as detailed in the desk-based assessment (Smith 2007).

5.2 Prehistoric

5.2.1 A number of entries in the Historic Environment Record (HER) are described as prehistoric. Four inhumations beneath a gravel mound, possibly a long barrow, were discovered during building site levelling in 1960. Their location is described as east of Millfields and this probably places them within the housing estate sited between Millfields and the site (ibid).

5.2.2 A struck flint was found at Sheering Mill Lane within 500m of the site. At Great Hyde Hall, located over 1km to the south of the site, a cropmark of a single ditched rectangular enclosure (60m x 50m) with associated linear ditches and circular enclosures is thought to be prehistoric in date (ibid).

5.2.3 Evidence for Neolithic activity includes a flint arrowhead found during the construction of a housing estate 150m north-west of the proposed development area. Two Scheduled Ancient Monuments — a causewayed enclosure and cropmarks of a further ditch system — are both located to the south of the town just over 1km from the site (ibid).

5.2.4 There have been no definite finds for the Bronze Age or Iron Age periods within the local area as far as can be ascertained from a search of the Hertfordshire HER and other relevant sources (ibid).

5.3 Roman

5.3.1 There is limited evidence for the Romano-British period within the locality. A partial skeleton of unknown stratigraphic location has been dated as Romano-British on the basis of an associated sherd of pottery and a fragment of lava quern. An unidentified Roman coin(s) is recorded as being found within a garden in 1950 (ibid).

5.4 Saxon

5.4.1 There are no evidence of Saxon remains recorded within the HER. However, the investigations at St Mary the Great Church in the centre of Sawbridgeworth highlight the late Saxons origins of the church that suggest pre-Norman settlement (ibid).

5.5 Medieval

5.5.1 Although medieval Sawbridgeworth is well documented, there are only five examples of medieval remains listed within the HER.

- 5.5.2 To the south of the site the Church of St Mary the Great has a tower from the 13th and 15th centuries and internal arches from the 14th century. To the west of the church was the location of a medieval market place, now covered with buildings, in an area known as The Square. The origins of the market are well documented with Geoffrey de Say receiving a grant for a market in 1222 (ibid).
- 5.5.3 A posthole containing Harlow ware pottery dating to the 13th-14th century was observed in 2004 during excavations at Bell Street. Also attributed to the medieval period is a large boundary ditch found at Fawbert and Barnard School. The ditch produced no dating evidence but is thought to be associated with the Sayesbury Manor believed to have been originally located somewhere beneath present-day Sawbridgeworth (ibid).

5.6 Post-Medieval

- 5.6.1 It would appear that the older areas of the town are located around the south of the parallelogram-shaped street layout, comprising Barkers Lane (now Station Road), Cock Street (now Bell Street) and Knight Street. The names of Knight Street and Cock Street are at least as old as the 16th century. On both sides of Bell Street are several 17th-century cottages built of timber and brick (ibid).
- 5.6.2 In the town centre at Fair Green is the site of the former manse. The building dates to the late 18th century, whilst during the 19th century the building served as the manse for the Congregational Church in London Road. In 1839, two prominent residents, George Fawbert and John Barnard, set up the Fawbert and Bernard Charity to fund local education. The school still stands today (ibid)
- 5.6.3 The industrialised eastern side of the town is for the most part occupied by malt houses, malting being the chief industry of the town in this period. This area also includes the railway station and two bridges. The industrial nature of this part of town is further highlighted by the presence of an 18th-century crane base located on Station Road. The crane served the former wharf on the Stort Navigation Canal (ibid).

6 Archaeological Methodology

- 6.1 The evaluation was conducted according to the written scheme of investigation (WSI) prepared by CgMs Consulting (Hawkins 2010) prior to the commencement of works. The fieldwork was designed to assess the presence or absence of significant archaeological remains, which may require further investigation.
- 6.2 The WSI for this archaeological evaluation stipulated that 12 trenches were to be located within the area of the proposed development, each measuring 25m X 1.80m. The initial proposed trench locations were subject to change due to the presence of two known and active badger sets located toward the centre and south of the site. A barrier was established around the location of each badger sett which subsequently encroached on areas of the site upon which at least three of the trenches would have been located, necessitating minor adjustments to their positioning.
- 6.3 A mechanical excavator fitted with a flat ditching bucket was used under archaeological supervision to remove overburden down to the highest archaeological horizon. The features and deposits identified within the trenches were then cleaned and investigated by hand. Investigation was limited to identifying the extent and nature of the deposits and to recover dating evidence.
- 6.4 In a number of the trenches, natural deposits exceeded a depth of 1.20m below ground level. Due to health and safety restrictions it would not have been deemed suitable to proceed beyond this depth with the existing trench dimensions. As such small sondages were excavated by machine, using a small, narrow flat bladed bucket, until natural deposits were encountered. After being recorded the sondage was immediately backfilled by the machine.
- 6.5 The archaeological deposits were assigned individual context numbers and recorded onto pro-forma sheets and recorded in plan and section as appropriate. A photographic record (film and digital) was also made.
- 6.6 Two temporary bench marks were established on site, the values of which were obtained from GPS equipment operated by our surveyor. The TBM located in the north field was 52.02m AOD and in the south field was 51.26m AOD.
- 6.7 Given the similarities between the deposits found in Trenches 7-12 a plan and section of Trench 8 are presented here as representative illustrations.

7 The Archaeological Sequence

7.1 Trench 1

- 7.1.1 Trenches 1-6 lay towards the southern half of the site, as separated by the old field boundary that bisects the site.
- 7.1.2 Natural deposits were encountered at 50.67m AOD and comprised of a firm, light yellowish brown chalky clay [3] with moderate flint pebble inclusions. This clay was observed towards the north-western end of the trench only, in an area measuring 3.95m NW-SE by 1.60m NE-SW.
- 7.1.3 The natural chalky clay was truncated by what appeared to be a linear cut [5], measuring 1.60m NE-SW and extending in a south-easterly direction for the length of the trench (for some 21.00m). This feature was not excavated in Trench 1 but was observed in section in Trench 3 and as such shall be further discussed below.
- 7.1.4 'Filling' the cut feature was a firm mid yellowish/reddish brown clayey silt [4]. This deposit contained frequent flint pebbles and measuring approximately 2.15m in thickness at its deepest point. It was encountered at 50.67m AOD. This deposit could be identified as a 'fill' of the aforementioned cut feature [5] as it lies within the cut itself and is sealed by a layer of subsoil. However it is more likely that this deposit represents a layer of colluvium that has built up over long period of time. No cultural material was recovered from this context.
- 7.1.5 Overlying the cut feature and the colluvial deposit, a soft mid yellowish/reddish brown clayey silt subsoil [2] was observed. The subsoil contained frequent flint pebbles, occasional rootlets and very occasional fragments of abraded post-medieval peg tile. This layer was seen along the entire length of the trench, measured 0.38-0.45m thick and was recorded at a height of 51.16m AOD.
- 7.1.6 The subsoil was sealed by a 0.24-0.31m thick layer of friable dark brownish grey clayey, sandy silt [1] containing frequent flint gravel. This turf and topsoil formed the present day ground level which was recorded sloping between 51.23-51.40m AOD.

