

HOPH15-001



**Land at Holwell Road, Pirton, Hertfordshire  
Archaeological Evaluation Report**

*Prepared for CgMs Consulting*

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## **Archaeological Evaluation on land at Holwell Road, Pirton, Hertfordshire**

# **Evaluation Report**

**Client: CgMs Consulting**

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Client: CgMs Consulting  
Grid Reference: TL 1511 3181  
Address: Land at Holwell Road, Pirton Hertfordshire  
Parish: Pirton  
Council: Hertfordshire County Council  
Project Manager: Michael Tierney  
Text: Michael Tierney, Joe Abrams and Jake Streatfeild-James  
Illustrations:  
Fieldwork: Jake Streatfeild-James, Emma Tetlow, Joe Turner

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Report: October 2015

**Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd**  
**Building 68c**  
**Wrest Park**  
**Silsoe**  
**Bedfordshire**  
**MK45 4HS**

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## **Archaeological Evaluation on land at Holwell Road, Pirton, Hertfordshire**

*Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd conducted a trial-trench archaeological evaluation on land at Holwell Road, Pirton, Hertfordshire, prior to submission of planning consent for the residential development of the site. The trial-trenching evaluation uncovered a single area of medium-local significance remains at the northern end of the site. The artefactual, ecofactual and contextual information are, when combined, suggestive of occupation activity within the PDA, in the form of an infilled ditch of uncertain function – though presumably located close to settlement activity. These are most likely to have been infilled during the mid-late Iron Age. These were picked up as a geophysical survey anomaly and targeted by trenching (Trench 1).*

*Medieval – post medieval agricultural remains were also picked up on the site, consisting of plough furrows and field boundaries.*

### **1 INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Planning Background**

The archaeological trial trenching is being undertaken in association with the submission of an outline application (Ref: 15/01618/1) currently being determined by North Hertfordshire District Council and North Hertfordshire County Council. Due to the proximity of the site to the medieval core of Pirton, Hertfordshire County Council's Historic Environment Team (HET) have recommended that a programme of archaeological evaluation, comprising geophysical and trial trenching, be undertaken prior to outline consent being granted.

With the desk-based assessment results (CgMs 2015) and geophysical survey results in place (Stratascan 2015) CgMs Consulting commissioned Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd to carry out the trial trenching evaluation of the Proposed Development Area (PDA) and produce a report on the results. This evaluation has been carried out in order to assess the extent, nature and survival of archaeological features within those parts of the site where intrusive development will take place. The results will allow the HET to determine the significance of any archaeological remains within the PDA, and the impact of the proposed development on them. Decisions on the type and scope of mitigation measures (if required by the HET) will be based on the results of field evaluation.

The remit of the archaeological trial trenching programme was outlined in a Written Scheme of Investigation compiled by Headland Archaeology (2015) before the fieldwork started, and was agreed with the HET. A systematic array of trenches was designed to effectively evaluate the PDA (Illus 1). All evaluative works were carried out with the agreement of the HET.

#### **1.2 Site Description**

The PDA is located on the eastern edge of the modern village of Pirton, Hertfordshire. The core of the medieval settlement is some 500 metres to the south west of the PDA. The PDA is located immediately to the north of Elm Tree Farm, which is accessed from Hambridge Way (centred on NGR TL 1511 3181).

The PDA currently comprises one field in arable use and one field under pasture. It is bounded by hedgerows on all sides, with the western boundary formed by the gardens of residential properties fronting onto Royal Oak Lane. Further arable fields lie to the north and east, and Elm Tree Farm forms the southern boundary. It lies on flat land, at an elevation of approximately 55mOD.

The solid geology of the PDA comprises deposits of the Zig Zag Chalk Formation, formed approximately 94-100 million years ago in the Cretaceous Period. No superficial deposits have been mapped. Peat and river terrace deposits are recorded in the wider area, indicating that the village lies on one of the islands of the fen-edge.

### 1.3 Archaeological Background

Prior to the evaluation there was no evidence for prehistoric activity within the PDA. However, an evaluation (PCA 2011) opened 6 trenches in the northern end of the site, This was not dated, but was pre-modern in date and thought to be a field boundary.

There are several undated enclosures to the south east (MHT2334), and to the north (MBD1649). The presence of prehistoric activity associated with these settlements is possible. The route of the Icknield Way also passes to the south of the village, this route is associated with travel from East Anglia to the Channel Coast during the Early Medieval period, but may have origins as far back as the Early Neolithic.

A single Bronze Age find from Pirton parish, a possible copper alloy awl, has been reported to the Portable Antiquities Scheme.

