

2018

Northumberland

Archaeological
Evaluation



LAND NORTHWEST OF WELL HOUSE FARM

Colwell

Northumberland

NGR 396131 574320

Archaeological Evaluation

Project 234-18-HS | November 2018

on behalf of
Suddes and Son

VINDOMORA SOLUTIONS LTD

Archaeological Practice

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Archaeological Evaluation

Land northwest of Well House Farm

Whittington, Colwell
Northumberland

November 2018



VINDOMORA SOLUTIONS LTD
Archaeological Practice

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SUMMARY

Name of location:	Land west of Well House Farm
Address of location:	Well House Farm, Colwell NE46 4HX
NGR:	396131 574320 (Grid Square NY 96 74)
Client:	Mr Richard Suddes
Project Type:	Archaeological Evaluation
Project Code:	WFC-18
Planning Reference:	18/00295/PREAPP
County Council:	Northumberland County Council
County Council Archaeology Officer:	Karen Derham, Assistant County Archaeologist
Report Author:	Tony Liddell
Report Date:	Tuesday, November 13, 2018
Document datestamp:	Tuesday, November 13, 2018
OASIS ID:	vindomor1-333059
Ordnance Survey Licence Ref:	100053142

CONCISE SUMMARY OF REPORT

In Summer 2018 Vindomora Solutions Ltd were approached by Ian Pick Associates Ltd on behalf of their client Mr. Richard Suddes to undertake an archaeological evaluation in advance of a new development on land west of Well House Farm, Colwell, Northumberland. The proposed application will see the construction of a free-range egg unit with associated feed bins, hard-standing and access.

A preliminary assessment of the archaeological potential of the site suggested a high probability of medieval or prehistoric remains within the area. The evaluation requirement to assess the nature and extent of any such remains was undertaken in accordance with paragraph 128 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

No archaeological material was noted within the evaluation scheme. The topsoil overburden was undifferentiated with no visible redundant ploughsoil horizons, suggesting heavy working of the soil down to the natural geology through modern ploughing regimes.

