



**Archaeological trial trench evaluation  
on land at Rayne Road  
Braintree, Essex  
June to July 2015**

Report No. 15/153

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Mo Muldowney

Illustrator: James Ladocha



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**OASIS REPORT FORM**

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		<b>OASIS No: molarnort1 – 221642</b>
Project name	Trial trench evaluation on land at Rayne Road, Braintree, Essex	
Short description (250 words maximum)	MOLA Northampton was commissioned by Manor Oak Homes to carry out archaeological trial trenching and geoarchaeological assessment on a proposed development site at Rayne Road, Braintree, Essex. Prehistoric activity consisted of a posthole containing Bronze Age to Iron Age pottery. Evidence for a Roman presence was very tenuous, amounting to only two stray fragments of Roman roof tile. There was more substantive evidence for medieval activity, represented by a cluster of ditches and pits containing pottery of broadly 11th to 13th century date. Elsewhere on the site a sparse distribution of undated ditches and pits was observed. The geoarchaeological investigation identified generally thin and insubstantial layers of Pleistocene sediment overlying the London Clay, with one deeper pocket of head on the upslope part of the site. An area of made-ground was also identified in the south-west of the site.	
Project type (eg DBA, evaluation etc)	Trial trench evaluation	
Site status (none, NT, SAM etc)	None	
Previous work (SMR numbers etc)	None	
Current Land use	Pasture	
Future work (yes, no, unknown)	Unknown	
Monument type/ period	Pits: prehistoric; ditches and pits: medieval; ditches and deposits: post-medieval	
Significant finds (artefact type and period)	Pottery; prehistoric and medieval, fired clay	
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>		
County	Essex	
Site address (including postcode)	Rayne Road, Braintree, Essex	
Study area (sq.m or ha)	5.7ha	
OS Easting & Northing (use grid sq. letter code)	TL 741 230	
Height OD	50m to 64m	
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>		
Organisation	MOLA Northampton	
Project brief originator	Essex County Council	
Project Design originator	MOLA Northampton	
Director/Supervisor	Jonathan Elston	
Project Manager	Mo Muldowney	
Sponsor or funding body	Manor Oak Homes	
<b>PROJECT DATE</b>		
Start date/End date	29.06.2015 to 12.07.2015	
<b>ARCHIVES</b>	<b>Location (Accession no.)</b>	<b>Content (eg pottery, animal bone etc)</b>
Physical	Braintree Museum BTRR15	Pottery, fired clay
Paper		Site file, plan and section drawings, maps
Digital		Mapinfo plans, Word report
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>		
Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (MOLA report)		
Title	Archaeological evaluation on land at Rayne Road, Braintree, Essex June to July 2015	
Serial title & volume	15/153	
Author(s)	John Walford & Mo Muldowney	
Page numbers	45	
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# Archaeological trial trench evaluation on land at Rayne Road, Braintree, Essex June to July 2015

## *Abstract*

*MOLA Northampton was commissioned by Manor Oak Homes to carry out archaeological trial trenching and geoarchaeological assessment on a proposed development site at Rayne Road, Braintree, Essex. Prehistoric activity consisted of a posthole containing Bronze Age to Iron Age pottery. Evidence for a Roman presence was very tenuous, amounting to only two stray fragments of Roman roof tile. There was more substantive evidence for medieval activity, represented by a cluster of ditches and pits containing pottery of broadly 11th to 13th century date. Elsewhere on the site a sparse distribution of undated ditches and pits was observed. The geoarchaeological investigation identified generally thin and insubstantial layers of Pleistocene sediment overlying the London Clay, with one deeper pocket of head on the upslope part of the site. An area of made-ground was also identified in the south-west of the site.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

MOLA Northampton was commissioned by Manor Oak Homes to carry out archaeological trial trenching on a proposed development site at Rayne Road, Braintree, Essex (NGR TL 741 230; Fig 1). The work was required in accordance with *The National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012). The scope of works was outlined in a brief issued by Teresa O'Connor of Essex County Council (O'Connor 2015) and detailed in Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by MOLA Northampton (MOLA 2015). The fieldwork took place in June and July 2015.

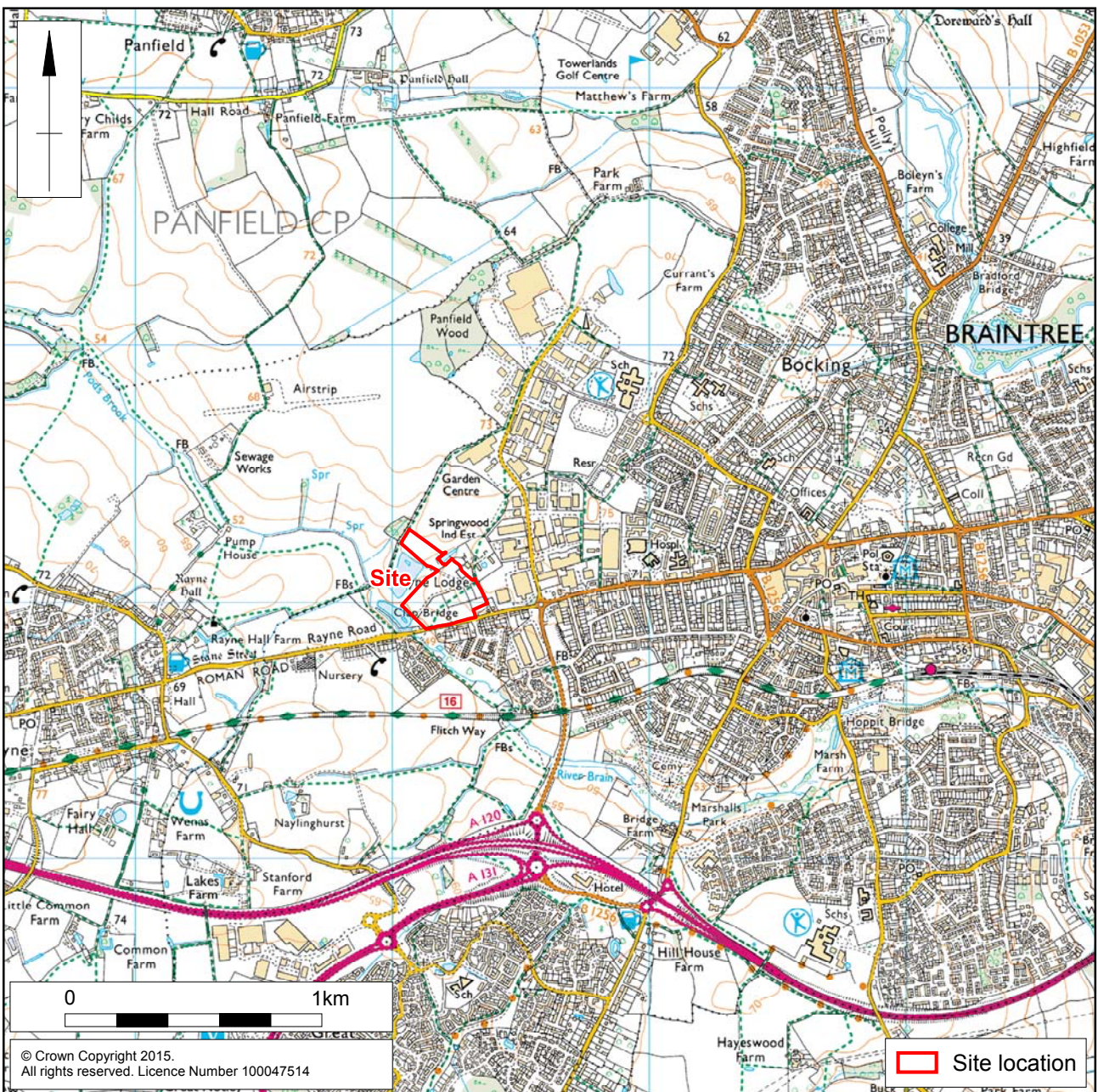
## **2 BACKGROUND**

### **2.1 Location, topography and geology**

The proposed development site comprises c5.7ha of pasture fields and horse paddocks on the western edge of Braintree, to the north of Rayne Road and the west of Springwood Industrial Estate (Fig 1). To the west it is bounded by three small fishing lakes, collectively known as Rayne Lodge Fishery.

The proposed development site stands on a moderate west-facing slope which rises from c49.5m above Ordnance Datum in the south-west to c64.5m aOD on the eastern edge of the site. Pods Brook, the principal tributary of the River Brain, flows south-eastwards along the foot of this slope, approximately 50m beyond the western end of the site.

The London Clay bedrock of the proposed development site is, according to the British Geological Survey, largely overlain by Pleistocene Head deposits. Lowestoft Formation till, dating from the Anglian glaciation, blankets much of the surrounding landscape and small pockets of pre-Anglian Kesgrave Formation gravels are reportedly also present in the vicinity (BGS 2015). Antiquarian records note the discovery of Palaeolithic implements and Pleistocene faunal remains in a gravel pit c 300m south-east of the proposed development site but geoarchaeological investigations undertaken as part of the present scheme of works (see Section 3.1, below) did not encounter any fossiliferous gravels.



Scale 1:25,000

Site location Fig 1



## 2.2 Historical and archaeological background

The Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) shows that a number of historic assets exist within and near to the proposed development site (Fig 2). The most directly relevant are the Roman road between Colchester, Braintree and Braughing which ran on or close to the southern boundary of the site, along the present line of Rayne Road (EHER6502), and an earthwork feature of unknown date and function which projects into the south-western corner of the site (EHER14172).

The earthwork (Fig 2) was first identified through inspection of a low level vertical aerial photograph taken in 1948. It has been plotted as a linear bank along the eastern side of Pods Brook, with five perpendicular offshoots between 20m and 50m long. The southernmost offshoot extends into the proposed development site and is aligned roughly parallel to Rayne Road and the presumed line of the earlier Roman road, with which it may have been associated.

Widespread and abundant archaeological remains have been recorded from the area surrounding the proposed development site. Undated earthworks and cropmarks are known from the fields to the west and north of the site (EHER6514, EHER6519, EHER6520, EHER6531) and there are many records of prehistoric, Roman and later sites and finds, as detailed below.

The earliest archaeological remains known from the vicinity are Palaeolithic flint tools and Pleistocene faunal remains, including bones and teeth of elephant and horse, which were uncovered in 1947 in Hunnable's gravel pit, c330m south-west of the proposed development site (EHER6318). More recent worked flints include a Mesolithic tranchet axe found in western Braintree (EHER18737), Mesolithic to Neolithic worked flints uncovered during excavation to the rear of 305, Rayne Road (EHER46897). Other Neolithic finds include a piece from a polished Neolithic greenstone axe (EHER6206), a stone hammer (EHER6213), and an early Neolithic to late Bronze Age ovoid, quartzite macehead found at Braintree Mill in c1902 (EHER6230).

