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Sherford New Community – Phase 1.1 Plymouth, Devon (Earthworks Surcharge Area and Haul Roads)

Archaeological Watching Brief Report



Planning Refs: Plymouth City Council - 06/02036/OUT
South Hams District Council - 7_49/2426/06/O)
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June 2016



**Sherford New Community – Phase 1.1
Plymouth, Devon**

(Earthworks Surcharge Area and Haul Roads)

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

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Sherford New Community – Phase 1.1 Plymouth, Devon

(Earthworks Surcharge Area and Haul Roads)

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

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Archaeological Watching Brief Report

Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by AECOM, on behalf of the Sherford Consortium, to undertake an archaeological watching brief on land within the area of the proposed new community at Sherford, Plymouth, Devon, centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 255028 53912.

The watching brief was specifically associated with the construction of the RMA Phase 1 Haul Road, and for work on the Earthwork Surcharge Area and associated haul road. The works involved the excavation of an 8 m (RMA Phase 1 Haul Road) and a 13 m (Earthwork Surcharge Area Haul Road) wide strip which ran across a number of fields, and which comprised the topsoil and subsoil stripping and excavation of areas. The works also involved the stripping and excavation of the Earthworks Surcharge Area, prior to bedrock extraction and deposition of material from later works during the wider development. The programme of works was carried out intermittently between the 1st September 2015 and the 29th March 2016.

During the work on the RMA Phase 1 Haul Road two features were identified. The remains of a wall or trackway was identified in Field 10 which is probably related to the demolished farmstead of Gore. A linear gully was also identified in Field 37 formed part of the old post-medieval field system.

A total of five linear ditches (Fields 39 and 40) were recorded during the work on the Earthworks Surcharge Haul Road, all of which relate to old field boundaries which date to before the 19th century. A single pit (Field 101) was also identified which seems to have been a waste or rubbish pit but could not be dated. Two linear gullies were recorded on the Earthworks Surcharge Area and relate to an old drainage or field system.

The archaeological features were generally well preserved with little truncation and features recorded correlated reasonably well with the results of the previous geophysical survey.



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(Earthworks Surcharge Area and Haul Roads)

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Acknowledgements

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The archaeological work was undertaken by Tom Blencowe, Mike Cepak, Matt Kendall, and Jon Sanigar. This report was written and compiled by Matt Kendall and edited by Gareth Chaffey, with specialist reports by Grace Jones (finds) and Phil Andrews (slag). The environmental samples were processed by Tony Scothern and were assessed by Inés López-Dóriga. The report illustrations were prepared by Rob Goller. The project was managed on behalf of Wessex Archaeology by Gareth Chaffey who also edited the report.



Sherford New Community – Phase 1.1 Plymouth, Devon

(Earthworks Surcharge Area and Haul Roads)

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology (WA) was commissioned by AECOM, of behalf of the Sherford Consortium, to carry out an archaeological watching brief on land within the area of the proposed new community at Sherford, Plymouth, Devon, centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 255028 53912 (hereafter 'the Site') (**Figure 1**). The watching brief was part of the wider archaeological mitigation strategy for Phase 1 of the Sherford New Community development required as conditions 52, 54, 56, and 93 in the outline planning application conditions (Plymouth City Council - 06/02036/OUT and the South Hams District Council - 7_49/2426/06/O).
- 1.1.2 The watching brief was specifically associated with the construction of the RMA Phase 1 Haul Road, and for work on the Earthwork Surcharge Area and associated haul road. The works involved the excavation of an 8 m (RMA Phase 1 Haul Road) and a 13 m (Earthwork Surcharge Area Haul Road) wide strip which ran across a number of fields, and which comprised the topsoil and subsoil stripping and excavation of areas. The works also involved the stripping and excavation of the Earthworks Surcharge Area, prior to bedrock extraction and deposition of material from later works during the wider development.
- 1.1.3 The fieldwork strategy and methodology was documented in two Method Statements (URS 2014a, AECOM 2015) and was submitted to and approved by the County Archaeologist at Devon County Council (DCC) prior to fieldwork commencing.

1.2 Location, topography and geology

- 1.2.1 The Site comprises of land located in the western and central areas of the overall site and is composed of 14 pasture and arable fields, as well as disused greenhouses belonging to Elburton Vineries (**Figure 1**). The RMA Phase 1 Haul Road starts from the entrance to the former site of the Elberton Vinery on Vinery Lane and runs broadly eastwards to Sherford Kilns before turning north-eastwards. It ends just east of Vealeholme Farm, joining up with Plympton Hill Road (**Figure 1**).
- 1.2.2 The Earthworks Surcharge Haul Road starts in Field 10, joining up with the RMA Phase 1 Haul Road, and runs broadly eastwards. It crosses Plympton Hill Road, turns south-eastwards, and runs immediately south of East Sherford and crosses Sherford Stream, before joining up with the Earthworks Surcharge Area. The Earthworks Surcharge Area comprises of three fields which are located north of Gentain Hill Boarding Kennels (**Figure 1**).



1.2.3 The overall Site is approximately 660 hectares in size and comprises of mostly pasture and arable fields. The Site is located on the hilly land ranging from around 32 m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) in the middle of the Site around Bridge Stream, and rising up to 100 m aOD in the north-eastern corner of the Site. The solid geology of the Site is comprised of Mid Devonian Slates and Mid Devonian Limestone (British Geological Survey Website).

1.3 Scope of document

1.3.1 This report documents the results of the archaeological watching brief associated with the RMA Phase 1 Haul Road and the Earthwork Surcharge Area, and associated haul road, works which was carried out intermittently between the 1st September 2015 and the 29th March 2016.

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The archaeological and historical background of the Site has been detailed in an Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment (DBA) (URS 2014b) the results of which are briefly summarised below. A 0.5 km Study Area around the Site was established in order to provide the context for the discussion and interpretation.

2.2 Known sites

2.2.1 The only known sites in the immediate area of the works are East Sherford, the possible site of 'Slo' farmstead, and Vealeholm Farm. East Sherford (located immediately north of the Earthworks Surcharge Area haul road), along with West Sherford, were collectively known as 'Sireford' at the time of the Domesday survey, and formed part of the grant to Henry I in the early 12th century. The name 'Sherford' it thought to mean 'clear ford' and the farms are located either side of the point where the main road through the site crosses a stream. Approximately 160 m to the east of the RMA Phase 1 Haul Road is the farmstead of Higher Sherford, more recently known as Slew Farm. This farm was first mentioned in 1327 as 'Slo', a name that is likely to denote a farm near to sloe trees.