Portable Antiquities Scheme records show the presence of Iron Age objects around Pirton, with two Gallo-Belgic coins recovered and reported to the Scheme by metal detectorists, one of which was recovered from inside the PDA. A further find of a brooch, and a strap fitting provisionally dated to the Iron Age have also been reported around the parish.

The manor of Pirton is recorded in Domesday as the property of Ralph de Limsey. There are 10 hides and land for 20 ploughs, and four mills making an income of 73 shillings and 4 pence. Before the invasion, the land was held by Archbishop Stigand.

The medieval village is located at the south end of modern Pirton. The land is known as 'The Bury' and includes a number of house platforms, sunken roadways and boundaries which mark the surviving remnants of the shrunken medieval settlement. Toot Hill, situated on the northern side of The Bury and just to the south of the modern village, represents the remains of a Norman Motte and Bailey castle, thought to have been established in the early 12th century. Immediately south of the motte is the church of St Mary, also constructed in the early 12th century. Further to the north east, the moated site at Rectory Farm represents the other end of the medieval settlement. The Moat has been partially filled in and a 17th century farmhouse constructed over the south western corner. The peak for construction of moated sites in south eastern England occurs between 1250 and 1350, so the likelihood is that this represents a semi-fortified manorial site replacing the castle.

The development of the post-medieval village occurred to the north of the medieval settlement, with houses occupying the present street plan, certainly by the 1880's as visible on the 1882 Ordnance Survey. The 1882 25" OS sheet shows that the precursor to Elm Tree Farm was the Shoulder of Mutton Public House, with the plots taken up by the current PDA in use as arable or pasture fields.

## 2 METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Objectives

The general aim of the trenching evaluation was to obtain useful information concerning the presence, character, date, status and level of preservation of surviving archaeological remains. It also allows the curatorial authority to determine the impact of the proposed development on the archaeological resource, and to discuss the necessity for the preservation by record and/or the possibilities which may exist to preserve certain areas of archaeological remains in-situ if appropriate and thus determine their significance.

The archaeological investigations were carried out in order to:

- Establish the depth and character of archaeologically 'sterile' overburden;

- Investigate geophysical survey anomalies recorded during magnetometer survey of the site (Stratascan, 2015)
- Assess the extent, structure and date of any archaeological features and deposits of archaeological interest;
- Place, where possible, the archaeological features within their local and regional context;
- Establish any constraints to further fieldwork (e.g. services) and factors concerning the survival of archaeological remains (e.g. natural and human disturbance);
- Place the findings of the investigation within the context of previous work undertaken within the vicinity of the site.

The local and regional research contexts are provided by Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties edited by Maria Medlycott: East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 24 (now updated online - [http://www.eaareports.org.uk/framework\\_update.htm](http://www.eaareports.org.uk/framework_update.htm)). These will be examined based on the results from the evaluation, but may cover issues including:

- Gathering evidence for the origins of Pirton village. “Targeted work [in the region] has confirmed a late Saxon origin for many existing settlements” (EAA, 2008, Rural Settlement, p.70) and similar evidence here will be sought. Evidence for Medieval and post-medieval activity will also be sought.

The resulting archive (finds and records) will be organised and deposited in the appropriate registered museum (North Hertford Museum Services) to facilitate access for future research and interpretation for public benefit.

## 2.2 Fieldwork strategy

Trial trenching was carried out between the 21st and 25th September 2015. A total of fifteen trenches were excavated across the DA, measuring 30m in length by 1.8m in width.

The methodology underlying the archaeological trial trenching programme was outlined in the Written Scheme of Investigation (Headland Archaeology 2015), and agreed with the HET. The trench layout was designed to evaluate the DA using a systematic trenching array, with the trenches spread evenly across the DA avoiding overhead services and the presence of a rising sewer main.

A 360 degree tracked mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless bucket was used to remove topsoil under direct archaeological control. Excavation continued until clean geological sediments or archaeological deposits were encountered.

Further excavation required to satisfy the objectives of the evaluation was continued by hand. A representative sample, sufficient to meet the objectives of the evaluation, of identified features was investigated by hand and all features were recorded. The stratigraphy of each trench was recorded in full.

All recording was in accordance with the code of practice of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) and in line with the approved Written Scheme of Investigation (Headland Archaeology 2015). All trenches and contexts were given unique numbers. All recording was undertaken on pro forma record cards that conform to accepted archaeological standards. All stratigraphic relationships were recorded.

An overall site plan at an appropriate scale and relative to the National Grid was recorded by digital survey using a differential GPS.

A full photographic record comprising colour slide and black and white print photographs was taken, supplemented with digital photography. A metric scale was clearly visible in record photographs.