Bronze Age activity in Braintree was more significant, with evidence including a furnace and metalworking site (EHER6227) possibly associated with several socketed axes (EHER6224, EHER6226, EHER6228, EHER51037, EHER6228), as well as a looped palstave (EHER6223) and a bronze dagger (EHER6229), all found before the 20th century. Further metal working debris which might date from this period was discovered to the north-west of the proposed development site (EHER6467). Sherds of Bronze Age pottery (EHER6207, EHER6208) have also been found in this area. Into the Iron Age, cremation urns (EHER6195, EHER6222) and a gold stater (EHER6198) were all found historically in western Braintree, and Iron Age pottery recovered during trial excavations in 1976 (EHER6351). Late Iron Age to Roman pits and ditches and a metalled roadway were uncovered during excavations 800m to the east of the proposed development site (EHER8249).

The Roman road which passes the site to the south (EHER6502) was known as Stane Street from as early as 1181 until the mid-20th century. As well as the Roman road, several other Roman period features and finds are known from the vicinity. Two cremations and four small Romano-British vessels were reportedly discovered in the west of Braintree (EHER6193, EHER6197). Pieces from several Roman shoes and other material were discovered at the top of Panfield Lane near the former work house (EHER6218). Trial excavations in 1976 after the demolition of 19th-century buildings on Rayne Road produced small quantities of Roman pottery and heavily disturbed probable Romano-British occupation (EHER6352). Further than 1km east of the proposed development site a small Roman town has been identified along Stane Street, and another small settlement and possible villa were also located along this road to the west (EHER9014).

No Saxon features or material is known from the vicinity. Late 12th or 13th-century pottery was found at Naylinghurst to the south in 1973 on a site hypothesised as a moated manor house, although this is considered to be unlikely (EHER6453). A late medieval manor house with 17th-century expansion is known from Rayne Hall to the west of the site (EHER18266, 7). Other medieval evidence from the area includes findspots of coins (EHER6203) and pottery (EHER6517, 6518, 6452), as well as boundary ditches (EHER6536, EHER18319). The Church of All Saints retains a late 15th or early 16th-century tower (EHER6515).

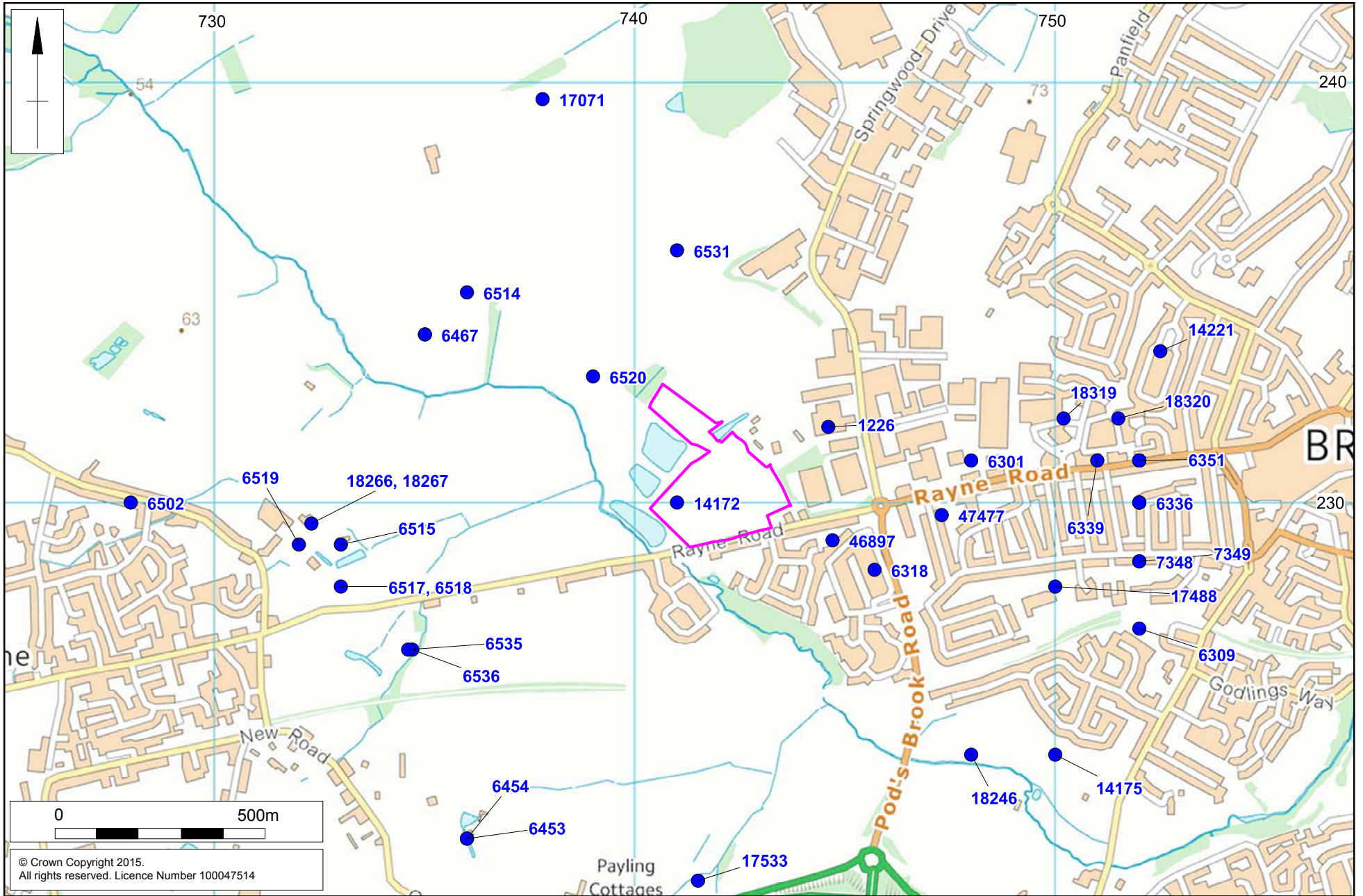
A number of post-medieval structures or sites stand within a 1km radius of the development site. These include the site of the former watermill (EHER6301), former windmill (EHER47477), house plot boundaries visible as cropmarks (EHER14221), and a gravel pit (EHER6354).

The historic Ordnance Survey (OS) maps of the proposed development site show that although the layout of the encompassed fields has changed only slightly in the last 140 years the immediate surroundings have seen the construction of fishing lakes and the encroachment of suburban development. The OS map of 1875 shows that the main field divisions and the track leading south-west across the site were already established by this time and that a sinuous north-west by south-east field boundary lined with trees crossed the south-western part of the site. This latter boundary is no longer extant. The 1921 OS map marks two additional features within the site; a windpump and a well, both on the boundary between the north and south field, approximately in the area of the three small ponds at Rayne Lodge (see Fig 3). Modern housing development to the south of Rayne Road is first apparent on the 1953 map. The fishery lakes are thought to date from around the early 1990s, and do not appear on any available historic map.

Scale 1:12,500 (A4)

Historic Environment Record (HER) data

Fig 2



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### 3 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Objectives

The primary objective of the work was to determine the presence or absence of archaeological remains within the proposed development site, thus facilitating the design of a strategy to mitigate the archaeological impact of the proposed development. More specific aims were to establish:

- the date, nature, significance and extent of activity or occupation in the development site;
- the relationship of any remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscapes;
- the potential for the recovery of artefacts to assist in the development of type series within the region;
- the potential for palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions;
- the impact of the proposed works upon any surviving archaeological remains.

The regional research agendas for the eastern counties set out in Glazebrook (1997), Brown and Glazebrook (2000), and Medlycott (2011) were considered during the course of planning this evaluation.

#### 3.2 Methodology

The WSI for the project envisioned the excavation of 36 trial trenches but three of these (Trenches 8, 9 and 32) could not be excavated due to difficulties with livestock and other obstructions. Some other trenches had to be slightly re-positioned for similar reasons (Fig 3).

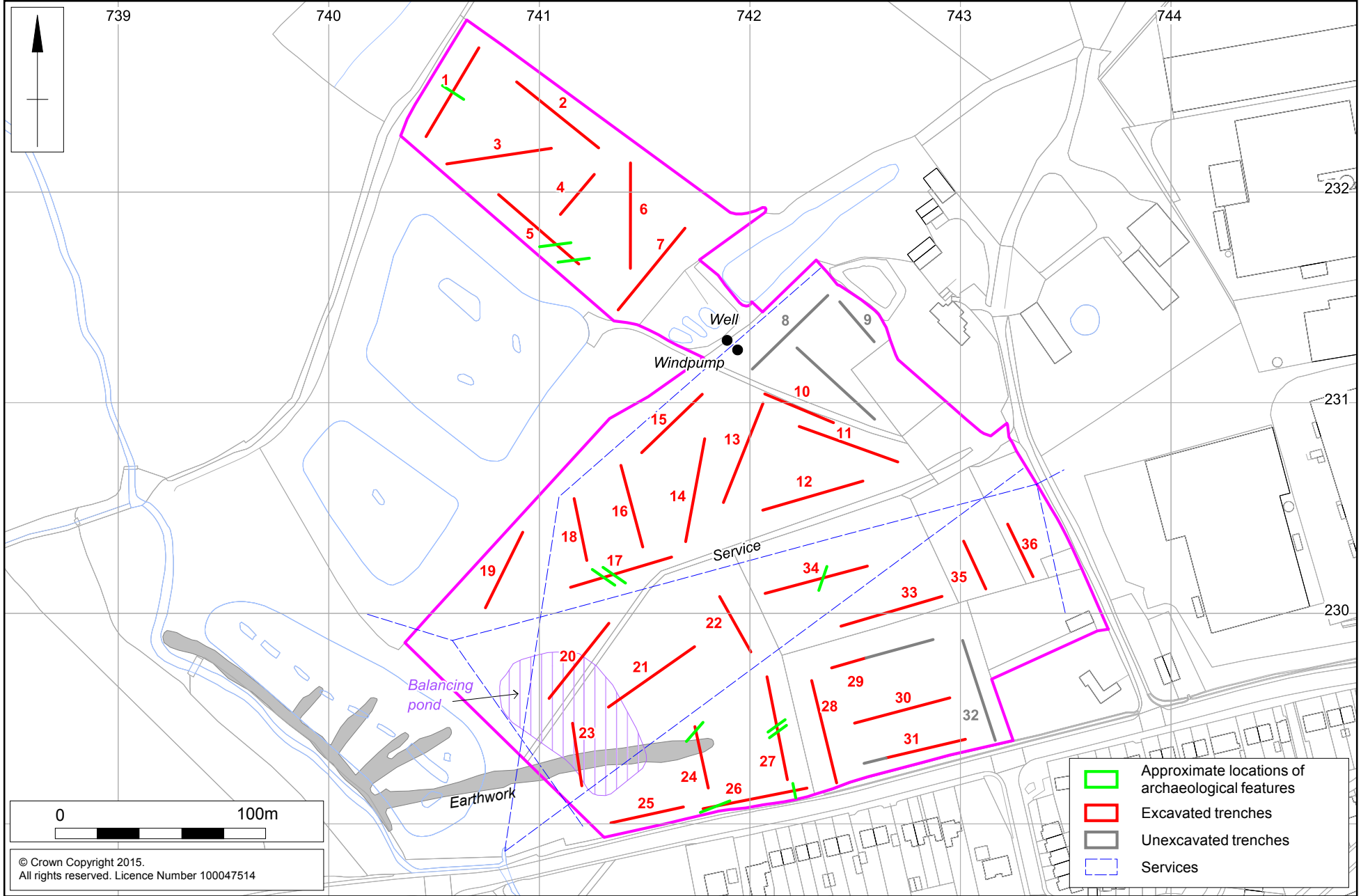
All the trenches were set out with a Leica Viva GPS and excavated under constant archaeological supervision by a 13 ton 360° tracked mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. Topsoil, subsoil and any modern overburden were removed sequentially and stored in separate stockpiles adjacent to each trench. The spoil heaps and features were scanned with a metal detector to ensure maximum finds retrieval.

