2014

Results of an Archaeological Evaluation at 35 High Street, Brentwood, Essex, CM14 4RG ~ Final Report

Sam Driscoll BA, MA, MIFA

Absolute Archaeology LLP

On behalf of

Mr V Bhandari

Character Development Ltd

©Absolute Archaeology LLP

Client/Agent Name:	Mr Vinod Bhandari, Character Development Ltd
Document Title:	Results of an Archaeological Evaluation at 35 High Street, Brentwood, Essex, CM14 4RG~ Final Report
Grid Reference:	NGR TQ 59583 93896
Document Type:	Written Scheme of Investigation
Issue Number:	1.0
Date of Preparation:	29th October 2014
Local Planning Authority:	Brentwood Borough Council
Planning Reference:	13/00518/EXT
Site Code:	BW22
Project Reference:	AARC131
Museum Repository:	Chelmsford Museum
Museum Accession Number:	To Be Confirmed
Oasis Ref:	absolute1-164619
OS Licence:	100048201

Prepared By	Checked By	Signed
Sam Driscoll BA, MA, MIFA Partner	Paul Martin BSc, MIFA Partner	Sam Driscoll

Disclaimer

Whereas Absolute Archaeology LLP have taken all care to produce a comprehensive summary of the known and recorded archaeological and historical evidence, no responsibility can be accepted for any omissions of fact or opinion, however caused.

Copyright

The copyright to the following text, drawings, graphics and photographs is, unless otherwise credited, the property of Absolute Archaeology LLP. Absolute Archaeology LLP hereby grants a licence to the client and their agent(s), to use this document for the purpose for which it was issued, after receipt of full payment.

Reproduction of maps

Plans and maps based on Ordnance Survey Sheets are reproduced by permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown Copyright Reserved.

Absolute Archaeology LLP

51 St Mary's Gardens, Hilperton Marsh, Trowbridge, Wiltshire, BA14 7PH

Sam Driscoll (m) 07825550271 (e) sam.driscoll@absolutearchaeology.co.uk

Paul Martin (m) 07796333021 (e) paul.martin@absoltuearchaeology.co.uk

Summary

This document sets out a summary of results following the archaeological trench evaluation on the site known as 35 High Street, Brentwood, Essex, CM14 4RG, hereafter referred to as the Project Site. The work was commissioned by Mr Vinod Bhandari, Character Development Ltd (The Client) and informed by the *'Brief For Archaeological Trenching at Culyers Yard, 35 High Street, Brentwood'*, issued by Sue Tyler, Historic Environment Advisor (Essex County Council: October 2013). The investigation was carried out the 21st May 2014.

A truncated Medieval feature [204] was identified in the area of Trench Two, with a shallow fill containing 13th-14th century ceramic sherds. Both Trench One and Two revealed evidence of significant groundwork having been carried out across the Project Site and it is estimated that over 1m of stratigraphy has probably been truncated, judging by the diminished depth of feature [204]. However, the survival of the base of the Medieval pit adds to the record of contemporary activity within the Historic Town Centre Conservation Area.

The shallow depth of the feature indicates that any associated Medieval occupation layers have been truncated and therefore the potential for the survival of further activity relating the Medieval period across the Project Site is considered low.

Acknowledgements

Absolute Archaeology LLP would like to thank Mr V Bhandari, Character Development Ltd (the Client) and Mrs S King, AKT Planning & Architecture (the Agent) for their assistance in the production of this report. We would also like to thank Mr R Havis, Senior Historic Environment Advisor, Ms Teresa O'Connor and Ms H Saunders (Essex County Council Specialist Advice Team), for their help and expertise. Our thanks also go to Mr Damian Mc Mahon and Jim the digger driver for their assistance during the ground reduction.

Contents

1. INTRODUCTION 1
2. THE PROJECT SITE 1
2.1. Archaeological Background 1
3. APPROACH TO ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION 2
3.1. Objectives 2
4. RESULTS 3
4.1. Trench One 3
4.2. Trench Two 3
5. Ceramic Finds by Duncan H. Brown 4
6. Discussion 5
7. CONCLUSION 5
8. BIBLIOGRAPHY 6
9. FIGURES 7
10. PHOTOGRAPHS 10
11. APPENDICES 14

List of Figures

Figure 1 Site Location 7
Figure 2: Detailed Site Location – Project Site in Red 8
Figure 3: Trench Locations 9