7.2 Trench 2

- 7.2.1 The natural strata [8] was observed along the whole of the trench, apparently sloping down towards the east between heights of 52.10m AOD and 50.50m AOD. As before this deposit was comprised of a light yellowish brown chalky clay.
- 7.2.2 A feature was observed cutting the natural which upon investigation revealed itself to be either a tree bole or tree throw [10]. It was irregular in shape, with slightly concave steeply sloped sides and a sharp break of slope at the top and more gradual at the base. The base itself was concave. It measured 2.65m NE-SW by 1.50m NW-SE and

was approximately 0.46m in depth. The top of the cut was recorded at 52.04m AOD. It was filled by a soft mid reddish/yellowish brown clayey silt [9] which contained frequent flint pebbles and nodules but no cultural material.

7.2.3 Overlying this was a 0.25-0.28m thick layer of yellowish/reddish brown clayey silt subsoil [7], observed around 52.46m AOD. Two fragments of abraded fine moulded sandy peg tile, datable to the post-medieval period, were recovered from the subsoil along with one coarse tile fragment comprised of large black iron oxide and quartz, which can be described as local fabric burnt clay. Although potentially post-medieval it is plausible that the fragment of burnt clay could be earlier, possibly medieval or even Roman in date.

7.2.4 The subsoil was overlain by a 0.24-0.27m thick layer of topsoil [6], seen between 52.81m AOD and 50.62m AOD.

7.3 Trench 3

7.3.1 Natural chalky clay [13] was observed in this trench between 52.59m AOD and 51.92m AOD.

7.3.2 A cut [16] which appears to be a continuation of the one seen in Trench 1, was observed towards the north-west end of the trench. Observed here in section (Figure 5), the feature appears linear with a moderately steep, slightly concave to straight side and a gradual break of slope at the top. The base of the cut was not fully observed due to its apparent size and depth. It continued south-east for at least 15.40m by which point it met the limit of excavation of the trench. The precise nature or function of this feature is unknown. Assuming the cut seen here forms part of the same feature observed in Trench 1, one could postulate that if this was a man made feature it could represent terracing of the hillside, perhaps for agricultural purposes. It could also be as a result of quarrying, presumably for chalk, at some time in the past. Alternatively this could represent a natural, albeit sudden, change in the geology.

7.3.3 'Filling' the feature was a soft mid yellowish/reddish brown clayey silt [15] containing occasional small pebbles. It was approximately 1.52m thick, was encountered between 51.81m AOD and 51.68m AOD and appeared to display a lack of cultural material. As suggested with the similar deposit encountered in Trench 1, as opposed to being considered as a 'fill' this material could represent a layer of colluvium that has built up over time. Observed in section was a small area of slumped natural chalky clay [14]. Measuring 1.07m NW-SE by 1.75m SE-SW by 0.24m in thickness, it was seen sloping from 52.30m AOD to 52.05m AOD.

7.3.4 Overlying the aforementioned features and deposits was the same subsoil [12] observed in the previous two trenches, comprising of a 0.26m – 1.00m thick layer of

yellowish/reddish brown clayey silt recorded sloping between 53.33 AOD and 52.22m AOD. In turn, overlying this was a 0.19-0.33m thick layer of topsoil [11] recorded sloping between 52.63m AOD and 52.46m AOD.

7.4 Trench 4

7.4.1 This trench, located closest to the River Stort, revealed that the depth of the natural chalky clay [19] had increased sharply with that observed in the neighbouring two trenches (Trenches 1 and 2). This natural deposit was only revealed in two machine excavated sondages, located at either end of the trench. The sondages revealed the natural to occur between levels of 48.38m AOD towards the north-western end and 48.65m AOD at the south-eastern end.

7.4.2 Overlying the clay was a 0.73m thick layer of subsoil [18], comprised of the same yellowish/reddish brown clayey silt observed elsewhere and which contained two fragments of abraded post-medieval peg tile. It was seen between heights of 50.58m AOD and 50.10m AOD. It was sealed by a 0.27m thick layer of topsoil, recorded between 50.82m AOD and 50.36m AOD.

7.5 Trench 5

7.5.1 The natural chalky clay [22] was observed here sloping east from 52.93m AOD down to 51.64m AOD at the south-eastern end of the trench. It can be noted that this trench (along with Trench 6) contained an increased amount of disturbance from tree related activity, in the form of root furrows, tree boles and tree throws (Figure 4) It appears that a localised area of tree growth occurred some time in the past on the higher ground further away from the River.

7.5.2 The clay was overlain with a yellowish/reddish brown clayey silt subsoil [21], measuring a mere 900mm in thickness and observed between heights of 53.10m AOD and 51.90m AOD. This lack of build up, in comparison to other areas of the site, is likely due to this trench's positioning on higher ground, a majority of the colluvium having been naturally transported further down the slope of the hill. The topsoil [20] was observed between 53.34m AOD and 52.12m AOD and measured approximately 0.23m in thickness.

7.6 Trench 6

7.6.1 As with Trench 5, the natural chalky clay [38], which was recorded between 51.72m AOD and 50.95m AOD, was truncated by a series of tree related features, comprising tree throws and tree boles and general root activity. In addition a small square/rectangular feature was observed which was identified as one of the geotechnical test pits that had been excavated here the previous year.

- 7.6.2 At some variance with the other trenches located in the southern half of the site, Trench 6 contained a 0.12m thick layer of soft light greyish/yellowish brown clayey silt [37] located inbetween the natural clay and the overlying subsoil (Figure 5). This layer was recorded in section and was observed at 51.51m AOD. It is possible that this layer represents the remains of agricultural soil, although its absence elsewhere on site is indeed peculiar.
- 7.6.3 The remainder of the stratigraphy is in line with that seen elsewhere so far, comprising of a 0.19-0.25m thick layer of yellowish/reddish brown clayey silt subsoil [36] sloping east between 52.49m AOD and 50.69m AOD overlain with a 0.30-0.35m thick layer of topsoil. The topsoil was recorded at heights of 52.63m AOD and 50.95m AOD.

7.7 Trench 7

- 7.7.1 Trenches 7-12 all lay in the northern half of the site. The sequence here is different to that seen thus far.
- 7.7.2 Natural deposits were encountered at a 48.01m AOD, recorded in a machine excavated sondage. The natural geology here comprised of soft, mid yellowish/greyish brown clayey silt (or brickearth) [45] containing occasional small flint pebbles. This natural deposit differs with that encountered in the southern field, and although it is possible that this represents a variance within the natural geology of the area (a phenomenon apparently not uncommon in this part of Hertfordshire), it is more likely that truncation has occurred during construction of the housing estate during the mid 20th century.
- 7.7.3 Overlying the brickearth was a 1.10m thick layer of soft dark blueish grey silty clay [44] which contained moderate small pebbles and occasional flecks of CBM and charcoal. This deposit is seen in all but one of the trenches in the northern half of the site and likely represents a dump of redeposited alluvium, perhaps from one or more incidents of dredging of the River Stort at some point in the past. This layer of redeposited alluvium was observed at 49.11m AOD.
- 7.7.4 Above the alluvium, a layer of modern made ground [43] was observed which can be described as a moderate to loose mixture of light reddish brown, greyish brown and brownish yellow bands and lenses of silty sand and chalky clay. These bands represent a series of dumps which contained frequent sub-rounded pebbles, frequent brick and tile, moderate-occasional pieces of metal, lumps of concrete and fragments of mortar and tarmac. It is likely that this layer of demolition debris, seen in every trench to the north of the site, was formed during the 1960's during the construction of the large housing estate that immediately borders the site to the west. This layer was

approximately 2.11m thick and was observed between heights of 51.55m AOD and 50.89m AOD.