2.2.2 Vealeholme Farm, located 50 m to northern end of the RMA Phase 1 Haul Road, may represent the site of a medieval manor house referred to as 'Velehalle' which was recorded in a document of AD 1336. No traces of any medieval structures have been recorded however, and mapping evidence indicates only a single dwelling on this site in 1784, with the farmstead developing later in the 19th century.

2.2.3 Of local significance are the Sherford Kilns, located at the eastern of the Site, which seem to date back to the early 18th century.

2.2.4 The only scheduled monument identified is the Iron Age hillfort known as Wasteberrey Camp (NHL no.33794) which is located to the east of the wider development area. In addition, the Plympton St Maurice conservation area is located c. 370 m to the north of the wider development area.

2.3 The Site

2.3.1 There is little evidence for early prehistoric activity area with only a single Mesolithic microlith being recovered from an area immediately south of the King George Playing Field, to the south-west of the Site. Neolithic evidence is similarly scarce with a flint scatter and possible settlement activity being uncovered in the north-east of Elburton. Bronze Age



activity seems to have increased in line with the wider area. Two circular earthwork features which appear to be barrows have been identified to the north of the Site and have been confirmed by later geophysical surveys (Bartlett-Clarke Consultancy 2014). In addition, an enclosure tentatively dated to the Bronze Age has been identified nearby to the barrow features.

- 2.3.2 Romano-British activity within the Site is mainly seen through coin find spots which from the 2nd to 4th centuries and are predominately located in the south-western corner of the overall development area. A trial trench evaluation in 2006 (Exeter Archaeology 2006) identified settlement activity close to the find spots and denoted by an enclosure ditch, a hearth and a scatter of pits which were dated from the mid Iron Age to the 4th century, suggesting a continued occupation presence on the Site.
- 2.3.3 Medieval activity within the Site seems to be concentrated on the remains of enclosures based on strip fields and which can still be seen across the north-western half of the overall development area, while documentary sources record a medieval quarry north-east of West Sherford Farm.
- 2.3.4 The quarry continued into the post-medieval and was associated with three lime kilns, known locally as the Sherford Kilns. Further post-medieval activity is associated with the now demolished Gore Farm which is located to the east of the Site and immediately north-west of Sherford Kilns. Shown on an 18th century plan and comprising of at least two substantial buildings, it was demolished by 1869. A number of other areas of post-medieval activity have been identified near to where the haul roads are intended to run. These include potential water meadows, particularly a field which was called 'Gutter Field' on a 19th century tithe map. Sites of now demolished post-medieval buildings are also recorded, specifically a cottage at East Sherford seen on the 1839 Brixton Tithe map and a lone agricultural building seen on a 1784 map.

2.4 Geophysical survey

- 2.4.1 A geophysical survey of the Site was undertaken in 2014 (Bartlett-Clarke Consultancy 2014) and which has provided information prior to the undertaking of the watching brief. The survey recorded anomalies suggestive of numerous significant archaeological features, which appear to suggest the presence of a prehistoric/Romano-British landscape (including barrows, possible settlement/stock enclosures and field systems) beneath the existing medieval and post-medieval field systems. The majority of these features are located on the lower ground near Bridge Stream.

2.5 Other investigations in the locality

- 2.5.1 A trial trench evaluation (WA 2015a) and watching brief (WA 2015b) was undertaken by WA earlier in 2015, and targeted features identified in the geophysical survey which were going to be affected by the proposed RMA Phase 1.1 Advanced Planting Works. The evaluation identified a number of features of which most were attributed to former field and drainage systems, although a number of Romano-British features were identified, along with two Mesolithic flints and a 19th century trackway.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Aims and objectives

- 3.1.1 The overall aim of the archaeological watching brief was to mitigate the impact of the works upon any archaeological features during the construction of the haul roads and the earthworks surcharge area. If remains were present, the watching brief would seek to



establish sufficient details such that informed decisions could be made regarding the need and scope of any further mitigation that may be required before or during the development of the Site.

3.1.2 Consequently, the following specific objectives have been identified (URS 2014a, AECOM 2015):

- *to contribute towards the discharge the planning conditions;*
- *to provide a clearer understanding of the level of archaeological activity within the proposed development site;*
- *to mitigate the impact of the development upon any archaeological features encountered during construction, by archaeological excavation and recording;*
- *to determine the nature and extent of further archaeological features and/or deposits encountered; and*
- *to disseminate the results of the watching brief by means of an archaeological report.*

3.2 Fieldwork methodology

3.2.1 All works were undertaken in accordance with the methodology set out within the Method Statements (URS 2014a, AECOM 2015). In format and content it conforms with current best practice and to the guidance outlined in *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (MoRPHE, Historic England 2015). All fieldwork was conducted in accordance with the guidance and standards outlined in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (CIfA 2014).

3.2.2 The construction of two haul roads associated with the RMA Phase 1 and Earthwork Surcharge works were monitored during the watching brief, in addition to the excavation of a field to facilitate the extraction of bedrock and the deposition of materials from later development works. These were located within the western and central areas of the overall development (**Figure 1**), which were within and beyond the Phase 1 development limits. The haul road and surcharge area works comprised the excavation of areas down to a determined construction level, prior to either the construction of a permanent haul road or further extraction of materials.

3.2.3 The watching brief was specifically associated with the construction of the RMA Phase 1 Haul Road, and for work on the Earthwork Surcharge Area and associated haul road. The works involved the excavation of an 8 m (RMA Phase 1 Haul Road) and a 29 m (Earthwork Surcharge Area Haul Road) wide strip which ran across a number of fields, and which comprised the topsoil and subsoil stripping and excavation of areas. The works also involved the stripping and excavation of the Earthworks Surcharge Area, prior to bedrock extraction and deposition of material from later works during the wider development.

3.2.4 The work was carried out using a 35 - 40 tonne 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, measuring approximately 2 m wide, and was supervised by a suitably qualified archaeologist at all times. The topsoil and subsoil were removed by machine in a series of level spits to the top of the archaeology, natural geological deposits, or the construction level, whichever was encountered first. The machine excavated arisings were stored at the side of the trench and were scanned for artefacts at regular intervals from both the topsoil and subsoil.



3.3 Recording

- 3.3.1 All features of an archaeological nature were investigated. Where applicable, small discrete features were fully excavated, larger discrete features were half-sectioned and linear feature were sample excavated along their length.
- 3.3.2 All exposed archaeological deposits were recorded using WA's *pro forma* recording system.
- 3.3.3 A complete drawn record of archaeological features and deposits was compiled. This included both plans and sections, drawn to appropriate scales (generally 1:20 for plans, 1:10 for sections), and with reference to a site grid tied to the Ordnance Survey National Grid. The Ordnance Datum (OD) height of all principal features and levels was calculated and plans/sections annotated with OD heights.
- 3.3.4 A photographic record was maintained during the evaluation using digital cameras equipped with an image sensor of not less than 10 megapixels. Digital images were subject to managed quality control and curation processes which embed appropriate metadata within the image and ensure long term accessibility of the image set.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 The following sections provide a summary of the information held in the Site archive. Details of individually excavated contexts, features and stratigraphic sequence are retained in the Site archive and a tabulated version of these can be found in **Appendix 1**.
- 4.1.2 The following result section is presented by sub-division (RMA Phase 1 Haul Road and Earthworks Surcharge Area and Haul Road) and should be read in conjunction with context descriptions in **Appendix 1**.

