



**Archaeological trial trench evaluation at
Foxholes, Pirton Road
Hitchin, Hertfordshire
June 2017**

Report No. 17/99

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Illustrators: Olly Dindol



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OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		Oasis No. molanort-292455	
Project title	Archaeological trial trench evaluation at Foxholes, Pirton Road, Hitchin, Hertfordshire		
Short description	Archaeological trial trenching was carried out by MOLA across c.2.3ha of grassland/parkland to inform a planning application. The trenches largely targeted anomalies detected in an earlier geophysical survey (Arkley 2017). Archaeology was distributed across the entire evaluation area with a particular concentration on the high ground at the centre of the site with evidence of a possible Roman settlement in the form of an enclosure ditch with internal postholes and a number of boundary ditches extending to the west and southwest. An area of post medieval quarrying is also noted in the north east corner of the site.		
Project type	Evaluation trial trenching		
Site Status	-		
Previous work	Geophysical survey (Arkley 2017);		
Current land use	Grassland/Parkland		
Future work	-		
Monument type and period	Iron-Age to Roman settlement and enclosures and settlement, post-medieval field boundaries		
Significant finds	Roman Pottery		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County	Hertfordshire		
Site address	Foxholes, Pirton Road Hitchin		
Postcode	-		
OS co-ordinates	TL 1742 2905		
Area (sq m/ha)	c 2.3ha		
Height aOD	90.53m aOD to 92.83m aOD		
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation	MOLA Northampton		
Project brief originator	Hertfordshire County Council		
Project Design originator	MOLA Northampton		
Director/Supervisor	Paul Sharrock, MOLA		
Project Manager	Mo Muldowney, Ant Maul MOLA		
Sponsor or funding body	Manor Oak Homes		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date	June 2017		
End date	June 2017		
ARCHIVES	Location	Contents	
Physical	HITFGH 17	Pottery, animal bone, clay tobacco pipe	
Paper		Site records, black and white print film	
Digital		GPS data, digital photographs	
BIBLIOGRAPHY	Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (MOLA report)		
Title	Archaeological trial trench evaluation at Foxholes, Pirton Road Hitchin, Hertfordshire June 2017		
Serial title & volume	MOLA report 17/99		
Author(s)	Paul Sharrock		
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Contents

1	INTRODUCTION	
2	LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY	
3	AIMS AND OBJECTIVES	
4	HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND	
5	EVALUATION METHODOLOGY	
6	THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE	
	6.1	Late Iron Age and Roman activity
7	ARTEFACT AND ECOFACT CATALOGUE	
	7.1	Pottery by Andy Fawcett
	7.2	Clay tobacco pipe by Tora Hylton
	7.3	Animal bone by Sander Aerts
	7.4	Analysis of the environmental evidence by Sander Aerts
8	CONCLUSION	

BIBLIOGRAPHY

APPENDIX 1: Context inventory

APPENDIX 2: Pottery fabrics, form and abrasion code catalogue

APPENDIX 3: Pottery

Figures

Cover: Land at Foxholes, Hitchin

Fig 1: Site location and excavated trenches

Fig 2: Trench plan with geophysics interpretation

Fig 3: Trenches 7, 8 and 11

Fig 4: Sections 6-8, 10, 12 and 14

Fig 5: Plans of trenches 6, 10, 12-13 and 16

Fig 6: Trench 13, looking North-West

Fig 7: Trench 16, looking North

Tables

Table 1: Summary of selected HER results

Table 2: Pottery distribution by trench

Table 3: Quantification of the hand collected animal remains. Weight in grams.

Table 4: Quantification of the animal remains from sample 1. Weight in grams.

Archaeological trial trench evaluation at Foxholes, Pirton Road Hitchin, Hertfordshire June 2017

Abstract

Archaeological trial trenching was carried out by MOLA across c2.3ha of grassland/parkland to inform a planning application. The trenches largely targeted anomalies detected in an earlier geophysical survey (Arkley 2017). Archaeology was distributed across the entire evaluation area with a particular concentration on the high ground at the centre of the site with evidence of an Iron Age to Roman settlement - possibly as late as the 3rd century AD - in the form of an enclosure ditch with internal postholes and a number of boundary ditches extending to the west and south-west. An area of post medieval quarry pits is also noted in the north-east corner of the site.

1 INTRODUCTION

MOLA was commissioned by Manor Oak Homes to carry out an archaeological evaluation on land at Foxholes, Pirton Road, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, in advance of proposed development (NGR TL 1742 2905; Fig 1). The proposed development comprises the construction of c60 dwellings, associated landscaping, services and community woodland (Planning Application: 1/16/3240PRE).

The evaluation work was designed to ensure that a proper record was produced and maintained of any archaeological resource affected by the proposed development. This is in accordance with paragraph 141 of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF; DCLG 2012). The works were described in an approved Written Scheme of investigation (WSI) (MOLA 2017).

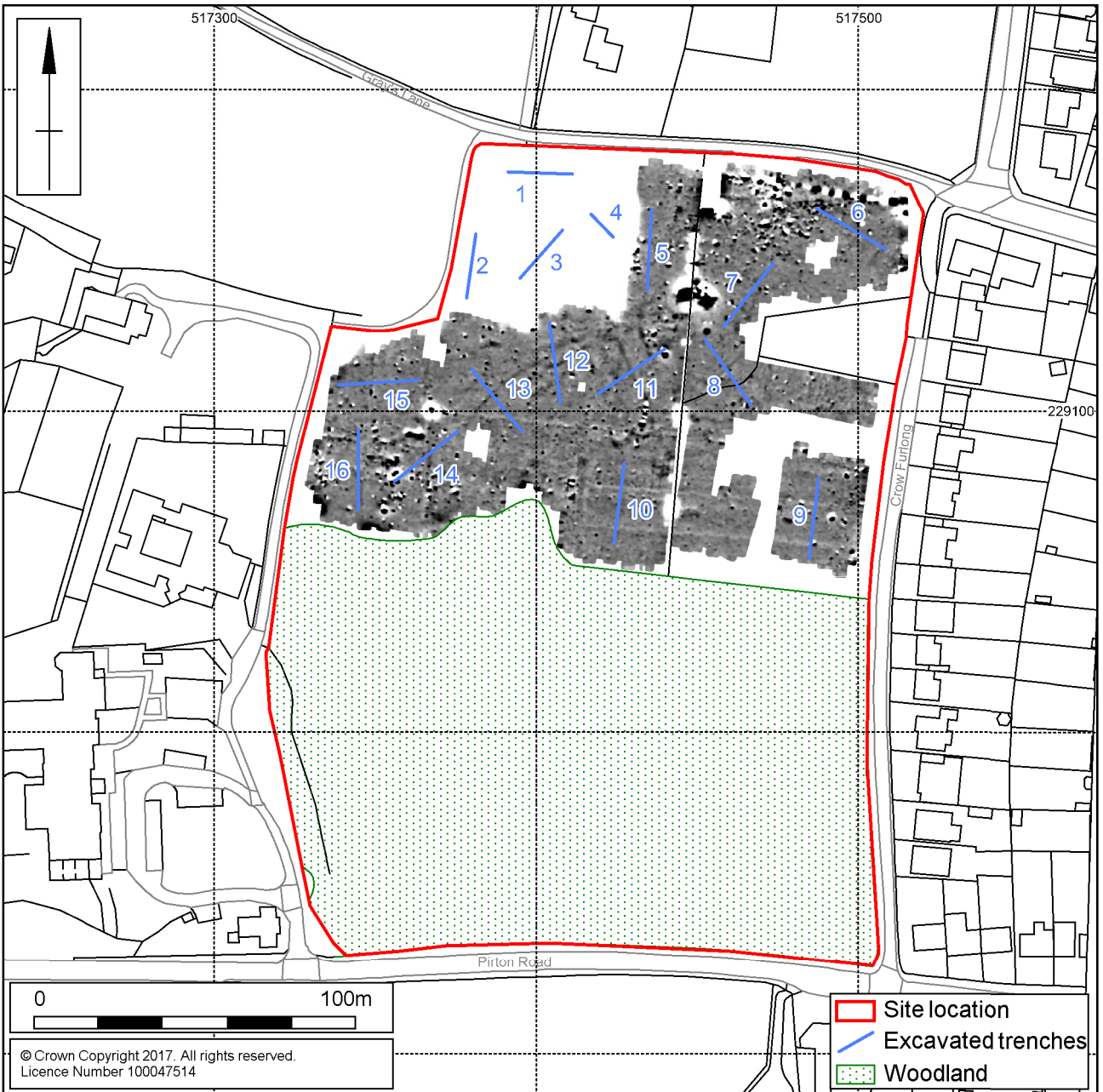
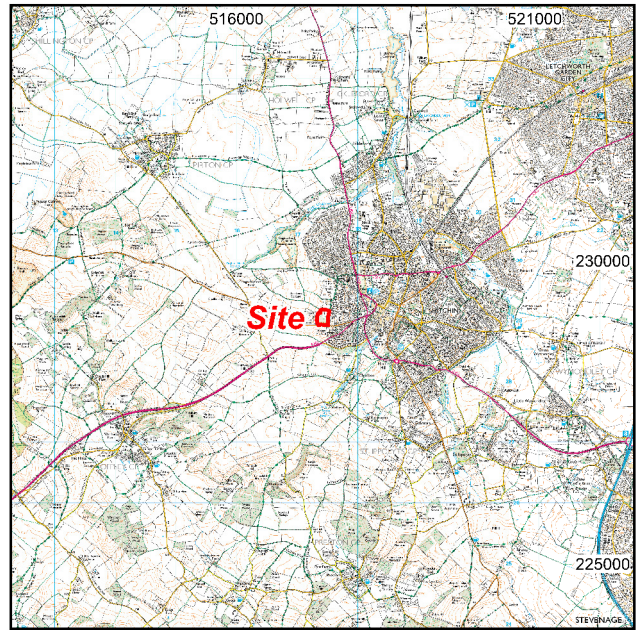
2 LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

The proposed development area lies adjacent to Foxholes Care Home, on the corner of Crow Furlong and Pirton Road on the west edge of Hitchin. It covers 4.2ha, c 1.9ha of which, the southern half, is mature woodland to be retained. The site is bounded to the south and east by the aforementioned roads, to the west by a private road servicing the neighbouring properties and agricultural land, and to the north by Gray's Lane. The full site boundary generally comprises hedge and mature trees, whilst the ground cover consists of grassland/parkland with occasional mature trees and areas of scrub.