- 7.7.5 Sealing the modern made ground was a 0.14-0.27m thick layer of topsoil, described as friable, dark brownish grey clayey silt [42], containing occasional flint gravel. It was recorded at 51.75m AOD.

7.8 Trench 8

- 7.8.1 Natural brickearth [41] was observed at 49.61m AOD, comprising of the same soft mid yellowish/greyish brown clayey silt as seen in Trench 7.
- 7.8.2 Unlike the previous trench, however, no sign of the redeposited alluvium was seen in the machine excavated sondage. Instead the brickearth was overlain by the modern demolition dump/made ground [40] encountered elsewhere across the north of the site. This was recorded at 51.97m AOD and was approximately 2.17m thick.
- 7.8.3 The made ground was sealed by a 0.15-0.20m thick layer of topsoil [39] which was recorded at a height of 52.17m AOD.

7.9 Trench 9

- 7.9.1 The remaining four trenches all share an identical profile to Trench 7, comprising brickearth overlain by redeposited alluvium, modern made ground and dumped demolition debris sealed by topsoil.
- 7.9.2 In Trench 9 the natural brickearth [28] was recorded at a level of 48.00m AOD. The redeposited alluvium [47] occurred around 49.00m AOD, being approximately 1.00m thick. The 20th century demolition deposits/made ground [27] was some 2.96m thick here and was observed at 51.30m AOD. Capping the made ground was a 0.20m thick layer of turf and topsoil [29], recorded at 51.50m AOD.

7.10 Trench 10

- 7.10.1 Natural brickearth [31] is observed here at 48.10m AOD. It is overlain by an approximately 1.00m thick layer of redeposited alluvium from 49.10m AOD. This, in turn is sealed by a 2.48m thick layer of modern demolition deposits [30]. This made ground was seen at 51.26m AOD and was in turned capped by a 0.20m thick layer of turf and topsoil [29] at 51.46m AOD.

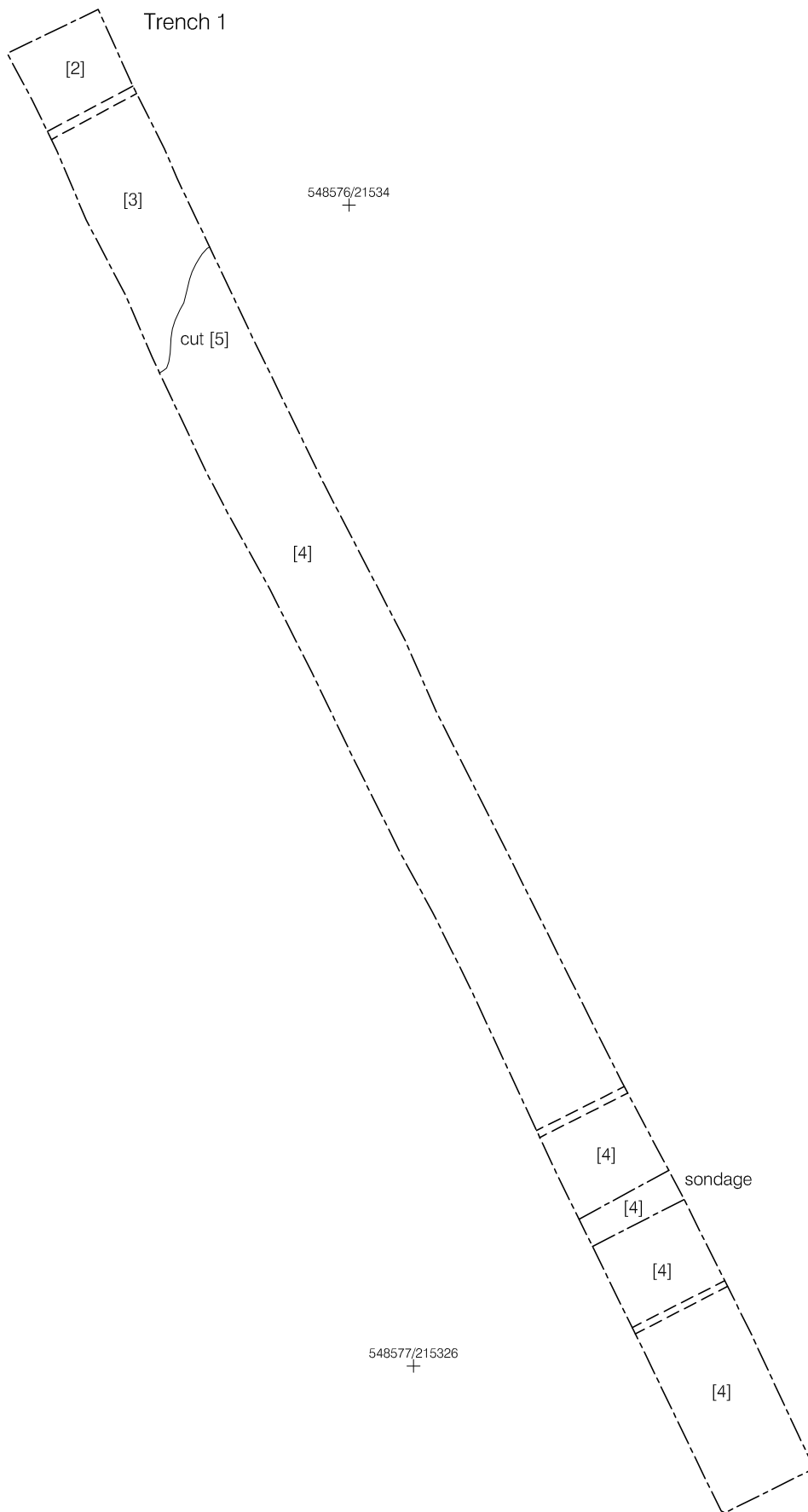
7.11 Trench 11

- 7.11.1 Here the natural silty clay, or brickearth [25], was recorded in a machine excavated sondage at a level of 47.98m AOD. It was, once more, sealed by an approximately 1.00m thick layer of redeposited alluvium [46] at 46.98m AOD. Overlying the alluvium was a 2.25m thick layer of modern made ground/dumped demolition deposits [24].

The present day ground level, formed of a 0.20m thick layer of turf and topsoil [23], was recorded at 51.43m AOD.