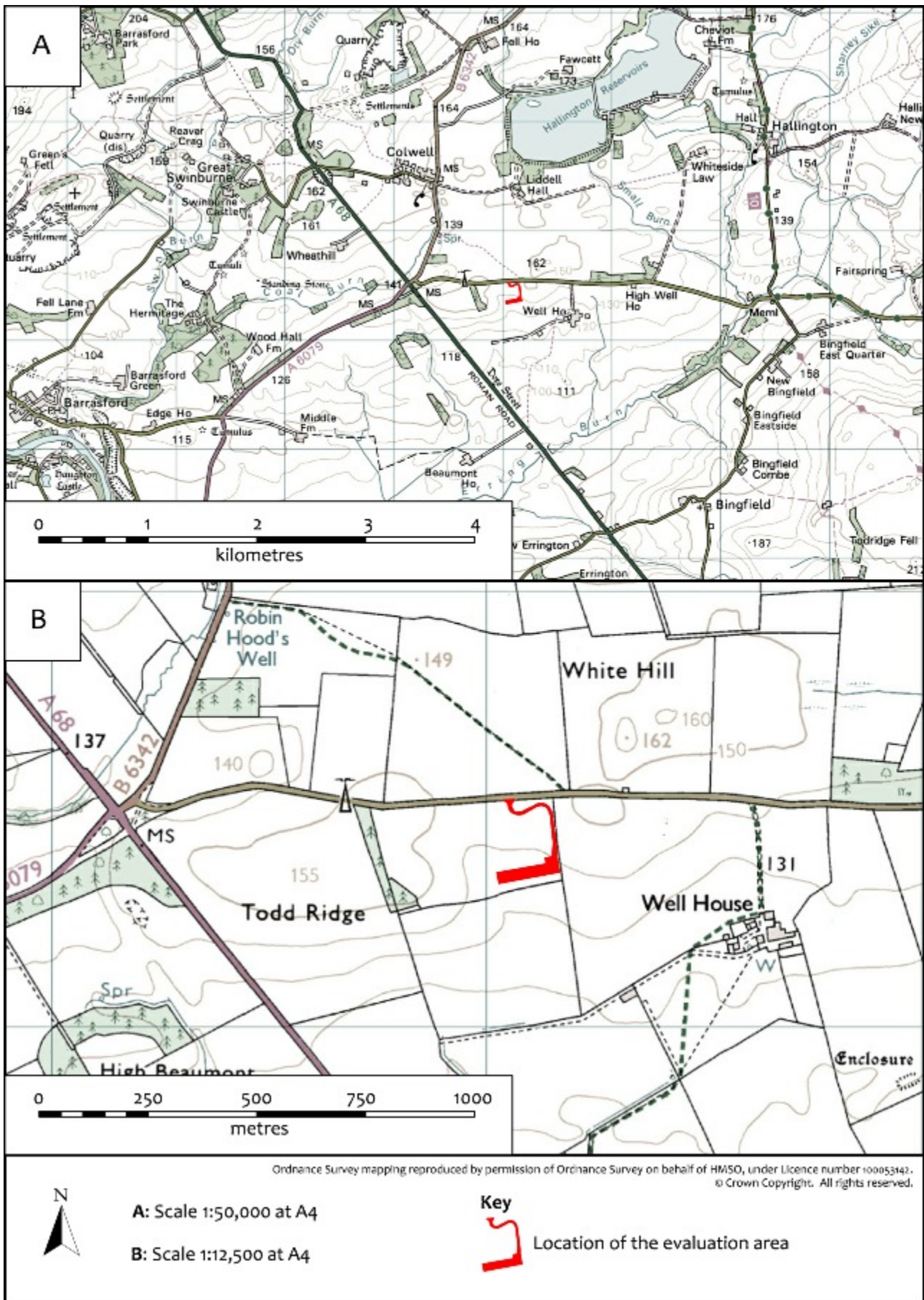


Figure 1. The location of the development area and evaluation, regionally

1. SCOPE OF PROJECT



Plate 1. Aerial image of the site, courtesy of Google Earth Pro 2018. The proposed development area is outlined in red.

1.1 Location

- 1.1.1 The site is located 425m northwest of Well House Farm, Colwell, Northumberland (centred at National Grid Reference 396131 574320). The development is located on the south side of an unnamed road aligned east west between the B6342 south of Colwell and Ryal to the east. The postcode for the site is NE46 4HX.
- 1.1.2 **Geology:** The site is located over the Tyne Limestone Formation, comprising sandstone, siltstones and thin limestones. Over this lies Devensian stage till, comprising clays, sands and gravels (British Geological Survey, 2018).
- 1.1.3 The site lies at 143m OD (Ordnance Datum, height above sea level) at the northern extent of the field, dropping to 137m OD at the southern edge of the development area.

1.2 Circumstances of the project

- 1.2.1 In August 2018 Vindomora Solutions Ltd were approached by Ian Pick Associates Ltd on behalf of their client Mr. Richard Suddes to undertake an archaeological evaluation in advance of a new development west of Well House Farm, Colwell. The proposed application (reference 18/00295/PREAPP) will see the construction of a free-range egg unit with associated feed bins, hard-standing and access.
- 1.2.2 Pre-application advice provided (dated 23rd May 2018) by Karen Derham of the Northumberland County Council Conservation Team identified the need for archaeological evaluation (trenching)

due to the proximity of the site to known Romano-British archaeological remains. The evaluation requirement is in accordance with paragraph 128 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

1.2.3 Vindomora Solutions Ltd were commissioned by the client to undertake the work on September 27th 2018.

1.2.4 Archaeological and historical research objectives are built into developer funded archaeological schemes of work. This is the result of a number of English Heritage national policy frameworks: *Exploring our Past* (1991), *Frameworks for our Past* (1996), *Research Agenda* (1997) and *Policy Statement on Implementation* (1999). The research priorities with potential relevance to this project are set out in *Shared Visions: North East Regional Research Framework for the Historic Environment* (2006), in particular:

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| <i>Prehistoric:</i> | <i>lii.</i> Settlement;
<i>liii.</i> Landscapes;
<i>lv.</i> Material culture. |
| <i>Roman:</i> | <i>Riv.</i> Native and civilian life;
<i>Rv.</i> Roman material culture;
<i>Rix.</i> Landscape and environment. |
| <i>Medieval:</i> | <i>MDi.</i> Settlement;
<i>MDii.</i> Landscape;
<i>MDvii.</i> Artefacts. |

1.3 Written Scheme of Investigation

1.3.1 The Written Scheme of Investigation for this project was produced by Tony Liddell, Principal Archaeologist for Vindomora Solutions Ltd and approved by Karen Derham, Assistant County Archaeologist for Northumberland County Council (WSI Version 1.2, approved on 1st November 2018).

1.4 Timetable of works

1.4.1 The historical background produced in this report was summarised from physical and online sources, which are listed in *Section 5*.

1.4.2 The evaluation was undertaken between the 5th-7th November 2018.

1.4.3 The results of the evaluation were compiled into this report during the week commencing the 12th November 2018.

1.5 Professional standards

1.5.1 The work undertaken was in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (2014) and their *Standard and Guidance for an archaeological evaluation* (2014), as well as in accordance with the British Archaeologists' and Developers' Liaison Group's *Code of Practice* (1988).