The site slopes downwards from north to south between 95m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) and 90m aOD. The British Geological Survey indicates that the geology of the area comprises a sequence of chalk strata concealed beneath a drift of fluvio-glacial sand and gravel (BGS 2017). This was confirmed on site.

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The main objective of the archaeological evaluation was to identify any archaeological deposits or features that may be present within the area of the proposed development



Scale 1:2000

Site location and excavated trenches Fig 1

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and to determine, where necessary, a programme of further mitigation work. The evaluation specifically aimed to examine:

- 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, including the presence/absence of palaeosols, palaeochannels, and old land surface soils/deposits, the character of deposits and their contents within negative features, and the site formation processes generally;
- the impact of the proposed works upon any surviving archaeological remains;
- and inform any future excavation, mitigation and/or preservation *in situ* strategy.

Specific research objectives have been drawn from national and regional research frameworks documents (Brown and Glazebrook 2000; Glazebrook 1997; Medlycott 2011), and currently include:

- The characterisation of Iron Age and Roman rural settlements and the development of the agrarian landscape;
- The investigation of sites with well-preserved deposits of both late Iron Age and Roman date in order to examine continuity of local tradition;
- Evidence for variation in resources from different scales of farm.

4 HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

A search of the Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record (HHER) was undertaken as part of this WSI process. Key data within a 1km radius of the development site are summarised below, and within Table 1 (see fig 2, MOLA 2017).

Palaeolithic

Significant quantities of Lower Palaeolithic flintwork, mainly handaxes, have been recovered from the area surrounding Hitchin. Most of the finds were made in the 19th century from brick pits located immediately south of the town centre (Bryant 2011a). Whilst no evidence of *in-situ* flint working sites has been identified, the condition of the flint suggests that such activity was taking place nearby (*ibid*). Palaeolithic flint implements have been recorded 100m to the east and again 1km to the east of the proposed development area (HHER281, 282).

Mesolithic and Neolithic

Limited Mesolithic activity is recorded in the HER data for the area around the site. Late Mesolithic or Neolithic blades and scrapers, as well as a perforated stone axe, are recorded immediately to the east of the site at Crow Furlong. In addition, a pebble macehead with an hourglass perforation is recorded from Hitchin, though no precise location is given (HHER6453).

A number of findspots are recorded for Neolithic material to the north and east of the proposed development area. A polished stone axe of black basaltic rock is recorded approximately 500m north-north-west of the site (HHER289). Approximately 900m to the east of the site, a group of six polished flint axeheads and a gouge dated to the Neolithic period were found (HHER290). In addition a leaf shaped arrowhead was recovered from the fill of a medieval rubbish pit, excavated in the centre of Hitchin (HHER18276).

Bronze Age

Archaeological evidence dated to this period is limited within the study area, with only a few spot finds for which no accurate location other than 'Hitchin' exists. These include an early Bronze Age beaker (HHER300) and a fragment of stone axe (HHER4867). An undated cropmark (HHER 4493) approximately 950m south of the proposed development area has been interpreted as a possible plough razed barrow ditch, though its proximity to 'Windmill Cottage' may suggest that the ditch relates to a medieval or post-medieval windmill mound. Archaeological excavations at Upper Tilehouse Street in Hitchin identified a boundary ditch (HHER12858), tentatively dated to the late Bronze Age/early Iron Age period (Saunders 2005).

Iron Age

Activity in the Iron Age is dominated by recorded spot finds of Iron Age coinage including a bronze stater of Tasciovanus found in 1937 (HHER131) and a number of other gold staters (HHER131; 4872; 4873) (see Table 1). Evidence for habitation within the study area for the Iron Age period is limited. The number of spot finds indicates clearly that activity must exist in the area though it most likely lies beneath modern day Hitchin town centre. A possible roundhouse was identified during archaeological works undertaken in 2004 c 900m to the east of the site at Foxholes, though its date remains inconclusive (HHER12582; Butler and Hawkins 2004). Iron Age pottery has also been found in a group of postholes (HHER18273) not far from the aforementioned roundhouse (Saunders and Winter 2009). In addition abraded Iron Age pottery was recorded in a number of features dated to the Roman period.

Roman

Evidence for this period, as with the Iron Age, is largely limited to features identified through archaeological work in the present day town centre and finds without known locations (see Table 1). Roman pottery, building material and other evidence for occupation is recorded in the town centre, approximately 900m to the east of the site (HHER1419; 11793; 12583).

Despite the apparent concentration of activity beneath Hitchin town centre, immediately to the east of the proposed development area, in the land surrounding 'Foxholes', further activity dated to the Roman period has been identified. A single Roman pit (HHER10912) was excavated which contained pottery dated from the middle-late Iron Age to the 2nd century AD (Bescoby and Vaughan 1998). In addition a Romano-British cemetery (HHER1184) containing several inhumations and a number of cremation deposits was excavated in 1880. Associated finds included Samian ware, 1st-century AD fibulae and other domestic objects. It remains unclear whether the cemetery extends into the present development area.

Anglo-Saxon

By the middle Saxon period Hitchin seems to have supplanted the Roman town of Baldock as the local administrative centre and appears to have controlled a small kingdom in North Hertfordshire and Southern Bedfordshire (Bryant 2011b, 35). By the

later Saxon period Hitchin probably fell under the control of the Mercian King Offa as a royal estate (*ibid*, 36). A rare silver coin depicting King Offa was found approximately 500m to the south-west of the site (HHER1181).

A large ditch (HHER12584) running north-north-east to south-south-west across one of the plots between Bucklersbury and Paynes Park was excavated in 2004 (Boyer 2005). Its dimensions were up to 4.25m wide and 2.41m deep, with steeply sloping sides. Its date appears to be late Saxon, as the fill contained a small amount of prehistoric material at the base and small amounts of Roman pottery and tile together with late Saxon and early medieval finds in the upper fills. The late Saxon date is not entirely certain, as the ditch might possibly be Roman, but on balance the later date appears more likely. The shape and dimensions suggest a defensive role, or at least that of a major boundary such as a burh. An alternative is that it is the boundary of the Saxon minster precinct, and it could have served both functions.

Approximately 720m south-east of the site an elaborate gold ring of probable Saxon date has been recorded (HHER4901). Set into the ring is an intaglio of jasper quartz depicting Mars with a spear and shield and dating to the 2nd or 3rd century AD.

Medieval

A number of medieval features have been identified in the centre of Hitchin, to the east of the proposed development area (Table 1). These included evidence for burghage plots, post-built structures and rubbish pits between Bucklesbury and Paynes Park, which produced pottery dated from 1000-1400 AD (HHER12585; Boyer 2005).

Evidence related to the medieval tile industry in Hitchin has been recorded during excavations along Tilehouse Street (HHER18275). This included several pits containing tile and pottery wasters dating from 1000 to 1400 AD (Saunders and Winter 2009).

The site of a Carmelite priory (HHER4392), founded in AD 1317 is located approximately 1km to the south-east of the site, at the northern edge of Priory Park (HHER12686).

Immediately north-east of the proposed development area lies the location of a former medieval deer park, Punfold Park (HHER12679). Part of the original medieval boundary may be preserved along its western and southern edges.

Post-medieval

There are a number of records within the search area for this period relating to the continued tile and pottery production within Hitchin town centre (Table 1).

A large house built in the Tudor Gothic style was present on land immediately to the west of the proposed development area (HHER13218). It was demolished in 2011 following a programme of detailed building recording (Hillelson and Ashworth 2011).