### 3 RESULTS

#### 3.1 Findings from the trial trenching evaluation

Full context descriptions and trench descriptions, including dimensions, depths and orientations, are presented in the Appendices 1 and 2. Contexts are identified numerically by trench (i.e. Trench 01: (0101), Trench 02: (0201)) with cuts indicated by square brackets and deposits by rounded brackets. Selected technical detail is utilised below in order to describe the remains found and to inform the interpretation and dating we have completed and presented in this report. This structure reflects our adherence to the ClfA guidance on report production, which states that “*descriptive material should be clearly separated from interpretative statements*” (ClfA 2014b, 14, Section 5). Drawing upon the same document, we feel it is imperative to create a narrative which uses the evidence we gather to assign significance to heritage assets (remains) we encounter:

*“If archaeological remains are present field evaluation defines their character, extent, quality and preservation, and enables an assessment of their significance in a local, regional, national or international context as appropriate”* (ClfA 2014b, 14, Section 5).

We always utilise multiple data-sources when phasing and interpreting remains. This includes feature morphology (recognisable and datable feature types), datable artefactual material, stratigraphic position of feature (in heavily ploughed areas the presence of an intact subsoil sealing remains is given particular emphasis), the relative stratigraphic position of features (cutting or cut by). A range of other considerations also come into play. The limitation of datable artefactual material is recognised and we reflect on the possibility of intrusive material and the presence of residual material. We also recognise that most archaeological features are ‘filled’ by disuse fills and disused artefacts.

Undisturbed natural deposits were observed in places in all trenches. This generally comprised a yellow-orange-brown clay to the north, with three trenches at the southern end of the site (08, 09 and 11) revealed an orange-brown deposit of sand and gravel. The level of the natural deposit varied, from between 0.5m beneath the present ground-surface to 0.8m beneath the present ground-surface. This was because of the differing thickness of subsoil observed across the site, which appeared to be connected with the presence of ploughed-out field boundaries and possible plough headlands running East-West across the site.

#### 3.2 Phase 1 – late Bronze Age – early Iron Age Remains

A small gully [0106] is (stratigraphically) the earliest feature within Trench 1, it contained a single fill [0114] which was cut by upper edge of ditch [0104] and gully [0107]. The gully appeared to terminate in the centre of the trench, measuring 0.95m in length and 0.36 in width and only 0.08m in depth.

Possible posthole [0107] cut through the single fill of gully [0106]. This feature was contained a single charcoal rich fill [0115], but contained no finds. It was cut to a maximum depth of 0.16m.

Ditch [0105] measured 2.1 metres across and 0.35m in depth, with shallow sides and a concave base; it contained a distinct primary fill (0113), followed by two further fills, (0111) and (0110). The tertiary fill was similar in hue and consistency to the material infilling the upper portion of ditch [0104], suggesting that they were formed under similar circumstances. The secondary fill (0111) was a mid-yellow white clay, which was initially interpreted as natural geology. Further excavation revealed, however, that this material was a compacted dump of redeposited natural sitting over a concealed primary fill (0113). Two sherds of late Bronze Age-early Iron Age (LBA-EIA) pottery were recovered.

Ditch [0104] measured 2.6m across and 0.60m deep; it contained a primary fill (0109) and a secondary fill (0108) made up of compacted clay. Five fragments of LBA-EIA ceramics were recovered from (0108), which also contained frequent small fragments of charcoal within its matrix.

Two ditches were recorded in Trench 1. These ditches matched the size and orientation of anomalies identified during magnetometer survey (Illus 1 and Stratascan 2015). The ditches were aligned North to South running parallel within the trench. Excavation of a slot through the features revealed that their upper edges were intercutting, with the westernmost ditch [0105] superseded by the eastern ditch [0104].

### 3.3 Phase 2 (Medieval) and Phase 3 (Post-Medieval) remains

Trenches 1, 2, 3, 5 and 13 contained shallow, truncated plough furrows. Furrows in trenches 2, 5 and 13 were investigated by hand and recorded. Slots showed the general form of the furrows to be shallow sided with concave bases, measuring 0.20-0.21m deep and 0.35-0.45m wide. No finds were recovered from the fills of these features.

Trench 15 contained a single sub-circular feature measuring 2.2m across by 1.8m wide. Upon excavation the feature was found to be shallow, with an irregular base, while the fill included large concentrations of mid grey brown loam – similar in form to the topsoil within Trench 15. Significant concentrations of gravel within the fill matrix suggests that this feature is the remains of a tree throw or bole.