Sondages were mechanically excavated to exposes sections through the natural geology in trenches 11, 21 and 23. These sondages were inspected by a geoarchaeologist to determine the nature of the geological strata and their potential to contain significant Pleistocene remains (Appendix 2).

Cleaning of exposed surfaces, hand excavation and recording was carried out in accordance with the methodology set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation (MOLA 2015) and in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance: Archaeological Field Evaluation* (CIfA 2014a) and *Code of Conduct* (2014b).

Following the completion of the work the trenches were backfilled and lightly compacted with the excavated material.

Scale 1:2500 (A4)



The excavated trenches Fig 3

## 4 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

### 4.1 General stratigraphy

The natural geology exposed in the trenches was somewhat variable but generally comprised gravels in an orange or orange-brown sandy matrix. Clay pockets were occasionally observed. Sondages in Trenches 21 and 23 showed that the sandy gravels comprised little more than a thin wash of material (c0.3m) overlying stiff orange London Clay. Another sondage in Trench 11 penetrated a 2m deep layer of weathered orange sandy clays with moderate gravel content which became increasingly clayey with depth. This was interpreted as a localised pocket of Head. A spring line was observed in Trench 15 and another was inferred from the presence of a patch of wet, gleyed sediment in Trench 27.

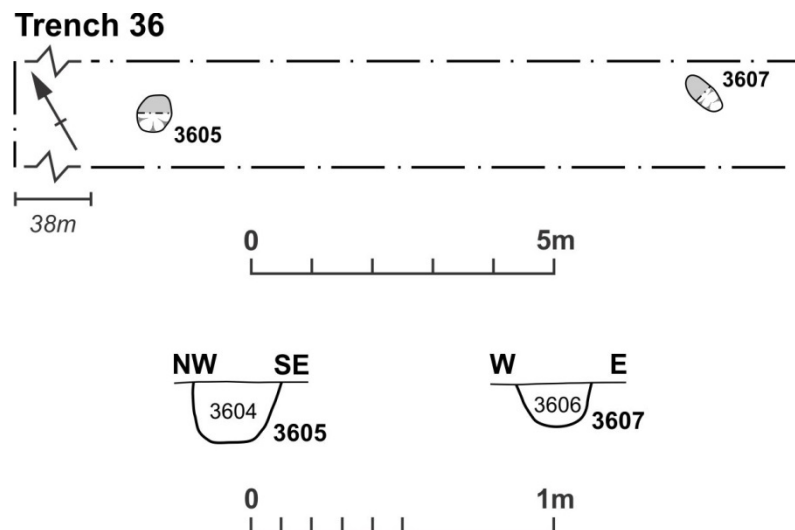
The subsoil was between 0.15m and 0.30m thick and comprised mid to light grey sandy silt with frequent small stones. It was overlain by 0.15m to 0.30m thick topsoil comprising light grey-brown sandy silt with occasional small stones.

Archaeological features, comprising ditches, pits and postholes, were identified in Trenches 1, 5, 17, 18, 24, 26 to 28, 33, 34 and 36. The remainder of the trenches were blank or contained modern services and root disturbance. Ridge and furrow was not observed in any trench.

Made ground, apparently of little antiquity, was observed in a few trenches at the south-western end of the site.

### 4.2 Prehistoric pit

Pit [3605] was located approximately 11m from the south-east end of Trench 36 (Fig 4). It was sub-rectangular in plan and was 0.45m long by 0.3m wide and 0.2m deep. It had steep, near vertical sides and a flat base.



Prehistoric pits [3605] and [3607], Trench 36 Fig 4

Two sherds of pottery were recovered from the fill (3604), and a further six (weight 4g) were recovered from Sample 3, but all are insufficiently diagnostic to date more closely than between the Bronze Age and Iron Age. Although undated, pit [3607] may also be prehistoric based on proximity and similarity. It was sub-circular in plan, with a U-shaped profile and was 0.45m long by 0.3m wide and 0.2m deep.

### 4.3 Medieval ditches, pit and posthole

A small number of features were dated to the medieval period and comprised four ditches, three pits and a posthole. These features were located on the south-central edge of the development area in trenches 26, 27 and 28, as well as to the north of the site in Trench 5 (Figs 3 & 5).

Ditch [2606], aligned north to south, was located 5.6m from the east end of Trench 26. It was 2m wide by 0.3m deep and had steep, gradually sloping sides and a flat base (Fig 5, section 23). Eight sherds of pottery were recovered that indicate the ditch was in-filled from the 12th century.

Ditches [2705] and [2707], aligned east to west, were located 4m to 6m from the south end of Trench 27. The ditches were parallel and set approximately 0.3m apart. They had similar profiles, with a steep, near vertical south side and a convex more gently sloping north edge (Fig 5, section 4). Both bases were flat. Pottery was recovered from fill (2704) and Sample 2 of ditch [2705] and comprised five sherds of early 11th century wares. Ditch [2707] was undated but thought to be broadly contemporary with ditch [2705].

Pit [2810] was located 22m from the north end of Trench 28. It was sub-circular in plan and was at least 1m long and 0.6m wide by 0.4m deep. It had an irregular, V-shaped profile (Fig 5, section 8). The pottery recovered from fill (2809) spot-dated the pit to the late 12th century. The north-west side of pit [2810] was truncated by pit [2812], which was sub-circular in plan and 1m long by 0.9m wide and 0.3m deep.

Pit [2812] had a regular U-shaped profile with an undulating base and the fill (2811) contained two sherds of medieval pottery as well as a Roman *tegula* roof tile sherd and a fragment of animal tooth. The six pottery sherds recovered from the fill and Sample 1 indicate the feature was in use from the late 12th century.

Posthole [2808] was located 19.5m from the north end of Trench 28. It was circular in plan and 0.5m in diameter by 0.42m deep. It had steep, near vertical sides and a slightly concave base. A sherd of 12th to 14th century pottery and a flint flake (SF2) were recovered from the upper fill (2806).

Two additional features may also date to the medieval period, although the dating evidence recovered was not as conclusive as the above described features. They comprised a ditch and a pit, both identified in Trench 5.

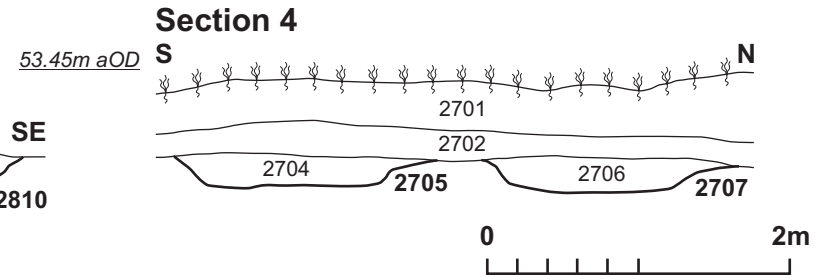
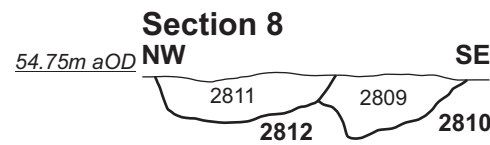
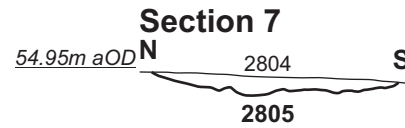
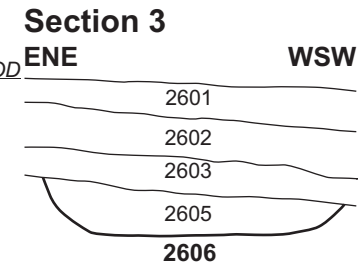
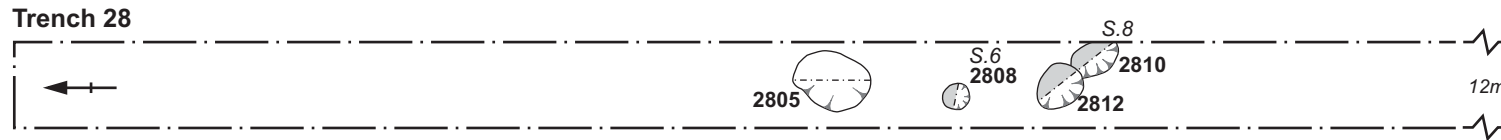
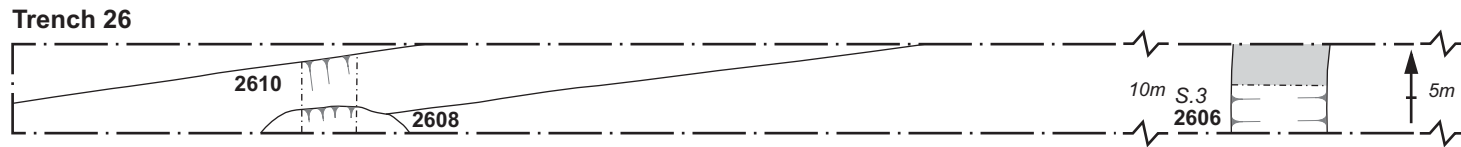
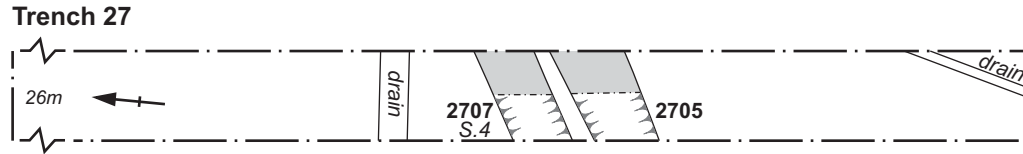
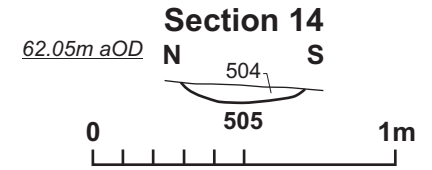
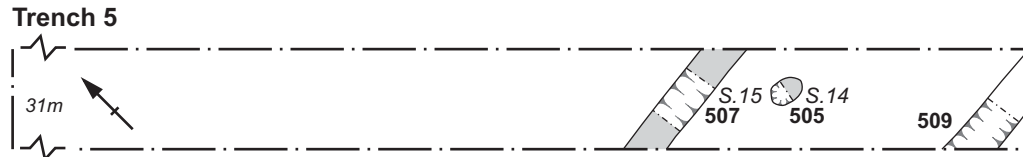
Ditch [507], aligned east to west, was located 7m from the south-east end of the trench. It had a V-shaped, asymmetrical profile with slightly concave base and was 0.6m wide by 0.07m deep. A small number of medieval or post-medieval tile fragments were recovered from the fill (506) as well as a single small fragment of residual Roman tile.