Table 1: Summary of selected HER results

MHT Number	Period	Description
291	Palaeolithic	Palaeolithic flint implement.
282	Palaeolithic	Palaeolithic flint implements.
289	Neolithic	Polished stone axe of black basaltic rock
290	Neolithic	Six polished flint axeheads and a gouge
292	Mesolithic/Neolithic	Late Mesolithic or Neolithic blades and scrapers and a perforated stone axe
293	Neolithic	Neolithic flint implements. Worked flint and a flint axe.
6453	Mesolithic	A Mesolithic pebble macehead with hourglass perforation,

		found at Hitchin
18276	Neolithic	A flint leaf-shaped arrowhead of Neolithic date, found in the fill of a medieval rubbish pit
300	Bronze Age	An early Bronze Age Beaker in the British Museum, 'which it is supposed was found near Hitchin'
4493	Bronze Age	Cropmark of a single ditched circular enclosure; diameter approx. 27m. No apparent entrance. No internal features. Interpreted as the ring ditch of a plough-raised barrow; probably of Bronze Age date.
4867	Bronze Age	A fragment of a stone axe in Letchworth Museum was found at 'Hitchin'
12858	Bronze Age	A ditch behind Lewesford House ran ENE-WSW and contained in its fill one small rim sherd of flint-gritted pottery, apparently late Bronze/early Iron Age. It appeared to be a boundary ditch.
131	Iron Age	A bronze stater of Tasciovanus found in 1937 at Hitchin, now in the British Museum. An uninscribed gold stater was also found at Hitchin. Two further gold coins found at Hitchin (no precise findspot given).
4872	Iron Age	Late Iron Age coin, uninscribed gold quarter stater. Allen's type Gallo Belgic
4873	Iron Age	An uninscribed gold stater found in 1884 at Hitchin
12582	Iron Age	A ring ditch excavated in 2004 is probably to be interpreted as an Iron Age round house, on the grounds of a lack of any sign that it was a Bronze Age burial, and the presence of a possible entrance in the north-east quadrant. Some later prehistoric pottery was present but its date is inconclusive
18273	Iron Age	Post holes and late Bronze Age to middle Iron Age pottery
22078	Iron Age	Late Iron Age coin, Hitchin
22091	Iron Age	Late Iron Age coin, Hitchin
22334	Iron Age	Late Iron Age coin, Hitchin
22363	Iron Age	Late Iron Age coin, Hitchin
22377	Iron Age	Late Iron Age coin, Hitchin
22392	Iron Age	Late Iron Age coin, Hitchin
22493	Iron Age	Late Iron Age coin, Hitchin
1184	Roman	Several inhumations (one with traces of an iron weapon) and to the west, numerous cinerary urns along with Samian ware, domestic objects, 1st century fibulae, bronze objects, two knife blades and coins, representing several grave groups.
1419	Roman	'Pottery and other evidence of occupation'
4876	Roman	Miniature Roman pot with vague provenance
10912	Roman	A pit found during construction work in 1998, in the area of the walled kitchen garden at Foxholes (where a Roman cemetery [1184] was found in the 19th century). This pit contained 23 potsherds, 'dating from the mid-late Iron Age to the early 2nd century AD'
12352	Roman	Part of a carved marble frieze from a 3rd century tomb
12583	Roman	Probable Roman field boundaries. Three sections of Roman field ditch were excavated here in 2004.
21464	Roman	Late Roman coin.
1181	Saxon	A rare type of silver penny of Offa
1609	Saxon	Early to mid-Saxon handled vessel. A small Anglo-Saxon pot found in a garden in Gaping Lane Hitchin.
4901	Saxon	A Roman jasper intaglio depicting Mars, in an elaborate gold setting of much later date. The ring has an intaglio of jasper quartz depicting Mars with a spear and shield and dating to

		the 2nd or 3rd century; the elaborate gold setting, however, was considered by British Museum staff to be 'probably Saxon'.
12584	Saxon	A large ditch running NNE-SSW across one of the plots between Bucklersbury and Paynes Park was excavated in 2004. Its dimensions were up to 4.25m wide and 2.41m deep, with steeply sloping sides. Its date appears to be late Saxon, as the fill contained a small amount of prehistoric material at the base and small amounts of Roman pottery and tile together with late Saxon and early medieval finds in the upper fills. The late Saxon date is not entirely certain, as the ditch might possibly be Roman, but on balance the later date appears more likely. The shape and dimensions suggest a defensive role, or at least that of a major boundary such as a burh. An alternative is that it is the boundary of the Saxon minster precinct; and it could have served both functions
4392	Medieval	Site of the Carmelite priory, 1317 friary, the church converted from an existing house.
12585	Medieval	Excavation of land between Bucklersbury and Paynes Park, within one of the medieval burgage plots, revealed traces of a rectangular post-built structure associated with pottery of cAD1000-1400, and several pits containing late Saxon and medieval pottery and tile. To the north-west was a feature with an industrial function, possibly a kiln of some sort, and a ditch which may have marked the rear of the burgage plot. There was also an unlined well, and many later small features reflecting use of the back yards.
12679	Medieval	Medieval deer park and possible boundary bank
18275	Medieval	Pits and structures associated with the tile industry in Tilehouse Street, with tile and pottery wasters. Pits found at the southern edge of the Brooker's Yard site, north of the Coopers Arms [15872], contained medieval pottery with a date range of AD 1100-1400. One pit contained tile wasters and other rubbish including animal bone, and cut another pit which contained a good assemblage of almost complete pots, some of them wasters. Another contained rubbish including a layer of tile wasters, above which was a small amount of pottery dating to AD 1350-1500. These are evidently associated with the tile and pottery industry in Tilehouse Street to the south and SW.
21461	Medieval	Lead token, copper alloy mount.
21463	Medieval	Silver longcross halfpenny.
5990	Post-medieval	Lucas Windmill. Post-medieval windmill, demolished in the mid 19th century
10203	Post-medieval	Grounds of small mid 19th-century country house
11477		A pit containing slightly overfired Hertfordshire Greyware pottery was found during excavation in advance of the A602 Hitchin bypass in 1982. The sherds may be wasters from pottery manufacturing.
12682	Post-medieval	Remains of pits in this field may be those of fishponds and a 'hurlock pit' referred to in a 1699 lease, and hollows on 19th century OS maps. 'Hurlock means a hard or stony chalk' used for making lime and marling fields. They may also be remnants of ponds dug in the 18th century for ice to supply the park icehouse
12686	Post-medieval	Earlier 18th century landscape park with some surviving features

12857	Post-medieval	A pit in an evaluation trench behind Lewesford House, Upper Tilehouse Street, contained pieces of peg tile apparently of 17th-18th century date. Some appeared to be overfired, suggesting that they are wasters from a possible nearby tile kiln.
13218	Post-medieval	Large later 19th century country house, built c1877 in Tudor Gothic style and demolished in 2011
18232	Post-medieval	Iron foundry in suburban street, replaced by housing in the late 19th century

Previous archaeological works

A number of previous archaeological evaluations, watching briefs and building recording programmes have been undertaken in the centre of Hitchin, many of which have been described in the historic and archaeological background. A geophysical survey has been undertaken within the northern part of the site and has identified a number of anomalies indicative of linear archaeological features as well as some linear features possibly relating to allotment boundaries (Arkley 2017). Archaeological evaluation undertaken in the walled kitchen garden, associated with 'Foxholes', did not find any further evidence for the Romano British cemetery excavated in 1880 (Pugh 1996).

5 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

A total of sixteen trenches were excavated across the proposed development area (Fig 1). A small area in the northern part of the site, which was not subject to archaeological geophysical survey, was targeted with three trenches 20m long x 1.8m wide and one trench 10m long x 1.8m wide. The rest of the site was evaluated by twelve trenches measuring 25m long x 1.8m wide. The trenches were positioned to target anomalies identified in the geophysical data and to identify the location of a possible Roman cemetery recorded immediately to the west of the site, as well as to provide a broad sample of apparent 'blank' areas.

All trenches were located using a Leica Viva Survey Grade RTK GPS operating to an accuracy of +/-0.05m to Ordnance Survey National Grid and Datum. Trenches were machine-excavated using a flat toothless bucket 1.8m wide under continuous archaeological supervision and were excavated to the first archaeological remains or, where these were absent, the upper interface of geological deposits.

All site recording procedures are detailed in MOLA's in-house *Archaeological Fieldwork Manual* (MOLA 2014), which is issued to all staff. A photographic record was maintained by high resolution digital photography exceeding 12 megapixels.

Where appropriate, soil samples were taken for environmental analysis from suitable contexts with reference to the guidance for sampling as outlined by Historic England (Campbell *et al* 2011).

6 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

General stratification

The natural geology at the site varies between chalky clay, gravels and sands which are mixed across the site and in some places giving a banded appearance, however towards the north western half of the site the sands are the dominant type, giving way to a further gravel layers with the occasional chalky clay patches towards the middle and south east.

The subsoil was mid greyish brown clayey silt across the site with thickness ranging from 0.10m to 0.54m. The deeper areas were focused towards the northern edges of the site where the landscape drops off and shallowest at the crest of the hill around trenches 7 and 8. The topsoil, for the most part mid greyish brown silt, was between 0.19m and 0.35m thick and followed the trend of the subsoil.

Overview of the archaeological remains

Ditches, pits and postholes were encountered in ten of the sixteen trenches and produced mixed results when viewed in comparison with the results of the geophysical survey (see below) (Figs 1 and 2). The archaeology was distributed across the entire evaluation area but the greatest concentration of features was found on the higher ground at the centre of the site between trenches 7 and 13. These features were dated to the mid to late Late Iron Age and Roman period. Continuations of the Roman activity can also be found in the form of ditches extending towards the west and south-west of the site. In addition to this within the north east of the site where the ground level drops sharply evidence of post-medieval quarrying have been found (Fig 2).

Trenches 1, 2, 4, 9, 14 and 15 contained no archaeological remains. Full context descriptions can be found in Appendix 1.

6.1 Late Iron Age and Roman activity

Trenches 7, 8 and 11 to 13 were positioned to target a sub-rectangular enclosure and possible associated ditch system noted by the geophysical survey (Arkley 2017). The sub-rectangular enclosure (trenches 7, 8 and 11, Fig 3) ditch [707], [807] and [1105] was between 0.38m to 0.45m deep and 0.79m to 0.90m wide with moderately sloping sides and concave base (see Fig. 5, section 7), and the overall enclosure was approximately 30m in diameter. Pottery was recovered from ditch [807] only. The sherds were mid to late Iron Age in date. Animal bone was also recovered from these ditches as well as an intrusive stem fragment of mid to late 17th century clay tobacco pipe.