4.2 Natural deposits and soil sequences

- 4.2.1 The monitoring of works during the excavation of the hauls roads and Surcharge Area revealed 0.20 m of topsoil which was removed to reveal around 0.18 m of subsoil. This sealed the natural geology which was revealed at around 0.38m below the current ground surface (**Plate 1**). Due to the undulating nature of the route taken by the haul roads, the thicknesses of the topsoil and subsoil varied with the subsoil becoming more prevalent in the lower areas of the route and disappearing within the higher areas of the route.
- 4.2.2 The natural geology identified during the excavation of the RMA Phase Haul Road varied along its length. To the west, where the haul road went through the lower lying fields, the geology was revealed to be degraded Mid Devonian Limestone (**Plate 2**) and which changed to Mid Devonian Slate as the topography to the route rose. During the excavation of the Earthworks Surcharge Haul Road and Area, the natural geology was made up entirely of Mid Devonian Slate (**Plate 3**).

4.3 RMA Phase 1 Haul Road

- 4.3.1 The RMA Phase 1 Haul Road measured approximately 1204 m in length by 8 m at its widest and ran on a rough south-west to north-east alignment from NGR 253959.31 53787.16 to 254622.44 54586.63. Its route took it through a total of eight fields (**Figure 1**), which comprised of the site of the Elburton Vinery greenhouses and seven arable and pasture fields (Fields 4, 5, 8, 10, 24, 35, 36, and 37). The results of this archaeological



watching brief will be presented in field order as the haul road moves south-west to north-east.

Elburton Vinery Greenhouses

- 4.3.2 The haul road within the Elburton Vinery Greenhouse area ran for approximately 155 m on a west-south-west to east-north-east alignment, along the route of a pre-existing concrete track, before turning to a west-north-west to east-south-east alignment for another 95 m across where the greenhouses had once stood. Due to the large amount of disturbance within this area, and the presence of hazardous contamination (i.e. asbestos, fertiliser chemicals), this section of the haul road was not monitored.

Fields 4, 5, and 24

- 4.3.3 Within Fields 4, 5, and 24, the haul road ran on a west-north-west to east-south-east alignment for approximately 190 m, clipping the south-western corner of Field 4, running across Field 5, and then clipping the north-eastern corner of Field 24. Previous archaeological investigation (WA 2015a) had encountered no archaeological features, and had observed a substantial depth of soils and materials within Fields 4 and 5, which was a result of dumping waste soils from the Elburton Vinery greenhouses. Although the archaeological level was monitored across these three fields, no archaeological features or deposits were encountered. (**Plate 4**)

Field 8

- 4.3.4 The route of the haul road in Field 8 ran along the southern edge of the field for a distance of 260 m on a south-west to north-east alignment. The geophysical survey undertaken in 2014 (Bartlett-Clarke Consultancy 2014) identified a number of potentially significant archaeological features within this field, and due to this the haul road was positioned in an area of lower archaeological potential. The works were monitored during the works within this field. However, due to the natural geology within this area being alluvial clay silts, and the fact that this field was one of the last to be stripped there was a degree of disturbance caused by rutting. Because of this, no archaeological features could be identified. (**Plate 5**).

Field 10

- 4.3.5 The route of the haul road in Field 10 ran along the southern and eastern edges of the field for a distance of 290 m on a south-west to north-north-east alignment. Previous archaeological investigations (Bartlett-Clarke Consultancy 2014, WA 2015a, 2015b) had identified a number of potentially significant archaeological features within this field, and due to this the haul road was positioned in an area of lower archaeological potential.
- 4.3.6 The only archaeological feature identified during the works in Field 10 was the remains of a stone foundation wall, **80328**, and its associated construction cut (**Figure 2, Plate 6**). Wall **80328** was recorded as running on a north-south alignment and measured 2.48 m in length by 0.62 m wide and 0.05 m deep. Made up of sub-angular to sub-rounded stones and fragments of limestone, it is possible that the wall is associated with the now demolished Gore Farm which was located immediately to the south of the haul road. Wall **80328** corresponds to a geophysical anomaly which was defined as a *historic field boundary*. However, it could also be part of a metalled trackway which was seen in the previous archaeological evaluation (WA 2015a) and watching brief (WA 2015b) and which can be seen on a 1784 map which leads to Gore Farm (URS 2014b).



Field 37

- 4.3.7 Within Field 37, the haul road ran through the middle of the field. Running initially for 130 m on a south-west to north-east alignment, it then turned sharply to continue 110 m on a south-east to north-west alignment. The previous geophysical survey had identified a number of features which were classed as being *archaeological* or *historical field boundaries*. The only feature identified during the archaeological watching brief during the work in this field was a single gully, **80307 (Figure 2, Plate 7)**. Running on a rough south-west to north-east alignment, and measuring 1.65 m in width and 0.16 m deep with shallow concave sides and a flat base, no dating evidence was recovered from the gully although it is most likely an old field boundary.

Field 36

- 4.3.8 The haul road within Field 36 ran on a south-south-west to north-north-east alignment in the western half of the field for a distance of 90 m. The geophysical survey had identified no archaeological features within the field and the monitoring of the works revealed no features or deposits (**Plate 8**).

Field 35

- 4.3.9 Within Field 35, the haul road continued on a south-south-west to north-north-east alignment, running along the western edge of the field for a distance of 150 m. The geophysical survey only picked up the high pressure gas main which runs across the north of the site. The only feature identified during the watching brief was a field boundary located at the northern edge of the field and which ran on an east to west alignment. Measuring 6 m in length by 4.30 m, the boundary was not fully investigated as conversations with the farmer revealed it had only been removed within living memory (J. Ellis *pers. comm.*).

4.4 Earthworks Surcharge Area and Haul Road

- 4.4.1 The Earthworks Surcharge Area Haul Road measured approximately 1311 m in length by 29 m at its widest and ran on a rough north-west to south-east alignment from NGR 254486.37, 54105.87 to 255581.07, 54703.10. Its route took it through a total of five pasture and arable fields (**Figure 1**) (Fields 39, 40, 50, 101, and 103). The Earthwork Surcharge Area is composed of three arable fields (Fields 106, 107, and 110) which cover an area of 100.3 ha and are centred on NGR 255686.12, 53554.07. However, at the point when this report was being written (June 2016), only Fields 106 and 110 had been used. The results of this archaeological watching brief will be presented in field order as the haul road moves north-west to south-east.

