



LAND WEST OF OAK BARN, GREEN STREET, ELSENHAM, ESSEX

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION





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ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION


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Site Code	ELOB19	NGR	TL 54966 25480
Project No.	P1281	Museum ACC	-
Planning Ref.	Utt/18/1608	OASIS	britanni1-365212
Approved By:		Date	September 2019



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Abstract

From the 5th to the 9th September 2019 Britannia Archaeology LTD (BA) undertook a trial trench evaluation at Land West of Oak Barn, Green Street, Elsenham, Essex (TL 54966 25480).

The archaeological background for the site suggested that there was a moderate potential for finds and features relating to the Prehistoric Period and a moderate to high potential for remains on the site relating to the Roman period. The potential for later medieval and post-medieval activity associated with the development of the village was considered moderate, while archaeology relating to remaining periods was considered low.

Despite the potential no archaeological features were encountered within the trial trenches. No dating evidence beyond recent modern material was found in the topsoil or subsoil.



1.0 INTRODUCTION

From the 5th to the 9th September 2019 Britannia Archaeology LTD (BA) undertook a trial trench evaluation at Land West of Oak Barn, Green Street, Elsenham, Essex (TL 5496625480) (Fig. 1) on behalf of Mr Charles Xenakis-Charalambous, in advance the construction of five houses.

A design brief issued by Essex County Council Place Services (ECCPS) (Havis, R. 2nd August 2019) required a programme of linear trial trenching to adequately sample the area of the proposed buildings and any additional areas of groundworks which are necessary for construction. Four trenches, three measuring 20.00m x 1.80m and one measuring 30.00 x 1.80m were located over the area of proposed buildings and were excavated using a 360 tracked, mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket.



2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

The site is located in Gaunt End, c.1 mile southeast of the village of Elsenham and immediately north of Stansted Airport. It sits on the south side of Hall Road with a grade II listed 18th century farmhouse adjacent on its east side. Industrial units are located adjacent on the south side and agricultural fields are located to the west.

2.1 *Site Geology*

The bedrock geology is described as London Clay Formation - Clay, Silt And Sand. This Sedimentary Bedrock formed approximately 48 to 56 million years ago in the Palaeogene Period when the local environment was previously dominated by deep seas (BSG, 2019).

The superficial deposits are recorded as Lowestoft Formation - Diamicton. These Superficial Deposits were formed up to 2 million years ago in the Quaternary Period when the local environment was previously dominated by ice age conditions (BSG, 2019).



3.0 PLANNING POLICIES

The NPPF recognises that 'heritage assets' are an irreplaceable resource and planning authorities should conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance when considering development. It requires developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible. The key areas for consideration are:

- The significance of the heritage asset and its setting in relation to the proposed development;
- The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance;
- Significance (of the heritage asset) can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction, or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification;
- Local planning authorities should not permit loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred;
- Non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest that are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments, should be considered subject to the policies for designated heritage assets.

3.2 *Uttlesford Local Plan (Adopted January 2005)*

The local development framework for Uttlesford deals with Ancient Monuments and Sites of Archaeological Importance in section 5 and Policy ENV4 and states the following:

- 5.7 – Within Uttlesford District, approximately 3000 sites of archaeological interest are recorded on the Heritage Conservation Record (EHCR) maintained by Essex County Council. These sites are not shown on the proposals map and inquiries should be made to the County Archaeologist. Scheduled Ancient Monuments of which there are 73 in the District (December 2001) are shown on the proposals map. The EHCR records represent only a fraction of the total. Many important sites remain undiscovered and unrecorded. Archaeological sites are a finite and non-renewable



resource. As a result, it is important to ensure that they are not needlessly or thoughtlessly destroyed.

- 5.8 - The desirability of preserving an ancient monument and its setting is a material consideration in determining planning applications whether the monument is scheduled or unscheduled. There is a presumption in favour of the preservation of nationally important sites and their settings. The need for development affecting archaeological remains of lesser importance will be weighed against the relative importance of the archaeology.
- Policy ENV4 *Ancient Monuments and Sites of Archaeological Importance* - Where nationally important archaeological remains, whether scheduled or not, and their settings, are affected by proposed development there will be a presumption in favour of their physical preservation in situ. The preservation in situ of locally important archaeological remains will be sought unless the need for the development outweighs the importance of the archaeology. In situations where there are grounds for believing that sites, monuments or their settings would be affected developers will be required to arrange for an archaeological field assessment to be carried out before the planning application can be determined thus enabling an informed and reasonable planning decision to be made. In circumstances where preservation is not possible or feasible, then development will not be permitted until satisfactory provision has been made for a programme of archaeological investigation and recording prior to commencement of the development.



4.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The following archaeological background draws on the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) (1km search centred on the site), English Heritage PastScape (www.pastscape.org.uk), and the Archaeological Data Service (www.ads.ahds.ac.uk) (ADS) (Fig. 2, 3 & 4).