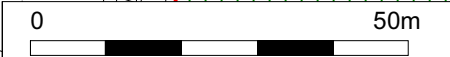
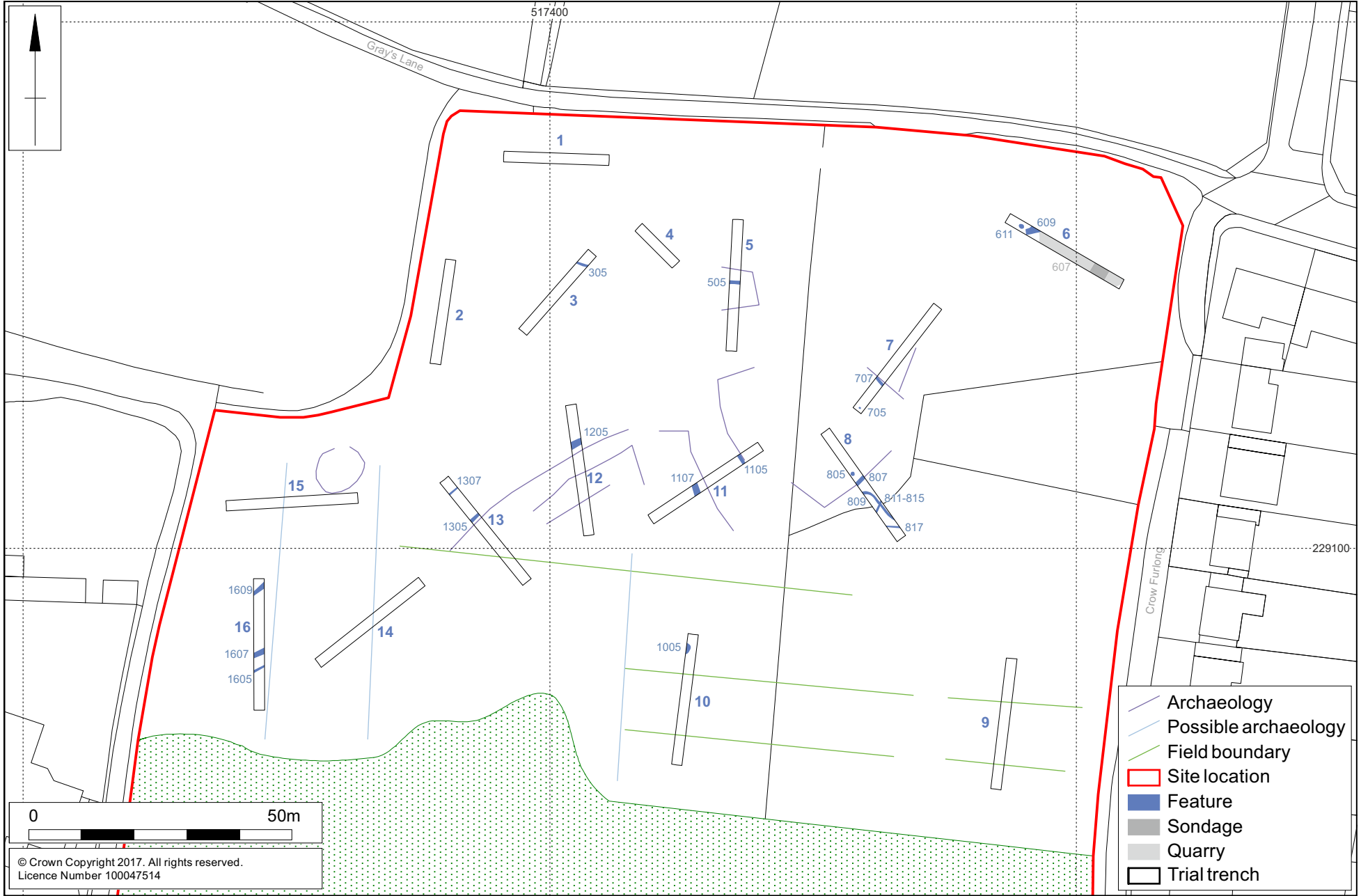
Within the enclosure, towards its east side were two discrete features, a posthole [705] (Figs 3 and 4, section 6), which was 0.3m in diameter and 0.09m deep and a pit or posthole [805] (Figs 3 and 4, section 14), which had straight sides and a flat base and was 0.8m wide by 0.35m deep. The pit/posthole contained mid to Late Iron Age pottery with a large number of packing stones.

Trenches 11, 12 and 13 targeted the possible ditch system adjacent to the west side of the enclosure. The results demonstrated that only one ditch was present, a probably continuous L-shaped ditch. It was oriented south-west to north-east through trenches 13 [1305] (Figs 2 and 4, section 8) and 12 [1205], then turned to the south-east in trench 11 [1107] approximately 8m to 10m from and parallel to the south-west side of the enclosure. The other anomalies on the geophysical survey were not present within the trenches and probably represent natural variations. The L-shaped ditch was approximately 80m in length and on average 1.1m wide by 0.4m deep with a broadly similar, steep to moderate-sided profile with a concave base. Pottery recovered from the ditch along its length returned dates from the 1st century AD to possibly the early 3rd century AD. A small quantity of animal bone was also recovered.

A further three ditches were located close to the enclosure on its south-east external side. None was identified via the geophysical survey. Ditch [813/815] and [817] were of similar size and shape being less than 0.5m wide and no more than 0.1m deep. The former was aligned south-west to north-east and the latter east to west. It is likely that they will have crossed about 2m beyond the west side of the trench. Ditch [813/815] was truncated by ditch [809/811].

Scale 1:1000

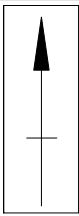
Trench plan with geophysics interpretation Fig 2



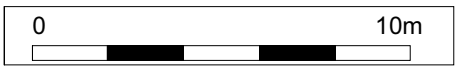
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- Archaeology
- Possible archaeology
- Field boundary
- Site location
- Feature
- Sondage
- Quarry
- Trial trench

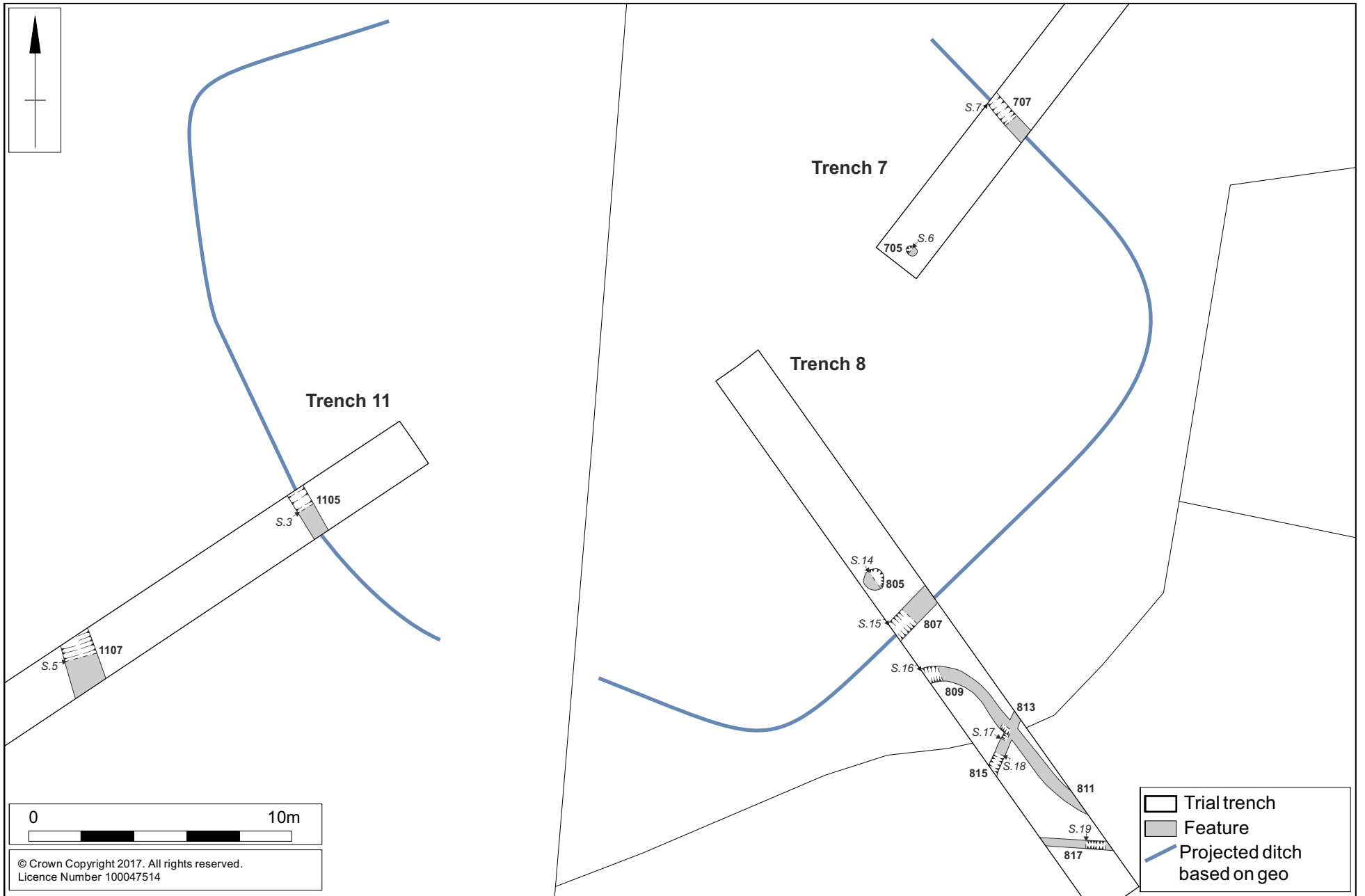
Scale 1:200



Trenches 7, 8 and 11
Fig 3



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It was sinuous, aligned south-east to north-west and was 0.8m wide by 0.3m deep with a V-shaped profile. Pottery was recovered from [809] only and was dated to the mid to late Iron Age, corresponding with the pottery recovered from the nearby enclosure.

