

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

LAND AT MENTLEY LANE EAST
PUCKERIDGE
HERTFORDSHIRE

JULY 2010

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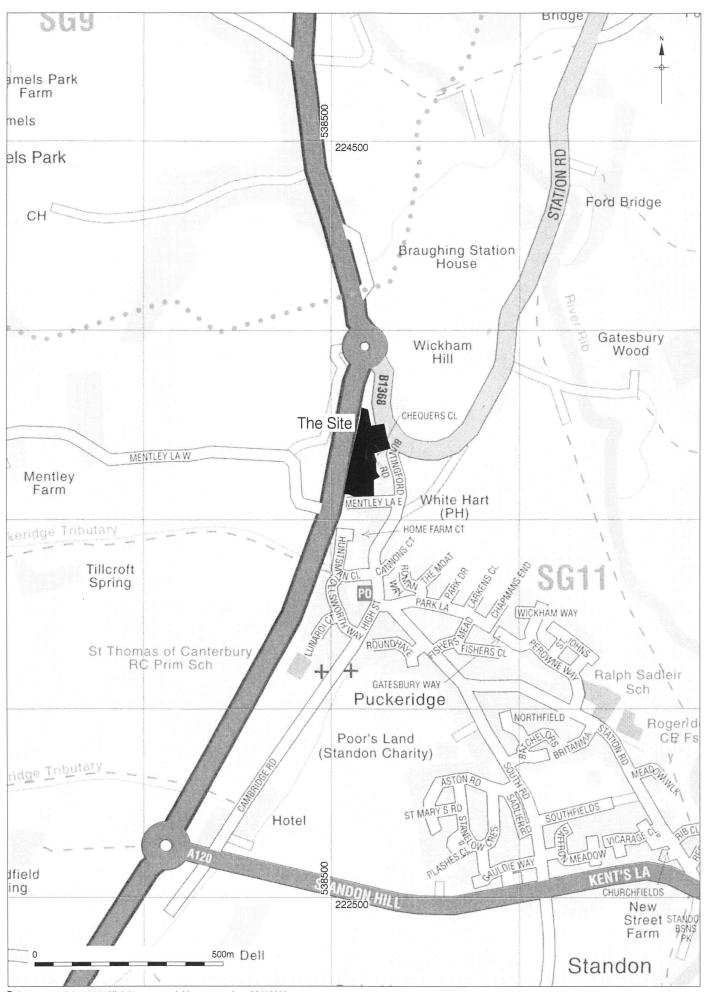
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1 ABSTRACT

- 1.1 This report details the results and working methods of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited at land at Mentley Lane East, Puckeridge, Hertfordshire.
- 1.2 The site lies to the southwest and west of the Braughing Roman Town Scheduled Ancient Monument and therefore lies within an area of archaeological significance as designated in the East Hertfordshire Local Plan.
- 1.3 Evaluation trenches were excavated across the site, in advance of redevelopment of the land.
- 1.4 Seventeen trenches were excavated across the area of the site in order to provide maximum coverage of the area of the proposed development. These trenches were excavated to the top of surviving archaeological deposits and features. The southern half of the site had almost no archaeological features and those that were found and dated were restricted to Post-Medieval plough marks. The northern half of the site saw heavy activity beginning in the Roman period with at least five urned cremations being recorded in the centre of this area, one of which had multiple vessels and may have been buried in a wooden casket. This cremation cemetery area is unsurprising as a number of other early Roman cemeteries have been recorded in the immediate vicinity of the site relating to the Roman town of Braughing. A number of other Roman features including ditches and pits were located in the northern half of the site, to the north of the cemetery area, illustrating multi-phase Roman occupation. Flint foundations with associated chalk deposits dating to the early post-medieval period were also recorded in the northern area of the site. These may represent buildings associated with agricultural activities occurring on the site during this period. Later post-medieval ploughmarks were also encountered in the southern area of the site. The archaeological sequence across the site was completed by subsoil overlain by the modern topsoil.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited at Land at Mentley Lane East, Puckeridge, Hertfordshire, in advance of redevelopment of the site.
- 2.2 The evaluation was conducted between the 7th and 17th June 2010 and was commissioned by Duncan Hawkins of CgMs Consulting on behalf of Fairview New Homes Ltd. The work was undertaken following English Heritage guidelines and the Institute of Field Archaeologists 'Code of Practice'. In addition all works conformed to the requirements of the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers for the East of England (Gurney 2003).
- 2.3 The evaluation was undertaken on open fields prior to planning permission for redevelopment being applied for. The proposed development involves a number of residential properties and associated parking across virtually the entire area of the site. The site is bounded to the south by Mentley Lane East, to the west by the A10, to the north by a roundabout, to the northeast by the B1368 and to the southeast by residential properties fronting onto Buntingford Road (Figure 1).
- 2.4 The National Grid Reference of the site is TL 3858 2367
- **2.5** The site was assigned the code HPUC 10.
- 2.6 The evaluation was supervised by Neil Hawkins and the project was managed by Peter Moore for Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. The work was monitored by Duncan Hawkins for the client and Alison Tinniswood, County Planning Archaeologist for Hertfordshire County Council.



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3 PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In March 2010 the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) published Planning Policy Statement, PP5 *Planning for the Historic Environment*.
- 3.2 PPS5 sets out Government's national planning policies on the conservation of the historic environment. The policies in the PPS are a material consideration which must be taken into account in development management decisions, where relevant. The policies set out in PPS5 also apply to the consideration of the historic environment in relation to other heritage-related consent regimes for which planning authorities are responsible under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
- 3.3 Annex 2 of PPS5 defines a "Heritage Asset", 'a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape positively identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions'; heritage assets are also defined as 'valued components of the historic environment'.
- **3.4** In short, government guidance provides a framework which:
 - Requires applicants to provide proportionate information on heritage assets affected by the proposals and an assessment of the impact of the proposed development on the significance of the heritage asset;
 - Has a presumption in favour of the conservation of designated Heritage Assets (which
 include World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Protected Wreck
 Sites, Registered Parks and Gardens, Registered Battlefields or Conservation Areas);
 - Protects the settings of such designated heritage assets;
 - Takes into account the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets;
 - Where the loss of whole or part of a heritage asset's significance is justified, provides for the recording of assets and for publication of the resulting evidence.

3.5 The relevant Regional Spatial Strategy is provided by the East of England Plan (May 2008) which contains the following policy relating to archaeology:

POLICY ENV5: The Historic Environment

Planning authorities and other agencies in their plans, policies and proposals will identify, protect, conserve and, where appropriate, enhance the historic environment of the region, its archaeology, Historic buildings and areas and historic landscapes, including those features and sites (and their settings) especially significant in the East of England:

- The internationally renowned historic cities of Cambridge and Norwich
- The exceptional network of historic market towns
- The major concentration of medieval churches
- Coastal fortifications, historic ports and traditional seaside resorts
- The early garden cities of the 20th century
- Listed buildings and conservation areas domestic and industrial buildings, and the settlements and settings which define their character
- The wider historic landscape that contributes to the distinctiveness of the region, including Scheduled Ancient Monuments and other nationally important archaeological sites and monuments.
- 3.6 The current Local Plan is the East Hertfordshire Local Plan Second Review which was formally adopted in April 2007. The 'saved' policies relating to archaeology are:

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:

- (A) THE NATURE AND CONDITION OF ANY ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS WITHIN THE APPLICATION SITE: AND
- (B) THE LIKELY IMPACT OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT ON SUCH FEATURES.