4.1 *Late prehistoric and Romano-British*

Located adjacent to the assessment site to the south are extensive records relating to the prehistoric and Roman periods. Record 14882 relates to a concentration of prehistoric pottery which was identified on this site covering an area of approximately 40m x 40m. Burnt flint and flint flakes were also identified and spread over an area 160 x 40m. No excavation was undertaken on this area and the site still exists. These finds represent part of a multi-period site in this area. This continuation of settlement is represented by Roman records 9038 and 9049. 9038 refers to surface scatters of Roman potsherds, potentially indicating buried Romano-British features. 9049 refers to a Roman grave found in 1990 through metal detecting. The finds were spread over an area of about a metre, when they were first found, some of the Samian sherds were lying on the field surface. Subsequent excavation at the find spot suggests that they originally had been grouped together in a shallow feature, but that this had been hit by the plough and by a mole drain, damaging and scattering the finds. Subsequent examination of the rest of the field suggests that this burial is just one small part of a much larger cemetery. This burial is important for two reasons: firstly because of the wealthy nature of the grave-goods, and secondly, because it fits into a pattern of rich burials from the Takeley area. In the nineteenth century a Roman burial was found in the region of Takeley church, containing a chest which held a glass bowl and bottle, Samian vessels, bronze rings and coins dating to the second century AD.

4.2 *Saxon and Medieval*

Related to the same site as in the preceding section, record 13828, relates to a widely dispersed scatter of Saxon pottery covering an area of approximately 1 ha. This material is situated on the same site as the large Roman scatter (9038) and indicates a continuation of occupation on this site from the Roman period into the Saxon period. Further records present in the HER data refer to the church of St Mary the Virgin. No building is recorded in the Domesday survey of 1086 however a priest has been recorded to it is reasonable to assume



that some form of structure for worship was present. the church was then developed in the medieval period.

4.3 *Post-medieval and Modern*

The post medieval period marks the expansion of Elsenham into a form more similar to the current form of the village. The Old Dairy Farmhouse (35923) located adjacent to the site on the east is an 18th century timber framed house. This building is typical of the expansion seen in the villages of East Anglia of this period. The other listed buildings in the immediate area are of similar date

4.4 *Archaeological Potential*

Given the above, the predominant potential for archaeology at this site is likely to relate to the Prehistoric and Roman periods.

Therefore, there was a **Moderate** potential for finds and features relating to the Prehistoric Period and a **Moderate - High** potential for remains on the site relating to the Roman period. The potential for later medieval and post-medieval activity associated with the development of the village was considered **moderate**, while archaeology relating to remaining periods was considered **low**.

No previous archaeological field work had been undertaken on this site.



5.0 PROJECT AIMS

The ECCPS brief states that the archaeological work should aim to record the location, extent, date and character of any surviving archaeological remains within the area of the proposed development. Trial trenches will be excavated on the area of the proposed buildings and in any additional area of groundworks which are necessary for construction. A summary report will be produced after the trial trenching has been completed and a site meeting will be held to determine further requirements. If significant archaeological deposits are identified then an open area excavation will follow (Havis, R. Brief, Section 5). In the event that open area excavation is required by ECCPS then a new WSI or method statement will be produced to cover this next phase of work. The scope of this WSI is for the trial trenching phase only.

Both the WSI, fieldwork and resulting report/archiving will be undertaken in accordance with CIfA Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations, 2014.

Four trenches, three measuring 20.00m x 1.80m and one measuring 30.00 x 1.80m will be excavated to achieve these aims (Fig.4).

All aspects of the trial trenching will be undertaken in accordance with the *CIfA Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations, 2014* and *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England, 2003*.



6.0 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Research objectives for the project are in line with those laid out in *Research and Archaeology Revisited: a revised framework for the East of England*, East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 24 (Medlycott, 2011).

Particular study of the following should occur:

- presence/absence of palaeosols and old land surface soils/deposits,
- the character of deposits and their contents within negative features
- palaeochannels
- site formation processes generally.

An assessment of the environmental potential of the site through examination of suitable deposits must also be arranged with a suitably qualified specialist. Attention should be paid:

- to the retrieval of charred plant macrofossils and land molluscs from former dry-land palaeosols and cut features, and to soil pollen analysis;
- to the retrieval of plant macrofossils, insect, molluscs and pollen from waterlogged deposits located.
- provision for the absolute dating of critical contacts should be made: *eg* the basal contacts of peats over former dryland surfaces; distinct landuse or landmark change in urban contexts

The evaluation should also carefully consider the retrieval, characterisation and dating (including absolute dating) of artefact, burial or economic evidence to assist in the characterisation of the site's evidence and in the development of future mitigation strategies.

Project specific research objectives outlined in the ECCPS brief (Havis, R. 2019) will be:

- Occupation associated with the adjacent Late Iron Age and Roman site
- Evidence of medieval and post medieval settlement within Gaunts End.



7.0 FIELDWORK METHODOLOGY

The ECCPS brief required a programme of linear trial trenching in advance of the construction of the houses. The trenching comprised four trenches, three measuring 20.00m x 1.80m and one measuring 30.00 x 1.80m

A 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket will be used to machine down to the first archaeological horizon, thereafter all excavation work will be undertaken by hand (Fig. 4).

The archaeology will be recorded using pro-forma record sheets, drawn plans and section drawings and appropriate photographs will also be taken.



8.0 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS (Fig. 6, 7 & 8)

8.1 *Trench 1*

Trench 1 was located in the centre of the site and measured 30.00m x 1.80m and was orientated north west to south east. It was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.40m. Trench 1 contained no archaeological features.