Photographs

Photo 1 ENE Facing View of Trench One (Scales 1 x 2m & 1 x 1m) 10
Photo 2 SSE Facing Section Trench One (Scales 1 x 2m & 1 x 500mm) 10
Photo 3 NNW Facing View of Trench Two (Scales 1 x 2m & 1 x 1m) 11
Photo 4 NW Facing View of Feature [204] (Scales 1x2m, 1x600mm, 1x500mm & 1x200m) 11
Photo 5 WSW Facing View of Feature [204] (Scales 1x2m, 1x600mm, 1x500mm & 1 x200mm) 12
Photo 6 WSW Facing Section Trench Two (Scales 1 x 2m, 1 x 600mm & 1 x 200mm) 12
Photo 7 Sample of Medieval Ceramics from (203) 13

Table

Table 1 Table 1: Ware types present in context 203 4

Appendix

Appendix 1 Context Description 14

Appendix 2 Ceramics from (203) 17

Appendix 3 Chronological Table 18

1. INTRODUCTION

This document sets out a summary of results following the archaeological trench evaluation on the site known as 35 High Street, Brentwood, Essex, CM14 4RG, hereafter referred to as the Project Site. The work was commissioned by Mr Vinod Bhandari, Character Development Ltd (The Client) and informed by the *'Brief For Archaeological Trenching at Culyers Yard, 35 High Street, Brentwood'*, issued by Sue Tyler, Historic Environment Advisor (Place Services, Essex County Council: October 2013). The investigation was carried out the 21st May 2014.

This document was prepared in direct response to Brentwood Borough Council Decision Notice, Condition 12, which states that *'No development or preliminary groundworks of any kind shall take place until the Applicant or their successors in title has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation which has been submitted by the Applicant, and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. Reason: To allow archaeological records to be made.'*

The trench evaluation forms the first phase of a staged programme of mitigation as outlined in the brief, comprising:

- An archaeological trench evaluation to identify and characterise any archaeological remains that may be preserved on the Project Site;
- An appraisal of the results of the evaluation to identify whether any further archaeological investigation is required;
- Implementation of an agreed programme of archaeological investigation and recording, if necessary;
- The provision of an adequately detailed project report;
- The dissemination and publication of the project results, as appropriate.

2. THE PROJECT SITE

The Project Site is located in Brentwood, a small town situated in London's commuter belt. The development area is accessed from Brentwood High Street, with rear access from William Hunter Way.

Geologically the site is defined by the Stanmore Gravel Formation (STGR), overlying Bagshot Formation (BGS) Sands, of the Eocene epoch. The site is located at 108m aOD.

2.1. Archaeological Background

The Project Site has the potential to preserve evidence of archaeological activity, being located in the historic core of Brentwood. The development area is located between Ingrave Road to the NE and Tower Hill to the SW, which define the main area of known Medieval activity and form the boundaries of Brentwood Borough Council's Historic Town Centre Conservation Area (EHER 525). In support of this, monitoring of groundwork 400m WSW of the Project Site revealed Medieval plough furrows in the vicinity of 125–127 High Street (EHER 18224). In addition, a programme of evaluation and excavation in the location of Weald Road (400m SW of the Project Site), revealed evidence of Medieval activity (EHER 46124) and late Medieval ceramics were recovered during groundwork carried out at 63-65 High Street. All of the above mentioned sites are located to the north of the High Street, highlighted the potential for preservation of archaeological layers / features on the Project Site. Furthermore, the standing and buried remains of the chapel of St Thomas a Becket, founded c. 1221 by the Augustinian Abbey of St Osyth, are located just 140m SW of the Project Site.

The Project Site also has the potential to preserve evidence of Romano – British activity, due to the location of the development area in the region of the projected route of the Roman road, known as The Great Road (Margary 1973, 246-7), which ran from London (Londinium) to Colchester (Camulodunum). Evidence of activity dating to this period has been recovered from within a 200m radius of the Project Site. In 2011 Colchester Archaeological Trust recovered unabraded ceramics dating to the Roman period, during works carried out in the grounds of 63-65 High Street. Historic records also document finds from this period in the vicinity, with two Roman coins recovered from allotments to the NW of the Project Site and an 18th century record documents the discovery of two brass lares along with paterae and other vessels found in a field at Shenfield, which is interpreted a potentially belonging to a hoard.

3. APPROACH TO ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

The investigation took the form of an archaeological trench evaluation, undertaken to ascertain information on the presence/absence, extent, state of preservation, character, quality, integrity and date of any archaeological deposits on the Project Site.

All fieldwork was carried out in accordance with the *'Brief For Archaeological Trenching at Culyers Yard, 35 High Street, Brentwood'*, issued by Sue Tyler, Historic Environment Advisor (Essex County Council: October 2013) and the IFA Standard and Guidance for an archaeological field evaluation (revised 2008), Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: PPN 3: Archaeological Excavation (English Heritage 2008).