ON THE BASIS OF THE RESULTS OF THE EVALUATION AND/OR ASSESSMENT, THE COUNCIL WILL CONSIDER THE MOST APPROPRIATE MEANS OF MITIGATING THE IMPACT OF THE DEVELOPMENT ON THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT IN ORDER TO AHCIEVE 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

- (I) 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
- (II) 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.

3.7 The site lies to the west of a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM 75) therefore in adherence to the above national and local policy this report will assess the effect of the proposed development on the setting of the designated historic asset. In addition the site lies in an Area of Archaeological Significance as designated in the Local Plan.

4 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

4.1 Geology

- 4.1.1 The British Geological Survey 1:50,000 plan (Sheet 221: Hitchin) indicates that the site is underlain by Head Deposits overlying Glaciofluvial Deposits of Chalky sand and gravel overlying Upper Chalk.
- 4.1.2 Geotechnical investigations have previously been undertaken on the site in March 2010 by CARD Geotechnics (Gailey, S. 2010). The results of these investigations confirmed the geological sequence of the site to be topsoil, overlying Head deposits which in turn overlay Glacial Till and Glaciofluvial deposits capping the Upper Chalk.

4.2 Topography

- 4.2.1 The site lies on an east facing slope that drops from around 80.04m AOD in the southwest down to around 71.50m AOD in the east towards a dry valley. To the east of the dry valley the ground rises again to form a ridge known as Wickham Hill before dropping down eastwards towards the valley of the River Rib.
- 4.2.2 The River Rib flows c. 500m to the east of the site, in addition a tributary of the River Rib known as the Puckeridge Tributary flows approximately 250m to the south of the site.

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 5.1 A desk based assessment was conducted for the site by C.g.M.s. Consulting Limited (Gailey 2010). The following is a brief summary of that report.
- 5.2 The Roman town of Braughing is preserved as a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) immediately east of the site (SAM 75). Buntingford Road, dense tree cover and the residential properties and gardens act as a buffer to the SAM.
- 5.3 Evidence of prehistoric activity within a 1km radius of the site includes redeposited Mesolithic and Neolithic worked flint (606 TL 3925 2310 and 2112 TL 3924). Cropmarks of Bronze Age ring ditches have also been recorded approximately 800m north of the site (2305 TL 3856 2450 and 2329 TL 3849 2451). A Bronze Age round barrow and other cropmarks, possibly representing settlement activity, have also been recorded approximately 400m east of the site (4077 TL 3904 2353).
- 5.4 Iron Age activity is well documented in the surrounding area of the site. Much of the Iron Age activity was established across the Rib valley floor and around Wickham Hill to the northeast. Excavations at Skeleton Green immediately northwest of the site revealed evidence of timber buildings with partial rebuilding dating to the late Iron Age (2188 TL 3866 2384). Late Iron Age, and Roman occupation, was also recorded during excavations at 11 Buntingford Road immediately southeast of the site (6434 TL 3866 2358).
- Approximately 800m northeast of the site on the east bank of the River Rib lies the Gatesbury earthwork. This may possibly be the focus of the late Iron Age settlement but it has also been interpreted as being of medieval origin (110 TL3950 2395). Chance finds dating to the late Iron Age and early Roman period have been recorded during fieldwalking within the Gatesbury enclosure (111 TL 3924 2406). Excavations to the south of Wickham Hill recorded a late Iron Age enclosure approximately 600m southeast of the site (2152 TL 3911 2330).

- A Roman town at Broughing was established in the late 1st century AD focussing on the convergence of several important road systems. The Roman road of Ermine Street from London to York runs on a southeast-northwest alignment to the east of the site before following the route of the A10 northwards. A second Roman road is projected to travel from Ermine Street approximately 400m north of the site to the northwest towards Baldock (Margary 1955). The projected route of the Roman road to Great Chesterford is assumed to diverge from Ermine Street approximately 400m east of the site. The extent of the known Roman town recorded from numerous cropmarks and investigations is preserved as a Scheduled Ancient Monument which lies to the northeast and east of the site (SAM 75).
- 5.7 A number of cemeteries have been recorded within the vicinity of the site, outside the limits of the town. Prior to the construction of the A10 by-pass a cremation cemetery was recorded just north of the roundabout approximately 250m north of the site. This was recorded as Cemetery 'A' and revealed five rich cremation burials including two in wooden caskets (2763 TL 3854 2412). Based on the results of the excavation it was concluded that the cemetery most likely extended eastwards (Partridge 1977) possibly associated with those burials recorded during Stead's evaluation approximately 300m northeast of the site (Stead 1970, 1099 TL 3879 2398). A further cemetery was recorded during construction of the by-pass south of the roundabout immediately west of the site. This was recorded as Cemetery 'B' and comprised of 104 burials of 3rd and 4th century date (4219 TL 3855 2377).
- 5.8 At Skeleton Green immediately northeast of the site on the other side of Buntingford Road, excavations revealed a cemetery comprising of 57 cremations (2188 TL 3866 2384). Excavations at 11 Buntingford Road immediately southeast of the site revealed evidence of occupation into the later Roman period (6434 TL 3866 2358).
- 5.9 The settlement at Puckeridge developed along the roadside from the 13th century. As a result the core of activity during this period was focussed along the High Street and comprised of several inns including the 14th century Chequers Inn which was located to the southeast of the site fronting onto Buntingford Road (now demolished). Extant buildings dating to the 16th century are located at 19 High Street, 30 High Street and 52 High Street.

5.10 The growth of Puckeridge into the post-medieval period continued to be focussed around the High Street. The site during this period was located outside the northern extent of the town and would have been predominantly agricultural in nature, as illustrated by the 1766 and 1822 surveys of the area. The 1839 Standon Tithe map shows the area of the site spanning part of three field enclosures two of which are arable and one is pasture. The area of the site remains virtually identical until the present day with the only major change being the A10 by-pass constructed just north of the site by 1974.

6 METHODOLOGY

- 6.1 The evaluation was conducted according to the Specification agreed by the archaeological consultant Duncan Hawkins of CgMs Consulting following consultation with the Archaeological Officer at Hertfordshire County Council, Alison Tinniswood.
- The evaluation consisted of seventeen trial trenches each measuring c. 25m in length by 1.80m wide. These were arranged across the site to provide equal coverage of the development area.
- 6.3 The trenches were excavated under archaeological supervision by a mechanical excavator fitted with a flat-bladed grading bucket. The grading bucket was then used to remove undifferentiated made ground down to the first archaeologically significant horizon. Level spits of no more than 0.20m were removed in each pass. Material was removed by the machine until natural stratigraphy was uncovered.
- 6.4 The trenches were cleaned by hand. A plan of the trench was drawn to a scale of 1:20 and a representative section at 1:10.
- Archaeological features and deposits were excavated in order to provide information as to their date and origin. These were recorded using the approved recording system. A photographic record consisting of 35mm colour and black and white slides as well as digital shots was created. Appropriate sampling was undertaken according to English Heritage guidelines.
- **6.6** The evaluation's objectives were:
 - To determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains present;
 - To determine the extent of truncation at the site and its effect upon any underlying archaeology;
 - To inform the strategy for any further mitigation
- 6.7 All OD heights were taken using three temporary benchmarks, 78.95m OD, 73.41m OD and 74.34m OD which were imported onto the site using GPS equipment. The trench locations were surveyed by the Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd surveyor using GPS equipment. This information was then located to OS data.
- **6.8** The completed archive, including all artefactual, written, drawn and photographic material, will be deposited with Hertfordshire County Museum.