Topsoil **1000** was present to a depth of 0.31m. This overlay Natural Geology **1001**.

8.2 *Trench 2*

Trench 2 was located in the west of the site and measured 20.00m x 1.80m and was orientated north east to south west. It was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.39m. Trench 2 contained no archaeological features.

Topsoil **1000** was present to a depth of 0.32m. This overlay Natural Geology **1001**.

8.2 *Trench 3*

Trench 3 was located in the north of the site and measured 20.00m x 1.80m and was orientated north west to south east. It was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.47m. Trench 3 contained no archaeological features.

Topsoil **1000** was present to a depth of 0.35m. This overlay Natural Geology **1001**

8.2 *Trench 4*

Trench 4 was located in the east of the site and measured 20.00m x 1.80m and was orientated north east to south west. It was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.45m. Trench 4 contained no archaeological features. A single modern service orientated east – west (suspected to be a gas pipe) that was not present on any plans was present in the trench. Its location was identified through the CAT scanning of the trench prior to its excavation.

Topsoil **1000** was present to a depth of 0.37m. This overlay Natural Geology **1001**



9.0 DEPOSIT MODEL (Fig. 6 & 7)

The deposit model was consistent across the site.

At the top of the stratigraphic sequence in all trenches was Topsoil **1000**, which was present to a maximum depth of 0.37m in sample section 4. This comprised of a dark brownish grey, compact, silty clay. The topsoil contained modern material throughout.

At the base of the stratigraphic sequence in all trenches, was natural geology **1001**, which consisted of a light orangish yellow, firm, sandy gravel with frequent sub-angular stone inclusions.



10.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The archaeological background for the site suggested that there was a moderate potential for finds and features relating to the Prehistoric Period and a moderate to high potential for remains on the site relating to the Roman period. The potential for later medieval and post-medieval activity associated with the development of the village was considered moderate, while archaeology relating to remaining periods was considered low. However, no archaeological features were encountered within the trial trenches. No dating evidence beyond recent modern material was found in the topsoil or subsoil.

The site has been used as pasture and storage in recent times. It is likely that ploughing in the post medieval period may have removed any shallow features that may have been present. Despite the potential for prehistoric and Roman activity suggested by nearby occupation evidence it appears this site is located in the hinterland of these settlements.



11.0 ARCHIVE DEPOSITION

Arrangements will be made for the archive to be deposited with the relevant museum (Saffron Walden Museum), subject to agreement with the legal landowner where finds are concerned. The digital archive will be stored with the Archaeological Data Service (ADS).



12.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Britannia Archaeology would like to thank Mr Charles Xenakis-Charalambous of Vantage Point Ventures Limited for commissioning and funding the project.

We would also like to thank Richard Havis from Place Services for his advice and assistance on the project.

The site was excavated by Martin Brook, Matthew Baker and Matt Selfe of Britannia Archaeology Ltd.



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English Heritage PastScape www.pastscape.org.uk

Archaeological Data Service (ADS) www.ads.ahds.ac.uk

English Heritage National List for England

www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/protection/process/national-heritage-list-for-england

DEFRA Magic <http://magic.defra.gov.uk/website/magic>



APPENDIX 1 – DEPOSIT TABLES

Deposit Tables

TRENCH 1

Trench No	Orientation	Height AOD	Shot ID
1	NW - SE	107.99m	1
Sample Section No	Location	Facing	
1	NW end, NE side	SW	
Context No	Depth	Deposit Description	
1000	0.00-0.31m	Topsoil: Dark brownish grey, compact, silty clay.	
1001	0.31m +	Natural: Mid orangish grey, compact, clayey sand.	

Trench No	Orientation	Height AOD	Shot ID
2	NE - SW	107.98m	2
Sample Section No	Location	Facing	
2	SW end, NW side	SW	
Context No	Depth	Deposit Description	
1000	0.00-0.32m	Topsoil: Dark brownish grey, compact, silty clay.	
1001	0.32m +	Natural: Mid orangish grey, compact, clayey sand.	

Trench No	Orientation	Height AOD	Shot ID
3	NE - SW	108.42m	3
Sample Section No	Location	Facing	
3	NW end, NE side	SW	
Context No	Depth	Deposit Description	
1000	0.00-0.35m	Topsoil: Dark brownish grey, compact, silty clay.	
1001	0.35m +	Natural: Mid orangish grey, compact, clayey sand.	

Trench No	Orientation	Height AOD	Shot ID
4	NE - SW	108.09m	4
Sample Section No	Location	Facing	
4	SW end, NW side	SW	
Context No	Depth	Deposit Description	
1000	0.00-0.37m	Topsoil: Dark brownish grey, compact, silty clay.	
1001	0.37m +	Natural: Mid orangish grey, compact, clayey sand.	