3.1. Objectives

Broadly the archaeological investigation sought to:

- Assess the potential for archaeological activity associated with the Project Site;
- Establish the date, nature and extent of activity or occupation within the development area;
- Record and identify archaeological features and deposits to a level appropriate to their extent and significance;
- Establish the relationship of any remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscapes;
- Undertake sufficient post-excavation assessment to interpret archaeological features and phasing identified during the evaluation and to place these within their local and regional context;
- Create a site archive for deposition in a suitable repository;
- Inform the implementation of a suitable strategy in order to mitigate the impact of the groundwork on the archaeological resource, in the event of positive results.

4. RESULTS

4.1. Trench One

The trench evaluation was carried out following the demolition of the existing buildings. Trench one was located to the SE of the Project Site in area that had been in use as a yard. The mechanical reduction of the trench revealed a recently deposited demolition material (101) overlaying made ground (108), which was seen to seal truncated natural sandy clay (109). Two Post Medieval ceramic drains bisected the trench. An absence of buried topsoil or subsoil indicates that the Project Site has been significantly reduced, most likely as a result of a previous phase of development.

No archaeological features, layers or deposits were identified in the vicinity of Trench One and no finds were recovered from the spoil, which was monitored throughout.

4.2. Trench Two

Trench Two was located to the NE of the Project Site in an area that had been in use as a yard. The mechanical reduction of the trench revealed the recently deposited demolition material (201) overlaying a topsoil (202), representing the use of this portion of the site as a garden area in the 20th century. The garden material was seen to seal a truncated sub circular feature [204]. When sectioned, the feature revealed a single shallow fill (203) with frequent charcoal inclusions, containing 13th - 14th century lead glazed, Medieval ceramic sherds. Furthermore, the sandy clay fill was seen to contain abundant rounded pebbles. The stone is

most likely derived from the natural gravels that defined the upper stratigraphy at the time that the pit was excavated and in use. The extent of truncation evident across the site may explain the absence of the Stanmore Gravel Formation, which is recorded as defining the upper geological deposit in the vicinity of the development area.

The depth of the feature provides further evidence that the Project Site has been substantially reduced in line with previous activity on the site. The feature measured 1.62m in diameter, with a depth of 220mm. The nature of the pit was not evident from the finds, however it is suggested that the shallow feature probably represents the remains of a latrine/rubbish pit, perhaps located to the rear of dwellings along the High Street.

5. Ceramic Finds by Duncan H. Brown

An assemblage of eight sherds of pottery, with a total weight of 48 grams, was recovered from a single context, 203; the fill of a truncated pit, context 204. Every sherd was characterised by ware type, sherd type and vessel type and quantified by weight and sherd count. Every fragment was a body sherd, so no rim percentages were recorded, although three sherds are from the same vessel, giving a total vessel count of six. Recording was carried out by the author in July 2014. Four ware types have been identified, as shown in Table 1.

Ware type	Weight (g)	Sherd count
Local coarseware	9	1
Mill Green ware	26	5
London-type ware	3	1
Hedingham-type ware	10	1
Totals	48	8

Table 1 Table 1: Ware types present in context 203

There is a single sherd of a local coarseware, probably Mill Green type, with well-sorted medium quartz in a sandy fabric. The sherd has red-brown surfaces with a grey core. External sooting indicates use as a cooking pot.

The remaining sherds are all likely to be from jugs. There are five sherds, representing three vessels, of Mill Green ware, which was manufactured a few miles to the north of Brentwood. This product is common in London and to the north-east in Chelmsford and Colchester (Pearce et al, 1982; Cotter) and it is no surprise to find it in Brentwood. Two vessels here have an

external white slip covered in a speckled clear/green glaze, while the other has a more consistent green glaze over a white slip. London-type ware (Pearce et al, 1985) is also known in Colchester and a small sherd here has been given that tentative attribution. Hedingham ware was made in northern Essex and is common in Cambridgeshire, although it has also been found in Chelmsford and London (Cotter). The sherd identified as Hedingham in this assemblage has a characteristic fine, micaceous fabric with a scar from an applied strip that has come away from the body of the pot.

All the pottery can be dated to the mid-13th to mid-14th centuries and thus represents a coherent, if small, group, which provides a sound high medieval date for Pit 204. Further work at or around this site could be most revealing.