Field 39

- 4.4.2 Within Field 39, the haul road ran for a distance of 270 m from the north-western corner of the field south-eastwards to the eastern side of the field. The only features identified through the geophysical survey (Bartlett-Clarke Consultancy 2014) were a number of *geological* anomalies located in the southern half of the field, and *historic field boundaries*.
- 4.4.3 The watching brief identified a total of four linear features during the works within Field 39 (**Figure 3**). Ditch **80301 (Plate 9)** and gully **80303 (Plate 10)** both ran on an east to west alignment, separated by a distance of 2.40 m. Recorded as being 1.24 m wide by 0.53 m deep and 0.86 m by 0.17 m respectively, both features were undated. Approximately 53 m to the north-west of these two linears, ditches **80305** and **80309** were identified running on a parallel north-south alignment and separated by a distance of 2.60 m. Ditch **80305 (Plate 11)**, recorded as measuring 0.91 m wide by 0.07 m deep contained a single piece



of vitrified brick which could not be dated, while ditch **80309 (Plate 12)**, measuring 0.84 m wide by 0.10 m deep contained no dating evidence.

- 4.4.4 These features match the geophysical anomalies which were identified as *historic field boundaries*, and historic map regression identifies field boundaries which were present in 1784. The fact that the ditches seem to be paired together and run parallel with each other indicates that these could form the traditional ‘Devon Hedgebank’ which is seen across the county.

Field 40

- 4.4.5 The route of the haul road through Field 40 ran across the middle of the field on a south-west to north-east alignment for a total distance of 250 m. The watching brief identified one ditch, **80317**, located near the western edge of the field and on a north-west to south-east alignment (**Plate 13**). Recorded as measuring 1.07 m wide and 0.55 m deep, and having steep straight sides and a flat base, no dating evidence was recovered from this feature. However, the geophysical survey had identified a linear feature on the same alignment and position, and had classed it as a *historic field boundary*. In addition, old field boundaries can be seen on maps from 1784 and 1839 which are in the same position as **80317**.

Field 50

- 4.4.6 Within Field 50, the haul road ran on a west to east alignment through the middle of the field for a distance of 240 m, before turning and running for 50 m along the edge of the field to the south-eastern corner. Geophysical results indicated that there were two linear anomalies at the western edge of the field which would be impacted by the haul road. However, the monitoring of the works within this field failed to identify any archaeological features or deposits.

Field 103

- 4.4.7 The route of the haul road within Field 103 was supposed to run along the northern edge of the field for approximately 205 m on a west-north-west to east-south-east alignment. However due to the waterlogged conditions of the field, Sherford Stream is immediately north of the field, it was decided to build the haul road up and there was no impact on the potential archaeology.

Field 101

- 4.4.8 Within Field 101, the haul road ran along the south-western edge of the field, for a distance of 270 m, on a north-north-west to south-south-east alignment. The geophysical survey had identified no archaeological features and due to the steep topography of the field, a gradient of roughly 1:10, the archaeological potential was low.
- 4.4.9 The watching brief identified a single pit, **80320 (Figure 2, Plate 14)**, which was located roughly halfway along the haul road route. Measuring 0.68 m by 0.56 m and 0.18 m deep with steep concave sides and a concave base, it contained a single deliberate backfill of charcoal rich material, suggesting it could be a small rubbish pit. Fragments of iron slag and fired clay, some vitrified, were recovered from the pit but were unable to provide a date.
- 4.4.10 In March 2016 an area covering 0.5 ha was stripped prior to bedrock extraction. No archaeological features or deposits were identified during the work.



Field 106

- 4.4.11 A total of 2.56 ha, around 60%, of Field 106 was excavated down to the archaeological horizon before the depth of colluvial material made in uneconomical to carry on (**Plate 15**). The monitored area, predominately in the northern half of the field, revealed no archaeological features or deposits which correlated with the geophysical results, which only identified anomalies which were classed as *geological* in origin or a result of *cultivation*.

Field 110

- 4.4.12 A total of 1.41 ha, around 40%, of Field 110 was excavated down to the archaeological horizon before the depth of colluvial material and unsuitable bedrock made in uneconomical to carry on. The monitored area, predominately in the northern half of the field, revealed two linear gullies, **80338** and **80339**. Gully **80338** was on a north-west to south-east alignment and measured 23.48 m in length by 0.64 m wide and 0.19 m deep, while gully **80339** was on a north to south alignment and measured 7.54 m in length by 0.50 m wide and 0.22 m deep. Both features were undated and probably relate to an old drainage or field system.

5 FINDS

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 A small quantity of Roman-British to post-medieval finds were recovered during the works. All finds have been quantified by material type within each context, and the totals are presented in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Finds total by material type

Material	Number	Weight (g)
Pottery	1	6
Ceramic building material	6	207
Clay pipe	1	7
Fired clay	8	24
Slag and iron concretions	53	708
Total	69	952

Pottery

- 5.1.2 A single body sherd of medieval pottery, in a South-Western derived granite ware, was recovered from the topsoil (context 80314).

Fired clay and ceramic building material

- 5.1.3 Fragments of plain, flat tile, of Romano-British and medieval date, were recovered from the subsoil (context 80315). A piece of vitrified brick came from field boundary **80305**, but was undated. Eight amorphous fragments of fired clay, two of which were vitrified, were recorded from pit **80320**.

Clay pipe

- 5.1.4 A single clay pipe stem fragment was recovered from the subsoil (80315).

Slag and iron concretions

- 5.1.5 Four pieces (51 g) of iron slag, and 657 g of iron concretion, came from pit **80320**.



6 ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 A single sample was taken from pit **80320** during the watching brief. The sample was processed for the recovery and assessment of charred plant remains and charcoal.

6.2 Charred plant remains

6.2.1 The bulk sample was processed by standard flotation methods; the flot retained on a 0.25 mm mesh, residues fractionated into 5.6 mm, 2 mm, 1 mm and 0.5 mm fractions and dried. The coarse fractions (>5.6 mm) were sorted, weighed and discarded. The flots were scanned under a x10 – x40 stereo-binocular microscope and the preservation and nature of the charred plant and wood charcoal remains recorded in **Table 2**. Preliminary identifications of dominant or important taxa are noted below, following the nomenclature of Stace (1997) for wild plants, and traditional nomenclature, as provided by Zohary and Hopf (2000, Tables 3, page 28 and 5, page 65), for cereals.