## 4 Finds

*by Julie Franklin, Jackie Wells, Julie Lochrie*

The finds assemblage numbered 15 sherds (51g) of pottery, 7 finds of chipped stone and two fragments of glass. Finds were found in two separate linear features in Trench 1. The finds appear to be of late prehistoric date. The finds are summarised by feature in the Table 1, a complete catalogue is given at the end.

| Feature      | Pottery (PH) | Pottery (PH) | Lithics  | Lithics    | Glass    | Glass           | Dating  |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|----------|------------|----------|-----------------|---------|
|              | Count        | Wgt          | Count    | Wgt        | Count    | Wgt             |         |
| linear 104   | 10           | 43g          | 5        | 7g         | 2        | <0.5g           | LBA-EIA |
| linear 105   | 5            | 8g           | 2        | 4g         |          |                 | LBA-EIA |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>15</b>    | <b>51g</b>   | <b>7</b> | <b>11g</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>&lt;0.5g</b> |         |

**Table 1:** Summary of finds assemblage by feature

#### Prehistoric Pottery

Fifteen abraded plain body sherds (51g), representing six hand-made vessels, were collected from the fills of two features. The pottery is abraded and highly fragmented, with a mean sherd weight of only 3g. Wares contain flint and quartz, broadly characteristic of late Bronze Age and early Iron Age assemblages in the Chilterns (Bryant 1995, 17). The absence of vessel forms and the fragmentary condition of the pottery means that dating cannot be further refined.

#### Lithics

Seven pieces of chipped stone were retrieved from linears [104] (108) and [105] (110). The assemblage comprised a bipolar core, four flakes and two chips. None are indicative of date, beyond being prehistoric in origin. It is not clear if the lithics are contemporary with the pottery or earlier.

#### Glass

Two tiny fragments of green glass were recovered from a sample of the secondary fill of linear [104] (108). Though too small to identify, it seems more likely that the fragments are intrusive modern material rather than of prehistoric date.



| Trench | Context | Feature    | Sample | Quantity | Weight (g) | Material     | Object           | Description   | Spot Date |
|--------|---------|------------|--------|----------|------------|--------------|------------------|---|-----------|
| 1      | 108     | linear 104 | 1      | 2        | 0          | Glass        | Fragments        | small bright green fragments  |           |
| 1      | 108     | linear 104 | 1      | 2        | 4          | Lithics      | Core & Debitage  | Flint. Corticated. Small bipolar core and a small secondary hard hammer flake                   | PH        |
| 1      | 108     | linear 104 |        | 3        | 3          | Lithics      | Debitage         | Flint. Corticated. Secondary hard hammer flake, cortical platform. Two small yellow brown chips | PH        |
| 1      | 108     | linear 104 |        | 1        | 2          | Pottery (PH) | Fine flint       | abraded   | LBA-EIA   |
| 1      | 108     | linear 104 |        | 3        | 1          | Pottery (PH) | Fine flint       | 1 vessel; abraded crumbs  | LBA-EIA   |
| 1      | 108     | linear 104 |        | 1        | 3          | Pottery (PH) | Flint and quartz | abraded   | LBA-EIA   |
| 1      | 108     | linear 104 |        | 2        | 36         | Pottery (PH) | Flint and quartz | 1 vessel; patchy firing   | LBA-EIA   |
| 1      | 109     | linear 104 |        | 3        | 1          | Pottery (PH) | Fine sand        | 1 vessel; abraded crumbs  | LBA-EIA   |
| 1      | 110     | linear 105 | 2      | 1        | 1          | Lithics      | Debitage         | Flint. short, wide, corticated flake with cortical platform                                     | PH        |
| 1      | 110     | linear 105 |        | 1        | 3          | Lithics      | Debitage         | Flint. Corticated. Short and wide, secondary hard hammer flake                                  | PH        |
| 1      | 110     | linear 105 |        | 5        | 8          | Pottery (PH) | Fine flint       | 1 vessel  | LBA-EIA   |

**Table 2: Finds Catalogue**

## 5 Environmental Evidence

Laura Bailey and Tim Holden

Two bulk samples and hand collected animal bone recovered during archaeological works at Land at Holwell Road, Pirton, Hertfordshire, were received for palaeoenvironmental assessment. The site revealed evidence for prehistoric activity, comprising boundary ditches, a small gully and posthole. There was also evidence for medieval and post medieval agricultural activity, in the form of plough furrows and field boundaries. The samples were from the fills (108) and (110) of ditches [104] and [105] respectively. The aims of the assessment were to assess the presence, preservation and abundance of remains and to characterize the assemblage as far as possible.

### Methodology

Bulk samples were subjected to flotation and wet sieving in a Siraf-style flotation machine. The floating debris (the flot) was collected in a 250 µm sieve and, once dry, scanned using a binocular microscope. Any material remaining in the flotation tank (retent) was wet-sieved through a 1mm mesh and air-dried. All samples were scanned using a stereomicroscope at magnifications of x10 and up to x100. Identifications, where provided, were confirmed using modern reference material and seed atlases including Cappers et al. (2006).