6. Discussion

Both Trench One and Two revealed evidence of significant groundwork having been carried out across the Project Site and it is estimated that over 1m of stratigraphy has probably been truncated, judging by the diminished depth of feature [204]. However, the survival of the base of the Medieval pit adds to the record of contemporary activity within the Historic Town Centre Conservation Area. The shallow depth of the feature indicates that the associated occupation layers have been truncated and therefore the potential for the survival of further activity relating to the Medieval period across the Project Site is considered low.

7. CONCLUSION

Whist activity relating to Medieval occupation was identified on the Project Site, the associated occupation layers have been truncated, diminishing the potential for the development area to reveal any further archaeology. Mr Havis (Senior Historic Environment Advisor, Essex County Council) has advised that no further on site investigation is required in association with the current planned development. However, as indicated in the ceramics report, further evidence may be revealed on neighbouring sites.

8. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Brickley, M. and McKinley, J.I. 2004. *Guidelines to the Standards for Recording Human Remains (*IFA Paper No 7)*. Reading: IFA.*

Cotter, JP, 2000, 'Post-Roman Pottery from excavations in Colchester, 1971-85', Colchester Archaeological Report 7

English Heritage. 2006. Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) – The MoRPHE Project Managers Guide. Swindon: English Heritage.

English Heritage. 2005. Guidance for Best Practice for Treatment of Human Remains Excavated From Christian Burial Grounds in England. Swindon: English Heritage.

English Heritage. 2011. Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-excavation (second edition). Swindon: English Heritage.

Institute for Archaeologists. 2008. Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation. Reading: IFA.

Institute for Archaeologists. 2008. Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials. Reading: IFA.

Margary, I. D. (1973) Roman Roads in Britain, 3rd edition, John Baker, London.

McKinley, J. I. and Roberts, C. 1993. *Excavation and Post-Excavation Treatment of Cremated and Inhumed Human Remains* (IFA Technical Paper No 13). Reading: IFA

Pearce, JE, Vince, AG, and Jenner, MA, 1985, 'A dated type-series of London medieval pottery part 2: London-type Ware' London and Middlesex Archaeological Society Special Paper No.6

Pearce, JE, Vince, AG, and White, R, with Cunningham, CM, 1982, 'A dated type-series of London medieval pottery, part 1: Mill Green Ware' Transactions of London and Middlesex Archaeological Society 33, 266-98