7 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

7.1 Phase 1 - Natural

- 7.1.1 Natural Head deposits, consistent with those described on the British Geological Survey Sheet and those recorded during the geotechnical investigations (Gailey 2010), were recorded throughout all seventeen evaluation trenches. This was recorded during the evaluation as a mid brownish orange clay-silt-sand [12].
- 7.1.2 The levels of the natural [12] recorded throughout the evaluation trenches reflect the surface topography of the site. The levels are listed below:
 - Trench 1 the natural sloped down from 73.94m OD in the southwest to 73.12m OD in the northeast
 - Trench 2 the natural sloped down from 74.24m OD in the northwest to 72.01m OD in the southeast
 - Trench 3 the natural sloped down from 75.69m OD in the southwest to 74.20m OD in the northeast
 - Trench 4 the natural sloped down from 73.49m OD in the southwest to 72.57m OD in the northeast
 - Trench 5 the natural sloped down from 74.71m OD in the northwest to 72.94m OD in the southeast
 - Trench 6 the natural sloped down from 78.28m OD in the southwest to 76.85m OD in the northeast
 - Trench 7 the natural sloped down from 75.78m OD in the southwest to 74.65m OD in the northeast
 - Trench 8 the natural sloped down from 73.52m OD in the southwest to 71,47m OD in the northeast
 - Trench 9 the natural sloped down from 76.64m OD in the northwest to 76.20m OD in the southeast
 - Trench 10 the natural sloped down from 76.38m OD in the southwest to 75.13m OD in the northeast
 - Trench 11 the natural sloped down from 78.63m OD in the northwest to 77.35m OD in the southeast
 - Trench 12 the natural sloped down from 79.11m OD in the southwest to 78.26m OD in the northeast
 - Trench 13 the natural sloped down from 76.67m OD in the northwest to 75.79m OD in the southeast
 - Trench 14 the natural sloped down from 77.19m OD in the northwest to 76.41m OD in the southeast
 - Trench 15 the natural sloped down from 78.30m OD in the southwest to 77.62m OD in the northeast
 - Trench 16 the natural sloped down from 76.90m OD in the southwest to 76.15m OD in the northeast
 - Trench 17 the natural sloped down from 77.80m OD in the northwest to 76.13m OD in the southeast

7.2 Phase 2 – Natural and undated features (Fig. 3)

7.2.1 <u>Trench 3</u>

7.2.2 Cutting the natural [12] in trench 3 was what appeared to be a natural feature, [64]. This feature was sub-circular in shape measuring 1.25m northwest-southeast by 1.50m northeast-southwest and was c. 0.50m deep. The sterile, homogenous nature of the fill, [63], and the irregular sides suggested that this feature was of natural origin, possibly a tree bole. This natural feature was encountered at c. 74.56m OD.

7.2.3 Trench 10

7.2.4 Cutting the natural [12] in trench 10 was a linear feature [73]. This possible ditch ran eastnortheast-westsouthwest through the trench measuring 2.50m in length by 1m wide. Encountered at c. 76.23m OD it was 0.30m deep. This linear feature was filled with a sterile, homogenous deposit, [72], which contained no anthropogenic material. This feature therefore remains undated and may even be of natural origin.

7.2.5 Trench 12

7.2.6 Cutting the natural [12] in trench 12 was a ditch, [34]. Aligned virtually east-west this ditch measured c. 2m in length by 1.06m wide. Encountered at c. 78.98m OD it was 0.56m deep. This feature also contained a sterile, homogenous, deposit, [33], which yielded no dateable artefacts. The very regular nature of the profile of this ditch however suggested that it was man-made and may represent pre-Roman activity within the area of the site.

7.2.7 Trench13

7.2.8 Cutting the natural [12] in trench 13 was what appeared to be a natural feature, [81]. This feature was sub-circular in shape measuring 0.60m northeast-southwest by 0.75m northwest-southeast and was c. 0.21m deep. The sterile, homogenous nature of the fill, [80], and the irregular sides suggested that this feature was of natural origin, possibly a tree bole. This natural feature was encountered at c. 76.03m OD.

7.3 Phase 3 – Roman 1st & 2nd Century AD (Fig. 4)

7.3.1 <u>Trench 1</u>

- 7.3.2 Cutting the natural [12] throughout trench 1 was a number ditches, pits and gullies predominantly dating to the early Roman period. At the northern end of the trench a ditch, [18], cut the natural [12]. Ditch [18] ran virtually north-south through the trench for c. 3m before terminating at its southern end. The ditch was encountered at 73.12m OD, was 1.30m wide and c. 1.20m deep. No dateable artefacts were recovered from this ditch but it seems likely that it dates to the Roman period. Approximately 2m south of the ditch was an apparent pit, [16]. Only a small area of this feature was located within the trench limits but it was sub-circular in shape most likely representing a pit. The pits recorded dimensions were 1.14m northeast-southwest by 0.40m northwest-southeast. It was encountered at 72.44m OD and was 0.28m deep. Pottery recovered from the fill, [15], of this feature dated to the early Roman period, 1st/early 2nd century.
- 7.3.3 Just south of pit [16] was another ditch, [20]. Aligned east-west the ditch measured 2.20m in length by 1m wide. Encountered at c. 73.40m OD it was 1.10m deep. Pottery from the fill, [19], of this ditch dated to the 2nd century AD and may represent a slightly later phase of Roman occupation in the area.
- 7.3.4 The southern half of Trench 1 also encountered numerous Roman features. Two ditches ran parallel to one another, [26] & [32], around 0.40m apart. Both ditches were aligned east-west with ditch [26] measuring 2.40m long by 1m wide and 0.15m deep. Ditch [32], the southern of the two, measured 2.40m long by 1.40m wide. This ditch was more substantial however at c. 0.70m deep. Pottery recovered from both ditches dated to the early Roman period, 1st/early 2nd century AD. Of note from fill [31] of ditch [32] was the recovery of one piece and two fragments of a small *millefiore* glass bowl, normally associated with high status occupation. Just south of ditch [32] was a large pit, [57], and a gully [61]. Only a small area of pit [57] was exposed in the trench with the large majority of it located east outside the trench limit. Sub-circular in shape the pit measured 1.70m northeast-southwest by 0.22m northwest-southeast. Encountered at 73.53m OD it was 0.30m deep. Gully [60] ran northeast-southwest just west of pit [57]. Measuring 1.40m in length by 0.54m wide its southern end was truncated by a later ditch and its northern end terminated just south of ditch [32]. Encountered at 73.53m OD the gully was 0.20m deep. Again pottery recovered from these features dates to 1st and 2nd centuries.