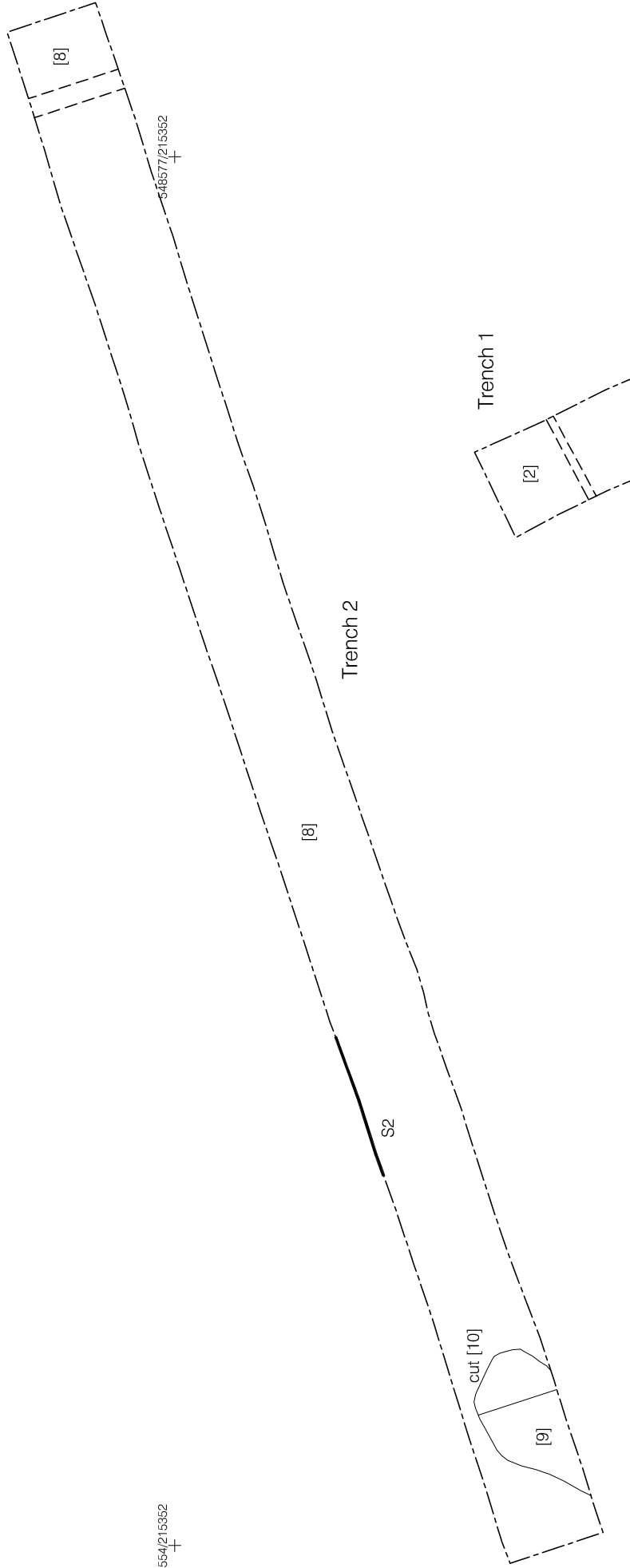
7.12 Trench 12

7.12.1 The final trench contained natural brickearth deposits [34] at 48.49m AOD. The layer of redeposited alluvium [49] was observed around 49.49m. Here the made ground [33] which sealed the alluvium was observed as approximately 3.29m thick at 51.74m AOD. Being the western most trench in this portion of the site, it also lies on slightly higher ground which likely accounts for the increased thickness of the made ground. The turf and topsoil [32] was recorded at 51.94m AOD.



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Figure 3
Trench 1
1:100 at A4



54654/215352

54657/215352



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Figure 4
Trench 2
1:100 at A4