1.6 Project personnel

1.6.1 The fieldwork (evaluation) was undertaken by Mick Coates and Jack Coates. The machine and driver were provided by the client. The report and subsequent archive was produced by Tony Liddell.

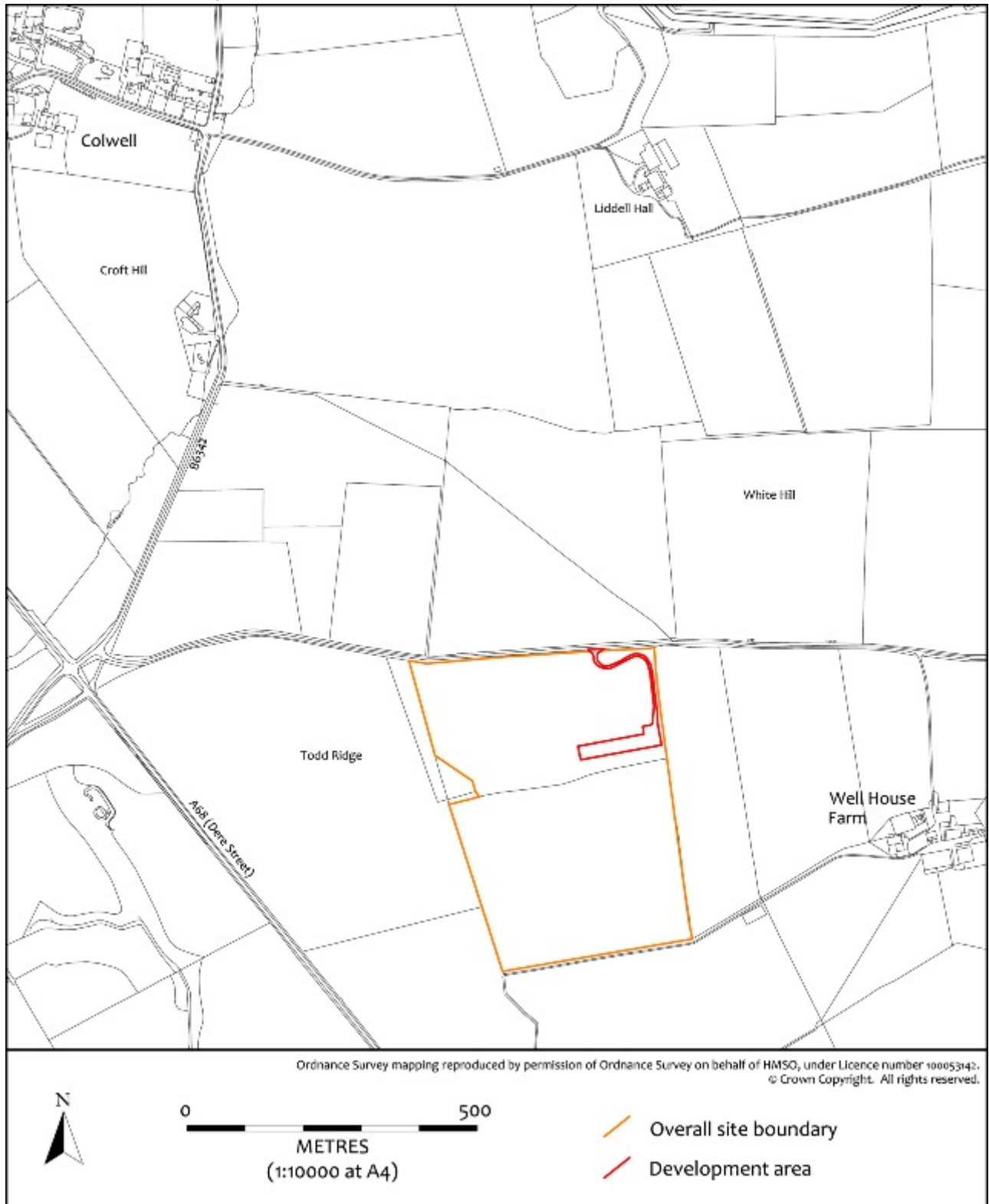
1.7 Health and safety

1.7.1 Standard PPE was utilised for health and safety purposes throughout the fieldwork.

1.8 Archive

- 1.8.1 A full archive has been compiled in line with the specification and current UKIC and English Heritage Guidelines. The project code is **WFC-18** (**Well House Farm, Colwell 2018**). Vindomora Solutions support the **Online Access** to the **Index of Archaeological InvestigationS** project (OASIS). As a result, this report will be made available to the project under the unique identifier **vindomori-333059**.