Identifiable animal bone fragments were recorded, together with the preservation and any signs of modification of the bone in order to assess the quality, quantity and

potential of the assemblage. Where possible fragments were identified to species level using Schmid (1972).

### Results

Results of the assessment are presented in Tables 1 (Retent samples), 2 (Flot samples) and 3 (Animal bone). No material suitable for AMS (Accelerated Mass Spectrometry) radiocarbon dating was recovered.

### Wood charcoal

A small amount of fragmented, abraded, wood charcoal was present in the fill (108) of ditch [104].

### Molluscs

A small number of well-preserved terrestrial molluscs were present in both samples. It is likely, given the abundance of modern root matter, that the molluscs are also modern.

### Animal bone

Animal bone was hand collected from three contexts (Table 3); from the fill (108) of ditch [104] and the fills (110) and (111) of ditch [105]. The animal bone was heavily fragmented and both old and modern breaks were noted. No complete bones were present.

The surface condition of the bones was poor and abraded.

The assemblage comprised fragments of scapula and ribs from a large mammal.

### Discussion

The palaeoenvironmental assemblage offers little insight into site economy. The combination of bone together with pottery suggests that the material probably had a domestic origin. The presence of meat bones such as scapula suggest that it may have been food waste incidentally incorporated into the backfill of negative features.

## 6 DESCRIPTION OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF HERITAGE ASSETS

The local and regional research contexts are provided by Medlycott's *Research and Archaeology Revisited: a Revised Framework for the East of England* (2011). In Section 2.1 of this document we identified research aims relating to Anglo-Saxon origins for Medieval Villages. The results of the trial trenching evaluation did not provide any information about Anglo-Saxon activity around Pirton. Evidence for LBA-EIA activity was recovered from features in the northern part of the site (Trench 1). The artefactual, ecofactual and contextual information are, when combined, suggestive of occupation activity within the PDA, in the form of an infilled domestic enclosure. The following heritage assets were identified during the fieldwork:

| Description of Heritage Asset                    | Trench Number | Feature Number/s               | Significance of heritage asset (Low, Medium, High) and of local, regional, national, international interest |
|--|---------------|--------------------------------|---|
| HA1: Late Bronze Age – Early Iron Age Enclosure  | 1             | [0104], [0105], [0106], [0107] | Medium significance of local interest   |
| HA2: Medieval/Post Medieval Agricultural remains | 1,2,3,5,13    | [0205], [0505], [1305]         | Low significance of Local interest  |

**Table 3:** Heritage Assets recorded during intrusive evaluation

HA1 consists of the remains of an LBA-EIA ditch identified during the geophysical survey and trial trenching. The ditch may have been part of an enclosure, although earlier trenching to the north (PCA 2011) found no similar evidence and this evaluation found no evidence to the south and so the extent of this activity seems limited. It is possible that the remains encountered by PCA (2011) are related (they were undated due to lack of artefactual evidence but remains of this date can be poor in finds). Any further remains are likely to consist of the continuation of the two boundary ditches already recorded within Trench 1, along with possible related (settlement) activity, which might include post-built roundhouses, and areas for agricultural or industrial processing. Several other enclosure of a similar date are noted on the Historical Environment Record to the North of the PDA.

HA2 consists of the evidence for medieval agricultural landscapes across the DA. This principally comprises of the plough furrows observed beneath the subsoil in trenches 1, 2, 3, 5 and 13. These furrows are considered to have negligible archaeological significance.

## 7 CONCLUSIONS

The trial-trenching evaluation uncovered a single area of medium-local significance remains at the northern end of the site. The artefactual, ecofactual and contextual information are, when combined, suggestive of occupation activity within the PDA, in the form of an infilled ditch of uncertain function – though presumably located close to settlement activity. These are most likely to have been infilled during the mid-late Iron Age.

All trenches showed the presence of modern plough soil or meadow topsoil and deposits of subsoil associated with the modern agricultural landscape across the whole of the site. This sealed the below ground remains of the medieval ploughlands around Pirton.

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## Appendix I – Context Register