APPENDIX 3 – OASIS SHEET

OASIS FORM - Print view

<https://oasis.ac.uk/form/print.cfm>

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

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OASIS ID: britanni1-365212

Project details

Project name	Land west of oak barn, Green Street, Elsenham, Essex
Short description of the project	From the 5th to the 9th September 2019 Britannia Archaeology LTD (BA) undertook a trial trench evaluation at Land West of Oak Barn, Green Street, Elsenham, Essex (TL 5496625480). The archaeological background for the site suggested that there was a moderate potential for finds and features relating to the Prehistoric Period and a moderate to high potential for remains on the site relating to the Roman period. The potential for later medieval and post-medieval activity associated with the development of the village was considered moderate, while archaeology relating to remaining periods was considered low. Despite the potential no archaeological features were encountered within the trial trenches. No dating evidence beyond recent modern material was found in the topsoil or subsoil.
Project dates	Start: 05-09-2019 End: 09-09-2019
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	P1281 - Contracting Unit No.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Cultivated Land 1 - Minimal cultivation
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	""Sample Trenches""
Development type	Rural residential
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country	England
Site location	ESSEX UTTLESFORD ELSENHAM land west of Oak Barn, Green Street, Elsenham, Essex
Postcode	CM22 6DS



OASIS FORM - Print view

<https://oasis.ac.uk/form/print.cfm>

Study area 0 Square metres
Site coordinates TL 54966 25480 51.905806285099 0.25294869108 51 54 20 N 000 15 10 E Point
Height OD / Depth Min: 0m Max: 0m

Project creators

Name of Organisation Britannia Archaeology Ltd
Project brief originator Local Planning Authority (with/without advice from County/District Archaeologist)
Project design originator Martin Brook
Project director/manager Martin Brook
Project supervisor Martin Brook
Type of sponsor/funding body Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body Mr Charles Xenakis-Charalambous

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No
Digital Archive recipient Essex HER
Digital Archive ID ELOB19
Digital Contents "none"
Digital Media available "GIS","Images raster / digital photography","Spreadsheets","Survey","Text"
Paper Archive recipient Essex HER
Paper Archive ID ELOB19
Paper Contents "none"
Paper Media available "Context sheet","Correspondence","Drawing","Map","Photograph","Plan","Report","Section","Survey"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title Land West of Oak Barn, Green Street, Elsenham, Essex
Author(s)/Editor(s) M. Brook
Other bibliographic details R1245
Date 2019



OASIS FORM - Print view

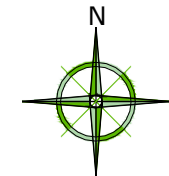
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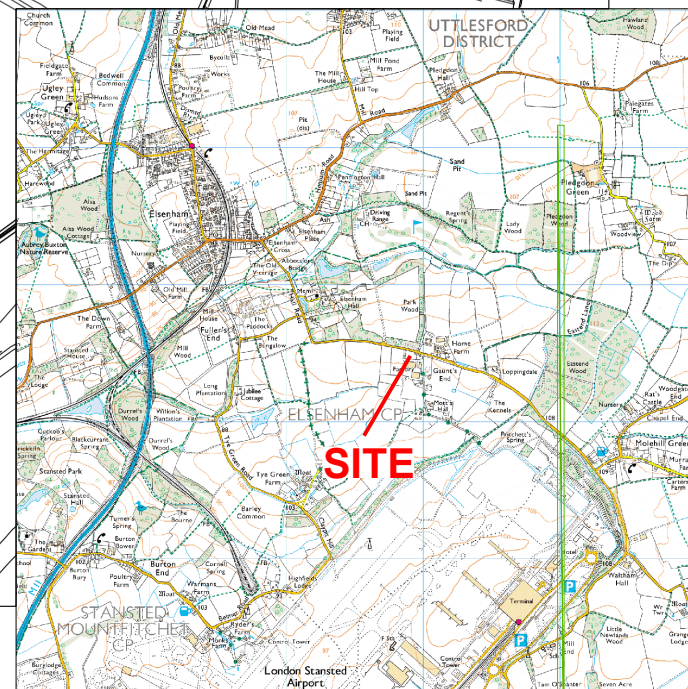
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 Site Boundary