Other features

Five ditches and a pit were also identified (Figs 2 and 5). These were located in trenches 3, 5, 13 and 16, with the pit located in Trench 10.

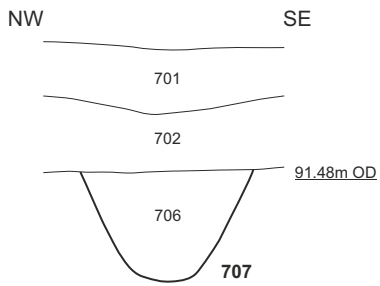
Ditch [505] in Trench 5 was identified as a ring ditch-type feature by the geophysical survey, but on excavation of the trench proved to be a single ditch aligned east to west. It was 0.5m wide by 0.2m deep with moderate sides and concave base. It was thought to continue westward into Trench 3 [305] (Fig 4, section 10), approximately 30m distant. The four pottery sherds recovered from this feature came from the same vessel, a mid/late 2nd century jar produced in Harrold, Bedfordshire. The remaining ditches were all aligned south-west to north-east and were located to the south-west of the L-shaped ditch, except ditch [1307], which was parallel and approximately 6m to the north. Ditch [1307] was 0.5m wide by 0.3m deep with moderate sides and concave base. Mid to late 1st century AD pottery and animal bone were recovered. Although sharing an alignment, none of the three ditches in Trench 16 could be definitively linked to ditch [1307] because they lie too far distant. The most likely possibility is ditch [1605] at 0.7m wide by 0.3m deep. This is the southernmost of the three ditches. North of that was ditch [1607], the largest in the trench at 1m wide by 0.3m deep (Figs 2 and 4, section 12), and a further 10m to the north was ditch [1609], which was 0.9m wide by 0.27m deep. The pottery recovered from ditches [1607] and [1609] was mixed and amounted to fewer than ten sherds. The fabrics range from later prehistoric to 1st to 2nd century Roman, but on balance indicate a Roman date for the activity (see Section 7). Animal bone was also recovered from ditch [1609].

The pit [1005] in Trench 10 was oval with steep sides and concave base, was 0.45m deep and had a diameter of 0.9m. Sherds from a jar were recovered and have been spot-dated to the mid 1st to the mid/late 2nd century. A single fragment of animal bone was also recovered.

Post-medieval Quarrying

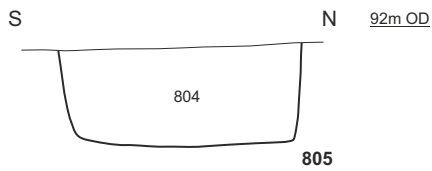
Post-medieval quarrying [607] was identified towards the northeast of the site in Trench 6 (Fig 2) where the landscape was noted as sloping downwards. The area of extraction covered 18m of the trench and a depth was established at 1.35m below the present ground surface. Two small pits [609] and [611] were identified to the immediate north-west of and separate from the quarrying; both were approximately 1m wide with dark brown loamy fills.

Section 7



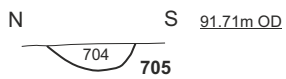
Section 7, looking north

Section 14

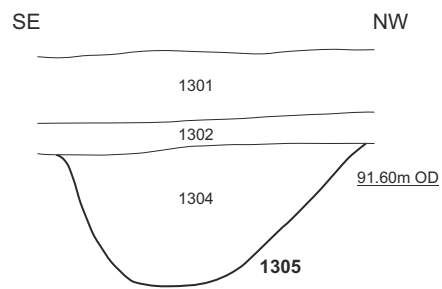


Section 14, looking south

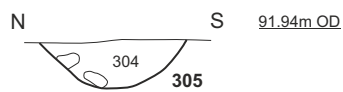
Section 6



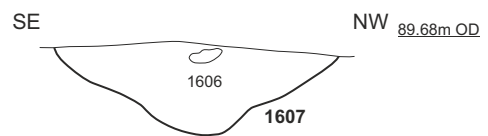
Section 8



Section 10



Section 12

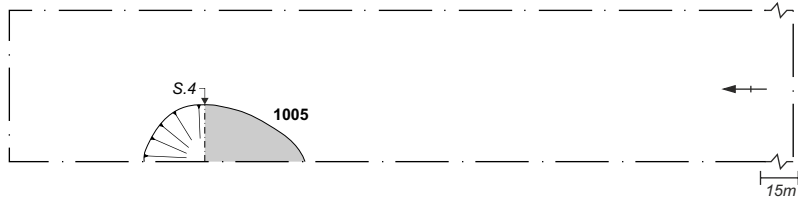


Scale 1:100

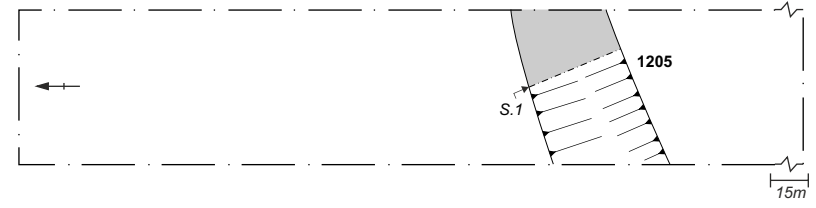
Trench 6



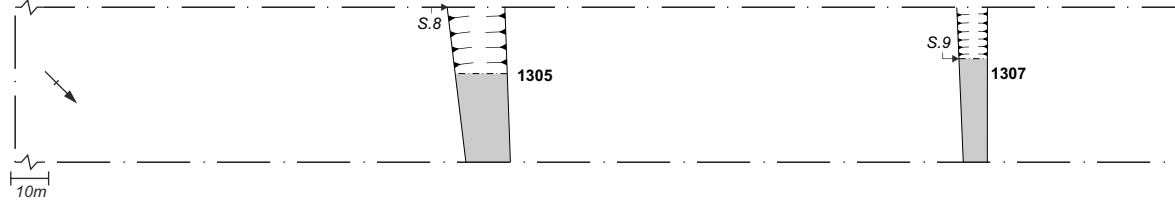
Trench 10



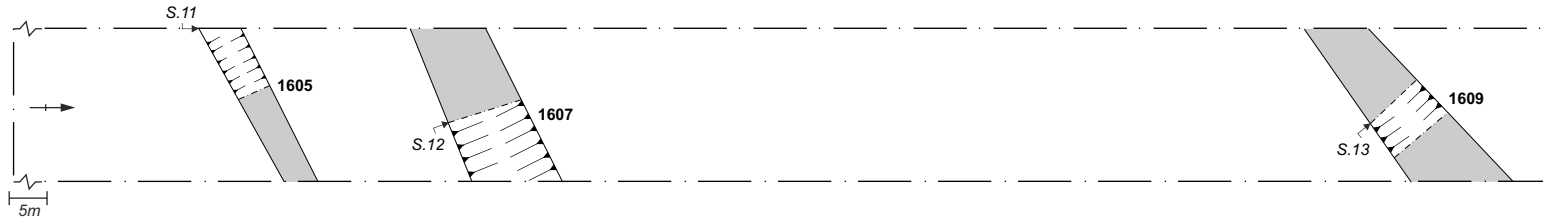
Trench 12



Trench 13



Trench 16



Plans of trenches 6, 10, 12-13 and 16 Fig 5



Trench 13, looking North-West Fig 6



Trench 16, looking North Fig 7

7 THE ARTEFACT AND ECOFACT EVIDENCE

7.1 Pottery by Andy Fawcett

Introduction

A total of ninety-one sherds with a weight of 1018g and a R.eve (estimated vessel equivalent) of 1.49 was recovered. Table 2 sets out the quantities of pottery retrieved from each trench.

Table 2: Pottery distribution by trench

Trench	Type	No of sherds	%	Wt/g	%	R.eve	%
3	Ditch	4	4.5	12	1	-	-
8	Pit	2	2	21	2	0.11	7.5
10	Pit	8	9	136	13.5	-	-
11	Ditch	34	37.5	329	32.5	0.84	56
12	Ditch	6	6.5	80	8	0.11	7.5
13	Ditch	31	34	332	32.5	0.43	29
16	Ditch	6	6.5	108	10.5	-	-
Total		91	100	1018	100	1.49	100

The assemblage is predominantly dated to the early Roman period with a small quantity of prehistoric material also being present.

This report within the introduction comments on the general condition and diagnostic element of the assemblage. This is then followed by a methodology of work, an examination of the pottery by trench and succeeded by a general conclusion.

The pottery assemblage from the combined trenches was mostly recovered from ditch fills the only exception being the presence of two pit contexts. As a whole the pottery assemblage has a reasonable average weight of 11.18g. Only the group within Trench 3 displayed a considerably lower average weight (3g). The overall condition of the pottery, in terms of abrasion, may be described as being slightly abraded.

The diagnostic component of the assemblage (rim and base sherds) may be described as slightly below average and in most cases, individual forms cannot be identified beyond their general class of vessel, such as jar or bowl for instance.

A total of seven trenches contained pottery which amounted to ten contexts with a ceramic element. However, many of these trenches/fills contained small quantities of pottery, only Trenches 11 and 13 held over ten sherds (34 & 31 pieces). The fills therefore associated with the remaining trenches cannot be considered to be well dated.

Methodology

The pottery has been recorded by sherd count and weight and the fabrics in each context were examined at x20 vision. Roman fabric codes have been assigned using simple letter combinations based upon those developed by Tomber and Dore (1998) as part of a national system and where relevant, these have been supplemented by those used at Chelmsford by Going (1987); codes relating to the prehistoric periods have also been given simple letter combinations based upon these approaches.