Table 2: Assessment of the charred plant remains and charcoal

Samples				Flot								
Feature	Context	Sam ple	Vol. Ltrs	Flot (ml)	% roots	Charred Plant Remains				Charcoal >4/2mm	Other	Anal ysis
						Grain	Chaff	Other	Comments			
Field 101												
Pit												
80320	80321	4	20	530	1%	C	C		Cereal grain, poor preservation. Avena sp. Grain, stem frags, hazelnut shell, Cyperaceae	5 ml	Hammerscales, pottery	c

Key: A*** = exceptional, A** = 100+, A* = 30-99, A = >10, B = 9-5, C = <5; Analysis: P = plant, C = charcoal

6.2.2 The sample from the pit contained scarce macroremains, poorly preserved, from hazelnut (*Corylus avellana*) shell, oat grass (*Avena* sp.) and sedges (*Cyperaceae*).

6.3 Further potential

Charred plant remains

6.3.1 The analysis of the charred plant remains has the potential to provide limited information on the nature of the surrounding environment and local agricultural practices.

Wood charcoal

6.3.2 The analysis of the wood charcoal would provide limited information on the species composition and the management and exploitation of the local woodland resource on the Site.

7 DISCUSSION

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 The watching brief during the excavation of the haul roads and surcharge area revealed a small number of archaeological features which suggests a lower potential for remains



within the local vicinity. There is a need to note that the position and route of the haul roads and surcharge area were agreed on after it was decided to limit the potential impact to any archaeology present to a minimum, and that in a number of fields, namely Fields 8 and 10, there is the potential for large concentrations of archaeology to be revealed and will be needed to be dealt with during later works.

- 7.1.2 The majority of the features identified are likely to represent post-medieval field systems or boundaries which were removed when the field system was reorganised into its present pattern. They also correlate well with the results of the geophysical survey which was undertaken in 2014 (Bartlett-Clarke Consultancy 2014). The stone wall/trackway **80328** is most likely a continuation of the trackway that was seen during an earlier evaluation in Trench 35 (WA 2015a) and watching brief in Area 1 (WA 2015b), and is most likely associated with the post-medieval farmstead of Gore which is immediately to the south.
- 7.1.3 Pit **80320** contained no dating evidence and no other features were revealed in the immediate area to provide any information on its function. However, given that it cuts through the subsoil, it is most likely of post-medieval or later date and could be the remains of a small fire that someone made in order to keep themselves warm on the side of a hill.

8 STORAGE AND CURATION

8.1 Museum

- 8.1.1 It is recommended that the finds and archive be deposited with Plymouth City Museum on completion of the project under accession code **PLYMG:2015.6**. The archive is currently held at WA's Salisbury office under the site code **107560**.

8.2 Archive

- 8.2.1 The complete site archive, which will include paper records, photographic records, graphics, artefacts, ecofacts and digital data, will be prepared following the standard conditions for the acceptance of excavated archaeological material by Plymouth City Museum, and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; ClfA 2014b; Brown 2011; ADS 2013).
- 8.2.2 An OASIS online record (<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/projects/oasis/>) will be initiated. All appropriate parts of the OASIS online form will be completed for submission with Devon HER.
- 8.2.3 All archive elements will be marked with the site code, and a full index will be prepared. The physical archive comprises the following.
- *1 file of paper records and A4 graphics.*
 - *1 cardboard box of artefacts and ecofacts, ordered by material type.*

8.3 Discard policy

- 8.3.1 WA follows the guidelines set out in *Selection, Retention and Dispersal* (SMA 1993), which allows for the discard of selected artefact and ecofact categories which are not considered to warrant further analysis. Any discard of artefacts will be fully documented in the project archive.
- 8.3.2 The discard of environmental remains and samples follows nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1993; 1995).



8.4 Security copy

- 8.4.1 In line with current best practice, (e.g. Brown 2011); on completion of the project a security copy of the written records will be prepared, in the form of a digital PDF/A file. PDF/A is an ISO-standardised version of the Portable Document Format (PDF) designed for the digital preservation of electronic documents through omission of features ill-suited to long-term archiving.

9 REFERENCES

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10 APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT INDEX

NB: Total lengths of sub-divisions are given in dimensions and co-ordinates are given for the sub-division extremities

RMA Phase 1 Haul Road		Type: Watching Brief	Machine excavated
Dimensions: 1204 m x 8 m		Max. depth: 0.66 m	Ground level: 34.03 – 61.61 m aOD
Co-ordinates: South-western extent: E 253959.31 N 53787.16 North-eastern extent: E 254622.44 N 54586.63			
Context	Description		Depth (m)
80307	Cut	Cut of a south-west to north-east aligned gully with shallow concave sides and a flat base. Measures 5.62 m in length by 1.65 m wide and 0.16 m deep.	0.16 m deep
80308	Fill	Secondary fill of 80307 . Mid brown silty clay loam containing sparse to occasional sub-angular to angular slate fragments and rare sub-rounded stone inclusions (<0.06 m). Derived from natural depositional processes.	0.16 m thick
80314	Layer	Topsoil – Mid to dark greyish brown silty clay containing moderate rooting and sparse to occasional angular to sub-rounded shillet and stone inclusions (<0.04 m).	0 – 0.20 m
80315	Layer	Subsoil – Mid brown silty clay containing sparse to occasional sub-rounded to sub-angular stone and shillet inclusions (<0.05 m). Only present in the lower lying areas of the watching brief areas.	0.20 – 0.38 m
80316	Layer	Natural – Mixed; Made up of fragmented Limestone and Slate/Shillet bedrock in the upper lying areas. Degraded Limestone bedrock and alluvially derived clay silts in the lower lying areas.	0.38 m+
80328	Structure	Foundations of a stone wall within 80329 . Made up of sub-angular to sub-rounded limestone and stones with no sign of coursing or jointing and bonded together by pale white calcareous mortar.	0.05 m thick
80329	Cut	Construction cut for a north-west to south-east aligned wall. Measures 2.48 m in length by 0.62 m wide and 0.05 m deep.	0.05 m deep