7.3.5 Truncating the southern end of gully [60] was ditch [59]. Aligned northwest-southeast the ditch measured 1.90m long by 1.56m wide. Encountered at 73.72m OD the ditch was 0.80m deep. South of this ditch another gully, [36], was recorded. Running northnorthwest-southsoutheast the gully measured 2.70m long by 0.60m wide. The gully was encountered at 73.90m OD and was 0.40m deep. Pottery from both features again dated to the 1st and 2nd centuries. These Roman features may represent activity external to cremation cemetery area, discussed below, located to the southeast. The various features in Trench 1 may also represent more than one phase of activity during the Roman period.

7.3.6 <u>Trench 2</u>

- 7.3.7 Cutting the natural [12] throughout trench 2 was a number of features, including urned cremations which dated to the early Roman period. Three separate urned cremations, [1], [2], and [3], were recorded along the length of the evaluation trench. Cremation [1] was located in the centre of the trench at c. 73.56m OD, cremation [2] was located towards the southeastern end of the trench again at c. 73.56m OD and cremation [3] was located in the very southeastern end of the trench at c. 73.25m OD. Burnt bone was only observed within cremations [1] and [2] but they were left un-excavated in situ. These cremations represent a cemetery area dating to the 1st/early 2nd century AD. This area may be the continuation of Cemetery 'A' encountered to the north or the cemetery area recorded at Skeleton Green immediately northeast of the site.
- 7.3.8 Recorded at the northwestern end of Trench 2 was a large ditch, [40]. Aligned east-west the full extent of this ditch was not recorded as it was outside of the trench limits. The southern side of the ditch was exposed and its recorded dimensions were at least 3m long and over 1.6m wide. Recorded at 74.24m OD, the ditch was c. 1m deep. The fill of this ditch, [39], produced a large assemblage of Roman pottery dating to 1st/ early 2nd century along with daub with wattle impressions within it and an Iron Age coin, possibly of Iceni origin. This relatively large ditch may represent a boundary of some sort possibly even the northern boundary of the cremation cemetery area.

- 7.3.9 Just south of ditch [40] in Trench 2 were two pits, [42] and [44]. Pit [42] was sub-circular in shape with the eastern half being excavated and the western half located outside the trench limit. The recorded dimensions of the pit were 2.18m northwest-southeast by 1m northeast-southwest. Recorded at c. 74.07m OD the pit was 0.60m deep. Pottery recovered from the fill, [41], of the pit dated to the early Roman period, 1st/ early 2nd century. Pit [44] was oval in shape with the majority of the pit, its eastern side, being outside of the trench limit. Its recorded dimensions were 1.35m northwest-southeast by 0.34m northeast-southwest. This pit was encountered at c. 74.02m OD and was 0.20m deep. Again pottery recovered from the fill of this pit, [43], dated to the early Roman period, 1st/early 2nd century. These features appear to be simple rubbish pits; however, their apparent presence with the cremation cemetery may mean they represent a different phase of Roman activity to the area's usage as a cemetery.
- 7.3.10 At the southeastern end of Trench 2 two more intercutting pits were recorded, [48] and [50]. Pit [50] was rectangular in shape with its eastern side being within the trench limit and the western side outside. Its recorded dimensions were 2m northwest-southeast by 1.30m northeast-southwest. It was encountered at 73.93m OD and was 0.54m deep. Truncating the southeastern end of pit [50] was a second smaller pit, [48]. This pit was sub-circular in shape with the western half of the pit being outside the trench limit. Its recorded dimensions were 1.20m northwest-southeast by 0.50m northeast-southwest. Pit [48] was encountered at 73.75m OD and was 0.20m deep. Pottery recovered from the fills of both these features, [49] and [47] respectively, dated to the early Roman period, 1st/early 2nd century. As with the two pits recorded at the northwestern end of the trench pits [48] and [50] appeared to be simple rubbish pits and may reflect a different phase of Roman activity to the cremation cemetery.

7.3.11 Trench 4

7.3.12 Recorded in the northern end of Trench 4, cutting the natural [12], where two cremations, [4] & [5]. Cremation [5] consisted of a single urn c. 0.18m wide and was recorded at 72.57m OD. Cremation [4] however contained at least three urns one of which was badly disturbed, possibly by ploughing. Around these urns was a rectangular line of burning which may represent a casket within which they had been placed. This multiple cremation was recorded at 72.56m OD and continued outside the trench limit. The cremations were left un-excavated in situ. These cremations, along with those recorded in Trench 2, represent a cemetery area dating to the 1st/early 2nd century AD. This area may be the continuation of Cemetery 'A' encountered to the north or the cemetery area recorded at Skeleton Green immediately northeast of the site.

7.3.13 Trench 5

7.3.14 Cutting the natural [12] in Trench 5 was a ditch [38]. Running east-west this ditch measured 3.20m in length by 1.30m wide. Its eastern end continued outside the trench limit whilst its western end terminated within the trench. Encountered at c. 74.09m OD it was 0.30m deep. The ditch was backfilled with deposit [37] which contained pottery dating to the 1st century AD. This ditch probably represents a boundary and/or drainage ditch.

7.3.15 Trench 9

7.3.16 Cutting the natural [12] in Trench 9 was a large ditch [30]. This ditch ran virtually east-west through the centre of the trench measuring at least 3m in length by 1.6m wide. This ditch was recorded at 76.39m OD and was 0.80m deep. The fill of this ditch, [29], contained a relatively large sized assemblage of 1st century AD early Roman pottery. This ditch may represent some form of boundary and/or drainage feature, possibly even defining the southern limit of the cremation cemetery area.

7.4 Phase 4 – Late Medieval to Post-Medieval (Fig. 5)

7.4.1 Trench 4

7.4.2 Recorded to the south of the Roman cremations in Trench 4 was a series of deposits and features dating to the early post-medieval period. At the southern end of the trench an extensive cut, [22], was recorded. Only the eastern side of this feature was recorded as it feature continued west outside the site limit. The one side of the feature recorded appeared to be aligned northnorthwest-southsoutheast and measured 1.80m wide by 2.40m long. The feature was encountered at 73.53m OD but was not fully excavated. The feature contained a large amount of CBM and tile dating to the late 15th/16th century, the early post-medieval period. This possible pit appears to contain demolition material relating to early post-medieval activity on the site.