Where present, Roman form types have followed the system used by Going (1987) and or Thompson (1982). A full breakdown of reference codes can be seen in Appendix 1, and the entire recorded pottery assemblage can be viewed in Appendix 2.

Trench 3

All the sherds were recovered from ditch [305], fill (304). They are body sherds that belong to the same vessel (a jar) in fabric UNS SH, which is highly likely to be an early Harrod product (Brown 1994, 51-57). The fabric style suggests a date no later than the mid/late 2nd century.

Trench 8

Two contexts were noted; pit [805], fill (804) (1 sherd @ 11g) and ditch [809], fill (808) (1 sherd @ 10g). The fabrics are hand-made, reduced and predominantly display common organic voids (UNS SO). They are dated from the early to mid/late Iron Age. Although both of the sherds were diagnostic none could be identified further beyond their general class of vessel. The jar in pit fill (804) exhibited a small and thin upright rim and the bowl in Ditch fill 808 a crude in-turned rim.

Trench 10

The sherds within this trench were all recorded in pit [1005], fill (1004). They belong to the lower part of a jar base in fabric BSW dated from the mid-1st to around the mid/late 2nd century. Its fabric is patchy brown/black, sandy with sparse grog.

Trench 11

This trench contained the largest recorded pottery assemblage, all of which was recovered from ditch [1107], fill (1106). The group contains a variety of Roman coarsewares which are dated from the mid to late 2nd possibly into the early 3rd century. Amongst these fabrics are a small number of white (UNS WH) and white slipped wares, the remainder comprising a variety of unsourced reduced wares (BSW and GRS). The only exception to this are twenty sherds of Hadham reduced ware (HAD RE 1) which derive from the east Herts/Essex border.

Five jar types were noted although they were too small to be identified beyond their general class of vessel. However, also present was a B2/4 (Going 1987) bead rimmed dish which is similar to Verulamium type 2594 (Wilson 1984) as well as a reed rimmed bowl (C16) which shares some likeness in style to Verulamium No 2456 (Wilson 1984).

Trench 12

Trench 12 contained a single ditch [1205], fill (1204). The pottery retrieved from this context included a single oxidised Romanising sherd (UNS OX) with the remainder being made up of grog-tempered wares (SOB GT). This latter fabric straddles the conquest period (late 1st century BC to c AD60/70) and within the group a single jar was recorded. It is a lid seated type, and similar in style to those produced at Harrod in Bedfordshire (Brown 1994). However, this version is directly comparable to Thompson's B5-2 category (1982) as it displays the remnants of a slashed rim and exhibits rilling on the outer body. The form was very common in the Bucks, Beds and Herts area and was produced from around AD5 until AD50/60. The context has been assigned a post conquest date (AD43-50/60) by the presence of the previously mentioned Romanising sherd.

Trench 13

Two ditch fills contained pottery within this trench ((1304), [1305] & (1306), [1307]), both of which are dated from the mid to late 1st century AD. This is due to the presence of grog-tempered (SOB GT), Romanising (BSW) and shell tempered fabrics (UNS SH). Two forms were noted, one from each context. The first in (1304) (13 sherds @ 243g) is a BSW G19.4 jar (Going 1987) which is directly comparable also to Thompson's B1-1 range (1982). This version has a single cordon at the base of the neck and a piercing (possibly for hanging purposes) half way down the neck.

Ditch fill (1306) (18 sherds @ 89g) contained a UNS SH channel rim jar (Going 1987, G5) which is also similar to those listed in Thompson's C5-3 class (1982) as well as Stead and Rigby No 470 (1986).

Trench 16

This trench also contained two ditch fills ((1606), [1607] & (1608), [1609]). The dating of the first fill (2 sherds @ 4g) is not entirely clear, due to the fact an extremely small and abraded sherd of Lezoux samian ware was noted (LEZ SA 2). The sherd is dated from the early to later 2nd century however its condition and very low weight (less than one quarter of a gram) indicates that it is possibly intrusive, perhaps as a result of animal or root activity. The accompanying sherd within this context is a single fragment of hand-made flint tempered ware (UNS FT) dated from the late Bronze to early Iron Age. The sherd (3g) is low fired and yet exhibits only slight abrasion; it has a brown outer surface, black body and contains abundant ill-sorted flint.

Fill (1608) (6 sherds @ 108g) is not closely datable (mid 1st to later 2nd century) containing body sherds of a Romanising version of UNS OX and a single storage jar sherd in fabric SOB GT St.

Conclusion

A single sherd of late Bronze/early Iron Age pottery was recorded in ditch fill (1606) (Trench 16). However, both of the features identified within Trench 8 (towards the eastern side of the site) contained solely Iron Age pottery, albeit just single sherds. Nonetheless, these sherds displayed little abrasion and had a reasonable average sherd weight, and therefore demonstrate that some form of limited rural land use was being undertaken within the sampled area during this period.

The Roman assemblage contains several groups that are quite loosely dated (mid 1st-later 2nd century) although there is no evidence within any of the trenches to suggest activity beyond the 2nd century. However, there is reasonable evidence from Trenches 12 and 13 (located at the centre of the site) to indicate Roman rural activity commenced from the mid to late 1st century, and it may well be that some of the more broadly dated groups too could be placed in this period. However only a subsequent phase of archaeological investigation may determine whether this is true.

The latest Roman assemblage is dated from the mid to later 2nd century and this was noted in Trench 11 also around the centre of the site. Nonetheless, at this stage of the archaeological investigation this group (in terms of dating) remains in isolation.

There is no evidence within any of the Roman assemblages to suggest high status activity (for instance the presence of finewares). Equally the coarsewares themselves are predominantly of a local nature indicating an economy that was not particularly dynamic. Finally the form assemblage is extremely limited, with the exception of a bowl and dish, the remainder is made up jars. Completely absent are any specialised forms such as mortaria or forms associated with dining, for example beakers, flagons etc.

The evidence therefore suggests that this assemblage represents low status Roman rural activity of some description. The lack of significant abrasion within the pottery groups, the size of the sherds and consistent presence of jars indicates that this is perhaps the debris of a small nearby community or farmstead.

Around a mile to the east of the current site on Queen Street in Hitchin (Fawcett, pers comm), there is limited evidence to suggest late Iron Age and early Roman activity. However, the first main phase of land use here is dated from c AD138 to 190 which is comparable to the dated group from Trench 11. Certainly as pointed out by Niblett (1995, 67-76) small farming communities existed side by side with clusters of farmsteads on the outskirts of modern Hitchin, (Pirton being one example, to the north-west of the current site) that were in use prior to and after the Roman conquest.

7.2 Clay tobacco-pipe by Tora Hylton

A single stem fragment from a clay tobacco-pipe was recovered from ditch [706] Trench 7. The fragment measures c22mm in length and displays signs of abrasion and wear. Changes in manufacturing technique and the use of finer wire to make the bore ensured that there was a regular reduction in the bore between c1620 and 1800. Stems bores are measured in increments of 64th of an inch, and this small fragment measures 7/64ths, suggesting a mid-late 17th date.

7.3 Animal bone by Sander Aerts

Introduction and methodology

Over the course of the excavation, 28 animal bone fragments were hand collected from seven different contexts, with an additional 29 being recovered from four environmental samples through wet sieving. All fragments were manually washed before analysis of the preservation and identification of the present taxa.

The animal remains were identified using the MOLA Northampton reference collection. Unidentifiable fragments were attributed to size categories where possible: large mammal (cattle, horse), medium mammal (sheep/goat, pig, large dog) and small mammal (small dog, cat, hare, rabbit and rodents). Due to the similarities in the morphology of sheep and goat skeletons, these two taxa have been grouped together as one category. Data on ageing was collected using Grant's (1982) methodology.

Results

A total of 5 fragments could be identified to species (17.9%), and 20 fragments were attributed to a size category (71.4%). None of the remains from the environmental sample could be identified. The results are summarised in tables 3 and 4 overleaf.

Context (1106) contained two first or second cattle molars (M1/M2). One cattle third molar (M3) was identified from (1204). Wear patterns indicate an age of 30 to 36 months. This was associated with a fully fused cattle metacarpus fragment and a premolar from a sheep or goat.

Preservation and taphonomy

The remains are fragmented, but in a good state. Some bones show moderate to heavy signs of root etching. No butchering or skinning marks were found, but a number of fragments from the environmental sample show charring and burning.

Table 3 Quantification of the hand collected animal remains. Weight in grams.

Context	Cattle	Sheep/Goat	MM	LM	Indet	Weight
706	-	-	-	-	3	3.9
808	-	-	-	7	-	78.7
1004	-	-	-	1	-	8.6
1106	2	-	-	4	-	35.6
1204	2	1	-	-	-	78
1304	-	-	-	7	-	19
1608	-	-	1	-	-	9.4
Total	4	1	1	19	3	233.2

Key: MM = medium mammal, LM = large mammal

Table 4 Quantification of the animal remains from sample 1. Weight in grams.

Sample	Context	Indet	Burnt indet	Weight
1	804	10	19	10.1
Total	-	10	19	10.1

Key: Indet = indeterminate

7.4 Analysis of the environmental evidence by Sander Aerts

Introduction and methodology

One sample from (804) of 20 litres was processed and analysed. A siraf tank fitted with a 500 micron mesh was used with a 500 micron sieve for the flot. The remains were sorted and analysed with the aid of a desk magnifier and a low powered binocular microscope (10x magnification). Dry sieving was carried out using a 10, 4 and a 2 millimetre sieve. The results from the 10-2 mm fraction and the flot have been merged in Table 5.

Table 5. Environmental remains from sample 1, (804).