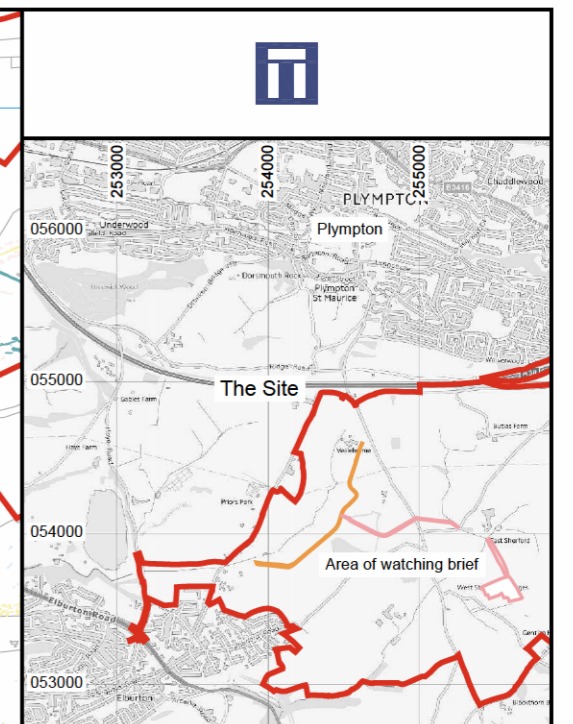
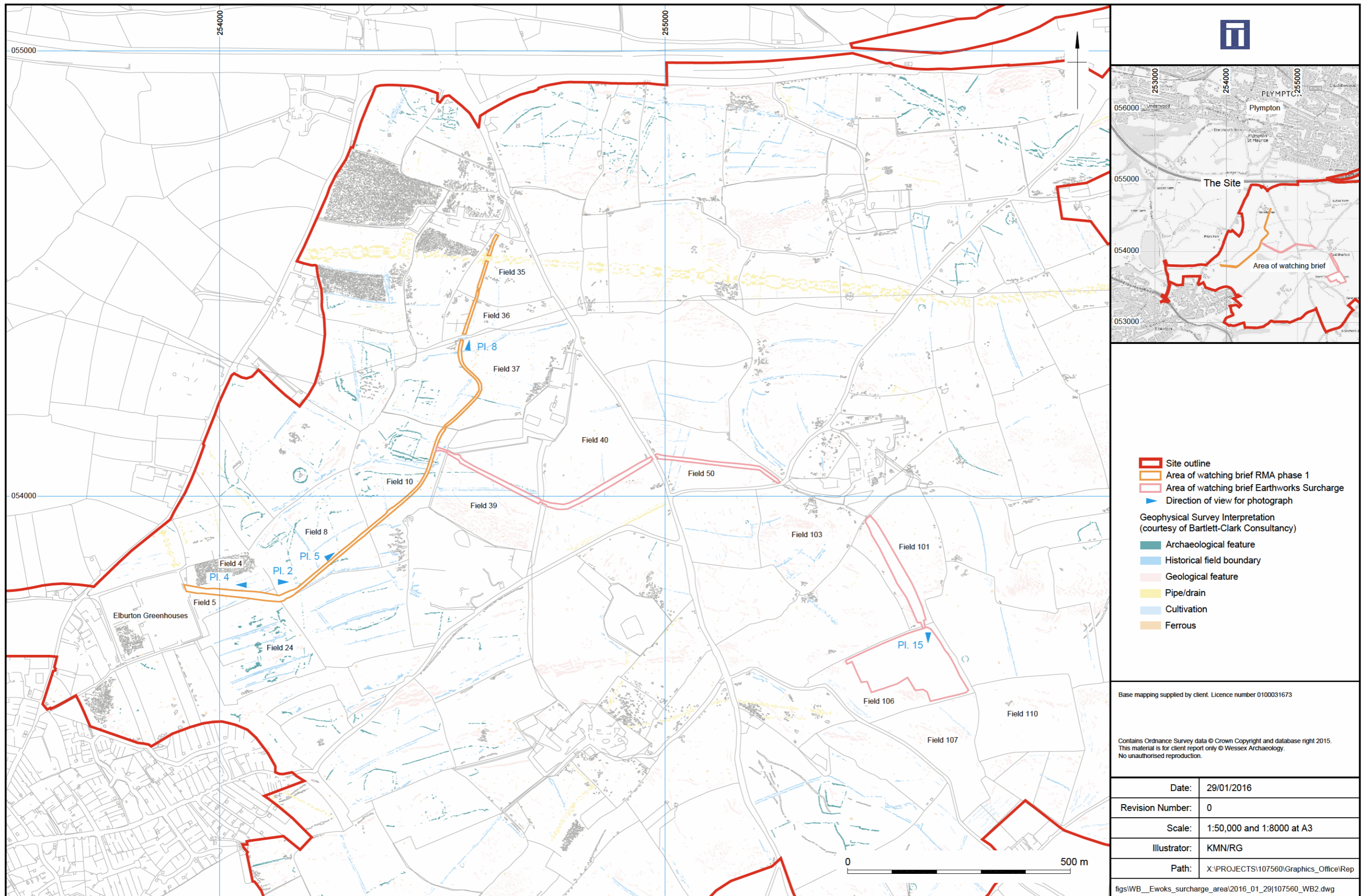
Earthworks Surcharge Area and Haul Road		Type: Watching Brief	Machine excavated
Dimensions: 1486 m x 29 m		Max. depth: 0.40 m	Ground level: 40.21 – 72.25 m aOD
Co-ordinates: North-western extent: E 254486.37 N 54105.87 South-eastern extent: E 255680.86 N 53564.09			
Context	Description		Depth (m)
80301	Cut	Cut of an east-west aligned ditch with moderate concave sides and a concave base. Measures 30.55 m in length by 1.24 m wide and 0.53 m deep. Runs parallel with 80303.	0.55 m deep
80302	Fill	Secondary fill of 80301 . Mid brown silty clay loam containing occasional to frequent angular to sub-angular slate fragments (<0.05 m). Derived from natural depositional processes.	0.55 m thick
80303	Cut	Cut of an east-west aligned ditch with moderate straight sides and a flat base. Measures 28.41 m in length by 0.86	0.17 m deep