- 7.4.3 Further north in Trench 4, in two distinct areas chalky demolition/levelling layers were recorded, [7] and [11]. Both these deposits contained CBM and tile dating from the late medieval to the early post-medieval, a similar date to feature [22] described above. Of note was a double oval buckle dating to the 14th/15th century recovered from deposit [11]. These deposits were recorded at 72.95m OD and 73.20m OD respectively. Both of these deposits were cut by two flint wall foundations, [6] and [9]. Flint foundation [9], which cut deposit [11] was aligned virtually east-west and measured 1.70m long by 0.40m wide. The eastern end of the foundation appeared to be disturbed and most likely would originally have continued east. This flint foundation was recorded at 72.94m OD. Flint foundation [9] which cut deposit [11] was also aligned virtually east-west running for 2.40m through the trench. It was encountered at 73.18m OD and was 0.40m wide. Both these flint foundations were mortared with a yellow sand material. These flint foundations appear to represent an early post-medieval structure possible relating to agricultural activity on the site during this period.
- 7.4.4 Recorded just southwest of flint foundation [9] and demolition deposit [11] was a layer of compacted chalk [13]. This layer of chalk measured 2m northeast-southwest by 1.80m northwest-southeast. Encountered at 73.24m OD this deposit was c. 0.10m thick. Despite appearing to be a linear feature the compacted chalk deposit was not in a cut and sealed the natural stratigraphy, [12], below. No artefacts were recovered from this deposit and it therefore remains undated. However it may represent some form of chalk raft associated with the early post-medieval structural remains also in Trench 4.
- 7.4.5 Recorded cutting the natural [12] between feature [22] and chalk deposit [13] was a linear feature [24]. Aligned northwest-southeast the extensive linear cut measured c. 4m wide by 1.90m long. The fill of this feature was sterile and homogenous except for frequent chalk flecks. The irregular profile and sterile fill of this feature implies it may be natural however its association with the various early post-medieval structural features in the same trench cannot be discounted. It was recorded at 73.46m OD and was 0.56m deep.

7.4.6 Trench 5

7.4.7 Cutting the natural [12] in the southeastern end of Trench 5 was an extensive cut [102]. Only one edge of this feature, the western, was recorded within the trench. The majority of the feature continue east outside the trench limit. This feature appeared to be pit like and was backfilled with various deposits containing early post-medieval CBM and roof tile. This feature measured 2.80m north-south by 1.60m east-west. It was encountered at 74.09m OD and was 0.85m deep. This feature may be related to, or even a continuation of cut [22] in Trench 4 discussed above. It therefore represents early post-medieval settlement in the area of the site, most likely small scale agricultural activity.

7.4.8 Trench 8

- 7.4.9 Recorded in the northern end of Trench 8 was a demolition/levelling layer, [68]. This deposit was similar to those recorded in Trench 4 just to the northwest which contained CBM and tile dating to the early post-medieval period. Recorded directly below the topsoil at c. 71.93m OD this deposit was 0.40m thick. As with the similar deposits recorded in Trench 4 a flint foundation, [62], was cut through them. Running virtually east-west only a small section of the flint foundation was recorded; measuring 0.80m in length by at least 0.40m wide. The flint foundation was recorded at 71.86m OD and was at least 0.40m deep but was not fully excavated. The flint foundations were again mortared with a yellow sandy material identical to those recorded in trench 4. The flint foundation and earlier demolition deposit represent early post-medieval settlement of the site, most likely relating to agricultural activity.
- 7.4.10 Recorded cutting the natural [12] in centre of Trench 8 was a linear feature [67]. This feature was aligned northwest-southeast and measured 1.90m long by 2m wide. The feature was filled by a deposit, [66], which contained frequent chalk flecks reminiscent of feature [24] in Trench 4 to the northwest which it may be a continuation of. No dateable artefacts were recovered from this feature but as it may be a continuation of feature [24] in Trench 4 and has a chalky fill it most likely relates to the various early post-medieval features concentrated in Trenches 4 and 5.

7.4.11 Trench 10

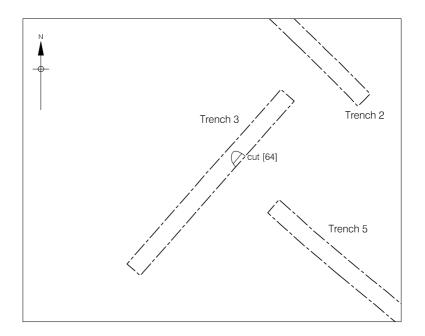
7.4.12 Cutting the natural [12] in Trench 10 were two intercutting ploughmarks, [75] and [77]. Ploughmark [77] ran east-west through the trench measuring 2.40m long by 0.08m wide but would have continued both east and west outside the trench limit. Cutting ploughmark [77] was another Ploughmark [75]. This ploughmark ran northnortheast-southsouthwest through the trench measuring c. 5m long by 0.08m wide, continuing south outside the trench limit but terminated at its northern end. Both this features were filled by an identical deposit, [76] and [74] respectively, and were c. 0.10m deep. These ploughmarks were encountered at c. 75.89m OD. No dateable material was recovered from either of these features. They represent post-Roman ploughing of the field, most likely dating to the later post-medieval period.

7.4.13 Trench 11

7.4.14 Cutting the natural [12] in Trench 11 was a single ploughmark [79]. Running eastsoutheast-westsouthwest through the trench, it measured 2.75m long by 0.08m wide and was c. 0.10m deep. This ploughmark had a virtually identical deposit filling it, [78], to the two ploughmarks recorded in Trench 10. Recorded at c. 77.74m OD this ploughmark clearly represents the same phase of ploughing recorded in trench10 to the northeast.

7.5 Phase 5 – Modern

7.5.1 Sealing the various archaeological features and the natural stratigraphy in the trenches void of archaeology was a layer of subsoil overlain by modern topsoil. The subsoil varied in thickness between 0.10m and 0.40m. The topsoil was predominantly 0.30m thick but in some places varied to 0.40m thick.