9. FIGURES

Figure 1 Site Location

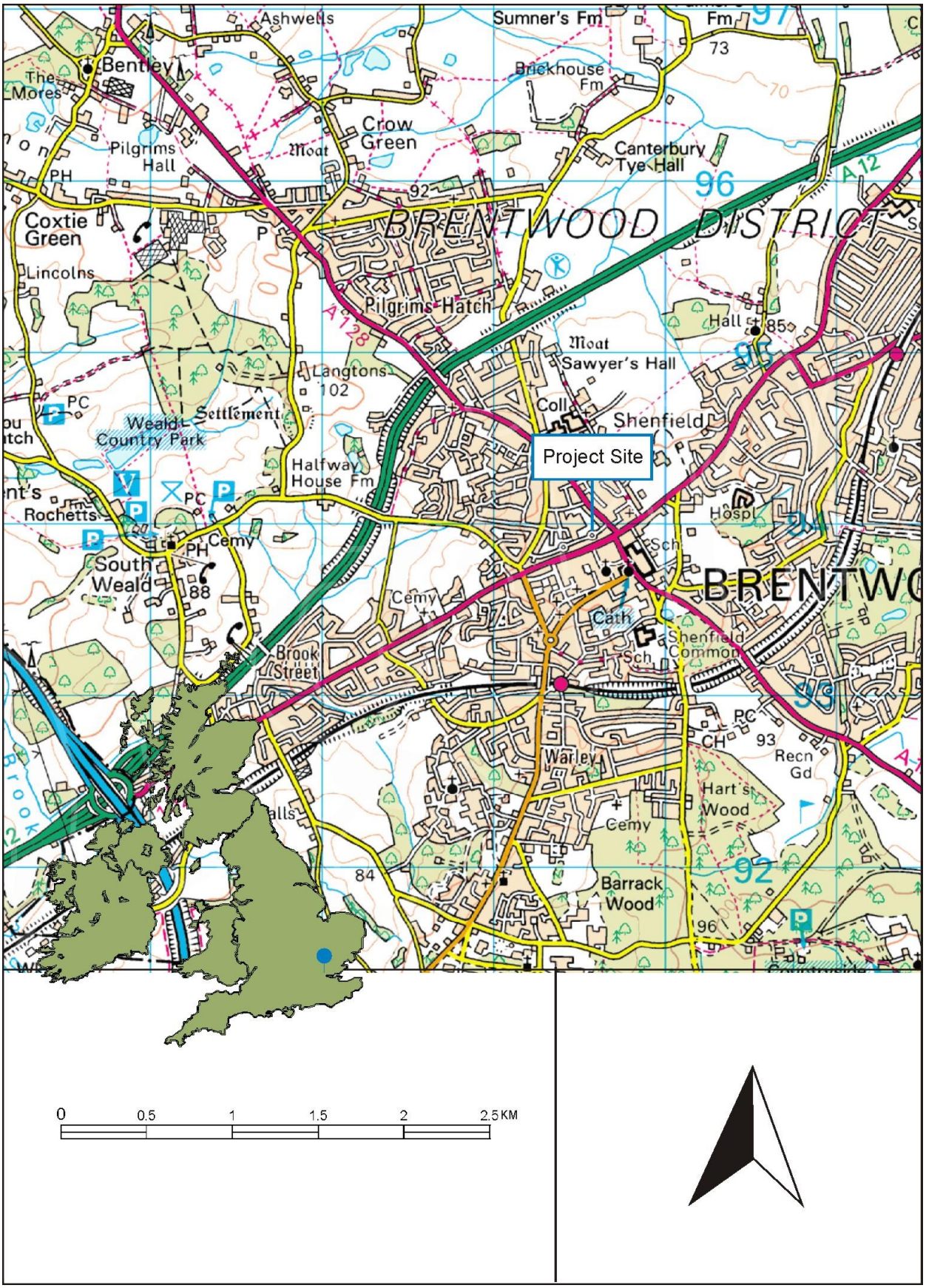


Figure 2: Detailed Site Location – Project Site in Red

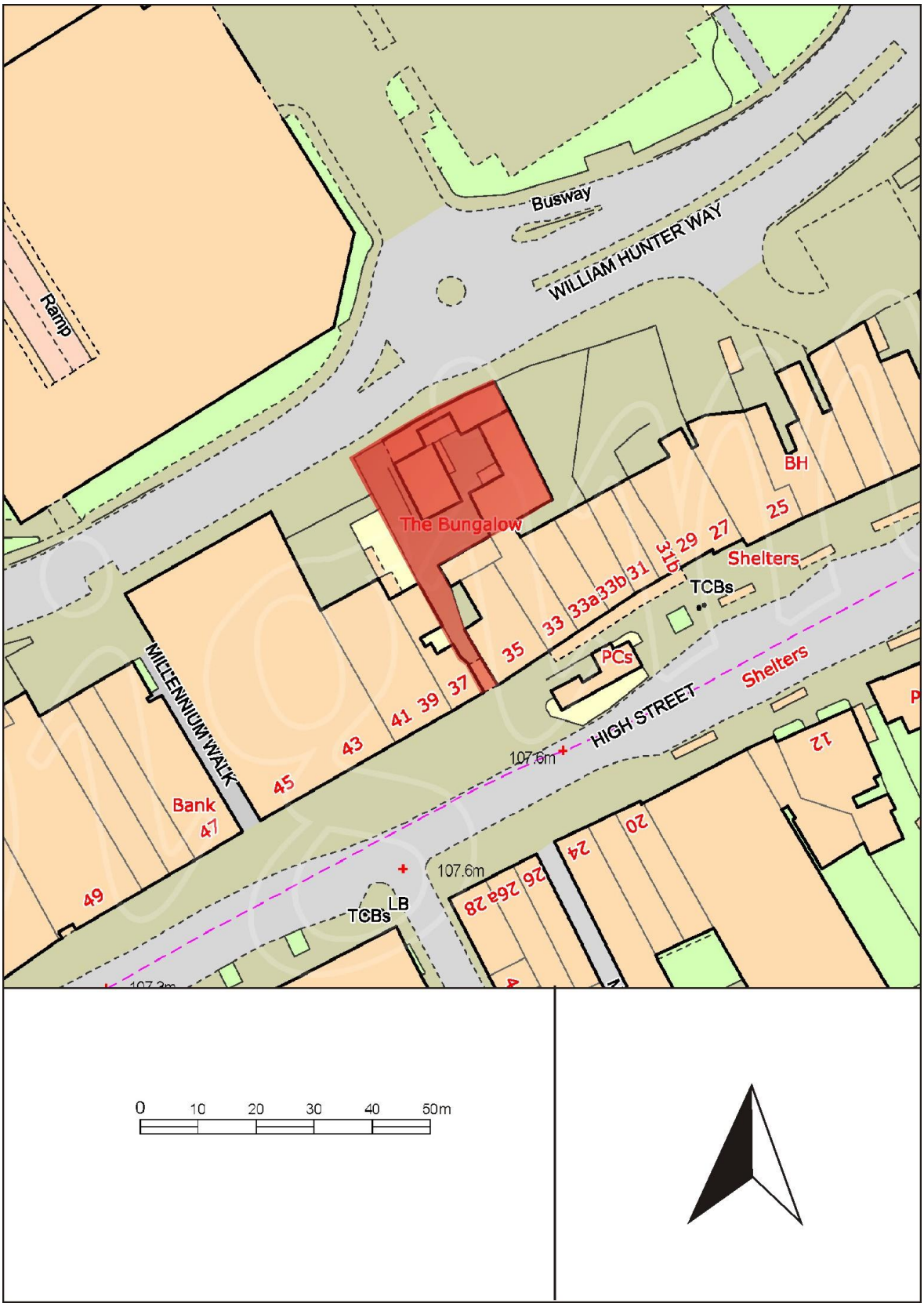
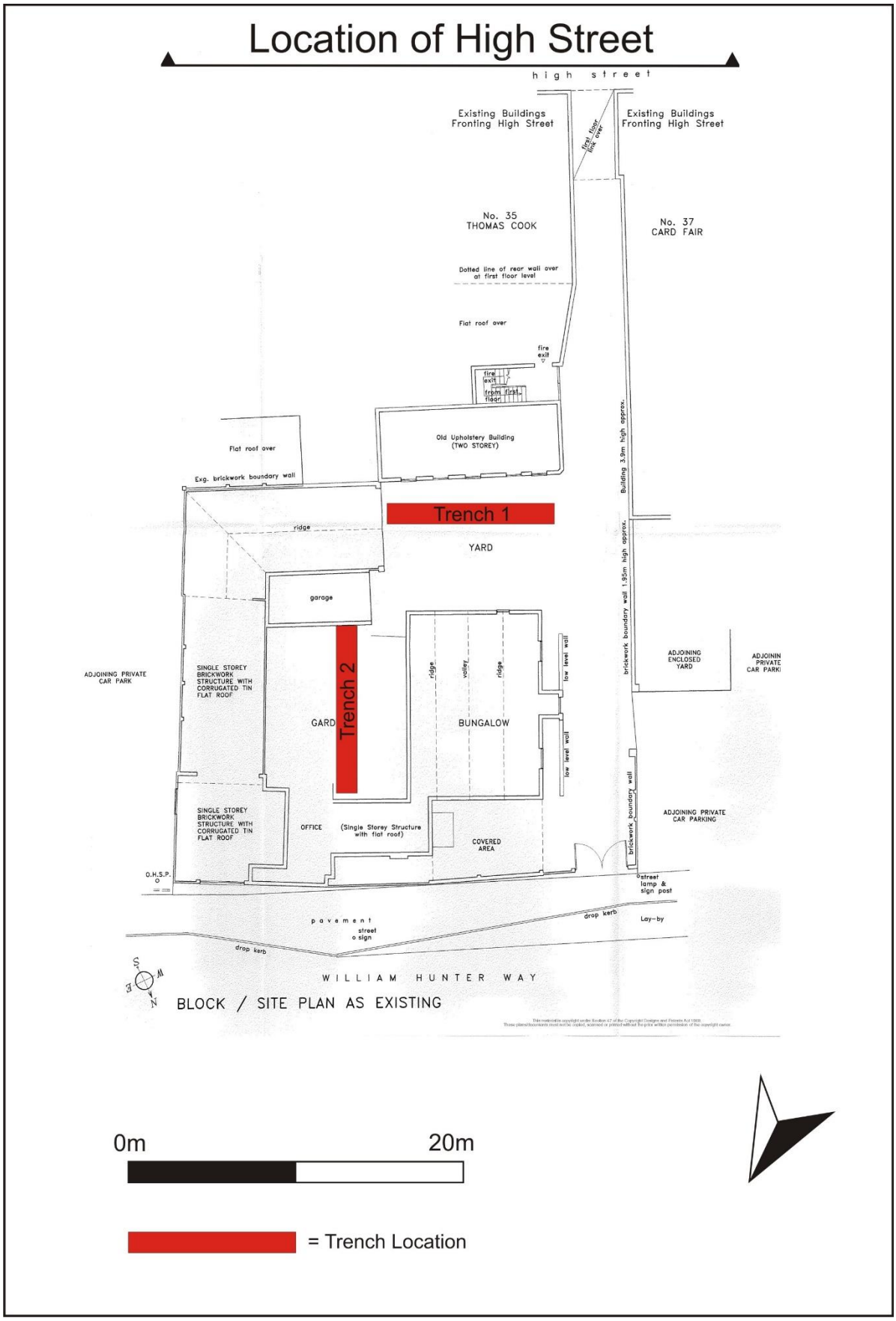