| Context No. | Trench | Description  | Dimensions |
|-------------|--------|--|------------|
| 0101        | 1      | Topsoil - mid grey brown clay  | 0.32m      |
| 0102        | 1      | Subsoil - light grey brown clay  | 0.30m      |
| 0103        | 1      | Natural - mid orange brown boulder clay with occasional lenses of orange gravel  |            |
| 0104        | 1      | Cut of linear feature with stepped sides, steep sloping at the base and shallow towards the top of the cut. Concave base, contained two separate fills (0109) (0108). Ceramic, bone and lithics recovered from fills. Max depth = 0.60m            | 0.60m      |
| 0105        | 1      | Cut of earlier linear feature with stepped sides, steep sloping at the base and shallow towards the top of the cut. Concave base, contained three separate fills - (0113) (0111) (0110) max depth = 0.35m  | 0.35m      |
| 0106        | 1      | Linear cut with steep sides, rounded base and gradual breaks of slope. Small/shallow linear on the NE edge of [0104] probable gully feature. Single fill = (0114) Max depth = 0.08m  | 0.08m      |
| 0107        | 1      | Sub-circular cut feature with single fill (0115) possible posthole on the NE edge of series of prehistoric ditches. Max depth = 0.16m  | 0.16m      |
| 0108        | 1      | Secondary fill of [0104] mid dark-grey clay, diffuse interfaces, highly compacted, occasional small flecks of charcoal. Prehistoric ceramics recovered, along with bone and a potential lithic. Seals primary fill (0109). Max depth = 0.43m       |            |
| 0109        | 1      | Primary fill of [0104] mid brown grey gravelly clay, diffuse interfaces, compact consistency, single fragment of ceramic recovered. Probable initial silting of enclosure ditch during use. Max depth = 0.15m                                      | 0.15m      |
| 0110        | 1      | Tertiary fill of [0105] mid dark grey clay, diffuse interfaces, compact consistency, occasional small charcoal flecks, max depth 0.20m. Interpreted as backfill material   | 0.20m      |
| 0111        | 1      | Secondary fill of [0105] yellow-white grey clay, likely to be redeposited natural, sharp interfaces, and compact consistency. Thin lens underlying (0110) mixed white chalky clay and grey clay, thought originally to be natural. Max depth 0.16m | 0.16m      |
| 0112        | 1      | VOID   |            |
| 0113        | 1      | Primary fill of [0105] dark grey clay, highly compacted, diffuse interfaces, inclusions of sub-rounded stones within the fill matrix. Max depth  | 0.25m      |

| <b>Context No.</b> | <b>Trench</b> | <b>Description</b>  | <b>Dimensions</b> |
|--------------------|---------------|---|-------------------|
| 0114               | 1             | Single fill of possible gully [0106] mid grey brown clay, gradual interfaces, firm consistency. Cut by possible posthole [0107]. Max depth                  | 0.16m             |
| 0115               | 1             | Single fill of posthole, dark grey clay, sharp interfaces and firm consistency. Inclusions of charcoal recorded in section. Max depth                       | 0.16m             |
| 0201               | 2             | Topsoil mid grey brown clay loam  | 0.30m             |
| 0202               | 2             | Subsoil light grey brown clay loam  | 0.30m             |
| 0203               | 2             | Natural light yellow brown clay   |                   |
| 0204               | 2             | Mid grey brown clay, sharp interfaces, compacted consistency, occasional sub-rounded gravel inclusions. Max depth   | = 0.20m           |
| 0205               | 2             | Cut of linear feature, moderate sides, concave base, mild breaks of slope. Single fill = (0204) max depth   | = 0.20m           |
| 0301               | 3             | Topsoil mid grey brown clay loam  | 0.30m             |
| 0302               | 3             | Subsoil light grey brown clay loam  | 0.45m             |
| 0303               | 3             | Natural light yellow brown clay   |                   |
| 0401               | 4             | Topsoil mid grey brown clay loam  | 0.35m             |
| 0402               | 4             | Subsoil light grey brown clay loam  | 0.30m             |
| 0403               | 4             | Natural light yellow brown clay   |                   |
| 0501               | 5             | Topsoil mid grey brown clay loam  | 0.30m             |
| 0502               | 5             | Subsoil light grey brown clay loam  | 0.20m             |
| 0503               | 5             | Natural light yellow brown clay   |                   |
| 0504               | 5             | Light orange brown clay, sharp interfaces, compacted consistency, occasional sub-rounded gravel. Single fill of furrow [0505]                               | 0.18m             |
| 0505               | 5             | Cut of linear feature, moderate sides, concave base, mild breaks of slope - cut of linear feature, single fill (0504), interpreted as cut of plough furrow. | 0.18m             |
| 0601               | 6             | Topsoil mid grey brown clay loam  | 0.35m             |
| 0602               | 6             | Subsoil light grey brown clay loam  | 0.30m             |
| 0603               | 6             | Natural light yellow brown clay   |                   |