Pit [505] was located 1m south-east from ditch [507] and was oval in plan (Fig 5, section 14). It had a shallow profile, 0.4m wide by 0.06m deep and a small number of sherds of medieval or post-medieval roof tile were recovered from the fill (504).

### 4.4 Post-medieval ditch and deposits

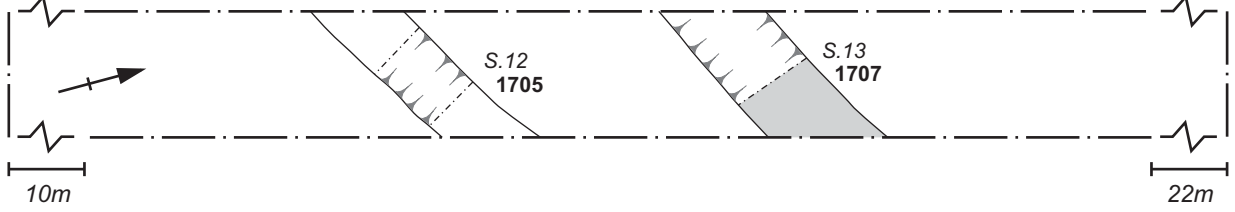
These features comprised a ditch and a series of made-ground layers, identified in Trench 17 and Trench 20.

Ditch [1707] had an asymmetrical v-shaped profile with flat base and was 1.4m wide by 0.3m deep. Unlike parallel ditch [1705] (see below), it was overlain by topsoil and cut through the subsoil.

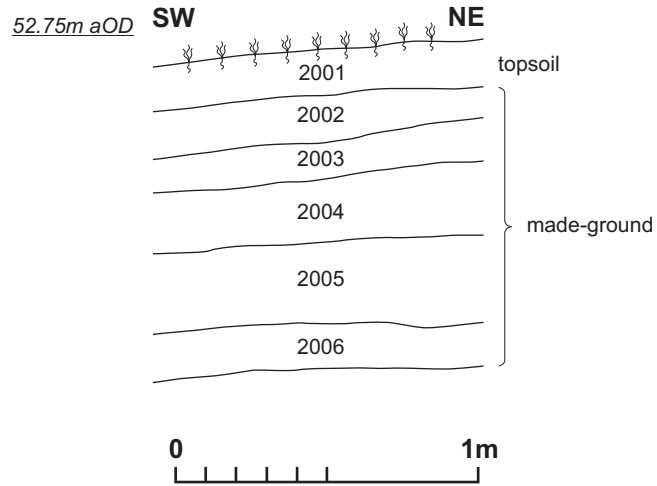




### Trench 17



### Section 11



In Trench 20, five gravelly make up deposits were identified (Fig 6, section 11). They were noted stretching for 40m of the length of the trench, filling and levelling a formerly undulating surface.

Together, the deposits varied in depth from 0.3m to 1.2m thick and from the lower two deposits (2005) and (2206) five fragments of medieval or post-medieval roof tile were recovered. Similar deposits were also noted in Trench 19, 22, 25 and 26. Deposit (1902) was up to 0.25m thick, whilst deposits (2203) and (2204) were in total 0.5mm thick. A small quantity of tile and brick was recovered from deposit (2204). Although deposits (2502) and (2602) were undated they were similar in character to those in Trench 20 and 22 and are likely to have been contemporary.

#### **4.5 Undated features**

Eight other features were identified across the site in Trenches 1, 5, 17, 18, 24, 26 and 34 (Fig 7). They consisted of seven ditches and one pit/posthole and were all undated, although one contained a residual flint flake.

##### ***Ditches***

The terminal of ditch [107], aligned south-east to north-west, was located 20m from the south-west end of Trench 1. It had a V-shaped profile with concave sides and a slightly concave base and was 0.4m wide by 0.12m deep (Fig 7, section 18).

Ditch [509], aligned east to west, was located at the south-east end of Trench 5. It had a V-shaped profile with flat base and was 0.8m wide by 0.16m deep (Fig 7, section 16).

Ditches [1705], aligned north-west to south-east was identified in Trench 17, 14m from the south-west end (Fig 6). It had a V-shaped profile with a concave base and was 1.15m wide by 0.35m deep.

Ditch [2405], aligned north-east to south-west was located 4m from the north end of Trench 24. It had concave sides and a flat base and was 0.8m wide by 0.16m deep (Fig 7, section 5). A broken Neolithic flint flake (SF1) was recovered from fill (2404), but probably indicates background prehistoric activity rather than date of use of the feature

Ditch [2610], aligned approximately east to west, was located at the west end of the trench (Fig 5). It had an uneven, shallow V-shaped profile and was 1.4m wide by 0.27m deep. It had been cut or disturbed by root damage on its south side.

Ditch [3407], aligned north to south, was located 20m from the east end of Trench 34. It had a V-shaped profile with an uneven but generally flat base.

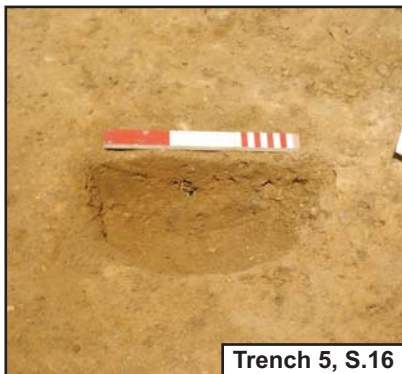
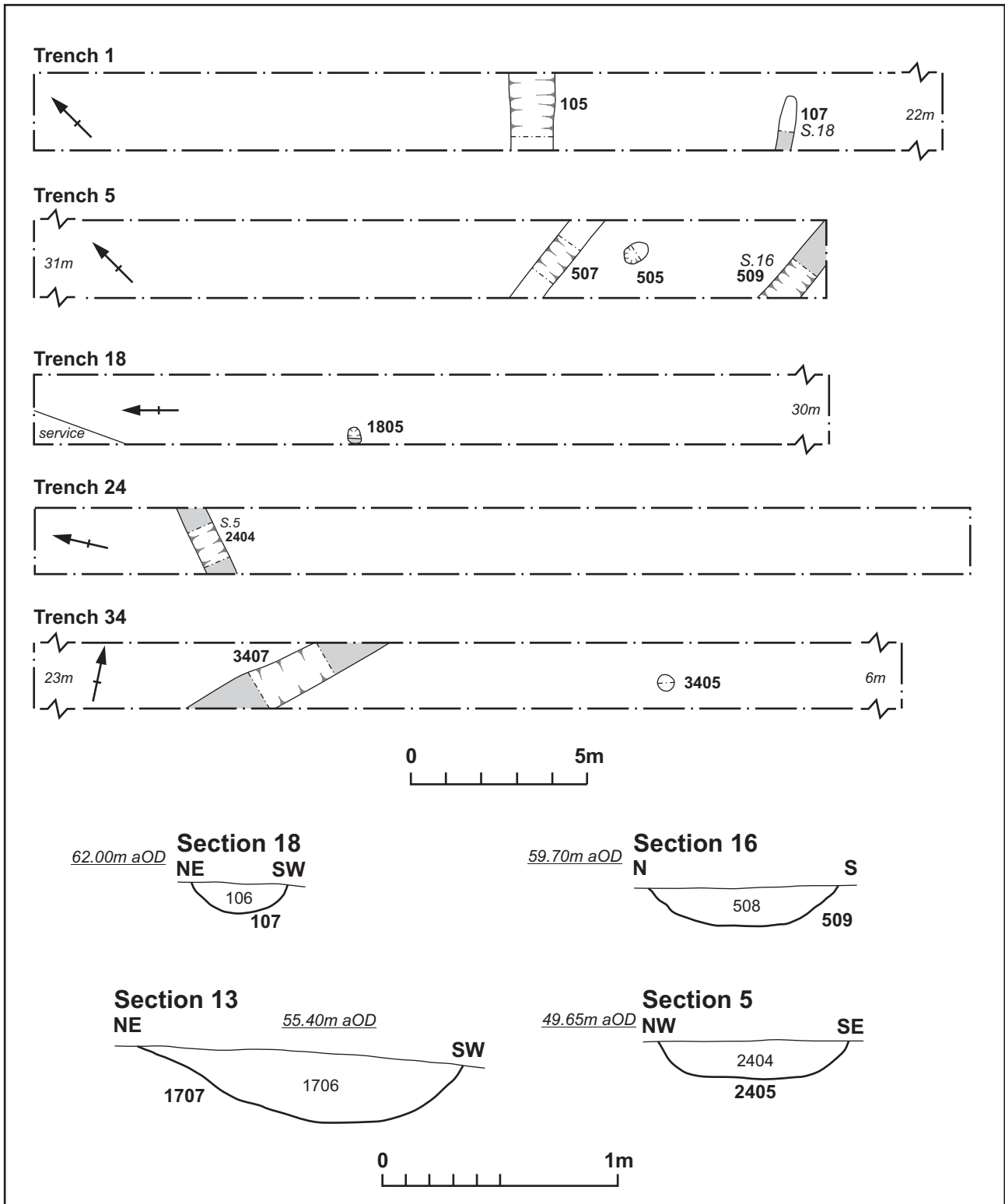
##### ***Pit/posthole***

Pit or posthole [1805] was located 8.5m from north end of Trench 18 (Fig 7). It was sub-rectangular in plan with near vertical sides and a flat base.