Figure 2. The development area within the overall site boundary, locally



2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL/HISTORICAL BACKGROUND



Plate 2. Extract from 1897 Ordnance Survey mapping, showing the evaluation area in red.

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 This historical/archaeological background is based primarily upon data from the Northumberland County Council Historic Environment Record (HER) as well as primary and secondary sources.

2.2 Primary archaeological impact

2.2.1 The primary archaeological concern lies with the scheme's potential impact on hitherto unknown archaeological remains lying concealed beneath post-medieval ridge and furrow on the site. This archaeology may belong to a number of periods, as summarised below.

2.2.2 Directly north of the site a worked flint was recovered in 1996, suggesting later prehistoric activity in the area.

2.2.3 West Well House Romano-British Farmstead lies 1km to the southeast of the proposed development. The site is a rectangular earthwork comprising a single rampart with a low internal platform.

2.2.4 The line of Dere Street Roman Road lies 660m to the west of the site beneath what is now the A68. The road runs north from Corbridge passing through Hadrian's Wall at Portgate before heading north to Rochester and Chew Green.

2.2.5 The deserted medieval village of Coldwell lies roughly 540m southeast of the development, essentially beneath the site of the modern Well House Farm. The village dated at least to AD 1296, when two taxpayers were recorded on the Lay Subsidy.

2.3 Previous archaeological works

2.3.1 No previous archaeological works have taken place within the proposed development area.

2.4 Light Detection And Ranging (LIDAR)

2.4.1 Study of current LIDAR data for the site did not show any topographic features within the development area, suggesting that if remains were present there would be a requirement for an archaeological evaluation to ascertain the presence and nature of any material or deposits.

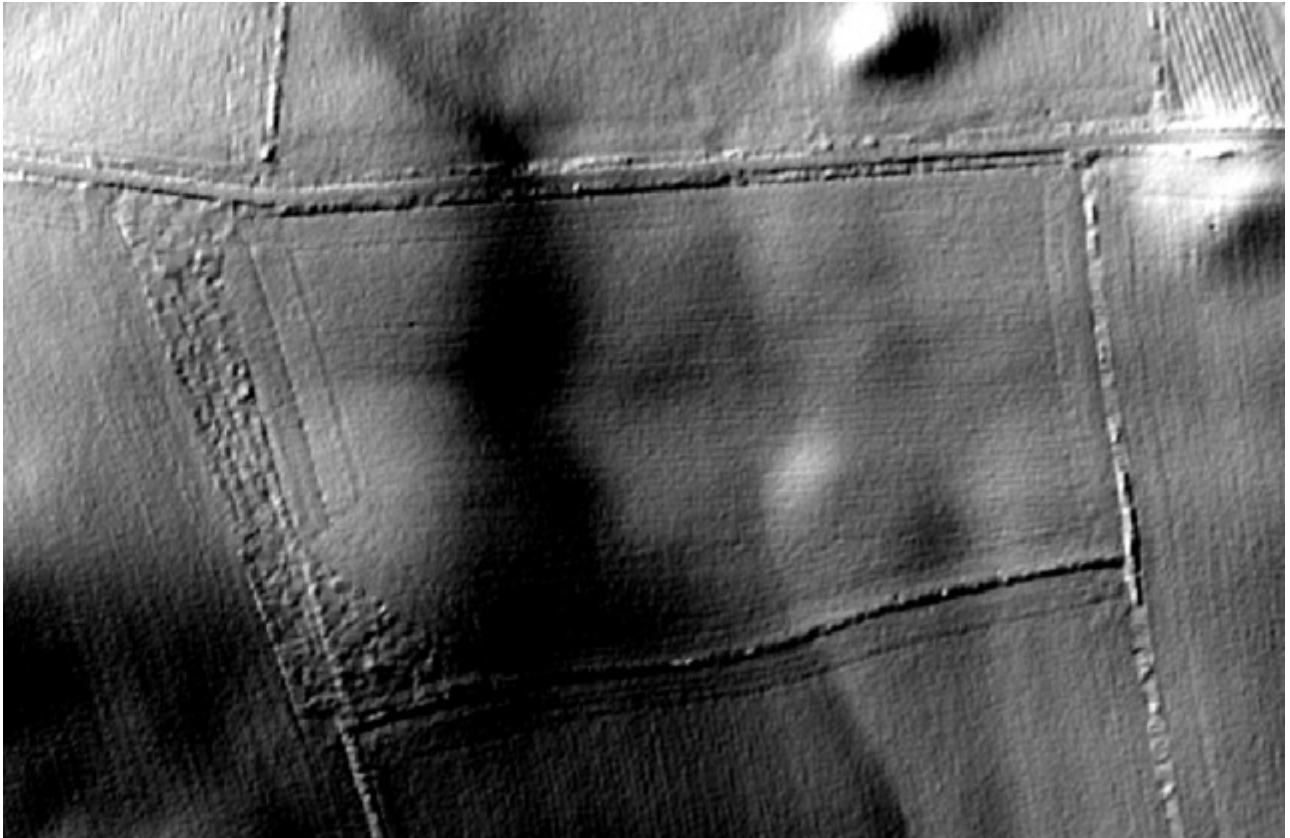


Plate 3. LIDAR imagery of the field subject to the development. Dataset provided by the Environment Agency.