Figure 3: Trench Locations



10. PHOTOGRAPHS

Photo 1 ENE Facing View of Trench One (Scales 1 x 2m & 1 x 1m)

Photo 2 SSE Facing Section Trench One (Scales 1 x 2m & 1 x 500mm)

Photo 3 NNW Facing View of Trench Two (Scales 1 x 2m & 1 x 1m)

Photo 4 NW Facing View of Feature [204] (Scales 1x2m, 1x600mm, 1x500mm & 1x200m)

Photo 5 WSW Facing View of Feature [204] (Scales 1x2m, 1x600mm, 1x500mm & 1 x200mm)

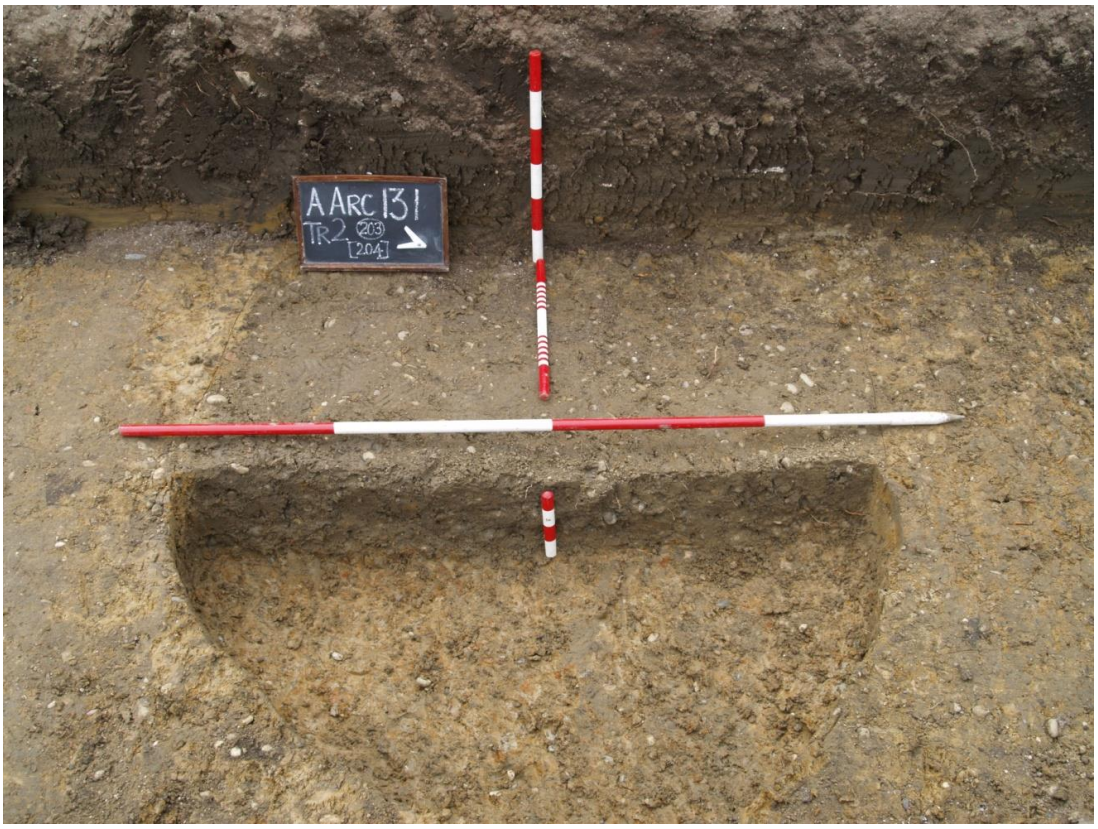


Photo 6 WSW Facing Section Trench Two (Scales 1 x 2m, 1 x 600mm & 1 x 200mm)

Photo 7 Sample of Medieval Ceramics from (203)

11. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Context Description

Trench One		
Description: Machine excavated linear trench	**Orientation**	ENE-WSW
	Depth	800mm
	Width	2m
	Length	8.5m