Sample	Context	Bone	Charcoal	Ch. grain	Shell
1	804	A	C	A	C

Key: A= 1-3, B=4-20, C=21-50, D=51+ Individuals

Results

The sample contains some charcoal remains. Although the count is high, the fragments are very small (<1mm). Bone is represented through some small flakes (<1mm). Shell is abundant, and is exclusively represented through various terrestrial snail species. Two highly distorted charred grains were noted, but could not be identified other than to the tribe of *Triticeae* within the grass family. The shape suggests a wheat species.

Conclusion and recommendation

Few culturally significant finds were found in this sample. However, due to the occurrence of cultivated grains, environmental sampling for archaeobotanical analysis would be highly recommended if mitigation were to take place.

8 DISCUSSION

The evaluation has demonstrated that the geophysical survey identified some, but not all archaeological remains, and confirmed the presence of a probable mid to late Iron Age to early Romano-British enclosure and associated ditches, pits and postholes. The enclosure was located on a slight ridge of high ground, above a south-facing slope and was probably part of a rural, low-status settlement, similar to others already known in the vicinity (Niblett 1995). Fine wares were rare in the pottery assemblage and the predominant vessel form was the jar.

The enclosure, which was investigated in trenches 7, 8 and 11 measured approximately 30m in diameter from the outer edge and contained two internal postholes, one of which containing a large amount of packing stones. The geophysical survey indicates a possible entrance at the south-east corner, but this should be treated with caution, as the features were present where the survey indicated none, for example in Trench 16, and the area was not tested with a trench. Associated with the enclosure were a series of up to three ditches, all aligned south-west to north-east and appearing the respect the location of the enclosure. Another ditch was present to the north-west and is likely to be related.

Limited environmental potential was noted, although probable wheat grains were present in the recovered assemblage. Standard sampling procedures should be implemented during any further work.

An area of post-medieval quarrying was present in the north-east corner of the evaluated area in Trench 6. It is sited some distance away from the area of Iron Age to Roman activity and is unlikely to have a negative impact on the remains.

The geophysical survey provided the best response on the ridge of higher ground on which the enclosure and associated ditches were identified (Fig 2). To the north the geophysical survey was less reliable, with one anomaly proving to be of archaeological origin. At the west edge of the site, the survey indicated no archaeology but four ditches were present. The anomalies presented with less certainty, annotated as possible archaeology and field boundaries, were not present within the trenches. They may be related to past activity that impacted no lower than the topsoil/subsoil. These may also have been short-lived, as they are not present on accessible historic Ordnance Survey mapping, and instead indicates that the site was an orchard, or planted formally with trees, from the late 19th century until the late 1970's (old-maps 2017).

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MOLA

First draft: 09 August 2017

APPENDIX 1: Context Inventory

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
1	20m x 1.8m E-W		92.57m	0.84m / 91.73m
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
101	Topsoil	Loose, mid greyish brown silt, occasional stones and pebbles	0.30m deep	
102	Subsoil	Friable mid orange brown silty clay with frequent flint	0.54m deep	
103	Natural	Firm mid orange silty clay with frequent flint and clay patches		

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
2	20m x 1.8m N-S		92.42	0.70m / 91.72m
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
201	Topsoil	Friable, dark brownish grey clayey silt	0.30m deep	
202	Subsoil	Friable, mid greyish brown clayey silt, freq flint	0.40m deep	
203	Natural	Mixed firm chalk with orange gravel and sands and freq flint		

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
3	20m x 1.8m NE-SW		92.47	0.66m / 91.81m
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
301	Topsoil	Loose, mid greyish brown silt	0.30m deep	

FOXHOLES, HITCHIN

302	Subsoil	Friable, mid orange brown silty clay with frequent flint and gravel	0.52m deep	
303	Natural	Friable, mid orange silty clay with lots of flint and gravel and patches of chalky clay		
304	Fill of 305	Compact, light brownish orange sandy silt with frequent of flint pebbles	0.16m deep 0.48m wide	
305	Ditch	NW-SE linear ditch with moderate sides and concave base	0.16m deep 0.48m wide	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
4	10m x 1.8m NW-SE		92.54m	0.74m / 91.80m
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
401	Topsoil	Loose, mid greyish brown silt, occasional stones and pebbles	0.30m deep	
402	Subsoil	Friable mid orange brown silty clay with frequent flint	0.44m deep	
403	Natural	Firm mid orange silty clay with frequent flint and clay patches		

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
5	25m x 1.8m N-S		92.47m	0.74m / 91.73m
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
501	Topsoil	Loose, mid greyish brown silt, occasional stones and pebbles	0.33m deep	
502	Subsoil	Friable mid orange brown silty clay with frequent flint	0.41m deep	
503	Natural	Firm mid orange silty clay with frequent flint and clay patches		

FOXHOLES, HITCHIN

504	Fill of 305	Compact, light brownish orange sandy silt with frequent of flint pebbles. Unexcavated as appears in TR 3 as (304)	0.51m wide	
505	Ditch	NW-SE linear ditch. Unexcavated as appears in Tr 3 as [305]	0.51m wide	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
6	25m x 1.8m NW-SE		90.60m	0.80m / 89.80m
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
601	Topsoil	Loose, mid greyish brown silt, occasional stones and pebbles	0.35m deep	
602	Subsoil	Friable mid orange brown silty clay with frequent flint	0.45m deep	
603	Natural	Firm mid orange silty clay with frequent flint and clay patches		
604	Fill of 607	Friable mid orange brown silty clay with frequent flint	0.19m deep	
605	Fill of 607	Friable light yellow brown silty clay with frequent flint	0.18m deep	
606	Fill of 607	Friable mid orange brown silty clay with frequent flint	0.18m deep	
607	Pit	Area of post medieval quarrying	0.55m deep 18m wide	
608	Fill of 608	Friable dark brown loamy silt	0.90m deep	
609	Pit	Rectangular post med quarry pit, steep	0.90m deep	
610	Fill of 611	Friable dark brown loamy silt, unexcavated.	1.00m dia	
611	Pit	Part of area of post medieval quarrying.	1.00m dia	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
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FOXHOLES, HITCHIN

7	25m x 1.8m NE-SW		91.83m	0.30m / 91.53m
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
701	Topsoil	Loose, mid greyish brown silt, occasional stones and pebbles	0.20m deep	
702	Subsoil	Friable mid orange brown silty clay with frequent flint	0.10m deep	
703	Natural	Mixed firm chalk with orange gravel and sands and frequent flint		
704	Fill of 705	Compact, mid brownish grey, sandy silt with frequent flint pebbles	0.09m deep 0.32m long 0.29m wide	
705	Cut of Posthole	Shallow, oval posthole with moderate to steep sides and concave base.	0.09m deep 0.32m long 0.29m wide	
706	Fill of 707	Loose, mid orange brown sandy silt with occasional pebbles and flint.	0.38m deep 0.79m wide	
707	Cut of Ditch	NW-SE linear ditch with moderate sides and a concave base	0.38m deep 0.79m wide	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
8	25m x 1.8m NW-SE		92.29m	0.45m / 91.84m
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
801	Topsoil	Loose, mid greyish brown silt with frequent small pebbles and flint	0.20m deep	
802	Subsoil	Friable mid orange brown silty clay with frequent flint and gravel	0.25m deep	
803	Natural	Mid orange with patches of grey blue clay		

FOXHOLES, HITCHIN

804	Fill of 805	Friable dark brownish grey loamy silt with frequent large stones throughout the fill.	0.35m deep 0.80m wide	
805	Pit	Circular feature with vertical sides and a flat bottom.	0.35m deep 0.80m wide	
806	Fill of 807	Friable, mid brown with frequent stones and flint	0.40m deep 0.90m wide	
807	Ditch	N-S linear ditch with moderate sides and a concave base	0.40m deep 0.90m wide	
808	Fill of 809	Compact mid brown loamy silt with frequent stones and flint	0.30m deep 0.80m wide	
809	Ditch	Curvilinear on broadly NW-SE turning SW at the NW end. Steep sides and concave – 'V' shaped base.	0.30m deep 0.80m wide	
810	Fill of 811	Compact mid brown loamy silt with frequent stones and flint	See 808	
811	Ditch	Relationship slot so only partial profile visible. See 809 for full profile.	See 809	
812	Fill of 813	Friable mid brown loamy silt with frequent stones	See 814	
813	Ditch	Relationship slot so only partial profile visible. Cuts ditch See 815 for full profile.	See 815	
814	Fill of 815	Friable mid brown loamy silt with frequent stones	0.04m deep 0.40m wide	
815	Ditch	Very shallow N-S linear with a flat to concave base	0.04m deep 0.40m wide	
816	Fill of 817	Friable, light brownish grey loamy silt with occasional stones and flint	0.06m deep 0.30m wide	
817	Ditch	E-W linear with moderate sides and concave base.	0.06m deep 0.30m wide	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
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FOXHOLES, HITCHIN

9	25m x 1.8m N-S		92.62m	0.55m / 92.07m
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
901	Topsoil	Loose, mid greyish brown silt, occasional stones and pebbles	0.30m deep	
902	Subsoil	Friable mid orange brown silty clay with frequent flint	0.25m deep	
903	Natural	Mixed firm chalk with orange gravel and sands and frequent flint		

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
10	25m x 1.8m N-S		92.83m	0.51m / 92.32m
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
1001	Topsoil	Loose, mid greyish brown silt, occasional stones and pebbles	0.23m deep	
1002	Subsoil	Friable mid orange brown silty clay with frequent flint	0.28m deep	
1003	Natural	Mixed firm chalk with orange gravel and sands and frequent flint		
1004	Fill of 1005	Loose, mid brown sandy silt with frequent stones and flint	0.45m deep 0.86m+ dia	
1005	Pit	Oval pit with steep sides and concave base. Only partially visible in trench so could possibly be the terminus of a ditch	0.45m deep 0.86m+ dia	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
11	25m x 1.8m NE-SW		92.65m	0.70m / 91.95m