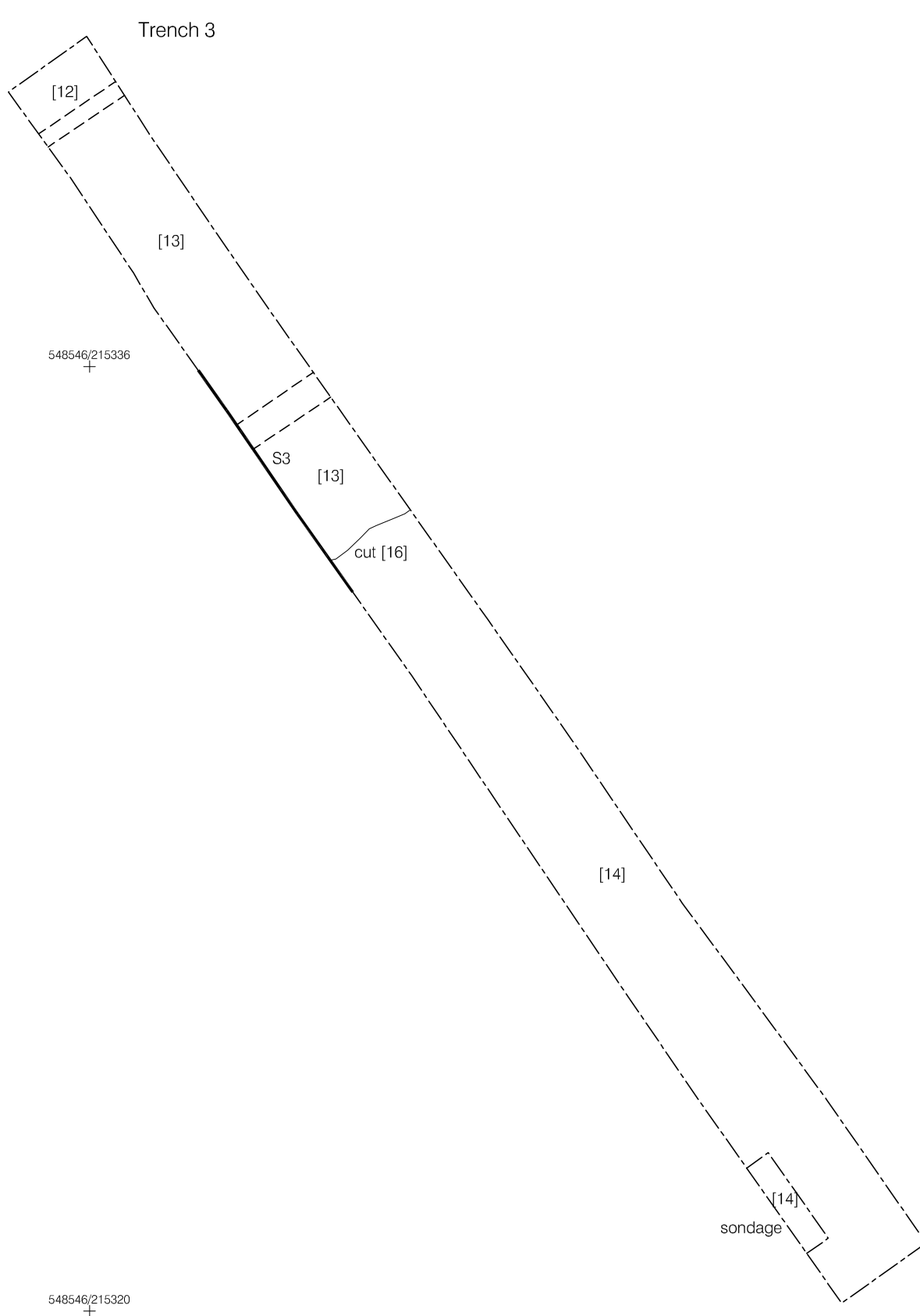


Figure 5
Trench 3
1:100 at A4

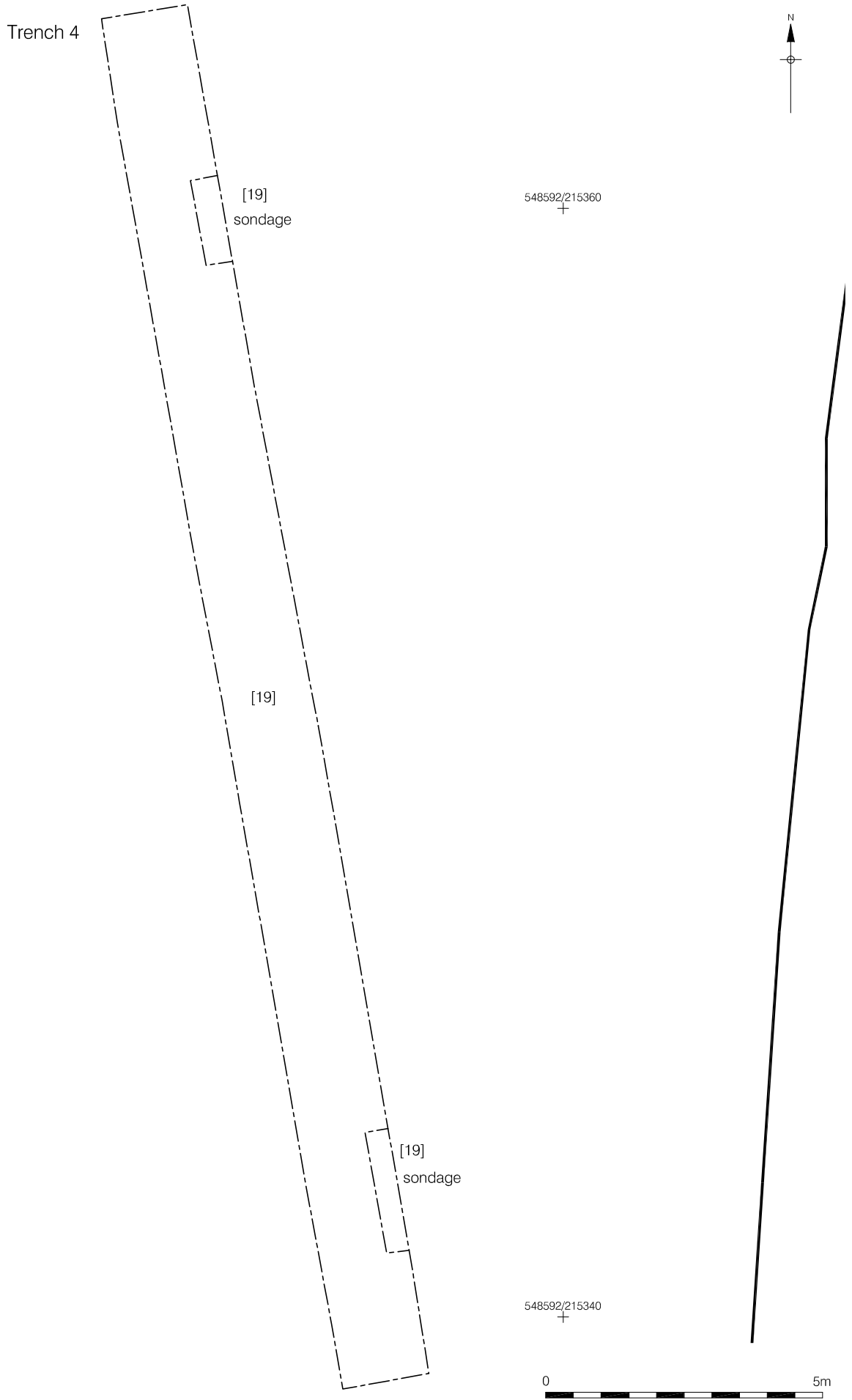


Figure 6
Trench 4
1:100 at A4

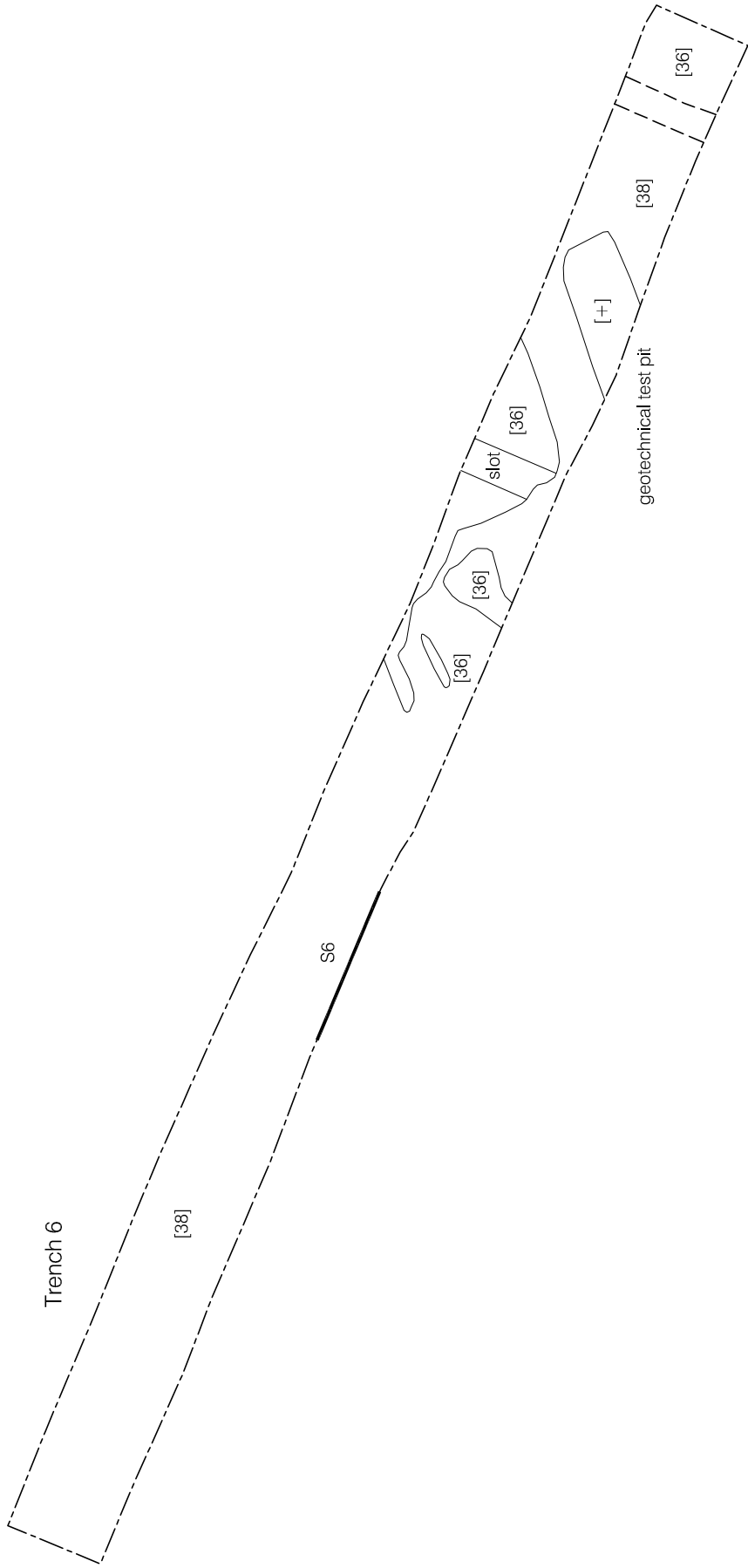
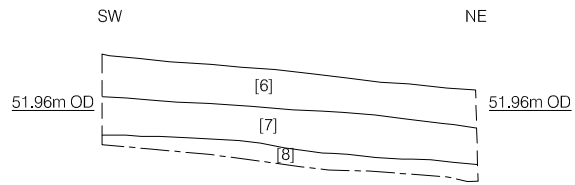
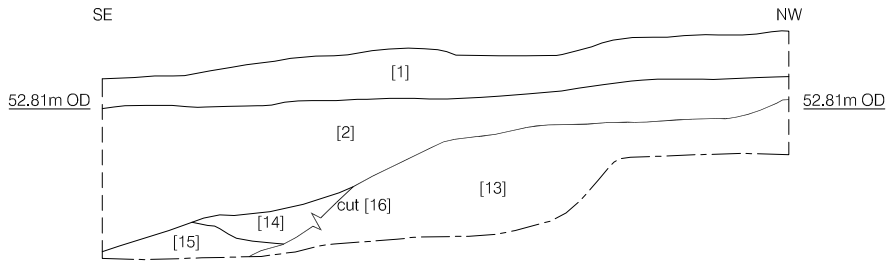