#### **4.6 Other features**

Four features were investigated that were of natural origin and were identified in Trenches 1, 26, 28 and 34.

In Trench 1 a possible former hedgerow [105] (Fig 7), aligned north-west to south-east, was identified, whilst in the remaining trenches the features [2608], [2805] (Fig 5, section 7) and [3405] (Fig 7) were pit-like in appearance but were caused by intensive root intrusion.



Scales 1:50 & 1:25

Undated features in trenches 1, 5, 17, 18 and 34 Fig 7

## 5 THE FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

### 5.1 Worked flint by Andy Chapman

There are four flints. From the topsoil (1101) there is a small cortical blade, 43mm long by 11-15mm wide. The flakes scars have a pale blue-grey patination, with one edge retouched at a later date, removing the patination. From the subsoil (1802) (SF3), there is a small squat, hard-hammer struck flake, and a broken flake from the fill (2404) (SF1) of ditch [2405]. From the fill (2806) of posthole [2808], there is a large cortical flake (SF2) struck from a pebble. This is a small collection of undiagnostic struck flint, apart from the blade, which is likely to date to the early Neolithic.

### 5.2 Prehistoric pottery by Andy Chapman

From the fill (3604) of pit [3605] there are two sherds of pottery weighing 18g. Their fabric and inner surface is dark grey, with an orange-red outer surface. The smaller sherd contains small pieces, up to 1mm, of angular flint while the larger sherd contains frequent large pieces of rounded quartz, up to 5mm across. Without any diagnostic features these can only be broadly dated to the Bronze Age to Iron Age.

### 5.3 Medieval pottery by Paul Blinkhorn

The pottery assemblage comprised 16 sherds with a total weight of 120g. It was recorded utilizing the coding system and chronology of the Post-Roman pottery from Colchester (Cunningham 1985; Cotter 2000), as follows:

F12A: Medieval Shelly Ware, 11th – late 12th centuries. 2 sherds, 14g.

F12C: Shelly Sandy Ware, 11th – late 12th centuries. 1 sherd, 3g.

F13: Early Medieval Sandy Ware, early 11th – early 13th century. 13 sherds, 86g.

F20: Medieval Grey Sandy Ware, 12th – 14th centuries. 5 sherds, 39g.

F22: Hedingham Ware, late 12th – 14th centuries. 2 sherds, 11g.

The pottery occurrence by number and weight of sherds per context by fabric type is shown in Table 1. Each date should be regarded as a *terminus post quem*. All the wares are well-known in the region, and indicate that there was activity at the site around the time of the Norman Conquest, from the 11th – 13th centuries.

Most of the assemblage comprised unglazed bodysherds, other than a jar rim from context (2605) and another from (2811). Most of the assemblage is in fairly good condition, although some sherds do show signs of abrasion, with the calcareous inclusions leached out of the shelly wares. Given this, and the fairly small mean sherd size, it seems likely that the entire assemblage is the product of secondary deposition.

*Table 1: Pottery occurrence by number and weight (in g) of sherds per context by fabric type*

Fill/cut	F12A		F12C		F13		F20		F22		Date century
	No	Wt (g)	No	Wt (g)	No	Wt (g)	No	Wt (g)	No	Wt (g)	
2605 / 2606 ditch	-	-	-	-	5	32	3	21	-	-	12th
2704 / 2705 ditch	1	8	1	3	3	11	-	-	-	-	early11th
2806 / 2808 posthole	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	-	-	12th
2809 / 2810 pit	1	6	-	-	1	4	-	-	1	10	late12th
2811 / 2812 pit	-	-	-	-	4	39	1	15	1	1	late12th
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>11</b>	

#### 5.4 Ceramic building materials by Pat Chapman

##### ***Roman tile***

Two small sherds from Roman tiles, together weighing 42g, were recovered (Table 2). A *tegula* roof tile sherd from the base of the flange comes from fill (2811) of pit [2812]. The fabric is a fine sandy orange-red with a red core. The body is 15mm thick and there is a remnant of the base of a diagonal cutaway, designed for the tiles to overlap. The angle suggests the tile could date from the beginning of the 2nd century AD onwards. A body sherd, 15mm thick, and made with fine slightly soft orange silty sand, grey core came from fill (506) of ditch [507].

##### ***Medieval/post-medieval roof tile***

Eleven tile sherds, weighing 363g, come from pit [505], ditch [509], make-up layers (2005), (2006), (2204), colluvium (2503) and root disturbance [2608] (Table 2). The fabric for eight sherds is hard fine sandy orange, for three sherds it is hard sandy dark red-brown with a black core. The sherds are 10-15mm thick, but there are no diagnostic features such as nibs or pegholes. Roof tiles remained more or less the same throughout the medieval and post-medieval periods until machine-made tiles became more prevalent during the 19th century onwards.

##### ***Brick and fired clay***

The six brick fragments, five from (2204) make-up layer and one from the surface of the natural (2504) together weigh 143g (Table 2). They are made from very coarse sandy orange-brown clay and are very abraded.

The fired clay, weighing 9g, comprises eleven very friable irregularly-shaped small fragments of soft silty orange from fill (2704) of ditch [2705] and a tiny soft orange crumb from fill (2609) of ditch [2610].

*Table 2: Quantification of ceramic building materials*

<b>Fill / cut</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Wt (g)</b>	<b>Description</b>
504 / pit 505	1	1	Tile, fragment, orange
506 / ditch 507	1	22	<b>Roman</b> , tile, body sherd
508 / ditch 509	1	9	Tile, 12mm thick, orange
2005 make-up layer	1	80	Tile, 11mm thick, orange
2006 make-up layer	4	130	Tile, 13mm thick, orange
			Tile, 11mm thick, red-brown, black core
			Tile, fragments x 2, orange
2204 make-up layer	1	12	Tile, 12mm thick, orange
2204 make-up layer	5	135	<b>Brick</b> , orange-brown,
2503 colluvial	2	129	Tile, 15mm thick, red-brown, black core
			Tile, 10mm thick, red-brown, black core
2504 natural	1	8	<b>Brick</b> , orange-brown
2607 / root disturbance 2608	1	2	Tile, orange
2609 / ditch 2610	1	1	<b>Fired clay</b> , soft orange
2704 / ditch 2705	11	8	<b>Fired clay</b> , crumbs, very friable, orange
2811 / pit 2812	1	20	<b>Roman-tegula</b> roof tile
<b>Totals</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>557</b>	

#### 5.5 Animal bone by Rebecca Gordon

The only animal bone found was a fragment of cattle tooth from fill (2811) of medieval pit [2812].

## 5.6 The environmental evidence by Val Fryer

### **Introduction**

Samples for the retrieval of the plant macrofossil assemblages were taken from pit [2812] (sample 1) and ditch [2705] (sample 2), both of which were of probable 12th century date, and from prehistoric pit [3605] (sample 3).

The samples were bulk floated by MOLAN and the flots were collected in a 300 micron mesh sieve. The dried flots were scanned under a binocular microscope at magnifications up to x 16 and the plant macrofossils and other remains noted are listed in Table 3. Nomenclature within the table follows Stace (2010). All plant remains were charred. Modern roots were abundant within all three assemblages.

### **Results**

Cereals and/or seeds of common segetal weeds are present at a low density within all three assemblages. Preservation is moderately good, although some grains are puffed and distorted, probably as a result of combustion at extremely high temperatures.

Oat (*Avena* sp.), barley (*Hordeum* sp.) and wheat (*Triticum* sp.) grains are recorded along with a small number of cereals which are too poorly preserved for close identification. Chaff is generally scarce, but a barley/rye (*Secale cereale*) type rachis node is present within the assemblage from sample 2, and sample 1 includes a single, poorly preserved wheat glume base. As the production of glumed wheats had all but ceased by the early medieval period, it is assumed that the latter is residual within the context, being derived from earlier activity on the site.

Weed seeds are scarce, with all occurring as single specimens within an assemblage. Taxa noted include stinking mayweed (*Anthemis cotula*), brome (*Bromus* sp.), small legumes (Fabaceae) and knawel (*Scleranthus annuus*). A single fragment of hazel (*Corylus avellana*) nutshell is recorded within the assemblage from pit [2812]. Charcoal/charred wood fragments are common or abundant, and although most are highly comminuted, occasional larger pieces are also recorded, most notably within the assemblage from ditch [2705].

Other remains occur very infrequently. The black porous and tarry residues are probably derived from the super heating of organic materials, with the pellets of burnt or fired clay and the fragment of heat shattered stone also hinting at very high temperatures of combustion. Small pieces of coal are present within both of the medieval assemblages, but it is thought most likely that these are intrusive.

### **Conclusions and recommendations for further work**

In summary, the assemblage from prehistoric pit [3605] is extremely small and sparse, with the few remains which are recorded possibly being derived from scattered hearth or midden waste. Although the medieval assemblages are also limited in composition, it would appear most likely that the remains within them are derived from either domestic hearth waste or burnt agricultural detritus. While sample 2 contains sufficient material to suggest that the remains were deliberately deposited within the ditch fill, the pit assemblage is very small and is almost certainly derived from scattered detritus which was accidentally incorporated within the feature fill.

As none of the assemblages contain a sufficient density of material for quantification (i.e. 100+ specimens), no further analysis is recommended. However, a summary of this assessment should be included within any publication of data from the site.