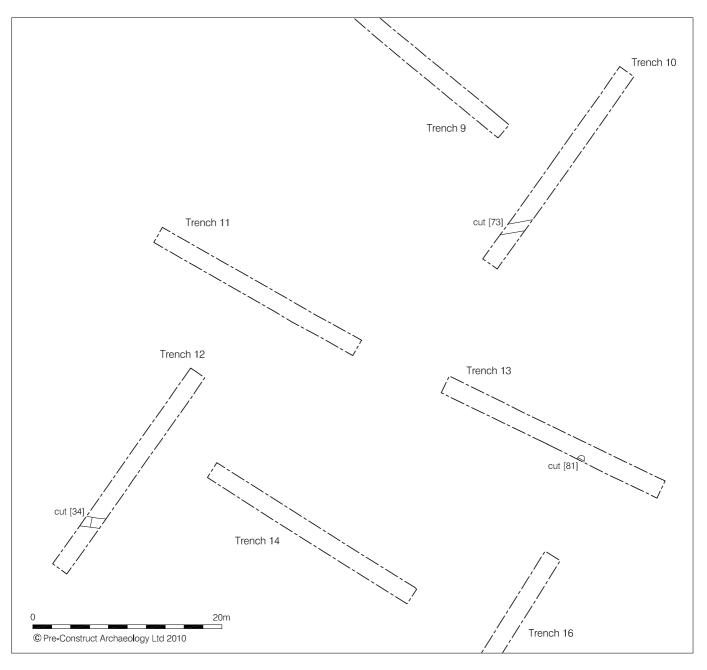
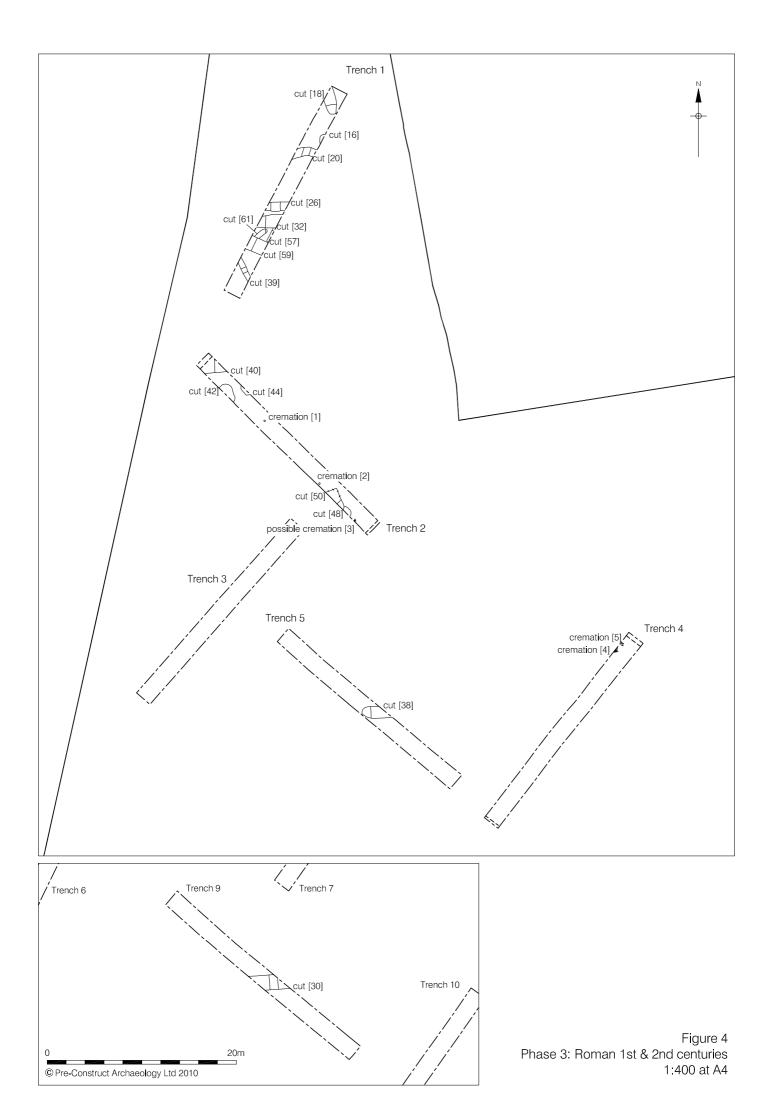