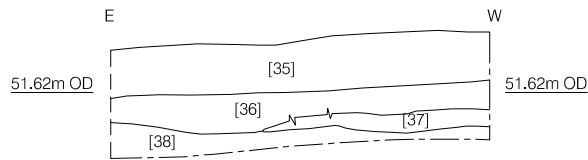
Figure 7
Trench 6
1:100 at A4



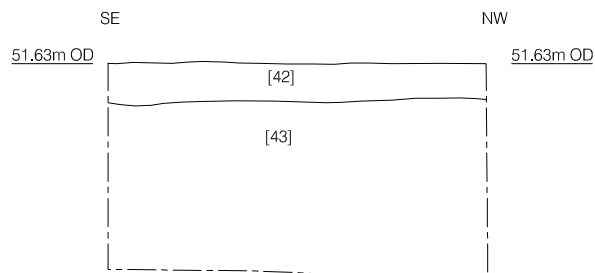
Section 2
Trench 2
Southeast Facing



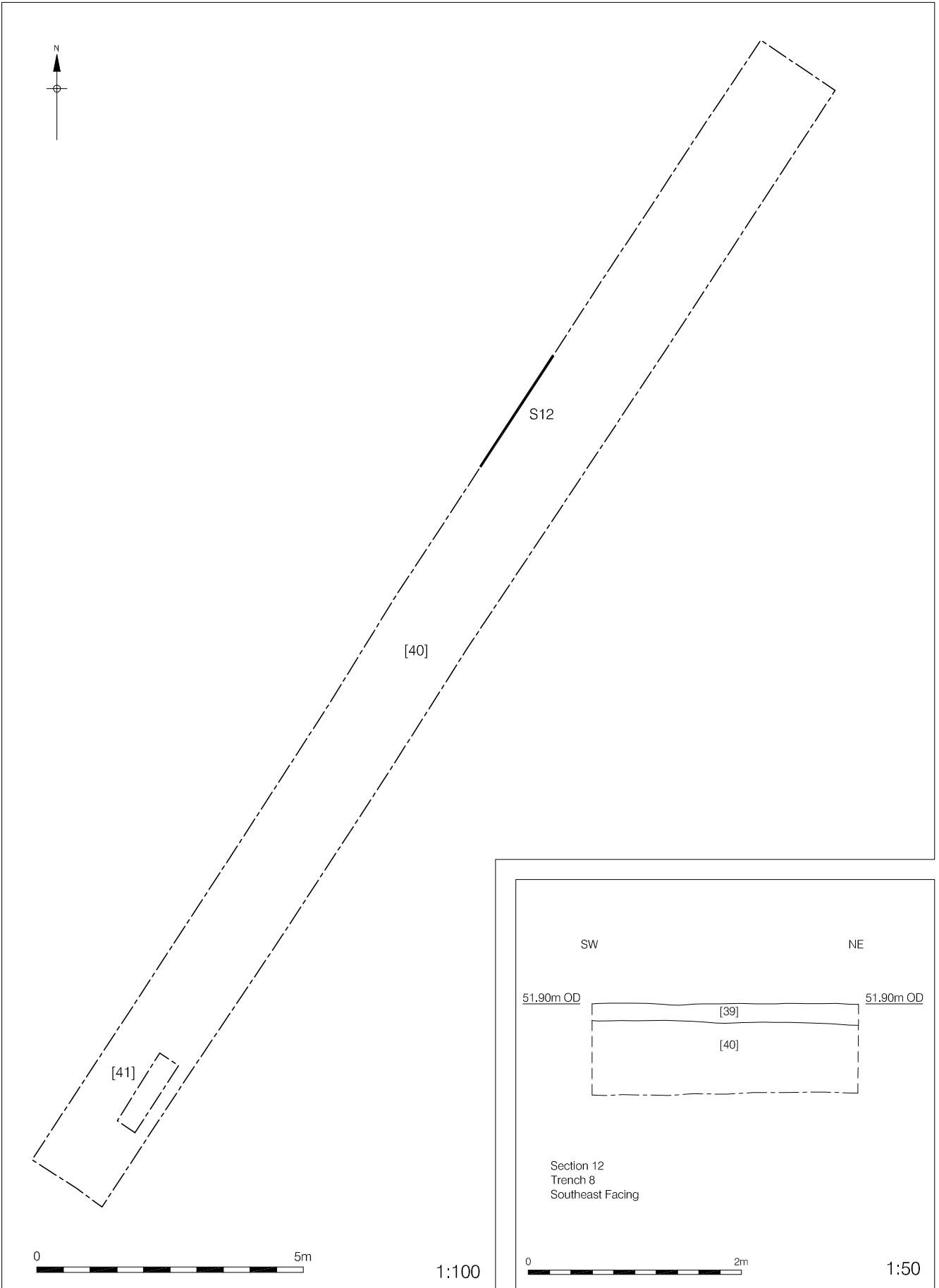
Section 3
Trench 3
Northeast Facing



Section 6
Trench 6
North Facing



Section 11
Trench 7
Northeast Facing



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Figure 9
Trench 8 & Section 12
Plan 1:100 and Section 1:50 at A4

8 Conclusions

- 8.1 The natural geology encountered on site seemed to vary somewhat from north to south. The south of the site was characterized by light yellowish brown clay with a high chalk content. This deposit is known as Boulder Clay (or Till). The topography here suggested that, mirroring the present day situation, the land sloped down moderately west to east, towards the River Stort. Towards the north of the site, however, the Boulder Clay is absent from the stratigraphy, brickearth forming the natural strata here. This London Clay is known to underlie Boulder Clay and this, in conjunction with level data and the presence of demolition dump deposits suggests that the latter deposit has been truncated. Indeed evidence of redeposited chalky clay was observed in the modern made ground. Redeposited alluvium was seen overlying the London Clay, its presence most likely derived from one or more incidents of dredging of the River Stort at some time in the past.
- 8.2 Although the north of the site now appears to have been heavily truncated during the 1960's, the south remained relatively untouched. However, despite a concentration of tree related features towards the north-west of this part of the site, little else of archaeological interest was observed save for the large 'cut feature' to the south. The exact extent of this feature could not be ascertained, and indeed it is an assumption that the cuts observed form only one feature. However, if this were to be a man made phenomenon, it could represent an incidence of land terracing that took place at some unknown point in the past. Alternatively it could form a natural decline in the geology of the site.
- 8.3 The subsoil contained a number of fragments of post-medieval peg tile and one fragment of fired clay which could feasibly have dated anytime from the Roman period onwards. The presence of such material, however, is merely only likely to support the already established notion that this land was utilised for agricultural purposes throughout a majority of the post-medieval period, and possibly earlier.
- 8.4 No further archaeological features or deposits were encountered during the evaluation.