Table 3: The charred plant macrofossils and other remains

Sample No.	1	2	3
<b>Context No.</b>	<b>2811</b>	<b>2704</b>	<b>3604</b>
<b>Feature No.</b>	<b>2812</b>	<b>2705</b>	<b>3605</b>
<b>Feature type</b>	<b>Pit</b>	<b>Ditch</b>	<b>Pit</b>
<b>Date</b>	<b>12thC</b>	<b>12thC</b>	<b>Prehist.</b>
<b>Cereals</b>			
<i>Avena</i> sp. (grains)	-	xcf	-
<i>Hordeum</i> sp. (grains)	-	x	-
<i>Hordeum/Secale cereale</i> type (rachis node)	-	x	-
<i>Triticum</i> sp. (grains)	x	x	-
(glume base)	x	-	-
Cereal indet. (grains)	x	x	x
<b>Herbs</b>			
<i>Anthemis cotula</i> L.	-	xcf	-
<i>Bromus</i> sp.	x	-	-
Fabaceae indet.	x	x	-
<i>Galium</i> sp.	x	-	-
Polygonaceae indet.	x	-	-
<i>Scleranthus annuus</i> L.	x	-	-
<b>Tree/shrub macrofossils</b>			
<i>Corylus avellana</i> L.	x	-	-
<b>Other plant macrofossils</b>			
Charcoal <2mm	xxx	xxxx	xx
Charcoal >2mm	xx	xxxx	x
Charcoal >5mm	x	xxxx	x
Charcoal >10mm	x	xx	-
Charred root/stem	x	x	-
Indet. seeds	-	x	-
<b>Other remains</b>			
Black porous 'cokey' material	=	x	-
Black tarry material	x	-	-
Burnt/fired clay	x	-	-
Burnt stone	=	-	x
Small coal frags.	x	x	=
<b>Sample volume (litres)</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Volume of flot (litres)</b>	<b>&lt;0.1</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>&lt;0.1</b>
<b>% flot sorted</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Key to Table**

x = 1 – 10 specimens; xx = 11 – 50 specimens; xxx = 51 – 100 specimens; xxxx = 100+ specimens  
 C = century cf = compare Prehist = prehistoric

## 6 DISCUSSION

The evaluation identified low densities of prehistoric, medieval and post-medieval archaeological remains. A small number of additional undated features were also identified that could be attributable to any of the above periods. Of particular significance is the almost complete absence of Romano-British features and artefacts, which is perhaps surprising given the presumed course of a Roman road between Colchester, Braintree and Braughing is thought to pass along the southern boundary of the site along the route of Rayne Road.

The prehistoric feature was a pit, located close to the east boundary of the site. The presence of the pit is not unexpected given the presence of Mesolithic to Iron Age remains, earthworks and cropmarks in proximity to the site, but has little significance, particularly as it cannot be closely dated.

Medieval remains of Saxo-Norman, or post-Conquest, date were present in a small area at the south edge of the site. They comprised a series of ditches and two pits. The ditches are likely to form enclosures leading off the present road to the south and the feature in Trench 26 may have been a roadside ditch as it lies broadly parallel with it. The two parallel ditches in Trench 27 are interesting as they were cut into a clay seam, which has been interpreted as a spring line (Appendix 2). It seems likely therefore that the ditches were cut here to take advantage of the naturally wet area, either to draw water or channel it downslope towards the river to the west. What the other ditches were enclosing is at this point unknown, but their presence might indicate there was a settlement nearby, perhaps an isolated farmstead. To date, pottery and remains of this date have not been recovered elsewhere in the vicinity of the site, except at Naylinghurst nearly 2km to the south-west. There are other known medieval remains, but these lie closer to Rayne, to the west, and Braintree to the east. It is possible that the activity here was taking advantage of an upslope location in proximity to the river. The environmental assessment indicates that some of the charred material within one of the ditches was deliberately deposited suggesting that the ditch was backfilled and thus put out of use. It may have been replaced by the ditch that lay parallel.

A small area of possible medieval activity was also present in Trench 5 where a ditch and a pit were identified. The dating of these features is less reliable as the recovered material comprised brick and tile fragments which are not as easily dateable as pottery. The ditch may have been associated with the activity to the south in Trenches 24 and 26 to 28 and demarcate the limit of that activity, or was an unrelated pre-Enclosure field boundary. Its alignment is broadly similar to Rayne Road, a route with likely pre-medieval origin, suggesting that the field system here has respected the road for some considerable time.

Post-medieval activity was identified in Trenches 19, 20 and 22 and comprised a series of made-ground deposits. It is conceivable that the material was generated from the excavation of the ponds to the west and deposited here in an attempt to level the slope.

All the undated features were found in an approximate north-south trend slightly to the west of the centre of the site. The ditches were probably former field boundaries. One of the ditches in Trench 17 is likely to have been post-medieval as it was overlain by the topsoil only and its course can be seen as a linear dip in the ground heading south-east towards a tree of some antiquity, a relic of a former hedged boundary. The ditch can be traced on the historic Ordnance Survey maps until the late 1960s as a boundary which follows the predominant contour crossing that parcel of land.

The possible hedgerow ditch in Trench 1 does not appear on the historic mapping and may have been a pre-Enclosure boundary.



The only evidence for Roman activity was a small fragment of Roman tile, recovered from a possible medieval ditch and located some distance from the possible Roman road, the course of which is thought to be reflected in Rayne Road to the south of the site. No deposits associated with the road, such as an *agger*, or cobbled surfaces were identified.

Trenches 23 and 24 were sited to target a possible linear earthwork identified through inspection of a low level vertical aerial photograph taken in 1948. Although nothing was identified within the trenches or on the ground surface that could correspond with the earthwork, the ground was observed to sharply drop away to the south at the south end of Trench 23.

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**APPENDIX 1: TABLE OF CONTEXTS**

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>		<b>Surface height aOD</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural aOD</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>50m, 1.8m &amp; NE-SW</b>		<b>63.93m NE</b>	<b>0.62m &amp; 63.31m</b>
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/Samples</b>
101	Topsoil	Mid brownish-grey, sandy silt, with occasional small and large stones and flint >40mm	0.30m thick	-
-102	Subsoil	Mid grey, sandy silt with frequent rounded and angular stones >50mm	0.32m thick	-
103	Natural	Mixed gravels, orange and yellow sands	0.62m+	-
104	Fill of hedgerow [105]	Mottled black and orange silty sand, friable, frequent gravel and small sub-rounded stones	L 2m+ W 1.1m D 0.30m	-
105	Cut of hedgerow	Linear, aligned NW-SE, moderately sloping sides, concave base	L 2m+ W 1.1m D 0.30m	-
106	Fill of ditch [107]	Friable, mottled grey-brown, silty sand, occasional gravel and small sun-rounded stones	L 2m+ W 0.40m D 0.12m	-
107	Cut of ditch	Linear, aligned NW-SE, moderately sloping sides, concave base	L 2m+ W 0.40m D 0.12m	-

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>		<b>Surface height aOD</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>50m, 1.8m &amp; NW-SE</b>		<b>64.39m NW</b>	<b>0.45m &amp; 63.94m</b>
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/Samples</b>
201	Topsoil	Mid brownish-grey, sandy silt, occasional angular stones and flints <30mm	0.20m thick	-
202	Subsoil	Mid grey-brown, silty sand, frequent small angular and rounded stones <30mm	0.25m thick	-
203	Natural	Gravel and flint deposits with occasional pockets of orangey-brown sandy clay	0.45m+	-

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>		<b>Surface height</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>50m, 1.8m &amp; E-W</b>		<b>63.47m E</b>	<b>0.24m &amp; 63.23m</b>
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/Samples</b>
301	Topsoil	Mid brownish-grey, sandy silt, frequent small angular stones <70mm	0.13m thick	-
302	Subsoil	Mid greyish-brown, silty sand, frequent small angular and rounded stones and flints <30mm	0.11m thick	-
303	Natural	Natural gravels and flint nodules with orangey-brown sand	0.24m+	-

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>		<b>Surface height</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>25m, 1.8m &amp; NE-SW</b>		<b>63.33m NE</b>	<b>0.40m &amp; 62.93m</b>
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/Samples</b>
401	Topsoil	Mid brownish-grey, sandy silt, occasional angular stones and flints <30mm	0.20m thick	-
402	Subsoil	Mid grey-brown, silty sand, frequent angular and rounded stones <30mm	0.20m thick	-
403	Natural	Natural gravels and flint deposits, glacial pockets of orange-brown sand	0.40m+	-

BRAINTREE, RAYNE ROAD

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>		<b>Surface height</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>50m, 1.8m &amp; NW-SE</b>		<b>61.77m NW</b>	<b>0.28m &amp; 61.49m</b>
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/Samples</b>
501	Topsoil	Mid brownish-grey, sandy silt, occasional angular stones and flints <30mm	0.16m thick	Brick fragment
502	Subsoil	Mid grey-brown, silty sand, frequent small angular and rounded stones <30mm	0.12m thick	-
503	Natural	Gravel and flint deposits with orangey-brown sands with manganese flecks	0.28m+	-
504	Fill of pit [505]	Mid grey-brown, sandy silt, friable, frequent gravel and small sub-rounded stones	W 0.40m D 0.06m	CBM
505	Pit	Oval, shallow sloping sides and a flat base	W 0.40m D 0.06m	-
506	Fill of ditch [507]	Mid grey-brown, sandy silt, friable, frequent gravel and small sub-rounded stones	W 0.60m D 0.07m	Tile
507	Ditch	Linear, aligned E-W, shallow sloping sides with a concave base	W 0.60m D 0.07m	-
508	Fill of ditch [509]	Mid grey-brown, sandy silt, friable, frequent gravel and sub-rounded stones	W 0.80m D 0.16m	CBM
509	Ditch	Linear, aligned E-W, shallow sloping sides with concave base	W 0.80m D 0.16m	-

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>		<b>Surface height</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>50m, 1.8m &amp; N-S</b>		<b>63.81m N</b>	<b>0.33m &amp; 63.48m</b>
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/Samples</b>
601	Topsoil	Mid brownish grey, sandy silt, frequent small angular stones <30mm	0.18m thick	-
602	Subsoil	Mid greyish-brown, silty sand, frequent small angular and rounded stones <30mm	0.15m thick	-
603	Natural	Natural gravels and flint deposits, orangey-brown sands	0.33m+	-