225500

554900



NGR: 554900 225500 REF: P1281

PROJECT: LAND WEST OF OAK BARN, GREEN STREET, ELSENHAM

DESCRIPTION: GENERAL LOCATION PLAN

CLIENT: CHARLES XENAKIS

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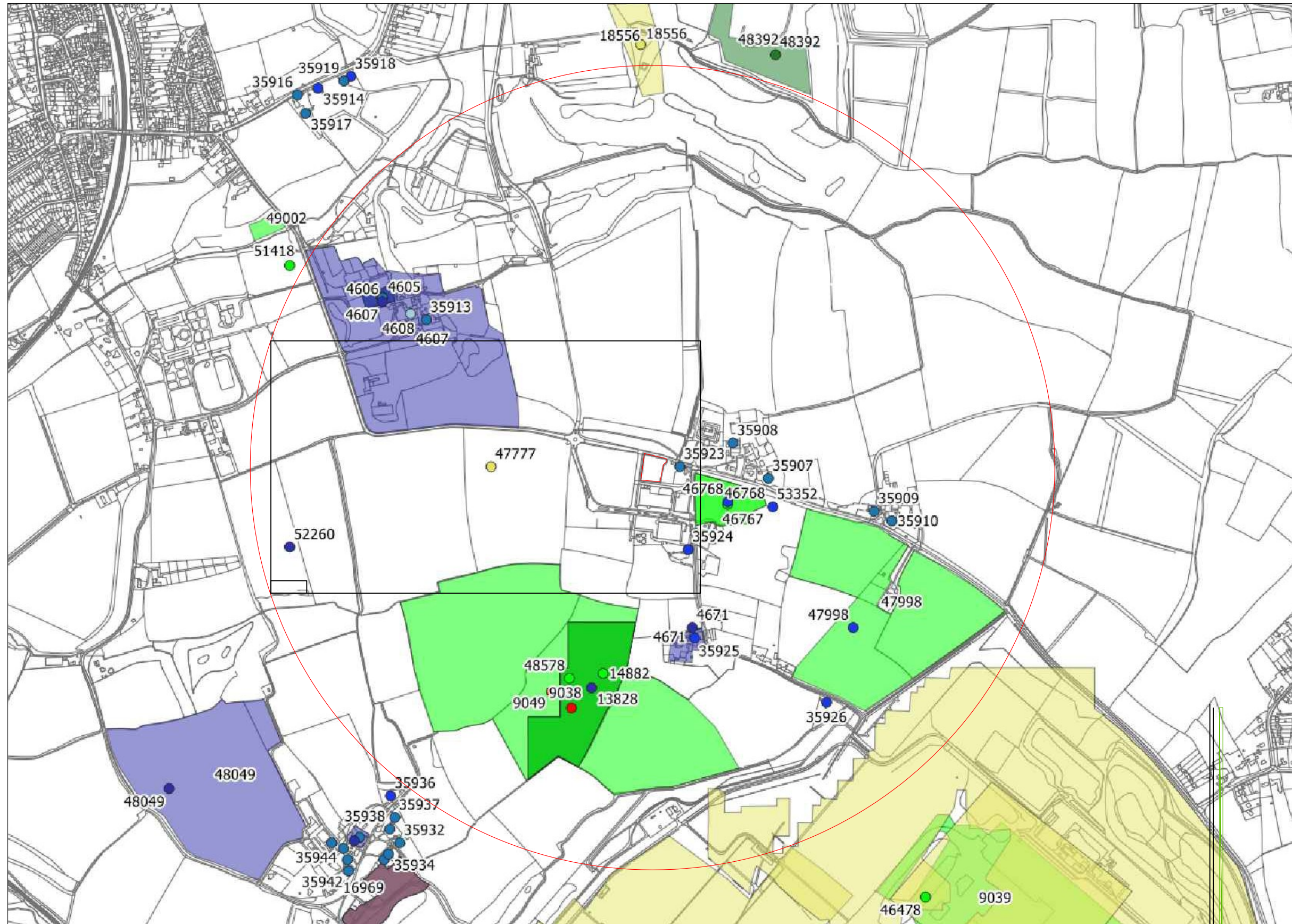
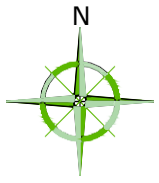
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












DATE: SEPT 2019 PLOT: A3 VERSION: 2

AUTHOR: MJB

APPROVED: DPM

FIGURE: 1



-  HER Search Area
-  Undated Record
-  Multiperiod Record
-  Modern Record
-  Post-medieval Record
-  Medieval Record
-  Anglo-Saxon Record
-  Roman Record
-  Iron Age Record
-  Bronze Age Record
-  Neolithic Record
-  Mesolithic Record
-  Palaeolithic Record
-  Site Boundary

NGR: 554900 225500 REF: P1281

PROJECT: LAND WEST OF OAK BARN, GREEN STREET, ELSENHAM

DESCRIPTION: HER DATA - MONUMENTS

CLIENT: CHARLES XENAKIS

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DATE: SEPT 2019 PLOT: A3 VERSION: 2