9 Acknowledgements

- 9.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited would like to thank Duncan Hawkins of CgMs Consulting for commissioning this project and Alison Tinniswood, the Archaeological advisor to Hertfordshire County Council for monitoring the work undertaken.
- 9.2 The author would like to thank Peter Bloomfield of Barratt Homes for his kind assistance on site and also Tim Elks who, with his JCB, excavated the trenches with great care and skill. The author would also like to thank Nathalie Barrett for survey work, Kevin Hayward for ceramic building material spot dating, Jenny Simonson for illustrations and Matthew Harrison for his assistance on site. Thanks also go to Peter Moore for project management and editing of this report.

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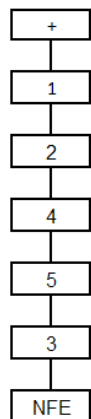
Appendix 1: Context Index

Site Code	Context No.	Plan	Section / Elevation	Type	Description	Date
HMIL10	1	Tr 2	S1	Layer	Topsoil	Modern
HMIL10	2	Tr 1	S1	Layer	Subsoil	Post-Medieval
HMIL10	3	Tr 1	S1	Layer	Natural Chalky Clay	Natural
HMIL10	4	Tr 1	S1	Layer	Colluvium	Undated
HMIL10	5	Tr 1	S1	Cut	Cut for possible terracing	Undated
HMIL10	6	Tr 2	S2	Layer	Topsoil	Modern
HMIL10	7	Tr 2	S2	Layer	Subsoil	Post-Medieval
HMIL10	8	Tr 2	S2	Layer	Natural Chalky Clay	Natural
HMIL10	9	Tr 2	N/A	Fill	Fill of [10]	Natural
HMIL10	10	Tr 2	N/A	Cut	Tree related feature	Natural
HMIL10	11	Tr 3	S3	Layer	Topsoil	Modern
HMIL10	12	Tr 3	S3	Layer	Subsoil	Post-Medieval
HMIL10	13	Tr 3	S3	Layer	Natural Chalky Clay	Natural
HMIL10	14	Tr 3	S3	Deposit	Slumped Chalky Clay	Undated
HMIL10	15	Tr 3	S3	Layer	Colluvium	Undated
HMIL10	16	Tr 3	S3	Cut	Cut for possible terracing	Undated
HMIL10	17	Tr 4	S4	Layer	Topsoil	Modern
HMIL10	18	Tr 4	S4	Layer	Subsoil	Post-Medieval
HMIL10	19	Tr 4	N/A	Layer	Natural Chalky Clay	Natural
HMIL10	20	Tr 5	S5	Layer	Topsoil	Modern
HMIL10	21	Tr 5	S5	Layer	Subsoil	Post-Medieval
HMIL10	22	Tr 5	S5	Layer	Natural Chalky Clay	Natural
HMIL10	23	N/A	S7	Layer	Topsoil	Modern
HMIL10	24	Tr 11	S7	Layer	Made ground	Modern
HMIL10	25	Tr 11	N/A	Layer	Natural Brickearth	Natural
HMIL10	26	N/A	S8	Layer	Topsoil	Modern
HMIL10	27	Tr 9	S8	Layer	Made ground	Modern
HMIL10	28	Tr 9	N/A	Layer	Natural Brickearth	Natural
HMIL10	29	N/A	S9	Layer	Topsoil	Modern
HMIL10	30	Tr 10	S9	Layer	Made ground	Modern
HMIL10	31	Tr 10	N/A	Layer	Natural Brickearth	Natural
HMIL10	32	N/A	S10	Layer	Topsoil	Modern
HMIL10	33	Tr 12	S10	Layer	Made ground	Modern
HMIL10	34	Tr 12	N/A	Layer	Natural Brickearth	Natural
HMIL10	35	Tr 6	S6	Layer	Topsoil	Modern
HMIL10	36	Tr 6	S6	Layer	Subsoil	Post-Medieval
HMIL10	37	N/A	S6	Layer	Colluvium	Undated
HMIL10	38	Tr 6	S6	Layer	Natural Chalky Clay	Natural

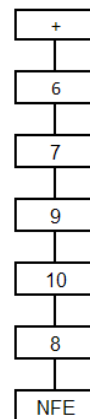
HMIL10	39	Tr 8	S12	Layer	Topsoil	Modern
HMIL10	40	Tr 8	S12	Layer	Made ground	Modern
HMIL10	41	Tr 8	N/A	Layer	Natural Brickearth	Natural
HMIL10	42	Tr 7	S11	Layer	Topsoil	Modern
HMIL10	43	Tr 7	S11	Layer	Made ground	Modern
HMIL10	44	N/A	N/A	Deposit	Redeposited alluvium	Undated
HMIL10	45	Tr 7	S11	Layer	Natural Brickearth	Natural
HMIL10	46	N/A	N/A	Deposit	Redeposited alluvium	Undated
HMIL10	47	N/A	N/A	Deposit	Redeposited alluvium	Undated
HMIL10	48	N/A	N/A	Deposit	Redeposited alluvium	Undated
HMIL10	49	N/A	N/A	Deposit	Redeposited alluvium	Undated

Appendix 2: Site Matrices

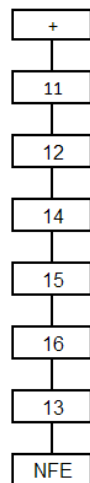
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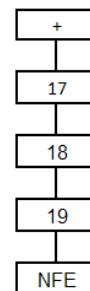
Trench 2



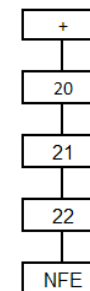
Trench 3



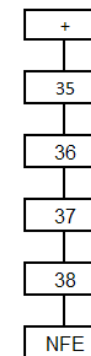
Trench 4



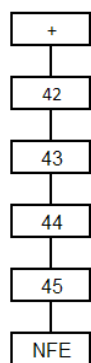
Trench 5



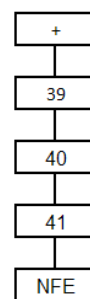
Trench 6



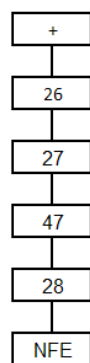
Trench 7



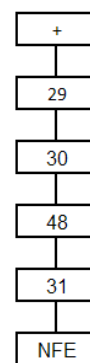
Trench 8



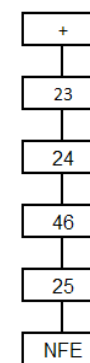
Trench 9



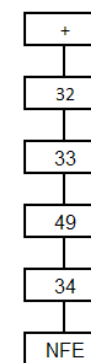
Trench 10



Trench 11



Trench 12



Appendix 3: Ceramic Building Material Spot Dates

by Kevin Hayward

The assemblage is quite abraded and all of a form that suggests that they are post-medieval (locally manufactured sandy peg tiles and some iron oxide form). They have fine moulding sand and appear fairly well made. Burnt clay is present from [7] this could well be older material (Roman-Medieval).