		m wide and 0.17 m deep. Runs parallel with 80301.	
80304	Fill	Secondary fill of 80303 . Mid brown silty clay loam containing occasional to frequent angular to sub-angular slate fragments and rare sub-angular stones (<0.06 m). Derived from natural depositional processes.	0.17 m thick
80305	Cut	Cut of a north-south aligned ditch with shallow concave sides and a flat base. Measures 11.50 m in length by 0.91 m wide and 0.07 m deep. Runs parallel with 80309.	0.07 m deep
80306	Fill	Secondary fill of 80305 . Mid brown silty clay loam containing sparse to occasional angular to sub-angular slate fragments (<0.04 m). Derived from natural depositional processes.	0.07 m thick
80309	Cut	Cut of a north-south aligned ditch with shallow concave sides and a flat base. Measures 11.25 m in length by 0.84 m wide and 0.10m deep. Runs parallel with 80305.	0.10 m deep
80310	Fill	Secondary fill of 80309 . Mid greyish black silty clay containing rare to sparse sub-angular slate fragments (<0.04m). Derived from natural depositional processes.	0.10 m thick
80314	Layer	Topsoil – Mid to dark greyish brown silty clay containing moderate rooting and sparse to occasional angular to sub-rounded shillet and stone inclusions (<0.04 m).	0 – 0.20 m
80315	Layer	Subsoil – Mid brown silty clay containing sparse to occasional sub-rounded to sub-angular stone and shillet inclusions (<0.05 m). Only present in the lower lying areas of the watching brief areas.	0.20 – 0.38 m
80316	Layer	Natural – Mixed; Made up of fragmented Limestone and Slate/Shillet bedrock in the upper lying areas. Degraded Limestone bedrock and alluvially derived clay silts in the lower lying areas.	0.38 m+
80317	Cut	Cut of a north-west to south-east aligned ditch with steep straight sides and a flat base. Measures 28.50 m in length by 1.07 m wide and 0.55 m deep.	0.55 m deep
80318	Fill	Primary fill of 80317 – Mid to light brown clay loam containing abundant sub-angular to sub-rounded shillet fragments (<0.08 m). Derived from the erosion and stabilisation of the ditch's sides.	0.27 m thick
80319	Fill	Secondary fill of 80317 – Mid to dark clay loam containing common sub-angular shillet fragments (<0.06 m). Derived from natural depositional processes.	0.28 m thick
80320	Cut	Cut of a small circular pit with steep concave sides and a concave base. Measures 0.68 m in length by 0.56 m in diameter and 0.18 m deep.	0.18 m deep
80321	Fill	Deliberate backfill of 80320 – Very dark brown silty loam containing abundant sub-rounded slate fragments (<0.05 m) and abundant charcoal fragments. Derived from a deliberate dumping of waste materials.	0.18m thick
80330	Cut	Cut of a north to south aligned gully with moderate to steep straight sides and a concave base. Measures 0.44 m wide and 0.22m deep.	0.22 m deep
80331	Fill	Secondary fill of 80330 . Mid reddish brown silty clay containing sparse sub-angular to sub-rounded shillet fragments (<0.02 m). Derived from natural depositional processes.	0.22 m thick
80332	Cut	Cut of the northern terminus of a north to south aligned gully with moderate to steep straight sides and a concave base. Measures 0.50 m wide and 0.15 m deep.	0.15 m deep



80333	Fill	Secondary fill of 80332 . Mid reddish brown silty clay containing sparse sub-angular to sub-rounded shillet fragments (<0.02 m) and sparse sub-angular stones (<0.05m). Derived from natural depositional processes.	0.15 m thick
80334	Cut	Cut of a north-west to south-east aligned gully with moderate concave sides and a flat base. Measures 0.64 m wide and 0.19m deep.	0.19 m deep
80335	Fill	Secondary fill of 80334 . Mid reddish brown silty clay containing sparse sub-angular to sub-rounded shillet fragments (<0.03 m). Derived from natural depositional processes.	0.19 m thick
80336	Cut	Cut of the north-western terminus of a north-west to south-east aligned gully with moderate to steep concave sides and a flat base. Measures 0.60 m wide and 0.17 m deep.	0.17 m deep
80337	Fill	Secondary fill of 80332 . Mid reddish brown silty clay containing sparse sub-angular to sub-rounded shillet fragments (<0.02 m) and sparse sub-angular stones (<0.05m). Derived from natural depositional processes.	0.17 m thick
80338	Group	North-west to south-east aligned gully measuring 23.48 m in length by 0.64 m wide and 0.19m deep. Composed of 80334 and 80336.	0.19 m deep
80339	Group	North to south aligned gully measuring 7.54 m in length by 0.50 m wide and 0.22 m deep. Composed of 80330 and 80332.	0.22 m deep



- ▬ Site outline
 - ▬ Area of watching brief RMA phase 1
 - ▬ Area of watching brief Earthworks Surcharge
 - ▶ Direction of view for photograph
- Geophysical Survey Interpretation
(courtesy of Bartlett-Clark Consultancy)
- Archaeological feature
 - ▬ Historical field boundary
 - Geological feature
 - ▬ Pipe/drain
 - ▬ Cultivation
 - ▬ Ferrous