| <b>Context No.</b> | <b>Trench</b> | <b>Description</b>  | <b>Dimensions</b> |
|--------------------|---------------|---|-------------------|
| 0701               | 7             | Topsoil mid grey brown clay loam  | 0.30m             |
| 0702               | 7             | Subsoil light grey brown clay loam  | 0.30m             |
| 0703               | 7             | Natural light yellow brown clay   |                   |
| 0801               | 8             | Topsoil mid grey brown clay loam  | 0.30m             |
| 0802               | 8             | Subsoil light grey brown clay loam  | 0.20m             |
| 0803               | 8             | Natural light orange yellow sand  |                   |
| 0901               | 9             | Topsoil mid grey brown clay loam  | 0.20m             |
| 0902               | 9             | Subsoil light grey brown clay loam  | 0.40m             |
| 0903               | 9             | Natural light yellow brown clay   |                   |
| 1001               | 10            | Topsoil mid grey brown clay loam  | 0.30m             |
| 1002               | 10            | Subsoil light grey brown clay loam  | 0.30m             |
| 1003               | 10            | Natural light yellow brown clay   |                   |
| 1101               | 11            | Topsoil mid grey brown clay loam  | 0.80m             |
| 1102               | 11            | Subsoil light grey brown clay loam  | 0.20m             |
| 1103               | 11            | Natural light yellow brown clay   |                   |
| 1201               | 12            | Topsoil mid grey brown clay loam  | 0.34m             |
| 1202               | 12            | Subsoil light grey brown clay loam  | 0.30m             |
| 1203               | 12            | Natural light yellow brown clay   |                   |
| 1301               | 13            | Topsoil mid grey brown clay loam  | 0.25m             |
| 1302               | 13            | Subsoil light grey brown clay loam  | 0.25m             |
| 1303               | 13            | Natural light yellow brown clay   |                   |
| 1304               | 13            | Mid orange brown clay, sharp interfaces, compacted consistency. Single fill of linear feature [1305]. Max depth = 0.21m | 0.21m             |
| 1305               | 13            | Cut of linear feature, moderate sides, concave base, mild break of slope. Single fill = (1304). Max depth = 0.21m       | 0.21m             |
| 1401               | 14            | Topsoil mid grey brown clay loam  | 0.20m             |

| <b>Context No.</b> | <b>Trench</b> | <b>Description</b>  | <b>Dimensions</b> |
|--------------------|---------------|---|-------------------|
| 1402               | 14            | Subsoil light grey brown clay loam  | 0.25m             |
| 1403               | 14            | Natural light yellow brown clay   |                   |
| 1501               | 15            | Topsoil mid grey brown clay loam  | 0.20m             |
| 1502               | 15            | Subsoil light grey brown clay loam  | 0.25m             |
| 1503               | 15            | Natural light yellow brown clay   |                   |
| 1504               | 15            | Dark grey brown clay, sharp interfaces, compact consistency, occasional sub-rounded gravel inclusions. Single fill of tree bole [1505] max depth = 0.18m        | 0.18m             |
| 1505               | 15            | Sub circular cut, moderate sides, concave base, mild breaks of slope. Cut of sub-circular feature with single fill (1504). Interpreted as a probable tree bole. | 0.18m             |

#### **Appendix II – Sample Register**

| <b>Sample</b> | <b>Context</b> | <b>Description</b>             |
|---------------|----------------|--------------------------------|
| 001           | 0108           | Secondary fill of ditch [0104] |
| 002           | 0110           | Tertiary fill of ditch [0105]  |

#### **Appendix III – Drawing Register**

| <b>Drw</b> | <b>Plan</b> | <b>Section</b> | <b>Description</b>                               |
|------------|-------------|----------------|--|
| 001        |             | 01:10          | Section of slot across ditches [0104] and [0105] |

#### **Appendix IV– Photographic Register**

| <b>Photo</b> | <b>Direction</b> | <b>Description</b>                |
|--------------|------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 001          | N                | Post-Excavation shot of Trench 1  |
| 002          | N                | Post-Excavation shot of Trench 2  |
| 003          | E                | Post-Excavation shot of Trench 3  |
| 004          | S                | Post-Excavation shot of Trench 4  |
| 005          | E                | Post-Excavation shot of Trench 5  |
| 006          | S                | Post-Excavation shot of Trench 6  |
| 007          | N                | Post-Excavation shot of Trench 9  |
| 008          | W                | Post Excavation shot of Trench 11 |
| 009          | N                | Post Excavation shot of Trench 14 |
| 010          | N                | Post Excavation shot of Trench 15 |
| 011          | S                | Post Excavation shot of Trench 12 |
| 012          | S                | Post Excavation shot of Trench 10 |
| 013          | S                | Post Excavation shot of Trench 8  |
| 014          | SE               | Post Excavation shot of Trench 7  |
| 015          | NW               | Post Excavation shot of Trench 13 |
| 016          |                  | Working shot of Joe Turner        |