2.5 Archaeological Potential

- 2.5.1 The extent of surviving archaeological remains within the development boundary was unknown, though the density of sites of interest from the prehistoric through to the medieval period within the vicinity of the area suggested that settlement activity belonging to any of these periods could lie beneath the ridge and furrow system.

3. THE EVALUATION

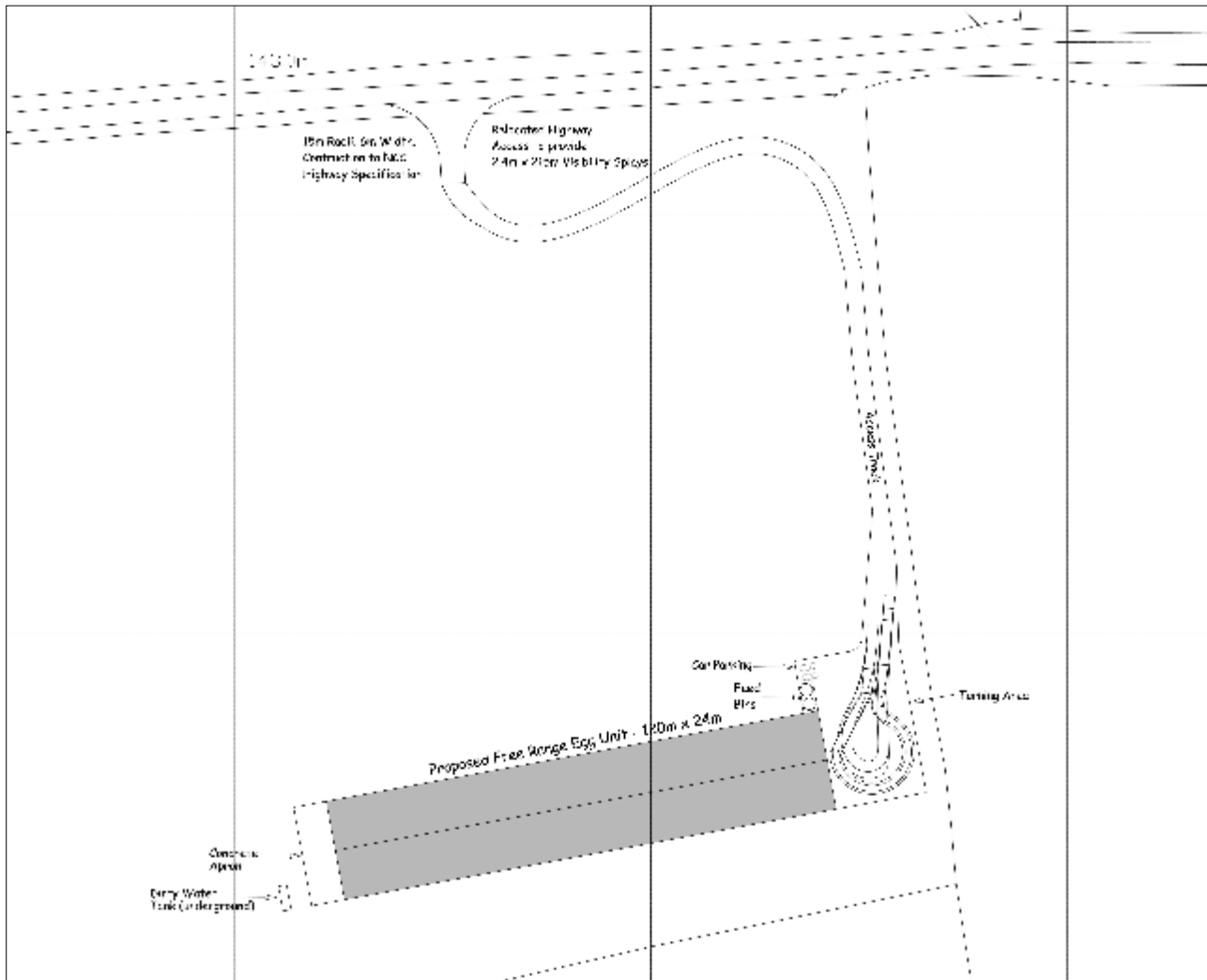


Figure 3. The proposed development, plan provided by Ian Pick Associates.