FOXHOLES, HITCHIN

Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
1101	Topsoil	Friable, dark grey brown, clay silt	0.24m deep	
1102	Subsoil	Friable, mid orange brown silty clay	0.46m deep	
1103	Natural	Firm, light blue grey silty clay with brownish yellow sandy gravel		
1104	Fill of 1105	Compact mid orange grey silty clay with frequent flint pebbles	0.45m deep 0.80m wide	
1105	Ditch	NE-SW Linear ditch with moderate sides and a concave base	0.45m deep 0.80m wide	
1106	Fill of 1107	Compact mid brownish grey silty clay with frequent flint pebbles	0.34m deep 1.21m wide	
1107	Ditch	N-S linear ditch with moderate sides and broad concave base	0.34m deep 1.21m wide	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
12	25m x 1.8m N-S		92.58m	0.63m / 91.95m

Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
1201	Topsoil	Loose, mid greyish brown silt with frequent flint and pebbles	0.23m deep	
1202	Subsoil	Mid orange brown silty clay with frequent flint and pebbles.	0.40m deep	
1203	Natural	Mid orange silty clay with frequent flint, chalk, gravel and clay patches.		
1204	Fill of 1205	Loose, mid brown silty sand with frequent flint pebbles with traces of charcoal	0.30m deep 1.11m wide	
1205	Ditch	NE-SW linear ditch with moderate sides and a 'V' shaped base	0.30m deep 1.11m deep	

FOXHOLES, HITCHIN

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
13	25m x 1.8m NW-SE		92.11m	0.66m / 91.45m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/ Samples</i>
1301	Topsoil	Dark brownish grey clayey silt	0.25m deep	
1302	Subsoil	Mid greyish brown clayey silt	0.41m deep	
1303	Natural	Mixed orange sands and gravel with patches of grey chalky clay		
1304	Fill of 1305	Friable, dark greyish brown clayey silt with occasional stones	0.47m deep 1.00m wide	
1305	Ditch	NE-SW linear ditch with steep sides and concave base. Appears on geophysics.	0.47m deep 1.00m wide	
1306	Fill of 1307	Soft, light brownish grey sandy silt with frequent flint and pebbles.	0.32m deep 0.51m wide	
1307	Ditch	SW-NE linear ditch with moderate sides and concave base	0.32m deep 0.51m wide	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
14	25m x 1.8m NE-SW		91.17m	0.74m / 90.43m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/ Samples</i>
1401	Topsoil	Friable, dark brownish grey clayey silt	0.25m deep	
1402	Subsoil	Friable, mid greyish brown clayey silt with frequent stones	0.49m deep	
1403	Natural	Firm blue / grey clay with patches of orange gravel / sands		

FOXHOLES, HITCHIN

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
15	25m x 1.8m E-W		90.53m	0.44m / 90.09m
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
1501	Topsoil	Friable, dark brown grey clayey silt	0.25m deep	
1502	Subsoil	Friable, mid grey brown clayey silt	0.19m deep	
1503	Natural	Mid orange sands and gravels with frequent plough scaring		

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
16	25m x 1.8m N-S		90.61m	0.50m / 90.11m
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
1601	Topsoil	Loose, mid greyish brown silt, occasional stones and pebbles	0.30m deep	
1602	Subsoil	Friable mid orange brown silty clay with frequent flint	0.20m deep	
1603	Natural	Mixed firm chalk with orange gravel and sands and frequent flint		
1604	Fill of 1605	Loose greyish brown sandy silt with frequent flint pebbles and charcoal	0.29m deep 0.70m wide	
1605	Ditch	NE-SW linear ditch with moderate sides and concave base	0.29m deep 0.70m wide	
1606	Fill of 1607	Soft, light brown/orange sandy silty clay with moderate flint and chalk	0.30m deep 0.94m wide	
1607	Ditch	E-W linear ditch with moderate sides and concave base	0.30m deep 0.94m wide	

1608	Fill of 1609	Loose mid greyish brown sandy silt with frequent flint and pebbles	0.27m deep 0.90m wide	
1609	Ditch	NE-SW linear ditch with steep sides and a concave base	0.27m deep 0.90m wide	

APPENDIX 2: Pottery fabrics, form and abrasion code catalogue

Prehistoric

- UNS SO Unsourced sand and organic tempered ware (hand-made)
 UNS FT Unsourced flint tempered ware (hand-made)

Roman

- LEZ SA 2 Lezoux samian ware (central Gaul) category 2
 UNS WH Unsourced white wares
 UNS WS Unsourced white slipped wares
 UNS OX Unsourced oxidised wares
 BSW Black surfaced/Romanising grey wares
 GRS Unsourced sandy grey wares
 HAD RE 1 Hadham reduced ware category 1
 UNS SH Unsourced shell tempered wares
 SOB GT Southern British grog tempered wares
 SOB GT St Southern British grog tempered wares (storage)

Form codes

B = dish, C = bowl, G = jar

Abrasion codes

Very = very abraded, Abr = abraded, Sli = slightly abraded

APPENDIX 3: Pottery

Context	Cut	Feature	Tr No	No	Weight/g	R.eve	Fabrics	Forms	Condition	Comments	Date	Context date	Temp notes
304	305	Ditch	3	4	12		UNS SH	Body	Sli	All the same vessel. Oxidised surface and reduced core, with sparse grog and rare flint, looks like an early Harrold fabric. Thin small upright rim. Hand made reduced with common organic voids, rare grog	M1st-2nd?+	M1st-2nd?+	This is likely no later than the mid/late 2nd C
804	805	Pit	8	1	11	0.05	UNS SO	G tsm	Sli		E-M/LIA	E-M/LIA	
808	809	Ditch	8	1	10	0.06	UNS SO	C tsm	Sli	Crude in turned rim. Hand made, reduced with organic voids	E-M/?LIA	E-M/?LIA	
1004	1005	Pit	10	8	136		BSW	Base + body	Sli	All same vessel base 0.40. Patchy black/brown sandy with sparse grog	M1st-2nd	M1st-2nd	Likely no later than mid/late 2nd C
1106	1107	Ditch	11	5	40	0.18	UNS WH	G tsm	Sli	All same vessel fabric looks to be in the Verulamium style c M-L2nd	c M-L2nd	M-L2nd/?E3rd	
1106	1107	Ditch	11	1	13	0.06	UNS WS	C 16/Ver 2456 style	Abr	Slip on oxidised surface	c ?E?/M-L2nd		
1106	1107	Ditch	11	1	7	0.06	BSW	G tsm	Sli		M1st-2nd?+		
1106	1107	Ditch	11	1	12	0.06	BSW	G tsm	Sli		M1st-2nd?+		
1106	1107	Ditch	11	1	13		BSW	Body	Sli		M1st-2nd?+		
1106	1107	Ditch	11	1	23	0.13	HAD RE 1	B2/4/Ver2594	Sli		?M?/L2nd-E/M3rd		
1106	1107	Ditch	11	4	71	0.26	HAD RE 1	G tsm	Sli	All join	2nd+		
1106	1107	Ditch	11	2	80	0.27	HAD RE 1	G tsm	Sli	Join	2nd+		
1106	1107	Ditch	11	13	40		HAD RE 1	Body	Sli		Roman		
1106	1107	Ditch	11	1	6		GRS	Base	Sli	4/0.07	Roman		
1106	1107	Ditch	11	3	12		GRS	Body	Sli		Roman		
1106	1107	Ditch	11	1	12		SOB GT St	Body	Abr	Combed	M1st-M/L2nd		
1204	1205	Ditch	12	1	3		UNS OX	Body	Sli	Romanising with sparse red grog	M1st-2nd L1st BC - c AD60/70	c AD43-50/60	
1204	1205	Ditch	12	4	19		SOB GT	Body	Sli				
1204	1205	Ditch	12	1	58	0.11	SOB GT St	G Tho 5-2	Sli	Remains of slashed rim, body rilled. Form common in Bucks,Beds and Herts	AD5-c 50/60		
1304	1305	Ditch	13	2	66	0.08	BSW	G19.4/Tho B1-1	Sli	Join, sieved neck	M-L1st/E2nd	M-L1st	
1304	1305	Ditch	13	5	32		BSW	Body	Sli		M1st-2nd L1st BC-c AD60/70		
1304	1305	Ditch	13	4	26		SOB GT	Body	Sli		1st-2nd		
1304	1305	Ditch	13	1	59	0.04	SOB GT St	G tsm	Sli		1st-2nd		
1304	1305	Ditch	13	1	60		SOB GT St	Body	Sli	Oxidised	1st-2nd		
1306	1307	Ditch	13	1	6		SOB GT	Body	Sli		L1st BC-c AD60/70	M-L1st	
1306	1307	Ditch	13	17	83	0.31	UNS SH	G 5/Tho C5-3/Bal 470	Sli	All same vessel, join	M1st-L2nd		
1606	1607	Ditch	16	1	<1		LEZ SA 2	Body	Very	Very fragmented	E-L2nd	LBA-EIA/E-L2nd	Possibly intrusive
1606	1607	Ditch	16	1	3		UNS FT	Body	Sli	Brown surface, black body. Abundant ill-sorted coarse flint	LBA-EIA		
1608	1609	Ditch	16	3	15		UNS OX	Body	Sli	Joins. Wheel thrown looks Romanising	M1st-L2nd	M1st-L2nd	
1608	1609	Ditch	16	1	89		SOB GT St	Body	Sli	With sparse shell	M1st-2nd		



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