Figure 3 Phase 2: Natural & Undated Features 1:400 at A4



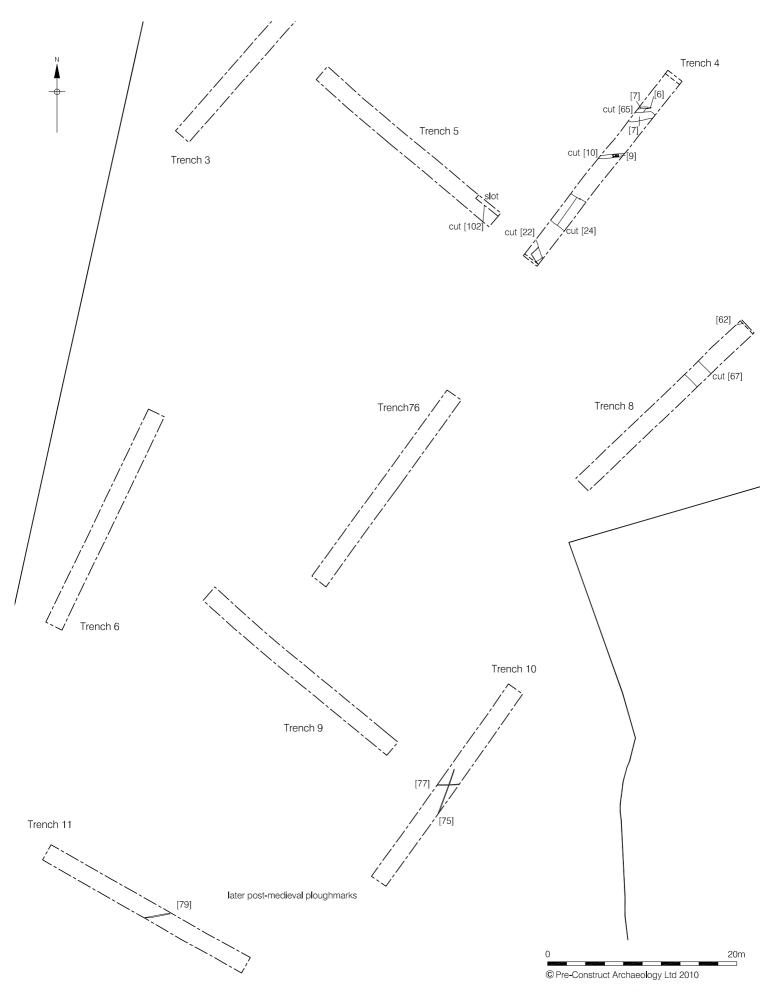


Figure 5 Phase 4: Late Medieval to Post-Medieval 1:400 at A4

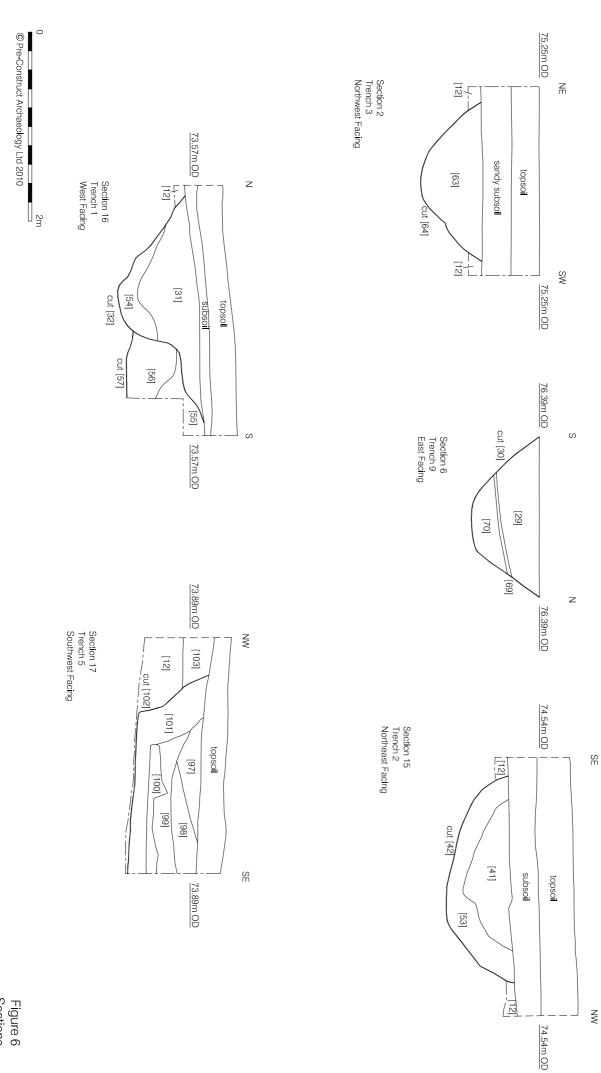


Figure 6 Sections 1.40 at A4

8 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 Natural stratigraphy consistent with the known underlying geology, as indicated by the British Geological Survey (Sheet 221: Hitchin), was recorded within all seventeen of the evaluation trenches. This was also consistent with the geology as recorded during geotechnical investigations prior to the evaluation (Gailey 2010). The natural drift geology, through which the varying archaeological horizons were cut, survived in some areas of the site as high as 0.30m directly below the modern topsoil. The underlying geology recorded within the evaluation trenches also reflected the surface topography. The topography of the site in relation to the known Scheduled Roman town to the northeast and east, a ridge of higher land which overlooked it, was probably one of the reasons why it was favoured by burials.
- 8.2 A handful of undated and natural features were recorded during the evaluation. None of these features produced any datable material and therefore remain anomalous. Despite the vast amount of Iron Age activity in the surrounding area no features dating to this period were encountered. The occasional sherd of pottery and an Iron Age coin were recovered but from early Roman features. The possibility exists that such pre-Roman activity on the site remains to be identified. Ditch [34] which was recorded in Trench 12 and yielded no datable artefacts may represent this pre-Roman activity on the site.
- 8.3 The Roman period was well represented in the evaluation. Trenches 1, 2, 4, 5 and 9 all recorded Roman features. Trenches 2 and 4 recorded five urned cremations, one of which was a multiple cremation containing at least three vessels and may possibly have been placed within a wooden casket. The presence of these burials is unsurprising (Gailey 2010). A number of cemeteries have been encountered during various archaeological investigations in the immediate vicinity of the site. These are directly related to Braughing Roman Town, a Scheduled Ancient Monument located to the northeast and east of the site. These cremations date to the 1st and early 2nd century, much the same as Cemetery 'A' encountered to the north or the cemetery area recorded at Skeleton Green immediately northeast of the site. Cemetery 'A' also recorded cremations buried within wooden caskets. It is difficult to ascertain the exact limits of the cemetery area. The cremations recorded seem to be concentrated in the northern end of the site. A large ditch in the northwestern end of Trench 2 may define the northern limit of the cemetery. Another large ditch some distance to the south in Trench 9 may define the southern boundary of the cemetery area, but the blank trenches between this ditch and cremations may suggest otherwise and it may represent a simple field boundary. No Roman features were recorded south of this ditch however implying it defines the southern limits of Roman activity on the site.

- The character of the numerous Roman features recorded in Trench 1, appear to represent activity outside the cemetery area as defined by the large ditch in Trench 2. These features include a number of ditches, gullies and pits the majority of which again date to the early Roman period. These appear to represent field boundaries and/or drainage gullies and rubbish pits on the periphery of the Roman town. Pottery from some of these features however appears to date to the latter 2nd century possibly even into the 3rd century. A single sherd of *Millefiore* glass recovered from one of the ditches implies the presence of higher status Roman activities. These features may therefore represent a number of phases of activity during the Roman period possible after the cemetery area goes out of use. A handful of other Roman features within the area of the cemetery may attest to this and closer study of the artefactual evidence will be able to define these phases of activity more accurately.
- 8.5 Post-Roman activity on the site was represented by a relatively small number of clustered features. Trenches 4, 5 and 8 recorded a sequence of flint foundations, demolition layers and other features which yielded CBM and tile dating from the late medieval transitional period into the early post-medieval. These flint foundations, along with a possible chalk raft, represent a structure, or structures, dating to the early post-medieval period when the site was thought to be open fields. These flint foundations may be for flint dwarf walls upon which a timber frame would have been constructed. Such a building may represent more intense agricultural activity on the site as oppose to open arable and pasture land. No structures can be seen on the earliest cartographic source of 1766 (Gailey 2010) which suggests that the structure which the flint foundations represent was out of use and demolished by the mid 18th century.
- 8.6 Trenches 10 and 11 also recorded a small number of ploughmarks. Their presence is unsurprising as the area of the site has predominantly been open arable fields and pasture land virtually right up until the present day. No datable evidence was recovered from these ploughmark but it seems likely that they date to the post-medieval period.
- **8.7** The archaeological sequence across the site was completed by a layer of subsoil overlain by the modern topsoil.
- 8.8 It can therefore be concluded that significant Roman, medieval and post-medieval archaeological features survive to the north of the Roman ditch in Trench 9, but that no significant features of any period survive to the south of that ditch.

9 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Number	Туре	Trench	Comments	Phase	Date
1	Cremation	2	Urned Cremation	3	Roman
2	Cremation	2	Urned Cremation	3	Roman
3	Cremation	2	Urned Cremation	3	Roman
4	Cremation	4	Urned Cremation	3	Roman
5	Cremation	4	Urned Cremation	3	Roman
6	Masonry	4	Flint Foundation	4	Early post-medieval
7	Layer	4	Chalky layer	4	Early post-medieval
8	VOID				
9	Masonry	4	Flint Foundation	4	Early post-medieval
10	Cut	4	Construction cut for flint foundation [9]	4	Early post-medieval
11	Layer	4	Mixed CBM leveling layer	4	Early post-medieval
12	Layer	4	Natural silty sand	1	Natural
13	Layer	4	Chalky layer	4	Early post-medieval
14	VOID				
15	Fill	1	Fill of Pit [16]	3	Roman
16	Cut	1	Roman Pit	3	Roman
17	Fill	1	Fill of ditch [18]	3	Roman
18	Cut	1	Roman ditch	3	Roman
19	Fill	1	Fill of ditch [20]	3	Roman
20	Cut	1	Roman ditch	3	Roman
21	Fill	4	Fill of pit [22]	4	Early post-medieval
22	Cut	4	?Pit filled with CBM material	4	Early post-medieval
23	Fill	4	Fill of ?natural feature [24]	4	Early post-medieval
24	Cut	4	?Nat feature	4	Early post-medieval
25	Fill	1	Fill of gully [26]	3	Roman
26	Cut	1	Roman gully	3	Roman
27	Fill	1	Fill of linear feature [28]	3	Roman
28	Cut	1	Linear feature	3	Roman
29	Fill	9	Fill of ditch [30]	3	Roman
30	Cut	9	Roman ditch	3	Roman
31	Fill	1	Fill of ditch [32]	3	Roman
32	Cut	1	Roman ditch	3	Roman
33	Fill	12	Fill of ditch [34]	3	Undated
34	Cut	12	Undated ditch	3	Undated
35	Fill	1	Fill of ditch [36]	3	Roman