| <b>Photo</b> | <b>Direction</b> | <b>Description</b>                             |
|--------------|------------------|--|
| 017          |                  | Working shot of machine crossing point         |
| 018          | N                | Post-excavation shot of trench 9               |
| 019          | N                | Post-excavation shot of trench 10              |
| 020          | E                | Mid excavation shot of slot in Trench 1        |
| 021          | S                | Post Excavation shot of slot in Trench 1       |
| 022          | S                | Post Excavation shot of slot in Trench 2       |
| 023          | S                | Feature [0105]                                 |
| 024          | S                | Feature [0104]                                 |
| 025          | S                | Features [0106] and [0107]                     |
| 026          | S                | Ploughsoil column in trench 1                  |
| 027          | S                | Features [0106] and [0107]                     |
| 028          | N                | South facing section through ditch [0105]      |
| 029          | N                | South facing section through ditch [0105]      |
| 030          | N                | Possible posthole adjacent to [0105]           |
| 031          | W                | Overview of [0105] and [0104]                  |
| 032          | S                | Variation in natural adjacent to [0104]        |
| 033          | E                | Cut of tree bole [1505]                        |
| 034          | N                | Cut of plough furrow [1305]                    |
| 035          | N                | Cut of plough furrow [0505]                    |
| 036          | N                | Cut of plough furrow [0205]                    |
| 037          | S                | Cut of ditch [0105] fully excavated            |
| 038          | S                | Cut of ditch [0105] fully excavated (original) |
| 039          |                  | Reinstatement shot                             |
| 040          |                  | Reinstatement shot                             |
| 041          |                  | Reinstatement shot                             |
| 042          |                  | Reinstatement shot                             |
| 043          |                  | Reinstatement shot                             |
| 044          |                  | Reinstatement shot                             |
| 045          |                  | Reinstatement shot                             |



**Appendix V - Retent Sample Results**

| Context Number  | Sample Number | Feature                        | Sample Vol (l) | Ceramic | Stone | Glass | Unburnt bone | Shell | Charcoal |       | Material available for AMS Dating | Comments              |
|---|---------------|--------------------------------|----------------|---------|-------|-------|--------------|-------|----------|-------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
|   |               |                                |                | Pottery |       |       |              |       | Lithics  | Glass |                                   |                       |
|   |               |                                |                |         |       |       |              |       |          |       |                                   |                       |
| 108   | 1             | Secondary fill of ditch [0104] | 40             | +       | +     | +     | ++           | +     | +        | 1     | No                                | Charcoal not retained |
| 110   | 2             | Tertiary fill of ditch [0105]  | 40             |         | ++++  |       |              | +     |          |       | No                                |                       |
| <p><b>Key:</b> + = rare (0-5), ++ = occasional (6-15), +++ = common (15-50) and ++++ = abundant (&gt;50)<br/> <b>NB</b> charcoal over 1cm is suitable for identification and AMS dating</p> |               |                                |                |         |       |       |              |       |          |       |                                   |                       |

## Appendix VI- Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record Summary Sheet

|  |   |                 |
|--|---|-----------------|
| Site name and address:<br>Land at Holwell Road, Pirton, Hertfordshire  |   |                 |
| County: Hertfordshire  | District: North Hertfordshire                           |                 |
| Village/Town: Pirton   | Parish: Pirton  |                 |
| Planning application reference: North Herts District Council 15/01618/1  |   |                 |
| HER Enquiry reference:   |   |                 |
| Funding source: Gladman Developments Ltd   |   |                 |
| Nature of application:<br>Outline planning permission for housing  |   |                 |
| Present land use: Agricultural   |   |                 |
| Size of application area: 4.43hd   | Size of area investigated: 450m <sup>2</sup>            |                 |
| NGR (to 8 figures minimum):TL 1511 3181  |   |                 |
| Site code (if applicable):   |   |                 |
| Site director/Organization: Michael Tierney Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd  |   |                 |
| Type of work: Evaluation   |   |                 |
| Date of work:  | Start: 21/9/15  | Finish: 25/9/15 |
| Location of finds & site archive/Curating museum:<br>Headland Archaeology, 68c, Wrest Park, Silsoe, Bedfordshire, MK45 4HS |   |                 |
| Related HER Nos:MHT 2334<br>MBD 1649   | Periods represented:<br>Late Bronze Age, Early Iron Age |                 |
| Relevant previous summaries/reports<br>Desk Based Assesment: Land at Holwell Road, Pirton, Hertfordshire. CgMS             |   |                 |

Summary of fieldwork results:

Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd conducted a trial-trench archaeological evaluation on land at Holwell Road, Pirton, Hertfordshire, prior to submission of planning consent for the residential development of the site. 30 evaluation trenches measuring 1.8m in width were excavated in the proposed development area. The remains of an Early Bronze Age enclosure ditch and medieval agricultural furrows were found.

Author of summary: Michael Tierney

Date of summary: 2/12/15