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 In accordance with the agreed Written Scheme of Investigation, the evaluation involved the excavation of eleven trenches (see Figure 4 for the trench location plan).
- 3.1.2 The trenches were excavated by a mechanical mini-digger under constant archaeological supervision. The trenches were then cleaned by hand and recorded.

3.2 Trenches A-C

- 3.2.1 Trenches A-C were located to evaluate the proposed access track.
- 3.2.2 No differential ploughsoils could be ascertained within the topsoil overburden in these three trenches. Each trench measured 20m long by 1.8m wide.
- 3.2.3 **Trench A:** (Plate 4) Aligned northwest-southeast, the topsoil measured between 0.4 and 0.45m deep with mid yellow-brown compact clay geology beneath.
- 3.2.4 **Trench B:** (Plate 5) Aligned northwest-southeast, the topsoil measured an average of 0.40m deep with dark brown compact clay with patches of gravel and small sandstone fragments (natural) beneath.

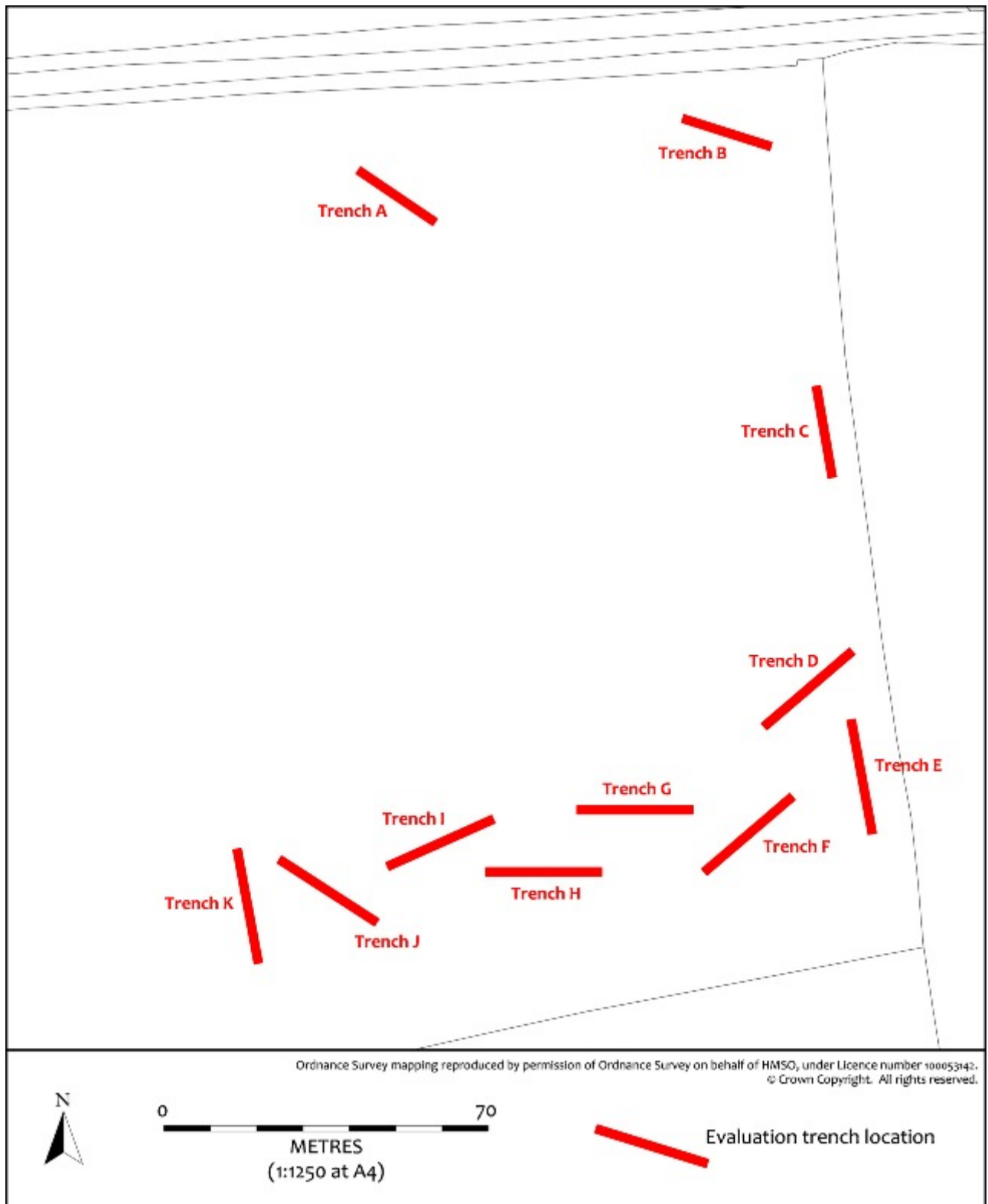


Figure 4. Trench location plan

- 3.2.5 **Trench C:** (Plate 6) Aligned approximately north-south, the topsoil measured an average of 0.50m deep with dark brown compact clay with patches of gravel and small sandstone fragments (natural) beneath. A modern plastic service pipe (water) was observed crossing the trench on an east-west alignment 7.5m from the northeastern corner of Trench C.
- 3.2.6 **No archaeological material was observed within the evaluation of the proposed access track.**

3.3 Trenches D-E

3.3.1 Trenches D-E were located to evaluate the proposed hard standing area.

3.3.2 No differential ploughsoils could be ascertained within the topsoil overburden in these two trenches. Each trench measured 25m long by 1.8m wide.

3.3.3 **Trench D:** (Plate 7) Aligned northeast-southwest, the topsoil measured between 0.55 and 0.6m deep with dark brown compact clay with patches of gravel, brown-orange clay and small sandstone fragments (natural) beneath.

3.3.4 **Trench E:** (Plate 8) Aligned approximately north-south, the topsoil measured an average of 0.5m deep with dark brown compact clay with patches of gravel, brown-orange clay and small sandstone fragments (natural) beneath.