BRAINTREE, RAYNE ROAD

Trench No	Length, width & alignment		Surface height	Depth & height of natural
7	50m, 1.8m & NE-SW		62.10m NE	0.38m & 61.72m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
701	Topsoil	Mid brownish-grey, sandy silt, frequent small angular stones <30mm	0.18m thick	-
702	Subsoil	Mid greyish-brown, silty sand, frequent angular and rounded stones <30mm	0.20m thick	-
703	Natural	Natural gravels and flint deposits, orangey-brown sands	0.38m+	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment		Surface height	Depth & height of natural
10	40m, 1.8m & NW-SE		62.82m SE	0.34m & 62.48m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
1001	Topsoil	Mid brownish-grey, sandy silt, occasional rounded small stones <30mm	0.16m thick	-
1002	Subsoil	Mid greyish-brown, silty sand, frequent small angular and rounded stones <30mm	0.18m thick	-
1003	Natural	Natural gravels with frequent flint nodules and occasional sandy pockets	0.34m+	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment		Surface height	Depth & height of natural
11	50m, 1.8m & NW-SE		63.25m SE	0.30m & 62.95m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
1101	Topsoil	Mid brownish-grey, sandy silt, occasional rounded small stones <30mm	0.20m thick	Modern brick
1102	Subsoil	Very compacted mid grey, sandy silt, frequent small rounded and angular <30mm	0.10m thick	Modern brick fragment
1103	Natural	Orangey-brown sands and gravels, frequent flint nodules, very compacted and weathered	0.30m+	-

BRAINTREE, RAYNE ROAD

Trench No	Length, width & alignment		Surface height	Depth & height of natural
12	50m, 1.8m & ENE-WSW		62.27m E	0.35m & 61.92m
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
1201	Topsoil	Mid brown-grey, sandy silt, frequent small angular stones <30mm	0.20m thick	-
1202	Subsoil	Mid grey-brown, sandy silt, occasional small angular and rounded stones <30mm	0.15m thick	-
1203	Natural	Orangey-brown sand with slight clay deposits	0.35m+	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment		Surface height	Depth & height of natural
13	50m, 1.8m & NE-SW		61.55m NE	0.33m & 61.22m
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
1301	Topsoil	Mid brown-grey, sandy silt, frequent small angular stones <30mm	0.18m thick	-
1302	Subsoil	Mid orangey-brown silty sand, frequent small angular stones <30mm	0.15m thick	-
1303	Natural	Mostly gravels and flint nodules with occasional pockets of sand	0.33m+	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment		Surface height	Depth & height of natural
14	50m, 1.8m & NE-SW		59.48m N	0.45m & 59.03m
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
1401	Topsoil	Light brownish-grey, silty sand, frequent small stones <30mm	0.20m thick	Brick fragment
1402	Subsoil	Mid grey-brown, sandy silt, frequent small angular and rounded gravel stones <30mm	0.25m thick	-
1403	Natural	Mixed gravels and orange sands, frequent flint nodules towards SW end	0.45m+	-

BRAINTREE, RAYNE ROAD

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>		<b>Surface height</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural</b>
<b>15</b>	<b>50m, 1.8m &amp; NE-SW</b>		<b>58.65m NE</b>	<b>0.45m &amp; 58.20m</b>
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/Samples</b>
1501	Topsoil	Mid grey-brown, sandy silt, frequent small angular stones and flint <30mm	0.20m thick	-
1502	Subsoil	Mid brownish-grey, silty sand, frequent small angular and rounded stones <30mm	0.25m thick	Brick fragment
1503	Natural	Orangey-brown sands with frequent rounded stone deposits and occasional pockets of clay	0.45m+	-

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>		<b>Surface height</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural</b>
<b>16</b>	<b>50m, 1.8m &amp; NNE-SSW</b>		<b>57.62m S</b>	<b>0.35m &amp; 57.27m</b>
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/Samples</b>
1601	Topsoil	Mid grey-brown, silty sand, frequent angular stones <30mm	0.15m thick	-
1602	Subsoil	Mid grey sandy silt, frequent small stones <30mm	0.20m thick	Brick
1603	Natural	Mostly gravels to North, orangey brown sand at south end	0.35m+	-



<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>		<b>Surface height</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural</b>
17	50m, 1.8m & WSW-ENE		58.25m E	0.40m & 57.85m
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/Samples</b>
1701	Topsoil	Mid grey-brown, silty sand, occasional small rounded stones <30mm	0.20m thick	-
	1702	Light grey-brown sandy silt, occasional small angular and rounded stones <30mm	0.20m thick	-
703	Natural	Mainly gravels with frequent flint nodules and occasional pockets of sand	0.40m+	-
1704	Fill of ditch [1705]	Firm, dark grey-brown with blue mottling, silty clay, occasional small gravel and sub-rounded stones	L 2m+ W 1.15m D 0.35m	-
1705	Cut of ditch	Linear boundary ditch, aligned NW-SE, moderately sloping sides and slightly concave base	L 2m+ W 1.15m D 0.35m	-
1706	Fill of ditch [1707]	Firm, dark grey-brown with blue and orange mottling, silty clay, occasional gravel and small sub-rounded stones	W 1.4m D 0.30m	-
1707	Cut of ditch	Runs parallel to [1705], linear aligned NW-SE, moderately sloping sides, slightly concave base	W 1.4m D 0.30m	-

BRAINTREE, RAYNE ROAD

Trench No	Length, width & alignment		Surface height	Depth & height of natural
18	30m, 1.8m & NNW-SSE		55.25m S	0.45m & 54.80m
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
1801	Topsoil	Mid grey-brown, sandy silt, occasional angular stone and flint fragments <30mm	0.20m thick	-
1802	Subsoil	Light yellow-brown silty sand, frequent small angular and rounded stones <30mm	0.25m thick	-
1803	Natural	Brownish-orange sand with gravel pockets	0.45m+	-
1804	Fill of pit [1805]	Friable, mid grey-brown, sandy silty clay, frequent small sub-rounded stones, result of silting	W 0.40m D 0.18m	-
1805	Cut of pit	Sub-square, near vertical sides and a flat base	W 0.40m D 0.18m	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment		Surface height	Depth & height of natural
19	35m, 1.8m & NNW-SSE		161.44m	0.70m & 161.81m
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
1901	Topsoil	Mid grey-brown, silty sand, very thin with frequent small angular stones <30mm	0.15m thick	Modern brick
1902	Make-up layer	Mixed sand and stone layer, redeposited natural gravels <30mm	0.20m thick	
1903	Subsoil	Light yellow-grey, silty sand, occasional small rounded and angular stones <30mm	0.35m thick	-
1904	Natural	Pale yellow-brown sand, frequent manganese flecks and pockets of light yellow clay	0.70m+	-

BRAINTREE, RAYNE ROAD

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>		<b>Surface height</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural</b>
<b>20</b>	<b>50m, 1.8m &amp; NW-SE</b>		<b>55.31m NE</b>	<b>0.30m &amp; 55.01m</b>
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/Samples</b>
2001	Topsoil	Mid grey-brown, sandy silt, friable, occasional gravel and small sub-rounded stones	0.08m – 0.15m thick	-
2002	Make-up layer	Light-mid yellow-brown, sandy silt, friable, moderate-frequent gravel and small sub-rounded stones	0.10m – 0.35m thick	-
2003	Make-up layer	Mid-dark grey silt-clay, firm, with very occasional gravel and small sub-rounded stones	0.10m – 0.25m thick	-
2004	Make-up layer	Light-mid orange-brown silty clay, firm with occasional gravel	0.05m – 0.25m thick	-
2005	Make-up layer	Mid grey-brown, silty clay, firm with occasional gravel	0.15m – 0.35m thick	Glass
2006	Make-up layer	Mid-dark grey-brown, silty clay, firm, occasional gravel and small sub-rounded stones	0.10m – 0.20m thick	Tile
2007	Natural	Variable natural, orange-brown clay with bands of gravel	0.30m – 1.18m+	-
2008	Subsoil	Light yellow-brown, sandy silt, friable, moderate gravel and small sub-rounded stones	0.20m thick	-

BRAINTREE, RAYNE ROAD

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>		<b>Surface height</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural</b>
<b>21</b>	<b>49m, 1.8m &amp; NE-SW</b>		<b>56.57m NE</b>	<b>0.40m &amp; 56.17m</b>
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/Samples</b>
2101	Topsoil	Light grey-brown, sandy silt, friable, occasional small sub-rounded stones	0.15m thick	-
2102	Subsoil	Light grey-brown, sandy silt, friable, moderate-frequent small sub-rounded stones	0.25m thick	-
2103	Natural	Orange clay, with patches of sandy gravel and small-medium sub-angular flints	0.40m+	-

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>		<b>Surface height</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural</b>
<b>22</b>	<b>28m, 1.8m &amp; NW-SE</b>		<b>58.22m N</b>	<b>0.30m &amp; 57.92m</b>
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/Samples</b>
2201	Topsoil	Light grey-brown, sandy silt, friable, occasional small sub-rounded stones	0.10m - 0.30m thick	-
2202	Subsoil	Light grey-brown, sandy silt, friable, moderate-frequent small sub-rounded stones	0.10m - 0.20m thick	-
2203	Make-up layer	Mid grey-brown, silt clay, firm, occasional gravel and small sub-rounded stones	0.30m thick	Tile
2204	Make-up layer	Mid orange-brown, silty clay, firm, occasional small sub-rounded stones	0.20m thick	Tile and brick
2205	Natural	Orange clay, with patches of sandy gravel and small-medium sub-angular flints	0.30m – 0.80m+	-

BRAINTREE, RAYNE ROAD

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>		<b>Surface height</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural</b>
23	28m, 1.8m & NNW-SSE		51.57m N	0.50m & 51.07m
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/Samples</b>
2301	Topsoil	Light grey-brown, sandy silt, friable, occasional small sub-rounded stones	0.20m thick	-
2302	Subsoil	Light-mid grey-brown, sandy silt, friable, moderate-frequent sub-rounded stones	0.30m thick	-
2303	Natural	Orange-brown clay with gravel	0.50m+	-

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>		<b>Surface height</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural</b>
24	25m, 1.8m & N-S		54.26m N	0.40m & 53.86m
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/Samples</b>
2401	Topsoil	Light grey-brown, sandy silt, friable, occasional small sub-rounded stones	0.15m thick	-
2402	Subsoil	Light grey-brown, sandy silt, friable, moderate-frequent small-medium sub-rounded stones	0.25m thick	-
2403	Natural	Orange sand with patches of gravel	0.40m+	-
2404	Fill of ditch [2405]	Light-mid grey-brown silty clay, firm, occasional small sub-rounded stones, result of silting	L 1.80m+ W 0.80m D 0.16m	Flint
2405	Cut of ditch	Linear ditch aligned NE-SW, moderately sloping sides and flat base	L 1.80m+ W 0.80m D 0.16m	-

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>		<b>Surface height</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural</b>
25	50m, 1.8m & NE-SW		50.96m E	0.54m & 50.42m
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/Samples</b>
2501	Topsoil	Light grey-brown, sandy silt, firm, occasional small sub-rounded stones	0.22m thick	-
2502	Make-up layer	Mid orange-brown, sandy silt, frequent gravel and small sub-rounded stones, friable	0.15m thick	-
2503	Colluvial	Light grey-brown, sandy silt, firm, occasional charcoal and very occasional small sub-rounded stones	0.17m thick	-
2504	Natural	Orange sand with patches of gravel	0.54m+	-