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74	Fill	10	Fill of ploughmark [75]	4	Undated
75	Cut	10	Undated ploughmark	4	Undated
76	Fill	10	Fill of undated ploughmark [77]	4	Undated
77	Cut	10	Undated Ploughmark	4	Undated
78	Fill	11	Fill of undated ploughmark [79]	4	Undated
79	Cut	11	Undated ploughmark	4	Undated
80	Fill	13	Fill of natural feature [81]	2	Undated
81	Cut	13	Natural feature	2	Undated
82	Layer	14	Natural sandy layer	1	Natural
83	Layer	14	Natural gravelly clay	1	Natural
84	Layer	14	Natural gravelly clay	1	Natural
85	Layer	15	Natural gravelly clay	1	Natural
86	Layer	15	Natural gravelly clay	1	Natural
87	Layer	16	Natural gravelly clay	1	Natural
88	Layer	16	Natural gravelly clay	1	Natural
89	Fill	16	Fill of natural feature [90]	2	Undated
90	Cut	16	Natural feature	2	Undated
91	Layer	16	Natural clay layer	1	Natural
92	Layer	17	Natural gravelly clay	1	Natural
93	Layer	17	Natural gravelly clay	1	Natural
94	Fill	17	Fill of natural feature [95]	2	Undated
95	Cut	17	Natural feature	2	Undated
96	Layer	17	Natural clay	1	Natural
97	Fill	5	Fill of pit [102]	4	Early post-medieval
98	Fill	5	Fill of pit [102]	4	Early post-medieval
99	Fill	5	Fill of pit [102]	4	Early post-medieval
100	Fill	5	Fill of pit [102]	4	Early post-medieval
101	Fill	5	Fill of pit [102]	4	Early post-medieval
102	Cut	5	Feature containing various CBM fills	4	Early post-medieval
103	Layer	5	Sandy layer	1	Natural

APPENDIX 2: OASIS FORM

9 OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: ENGLAND

1.1.1 <u>List of Projects | Search Projects | New project | Change your details | HER coverage | Change country | Log out</u>

1.1.2

Printable version

1.1.3

OASIS ID: preconst1-78760

1.1.4				
1.1.5	Project details	1.1.6		

- 1.1.7 Project name1.1.8 An Archaeological evaluation of Land at Mentley Lane East,Puckeridge, Hertfordshire
- 1.1.9 1.1.10
- 1.1.11 Short description of the project 1.1.12 An archaeological evaluation of land at Mentley Lane East,

 Puckeridge, Herfordshire. Seventeen evaluation trenches recorded five urned early Roman cremations and a number of other Roman ditches and pits all of which relate to the scheduled Roman town of Braughing to the northeast and east. Early post-medieval flint foundations were also encountered representing structures relating to agricultural activity during this period
- 1.1.13 1.1.14
- 1.1.15 Project dates 1.1.16 Start: 07-06-2010 End: 17-06-2010
- 1.1.17 1.1.18

1.1.19 Previous/future work	1.1.20	No / Yes
1.1.21	1.1.22	
1.1.23 Any associated project reference codes	1.1.24	HPUC 10 - Sitecode
1.1.25	1.1.26	
1.1.27 Type of project	1.1.28	Field evaluation
1.1.29	1.1.30	
1.1.31 Site status	1.1.32	Local Authority Designated Archaeological Area
1.1.33	1.1.34	
1.1.35 Current Land use	1.1.36	Grassland Heathland 2 - Undisturbed Grassland
1.1.37	1.1.38	
1.1.39 Monument type	1.1.40	DITCHES Roman
1.1.41	1.1.42	
1.1.43 Monument type	1.1.44	PITS Roman
1.1.45	1.1.46	
1.1.47 Monument type	1.1.48	CREMATIONS Roman
1.1.49	1.1.50	

1.1.51	Monument type	1.1.52	FLINT FOUNDATIONS Post Medieval
1.1.53		1.1.54	
1.1.55	Significant Finds	1.1.56	COIN Late Iron Age
1.1.57		1.1.58	
1.1.59	Significant Finds	1.1.60	BUCKLE Post Medieval
1.1.61		1.1.62	
1.1.63	Significant Finds	1.1.64	BROOCH Roman
1.1.65		1.1.66	
1.1.67	Significant Finds	1.1.68	TOILET IMPLEMENT Roman
1.1.69		1.1.70	
1.1.71	Significant Finds	1.1.72	GLASS BOWL Roman
1.1.73		1.1.74	
1.1.75	Methods &	1.1.76	'Sample Trenches'
1.1.77	quoo	1.1.78	
1.1.79	Development type	1.1.80	Rural residential
1.1.81		1.1.82	
1.1.83	Prompt	1.1.84	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS

1.1.85	1.1.86
1.1.87 Position in the planning process	1.1.88 Pre-application
1.1.89	1.1.90
1.1.91	
1.1.92 Project location	1.1.93
1.1.94 Country	1.1.95 England
1.1.96 Site location	1.1.97 HERTFORDSHIRE NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE BALDOCK Mentley Lane East, Puckeridge, Hertfordshire
1.1.98	1.1.99
1.1.100 Postcode	1.1.101 ST11 1GN
1.1.102	1.1.103
1.1.104 Study area	1.1.105 30000.00 Square metres
1.1.106	1.1.107
1.1.108 Site coordinates	1.1.109 TL 3858 2367 51.8938700668 0.01416391672310 51 53 37 N 000 00 50 E Point
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1.1.112 Height OD / Depth	1.1.113 Min: 71.47m Max: 79.11m
1.1.114	1.1.115

1.1.116	
1.1.117 Project creators	1.1.118
1.1.119 Name of Organisation	1.1.120 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
1.1.121	1.1.122
1.1.123 Project brief originator	1.1.124 CgMs Consulting
1.1.125	1.1.126
1.1.127 Project design originator	1.1.128 CgMs Consulting
1.1.129	1.1.130
1.1.131 Project director/manager	1.1.132 Peter Moore
1.1.133	1.1.134
1.1.135 Project supervisor	1.1.136 Neil Hawkins
1.1.137	1.1.138
1.1.139 Type of sponsor/funding body	1.1.140 Fairview New Homes Ltd.
1.1.141	1.1.142
1.1.143 Name of sponsor/funding body	1.1.144 Fairview New Homes Ltd.

1.1.146

1.1.145

1.1.147	
1.1.148 Project archives	1.1.149
1.1.150 Physical Archive recipient	1.1.151 Hertford Museum
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1.1.166 Digital Media available	1.1.167 'Database','Survey','Text'
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		vey ','Unpublished Text'
	1.1.180	1.1.181
	1.1.182	
	1.1.183 Project bibliography 1	1.1.184
	1.1.185 Publication type	1.1.186 Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
	1.1.187 Title	1.1.188 An Archaeological Evaluation of Land at Mentley Lane East, Puckeridge, Hertfordshire
	1.1.189	1.1.190
	1.1.191 Author(s)/Editor(s)	1.1.192 Hawkins, N.
	1.1.193	1.1.194
	1.1.195 Date	1.1.196 2010
	1.1.197	1.1.198
	1.1.199 Issuer or publisher	1.1.200 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
	1.1.201	1.1.202
	1.1.203 Place of issue or publication	1.1.204 London
	1.1.205	1.1.206

1.1.208 Unpublished client report.

1.1.207 Description

1.1.209	1.1.210
1.1.211	
1.1.212 Entered by	1.1.213 Peter Moore (pmoore@pre-construct.com)
1.1.214 Entered on	1.1.215 7 July 2010
1.1.216	
1.1.217	

10 oasis:

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