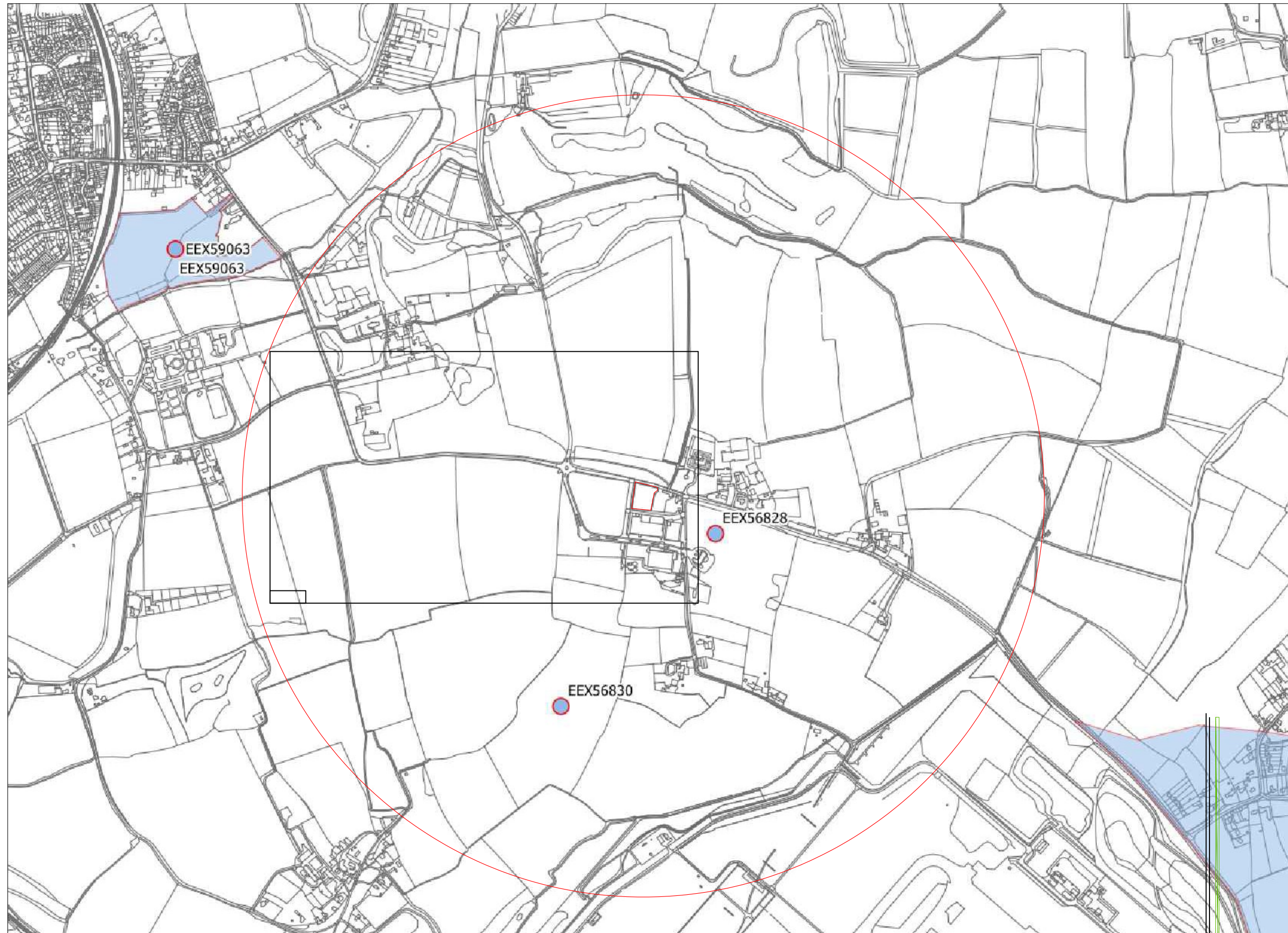
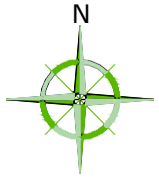
AUTHOR: MJB




APPROVED: DPM

FIGURE: 2



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-  HER Search Area
-  Archaeological Event
-  Site Boundary

NGR: 554900 225500 REF: P1281

PROJECT: LAND WEST OF OAK BARN, GREEN STREET, ELSENHAM

DESCRIPTION: HER DATA - EVENTS

CLIENT: CHARLES XENAKIS

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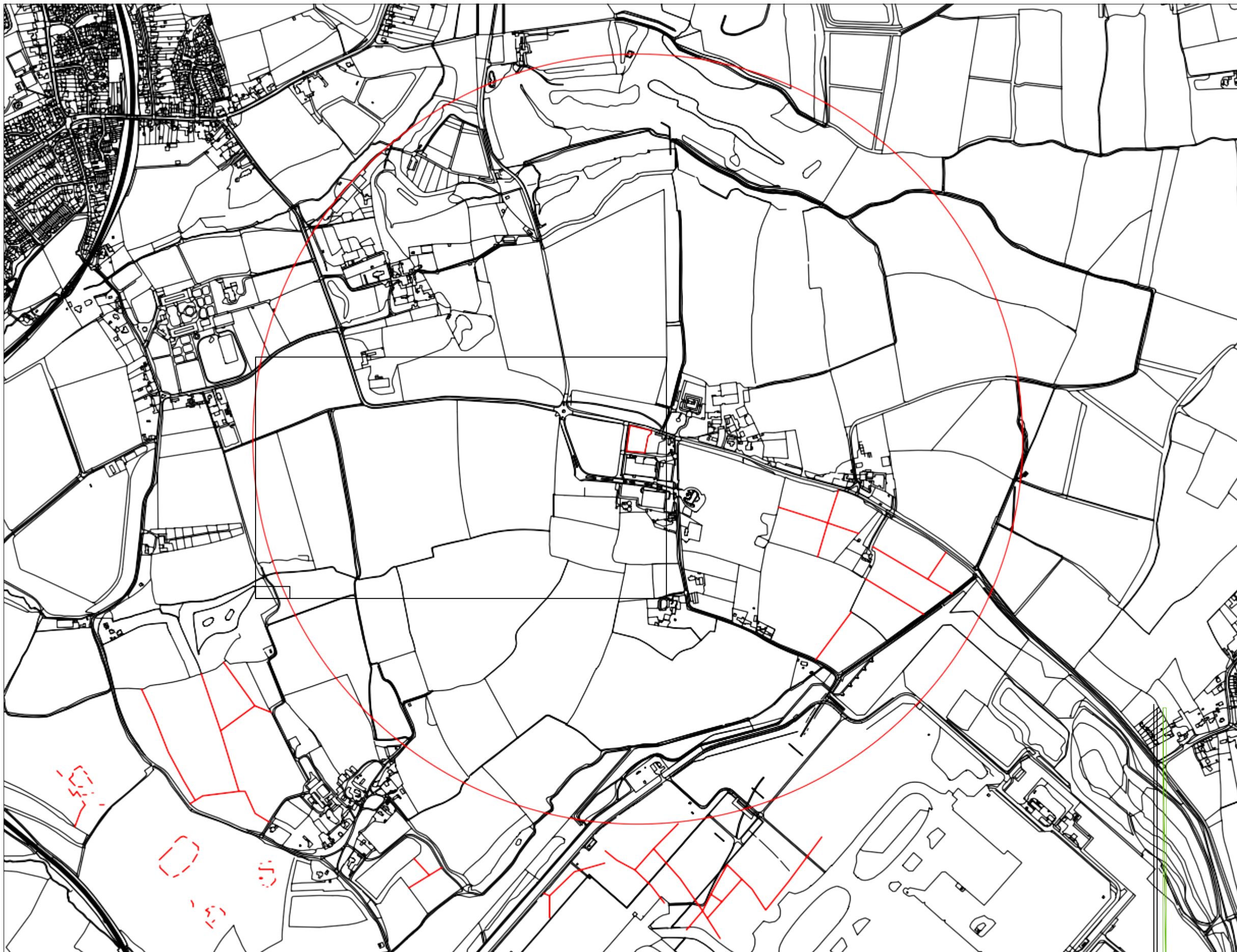
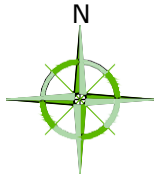
AUTHOR: MJB