BRAINTREE, RAYNE ROAD

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>		<b>Surface height</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural</b>
26	43m, 1.8m & E-W		54.39m E	0.60m & 53.79m
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/Samples</b>
2601	Topsoil	Light grey-brown, sandy silt, friable, occasional small sub-rounded stones	0.20m thick	-
2602	Make-up layer	Light grey-brown, sandy silt, firm, occasional charcoal and frequent small-medium sub-rounded stones, likely associated with construction of nearby modern road	0.20m thick	Modern tile/CBM
2603	Colluvial	Dark grey-brown, silty clay, firm, occasional small sub-rounded stones	0.20m thick	-
2604	Natural	Orange-brown clay with patches of gravel	0.60m+	-
2605	Fill of ditch [2606]	Friable, sandy silt, mottled mid-grey, small-medium sub-rounded stones, likely medieval	L 1.8m+ W 2m D 0.30m	Pot
2606	Cut of ditch	Linear medieval ditch aligned N-s, moderately sloping sides and flat base	L 1.8m+ W 2m D 0.30m	-
2607	Fill of root disturbance [2608]	Mottled mid grey and orange-brown, silty clay, firm, occasional small sub rounded stones	L 0.30m W 0.40m D 0.28m	Tile
2608	Cut of root disturbance	Irregular shape in plan, steep sloping sides, irregular base	L 0.30m W 0.40m D 0.28m	-
2609	Fill of ditch [2610]	Mid grey, silty clay, firm occasional small sub-rounded stones	L 19m+ W 1.4m D 0.27m	Pot
2610	Cut of ditch	Linear, aligned NE-SW, gently sloping sides and flat base	L 19m+ W 1.4m D 0.27m	-

BRAINTREE, RAYNE ROAD

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>		<b>Surface height</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural</b>
27	48m, 1.8m & N-S		56.35m N	0.50m & 55.85m
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/Samples</b>
2701	Topsoil	Dark grey-brown, sandy silt	0.30m thick	-
2702	Subsoil	Light grey-brown, sandy silt	0.20m thick	-
2703	Natural	Orange sand, blue clay	0.50m+	-
2704	Fill of ditch [2705]	Compact, dark grey-blue, silty clay, 10% gravel	L 1.60m D 0.25m	Pot, burnt clay, flint
2705	Cut of ditch	Linear ditch aligned E-W, 'U' shaped with concave base, parallel to [2707]	L 1.60m D 0.25m	-
2706	Fill of ditch [2707]	Compact, dark grey-blue, silty clay, 10% gravel and 5% ash	L 1.60m D 0.25m	-
2707	Cut of ditch	Linear ditch aligned E-W, 'U' shaped with concave base, parallel to [2705]	L 1.60m D 0.25m	-



BRAINTREE, RAYNE ROAD

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>		<b>Surface height</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural</b>
28	42m, 1.8m & NNW-SSE		57.82m N	0.50m & 57.32m
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/Samples</b>
2801	Topsoil	Light-mid grey-brown, sandy silt, friable, occasional small sub-rounded stones	0.30m thick	-
2802	Subsoil	Mid grey-brown, sandy silt, friable, moderate-frequent small sub-rounded stones	0.20m thick	-
2803	Natural	Orange sand with gravel	0.50m+	-
2804	Fill of root disturbance [2805]	Very mixed fill, mottled grey-brown with white patches, sandy silt, friable, occasional small sub-rounded stones	L 0.10m W 1.65m D 0.14m	-
2805	Cut of root disturbance	Irregular shape and base, shallow sloping sides	L 0.10m W 1.65m D 0.14m	-
2806	Upper fill of posthole [2808]	Silty clay, mid-dark grey-brown, occasional small sub-rounded stones, firm	W 0.50m D 0.27m	Pot, flint
2807	Fill of posthole [2808]	Compact, orange-brown, clay, moderate small-medium sub-rounded stones and sub-angular flints	W 0.50m D 0.27m	-
2808	Cut of posthole	Circular, steep near vertical sides, slightly concave base	L 0.5m W 0.5m D 0.42m	-
2809	Fill of pit [2810]	Compact, mid-dark brown, sandy silt, 10% gravel stones	L 0.90m D 0.40m	Pottery
2810	Cut of pit	Sub-circular, 'U' shaped pit with irregular base	L 0.90m D 0.40m	-
2811	Fill of pit [2812]	Compact, mid-dark brown, sandy silt, 10% gravel stones	L 1.08m D 0.30m	Pottery
2812	Cut of pit	Sub-circular, 'U' shaped sides and concave base	L 1.08m D 0.30m	-

BRAINTREE, RAYNE ROAD

Trench No	Length, width & alignment		Surface height	Depth & height of natural
30	44.5m, 1.8m & E-W		60.07m E	0.30m & 59.77m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
3001	Topsoil	Light grey-brown, sandy silt, friable, occasional small sub-rounded stones	0.14m thick	-
3002	Subsoil	Light-mid grey-brown, sandy silt, friable, moderate small-medium sub-rounded stones	0.16m thick	Modern tile
3003	Natural	Compact orange sandy clay with gravel	0.30m+	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment		Surface height	Depth & height of natural
31	31.5m, 1.8m & E-W		60.26m E	1.0m & 59.26m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
3101	Topsoil	Light grey, sandy silt, friable, occasional small sub-rounded stones	0.20m thick	-
3102	Subsoil	Light orange-grey, sandy silt, friable, moderate small sub-rounded stones	0.40m thick	-
3103	Colluvium	Mid-dark grey-brown, sandy silt, occasional small sub-rounded stones, friable	0.25m thick	-
3104	Colluvium	Mid grey sandy silt, friable, moderate-frequent small sub-rounded stones	0.15m thick	-
3105	Natural	Orange sand and gravel, predominately gravel at western end	1.0m+	-

BRAINTREE, RAYNE ROAD

Trench No	Length, width & alignment		Surface height	Depth & height of natural
33	50m, 1.8m & WSW-ENE		61.64m E	0.39m & 61.25m
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
3301	Topsoil	Mid brownish-grey, sandy silt, frequent small angular <30mm	0.24m thick	Modern brick fragment
3302	Subsoil	Mid grey-brown, silty sand, frequent small rounded and angular stones/flint <30mm	0.15m thick	-
3303	Natural	Orangey-brown sands, rounded and angular flint/stone inclusions, pockets of gravel also present towards eastern end	0.39m+	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment		Surface height	Depth & height of natural
34	50m, 1.8m & WSW-ENE		61.09m E	0.38m & 60.71m
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
3401	Topsoil	Mid brownish-grey, sandy silt, frequent small angular <30mm	0.20m thick	-
3402	Subsoil	Mid grey-brown, silty sand, frequent small rounded and angular stones/flint <30mm	0.18m thick	-
3403	Natural	Orangey-brown sands, rounded and angular flint/stone inclusions, pockets of gravel also present towards eastern end	0.38m+	-
3404	Fill of root disturbance [3405]	Friable, mid grey-brown, sandy silt, occasional small sub-rounded stone inclusions	L 0.40m W 0.40m D 0.25m	-
3405	Cut of root disturbance	Circular, moderately sloping sides and a concave base	L 0.40m W 0.40m D 0.25m	-
3406	Fill of channel [3407]	Extremely compacted fill, light grey, silty sand, 40% small – large stone inclusions, flint nodules	L 4m W 1.20m D 0.25m	-
3407	Cut of channel	Linear channel aligned N-S, shallow 'U' shape feature with a flat base	L 4m W 1.20m D 0.25m	-

BRAINTREE, RAYNE ROAD

Trench No	Length, width & alignment		Surface height	Depth & height of natural
35	25m, 1.8m & NW-SE		62.85m NW	0.42m & 62.43m
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
3501	Topsoil	Mid brownish-grey, silty sand, occasional small angular and rounded stones <30mm	0.24m thick	-
3502	Subsoil	Mid grey-brown, silty sand, frequent small angular stones/flint <30mm	0.18m thick	-
3503	Natural	Orangey-brown sands and gravels with frequent flint nodules	0.42m+	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment		Surface height	Depth & height of natural
36	25m, 1.8m & NW-SE		63.60m NW	0.37m & 63.23m
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
3601	Topsoil	Mid brownish-grey, sandy silt, frequent small angular <30mm	0.20m thick	-
3602	Subsoil	Mid grey-brown, silty sand, frequent small rounded and angular stones/flint <30mm	0.17m thick	-
3603	Natural	Natural orangey-brown sand and gravels with occasional flint nodules	0.37m+	-
3604	Fill of pit [3605]	Firmly compacted, mid grey with a brown tint, silty sand, occasional small angular stone fragments	L 0.45m W 0.30m D 0.20m	Pottery
3605	Cut of pit	Sub-oval, near vertical edges, 'U' shaped, flat base	L 0.45m W 0.30m D 0.20m	-
3606	Fill of pit [3607]	Firmly compact, mid orangey-brown, sandy clay with slight silty texture, occasional angular stones	L 0.80m W 0.25m D 0.15m	-
3607	Cut of pit	Sub-rectilinear aligned N-Sm concave 'V' shaped profile, rounded base	L 0.80m W 0.25m D 0.15m	-

## **APPENDIX 2: GEOARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION**

by Graham Spurr

One to two metre sondages were put into a series of trenches (23, 21 & 11) in a west / east transect leading uphill from Pods Brook to the higher ground on a site located just to the north of Rayne Rd, Braintree Essex. At each location the sondages revealed stiff orange London Clay deposits underlying the site overlain by thin washes of gravel (0.30m thick approximately), capped by greyish brown gravelly loam (plough soil). The only exception to this was at the highest point excavated (Trench 11) where 2m of Head deposit (weathered orange sandy clays with moderate gravel content – becoming increasingly clayey with depth) was revealed below the loam. Neither alluvial nor thick terrace gravel deposits were seen in any intervention.

Added to this, gleyed silty deposits were revealed in Trench 27. These were associated with two parallel, shallow, east / west aligned ditch features. The grey colouring of the sediment, which contrasted with the orange, weathered sediment revealed in the rest of the trench, was considered indicative of the reducing conditions (creating the gleyed colouring) because of the presence of groundwater at this location (seen in the trench). This could be indicative of a spring line near to Trench 27 which might explain the purpose of the ditch features (i.e. water management).



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