Context	Fabric	Form	Size	Date range of material		Latest dated material		Spot date
2	Local coarse sandy And 2586 iron oxide	Peg tile abraded fine moulding sand Iron oxide like 2586 medieval – post med London Sandy group like a coarse version of the v common 2276 in post med London	2	1180	1900	1480	1900	1600-1900
7	Local coarse sand As 18	Peg tile abraded fine moulding sand A coarse tile fragment large black iron oxide and quartz – local fabric local burnt clay	2	1600BC	1900	1480	1900	1600-1900
18	Local coarse sandy and 2586 iron oxide fabric	Peg tile abraded fine moulding sand Iron oxide (1180-1800) like 2586 medieval – post med London Sandy group like a coarse version of the v common 2276 in post med London	2	1180	1900	1480	1900	1600-1900

Appendix 4: Oasis Form

10.1 OASIS ID: preconst1-75896

Project details

Project name LAND AT MILLFIELDS, SAWBRIDGEWORTH, HERTFORDSHIRE

Short description of the project The project consisted of 12 evaluation trenches. The natural geology varied somewhat from north to south. The south of the site was characterized by light yellowish brown 'Boulder Clay' with a high chalk content. Towards the north of the site, however, the Boulder Clay has been truncated mostly like as a result of construction work associated with the adjacent housing estate in the 1960's. Redeposited alluvium was seen overlying the London Clay towards the north, its presence most likely derived from one or more incidents of dredging of the River Stort at some time in the past. Towards the south, despite a concentration of tree related features towards the north-west of this part of the site, little else of archaeological interest was observed save for the large cut feature to the south which could represent an incidence of land terracing that took place at some unknown point in the past. Alternatively it could form a natural decline in the geology of the site. The subsoil contained a number of fragments of post-medieval peg tile and one fragment of fired clay which could feasibly have dated anytime from the Roman period onwards. The presence of such material supports the already established notion that this land was utilised for agricultural purposes throughout the post-medieval period, and possibly earlier.

Project dates Start: 12-04-2010 End: 16-04-2010

Previous/future work No / No

Any associated project reference codes HMIL10 - Sitecode

Type of project Field evaluation

Site status None

Current Land use Grassland Heathland 2 - Undisturbed Grassland

Monument type TERRACED GROUND Uncertain

Significant Finds PEG TILE Post-medieval

Significant Finds BURNT CLAY Uncertain

Methods & 'Sample Trenches'
techniques

Development type Rural residential

Prompt Planning condition

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

Project location

Country England

Site location HERTFORDSHIRE EAST HERTFORDSHIRE SAWBRIDGEWORTH LAND
AT MILLFIELDS, SAWBRIDGEWORTH, HERTFORDSHIRE

Postcode CM21 0XX

Study area 1.10 Hectares

Site coordinates TL 48573 15398 51.8169606928 0.155741390562 51 49 01 N 000 09 20 E
Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 47.98m Max: 52.93m

Project creators

Name of PCA
Organisation

Project brief Hertfordshire County Council
originator

Project design Duncan Hawkins
originator

Project director/manager Peter Moore

Project supervisor Iain Bright

Type of Barratt Homes
sponsor/funding
body

Project archives

Physical Archive No
Exists?

Physical Archive Hertford Museum
recipient

Physical Archive HMIL10
ID

Digital Archive Hertford Museum
recipient

Digital Archive ID HMIL10

Digital Contents 'Survey'

Digital available Media 'Images raster / digital photography','Spreadsheets','Survey','Text'

Paper Archive Hertford Museum
recipient

Paper Archive ID HMIL10

Paper Contents Stratigraphic

Paper available Media 'Unpublished sheet','Drawing','Photograph','Plan','Report','Section' Text','Context'

Project

bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	An Archaeological Evaluation of Land at Millfields, Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Bright, I
Date	2010
Issuer or publisher	PCA
Place of issue or publication	Brockley, London
Description	Grey Literature
<hr/>	
Entered by	Archivist (archive@pre-construct.com)
Entered on	21 April 2010

OASIS:

Please e-mail [English Heritage](#) for OASIS help and advice
© ADS 1996-2006 Created by [Jo Gilham and Jen Mitcham, email](#) Last modified Friday 3 February 2006

Cite only: /d1/export/home/web/oasis/form/print.cfm?ID=75896 for this page

APPENDIX

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD SUMMARY SHEET

Site name and address: Land at Millfields, Sawbridgeworth		
County: Hertfordshire	District: East Hertfordshire	
Village/Town: Sawbridgeworth	Parish: Sawbridgeworth	
Planning application reference: 3/07/1699/OP		
Client name, address, and tel. no.: Barrett Homes C/o Duncan Hawkins CgMs Consulting Ltd Morley House 26 Holborn Viaduct London EC1A 2AT TEL:0207 832 1481		
Nature of application: Housing		
Present land use: Fields		
Size of application area: 1.1 Ha	Size of area investigated: 1.1 Ha	
NGR (to 8 figures): TL 4857 1540		
Site code (if applicable): HMIL 10		
Site director/Organization: Peter Moore/ Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited		
Type of work: Evaluation		
Date of work:	Start: 14/4/10	Finish: 16/4/10
Location of finds & site archive/Curating museum: Currently PCA offices at Brockley London./ Hertford Museum		
Related HER Nos:	Periods represented: Post-Medieval	
Relevant previous summaries/reports		
Summary of fieldwork results: The project consisted of 12 evaluation trenches. The natural geology varied somewhat from north to south. The south of the site was characterized by light yellowish brown 'Boulder Clay' with a high chalk content. Towards the north of the site, however, the Boulder Clay has been truncated mostly like as a result of construction work associated with the adjacent housing estate in the 1960's. Redeposited alluvium was seen overlying the London Clay towards the north, its presence most likely derived from one or more incidents of dredging of the River Stort at some time in the past. Towards the south, despite a concentration of tree related features towards the north-west of this part of the site, little else of archaeological interest was observed save for the large cut feature to the south		

which could represent an incidence of land terracing that took place at some unknown point in the past. Alternatively it could form a natural decline in the geology of the site. The subsoil contained a number of fragments of post-medieval peg tile and one fragment of fired clay which could feasibly have dated anytime from the Roman period onwards. The presence of such material supports the already established notion that this land was utilised for agricultural purposes throughout the post-medieval period, and possibly earlier.

Author of summary: Peter Moore

Date of summary: 29/7/10

Appendix 6: Site Photographs



Trench 1



Trench 2



Trench 3



Trench 4



Trench 5



Trench 6



Trench 7



Trench 9



Trench 10



Trench 11



Trench 12

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