APPROVED: DPM

FIGURE: 3



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-  HER Search Area
-  Cropmark
-  Site Boundary

NGR: 554900 225500 REF: P1281

PROJECT: LAND WEST OF OAK BARN, GREEN STREET, ELSENHAM

DESCRIPTION: HER DATA - CROPMARK DATA

CLIENT: CHARLES XENAKIS

BRITANNIA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD



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DATE: SEPT 2019 PLOT: A3 VERSION: 2

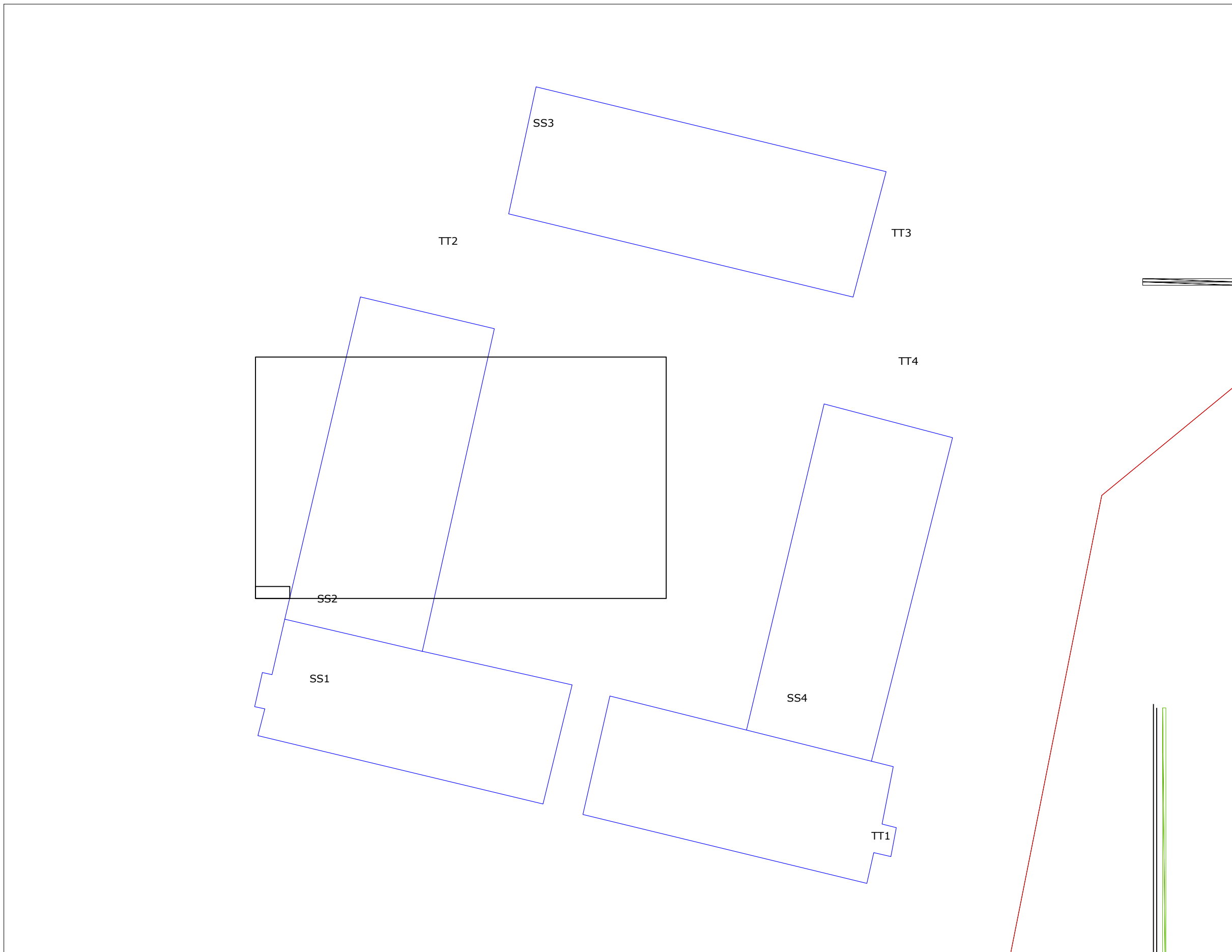
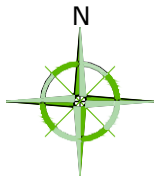
AUTHOR: MJB