Base mapping supplied by client. Licence number 0100031673

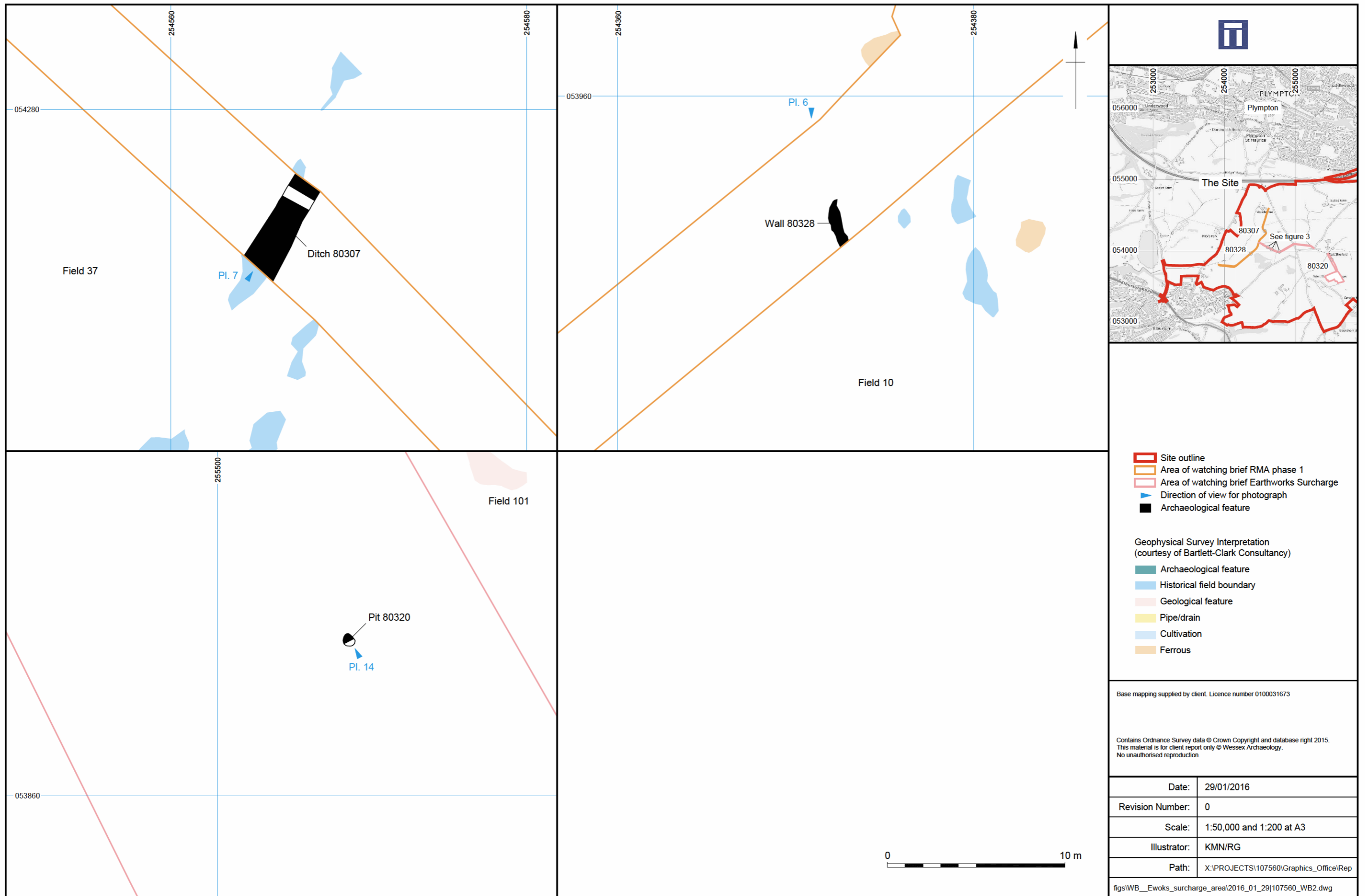
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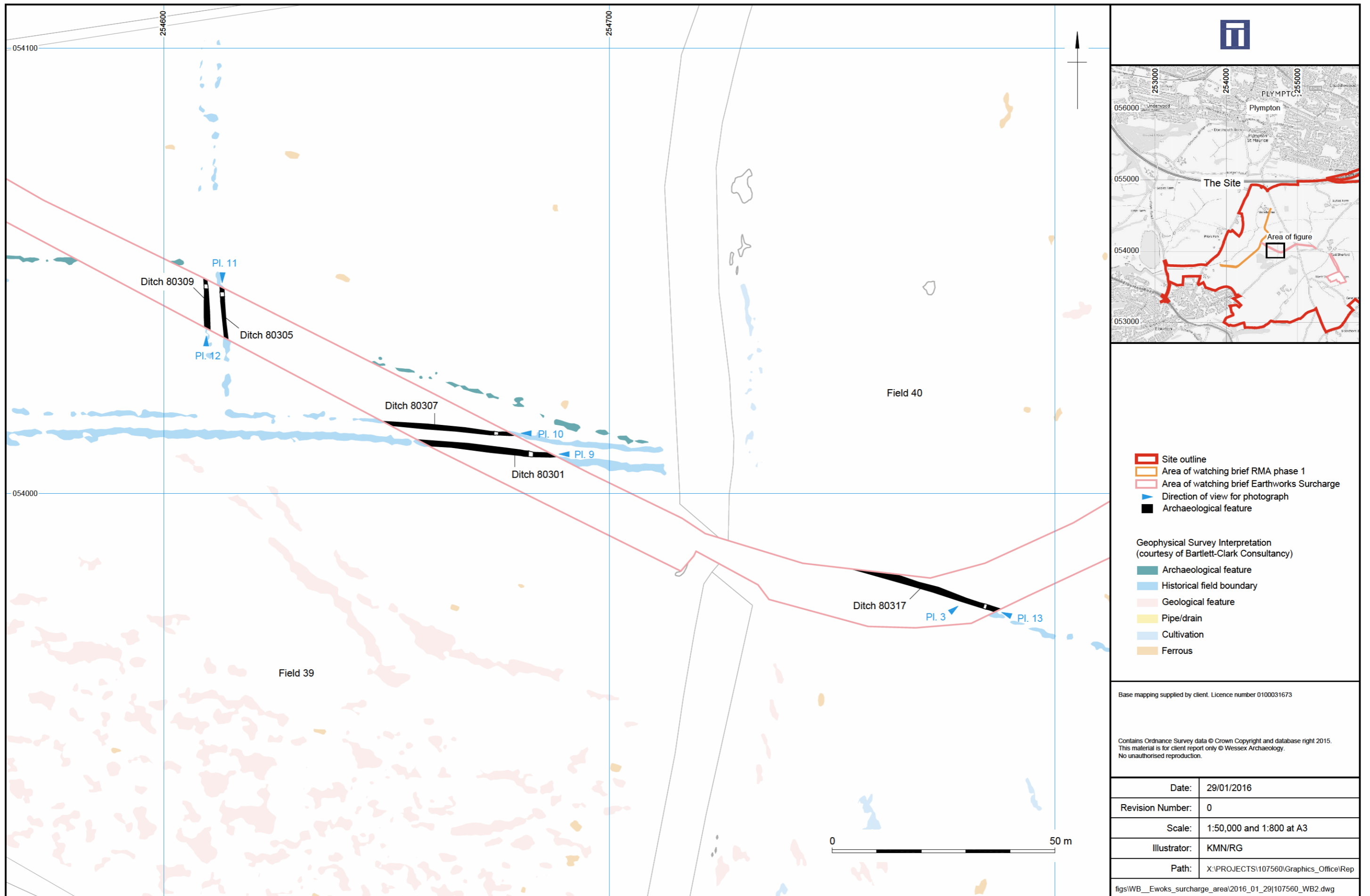
Site and watching brief area locations

Figure 1



Wall 80328 and gully 80307 within the RMA Phase 1 Haul Road, and pit 80320 within the Earthworks Surcharge Haul Road and Surcharge Area

Figure 2



Ditches 80301, 80303, 80305, 80309, and 80317

Figure 3



Plate 1: North-west facing representative section of the natural soil sequence (1 x 1 m)



Plate 2: View of RMA Haul Road in Fields 8 and 24 from the west


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Plate 3: View of Earthworks Surcharge Haul Road in Field 40 from the south-west with 80317 in the foreground



Plate 4: Working shot; Excavation of the RMA Haul Road in Field 5 viewed from the east


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Plate 5: Working shot; Excavation of the RMA Haul Road in Field 8 viewed from the west (1 x 1 m, 1 x 2 m)



Plate 6: Wall 80328 viewed from the north (1 x 1 m)


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Plate 7: Gully 80307 viewed from the south-west (1 x 1 m)



Plate 8: Working shot; Excavation of the RMA Haul Road in Field 36 viewed from the south-west


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Plate 9: Ditch 80301 viewed from the east (1 x 1 m)



Plate 10: Gully 80303 viewed from the east (1 x 0.5 m)


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Plate 11: Ditch 80305 viewed from the north (1 x 0.5 m)



Plate 12: Ditch 80309 viewed from the south (1 x 0.5 m)


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Plate 13: Ditch 80317 viewed from the south-east (1 x 0.5 m)



Plate 14: Pit 80320 viewed from the south-east (1 x 0.2 m)



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Plate 15: Working shot; Excavation of Field 106 viewed from the north-east67

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