Contexts 100-110

Context Number	**Type**	**Depth/ Height**	**Width**	**Length /Diameter**	**Colour**	**Finds**	**Recorded Date**
100	Tarmac Layer	70mm	>2m	>8.5m	-	-	21.05.2014
101	Demolition Layer Modern	300mm	>2m	>8.5m	-	-	21.05.2014
102	Fill Post Med Service Trench within [104]	400mm	400mm	>2m	-	-	21.05.2014
103	Ceramic Pipe within [104]	-	300mm	>2m	-	-	21.05.2014
104	Cut Post Med Service	300mm	300mm	>2m	-	-	21.05.2014
105	Fill Post Med Service Trench within [107]	300mm	300mm	>5m	-	-	21.05.2014
106	Ceramic Pipe within [107]	-	200mm	>5m	-	-	21.05.2014
107	Cut Post Med Service	300mm	300mm	>5m	-	-	21.05.2014
108	Made up ground	430mm	>2m	>8.5m	Dark Greyish Brown	-	21.05.2014
109	Natural soft, sandy clay	-	-	-	Mid Yellowish Brown 10YR 5/6	-	21.05.2014

110	Post Med Single Course Brick surface to the WSW of trench-seen in section	60mm	640mm	-	-	-	21.05.2014

Trench Two		
Description: Machine excavated linear trench	**Orientation**	SSE-NNW
	Depth	800mm
	Width	200mm
	Length	9m

Contexts 200-206

Context Number	**Type**	**Depth/ Height**	**Width**	**Length /Diameter**	**Colour**	**Finds**	**Recorded Date**
200	Tarmac Layer	70mm	>2m	>9m	-	-	21.05.2014
201	Demolition Layer Modern	200mm	>2m	>9m	-	-	21.05.2014
202	Buried Topsoil	300mm	>2m	>9m	Very Dark Greyish Brown 10YR 3/2	-	21.05.2014
203	Fill of Feature [204]	220mm	1.62m	1.62m	Dark Greyish Brown 10YR 4/2	13th-14th century ceramic sherds	21.05.2014
204	Cut	220mm	1.62m	1.62m	-	-	21.05.2014
205	Event-Truncation of cut [204]	-	-	-	-	-	21.05.2014
206	Natural	-	-	-	Mid Yellowish Brown 10YR 5/6	-	21.05.2014

Appendix 2 Ceramics from (203)

Ware Type	Earliest Date	Latest Date	Sherd Type	Vessel Type	Surface Treatment	Weight	Sherd Count	Vessel Count	Author
Mill Green ware	1250	1350	body	jug	external green-speckled glaze over white slip	20	3	1	**DH Brown**
Hedingham-type ware	1250	1350	body	jug	external clear glaze	10	1	1	DH Brown
Local coarseware	1250	1350	body	jar	-	9	1	1	DH Brown
Mill Green ware	1250	1350	body	jug	external green-speckled glaze over white slip	5	1	1	DH Brown
London-type ware	1250	1350	body	jug	external green glaze	3	1	1	DH Brown
Mill Green ware	1250	1350	body	jug	external green glaze over white slip	1	1	1	DH Brown

Appendix 3 Chronological Table

Period	Date	Information
Prehistoric	800000 – 43 AD	Generalised period from the earliest human activity in Britain (Happisburgh) to the conquest of Britain by Claudius.
Palaeolithic	800000 - 10000 BC	Mobile groups, ephemeral habitation evidence, stone tool technology. Material evidence found predominantly in caves. Earliest evidence for hominins in Britain is at Happisburgh and Pakefield in Norfolk dating to the Early Pleistocene c.800,000 BP.
Mesolithic	10000 – 4000 BC	Period of major transformation in the European environment and landscape after the end of the last Ice Age. Mobile hunter-gatherer communities, sophisticated tool technology and some semi-permanent settlement, particularly along the east coast of England and in Ireland.
Neolithic	4000 – 2350 BC	Emergence of monumental architecture, such as long barrows and causewayed enclosures. Movement towards more complex society and sedentary lifestyles.
Bronze Age	2350 – 800 BC	Introduction of Bronze, construction of barrows/tumuli for the dead in the early stages replaced by a lack of monuments and the preponderance toward hoard deposition.
Iron Age	800 BC– 43 AD	Introduction of Iron and the return of monumental architecture in the form of hillforts, tribal boundaries and the introduction of coinage.
Romano-British	43-410 AD	Romano-British period including the emergence of villas and Roman infrastructure.
Anglo-Saxon	410 –1066 AD	Post-Roman period including Saxon invasions and the arrival of Christianity.
Medieval	1066 – 1540 AD	Medieval period in Britain including Tudor activity, with the dissolution of the monasteries as the closing of the period.
Post-Medieval	1540 – 1900 AD	Period of rapid industrial development and changes to the English landscape.
Modern	1900 – 1950 AD	Including WWI, WWII and Cold War archaeology.