APPROVED: DPM

FIGURE: 4

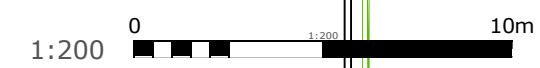
1:10000 0 500m

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- Site Section
- - - Trench
- ▭ Proposed building location
- ▭ Site Boundary

NGR:	554900 225500	REF:	P1281
PROJECT:	LAND WEST OF OAK BARN, GREEN STREET, ELSENHAM		
DESCRIPTION:	TRENCH LOCATION PLAN		
CLIENT:	CHARLES XENAKIS		
BRITANNIA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD			
	UNIT 2 THE OLD WOOL WAREHOUSE ST ANDREWS STREET SOUTH BURY ST EDMUNDS SUFFOLK IP33 3PH		
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AUTHOR:	MS	FIGURE: 5			
APPROVED:	MJB				

W

SITE SECTION 1

E
107.99

1000

1001



DP1-SS1-VIEW N

S

SITE SECTION 2

N
107.98

1000

1001



DP4-SS2-VIEW W

NGR: 554900 225500	REF: P1281	
PROJECT: LAND WEST OF OAK BARN, GREEN STREET, ELSENHAM		
DESCRIPTION: TRENCHES 1 & 2 SAMPLE SECTIONS		
CLIENT: CHARLES XENAKIS		
BRITANNIA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD  UNIT 2 THE OLD WOOL WAREHOUSE ST ANDREWS STREET SOUTH BURY ST EDMUNDS SUFFOLK IP33 3PH T: 01284 630057 E: info@brit-arch.com W: www.britannia-archaeology.com <small>© Copyright Britannia Archaeology Ltd 2019</small>		
DATE: SEPT 2019	PLOT: A3	VERSION: 1
AUTHOR: MS	FIGURE: 6	
APPROVED: MJB		

W

SITE SECTION 3

E

107.99

1000

1001



DP5-SS1-VIEW N

S

SITE SECTION 4

N

108.09m

1000

1001



DP7-SS1-VIEW W

NGR: 554900 225500 REF: P1281

PROJECT: LAND WEST OF OAK BARN, GREEN STREET, ELSENHAM

DESCRIPTION: TRENCHES 3 & 4 SAMPLE SECTIONS

CLIENT: CHARLES XENAKIS

BRITANNIA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD



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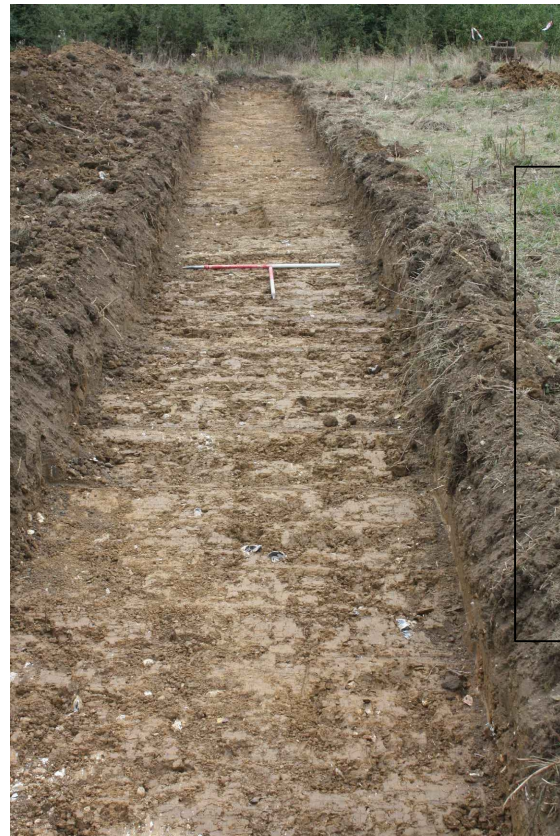
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DATE: SEPT 2019 PLOT: A3 VERSION: 1

AUTHOR: MS

APPROVED: MJB

FIGURE: 7



DP2-TT1 POST- EX-VIEW W



DP3-TT2 POST- EX-VIEW N



DP6-TT3 POST- EX-VIEW W



DP8-TT4 POST- EX-VIEW N

NGR:	554900 225500	REF:	P1281
PROJECT:	LAND WEST OF OAK BARN, GREEN STREET, ELSENHAM		
DESCRIPTION:	TRENCH PHOTOGRAPHS		
CLIENT:	CHARLES XENAKIS		
BRITANNIA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD			
		UNIT 2 THE OLD WOOL WAREHOUSE ST ANDREWS STREET SOUTH BURY ST EDMUNDS SUFFOLK IP33 3PH	
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DATE:	SEPT 2019	PLOT:	A3
		VERSION:	1
AUTHOR:	MS	FIGURE:	8
APPROVED:	MJB		