3.3.5 **No archaeological material was observed within the evaluation of the proposed hard-standing area.**

3.4 Trenches F-K

3.4.1 Trenches F-K were located to evaluate the proposed free-range egg unit.

3.4.2 No differential ploughsoils could be ascertained within the topsoil overburden in these six trenches. Each trench measured 25m long by 1.8m wide.

3.4.3 **Trench F:** (Plate 9) Aligned northeast-southwest, the topsoil measured between 0.35 and 0.4m deep with mid yellow-brown compact clay (natural) beneath.

3.4.4 **Trench G:** (Plate 10) Aligned east-west, the topsoil measured an average of 1m deep in its western extent and only 0.35m deep on its eastern extent. Beneath the topsoil was mixed geology consisting of mid yellow-brown compact clay on its eastern side with dark brown compact clay with patches of gravel, brown-orange clay and small sandstone fragments to the west.

3.4.5 **Trench H:** (Plate 11) Aligned east-west, the topsoil measured between 0.7 and 1.2m deep with banded natural consisting of grey-brown silty clay, orange-brown clay and gravels beneath.

3.4.6 **Trench I:** (Plate 12) Aligned northeast-southwest, the topsoil measured between 0.45 and 1.2m deep with banded natural consisting of grey-brown silty clay, orange-brown clay and gravels beneath.

3.4.7 **Trench J:** (Plate 13) Aligned northwest-southeast, the topsoil measured between 1m and 1.1m deep with banded natural consisting of grey-brown silty clay, dark brown compact clay and gravels beneath.

3.4.8 **Trench K:** (Plate 14) Aligned northwest-southeast, the topsoil measured an average of 0.4m deep with mid yellow-brown compact clay (natural) beneath.

3.4.9 **No archaeological material was observed within the evaluation of the proposed building.**

3.5 Observations on the archaeology

3.5.1 No archaeological deposits, artefacts or structures were observed in any of the trenches.



Plate 4. Trench A, looking southeast.

Plate 5. Trench B, looking northwest.





Plate 6. Trench C, looking north.

Plate 7. Trench D, looking northeast.





Plate 8. Trench E, looking north.

Plate 9. Trench F, looking southwest.





Plate 10. Trench G, looking west.

Plate 11. Trench H, looking east.





Plate 12. Trench I, looking northeast.

Plate 13. Trench J, looking southeast.





Plate 14. Trench K, looking south.

4. OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

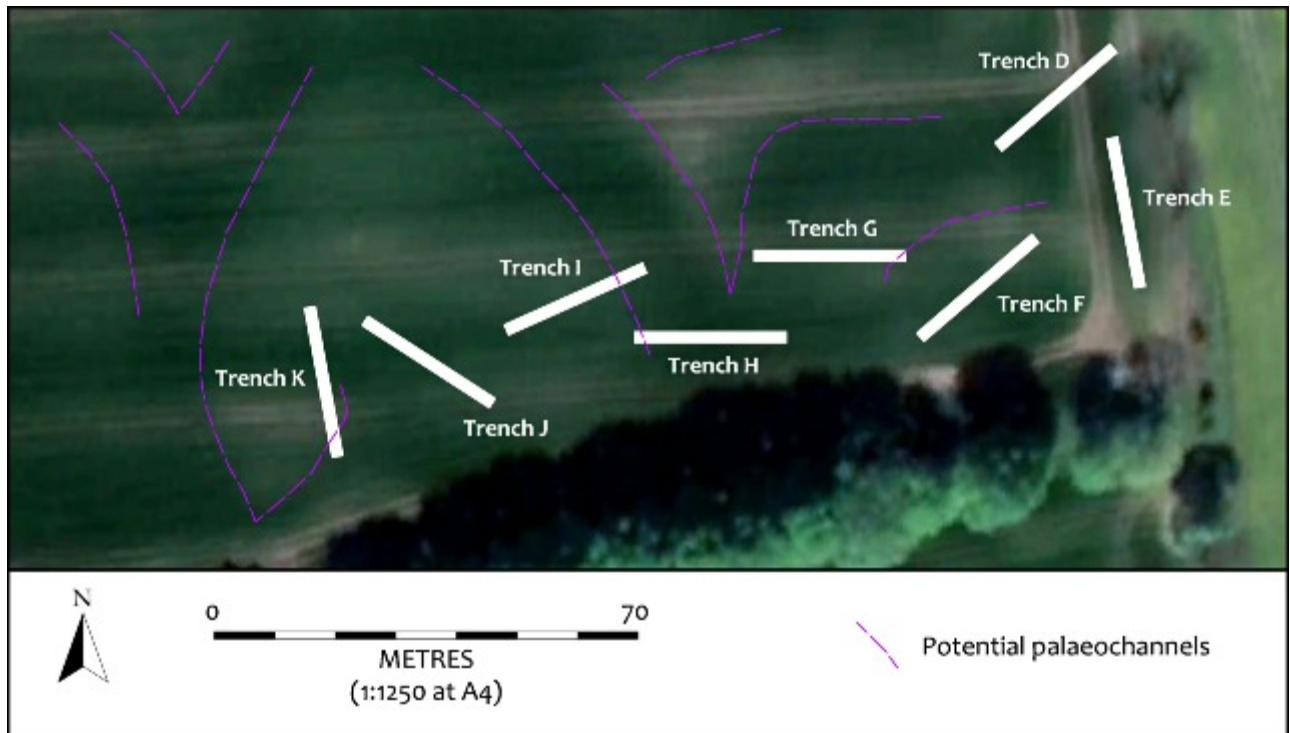


Figure 5. The southern trenches over potential palaeochannels.

4.1 Observations

- 4.1.1 No archaeological material was noted within the evaluation trenches. The topsoil overburden was undifferentiated with no visible redundant ploughsoil horizons, suggesting heavy working of the soil down to the natural geology.
- 4.1.2 The upper geological horizon was observed to be mixed with banded clays with patches of gravel, fragmented sandstone and the occasional small boulder as is standard with the expected glacial till.
- 4.1.3 The field was noted to drop over 6m from the north to the south boundaries, with the area comprising trenches G - J likely positioned over palaeochannels.

4.2 Recommendations

- 4.2.1 As no evidence of archaeological material, either in-situ or background was noted in the evaluation, it would be recommended that no further archaeological mitigation is required for this current planning application.

5. REPOSITORIES AND SOURCES

5.1 Repositories

- Beamish Museum People's Collection.** Online at <http://collections.beamish.org.uk/>
- Britain from Above Project.** Online at <http://www.britainfromabove.org.uk/>
- British Library.** Online at <http://www.bl.uk/>
- British Geological Survey.** Online at <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/discoveringGeology/geologyOfBritain/viewer.html>
- Durham Record Office.** County Hall, Durham DH1 5UL
- Historic England Archive.** Online at <http://archive.historicengland.org.uk>
- Keys to the Past.** Online at <http://www.keystothepast.info>
- Newcastle City Library.** Local studies section, Princess Square, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE99 1DX
- PastScape Project.** Online at <http://www.pastscape.org.uk/default.aspx>
- Portable Antiquities Scheme.** Online at <https://finds.org.uk/>
- Tyne and Wear Archives.** Blandford House, Blandford Square, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 4JA
- ViewFinder Project.** Online at <http://viewfinder.english-heritage.org.uk/>
- Vindomora Solutions Ltd Archive.** Prospect House, Prospect Business Park, Leadgate, Consett, County Durham DH8 7PW

5.2 Sources

- CIfA (2010) *Code of Conduct*. Institute for Archaeologists
- CIfA (2014) *Standard and guidance for archaeological evaluations*. Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.
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