

**PHASE II  
PRIORS GREEN  
TAKELEY  
ESSEX**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION  
BY  
TRIAL TRENCHING**



**Essex County Council**  
Field Archaeology Unit



**December 2006**

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**Client:** RPS Planning (on behalf of Countryside Properties Plc)

**FAU Project No.:** 1700 and 1707

**NGR:** TL 56965 21363 (Centre)

**Site Code:** TAPG 06

**OASIS No.:** essexcou1-18999

**Date of Fieldwork:** 8 - 17 November 2006

**SUMMARY**

*As part of an ongoing programme of residential development works at Priors Green, Takeley, Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit was commissioned by RPS Planning to evaluate by trial trench the site of the former nursery and orchard and an area west of Broadfield Wood along the northern side of Dunmow Road. The trenching was a follow-up to the archaeological monitoring of geotechnical test pits previously undertaken on the former nursery and orchard.*

*A total of thirty archaeological trial trenches were excavated across the area. Three north – south ditches and a single modern gully were uncovered. Although only one of the ditches was positively dated, it is likely that they are all post-medieval and represent further field divisions. All the ditches uncovered during the trenching were parallel to the extant north – south boundaries, as well as to each other. This suggests that they may originally have been contemporary with the extant field boundaries, which are known to pre-date the 1875 1st edition ordnance survey map but unlikely, based upon their morphology, to originate much before the post-medieval period. This suggests that this area of the Priors Green development was divided into long narrow fields during the post-medieval period. However, there is little evidence for any substantive earlier activity and none of the remains identified within the adjacent Phase I of the Priors Green development were seen to continue into this phase.*

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

This report describes the results of the archaeological trial trenching Phase II of the residential development at Priors Green, Takeley, Essex and incorporates the three trenches previously excavated on the former nursery site (Fig. 1). For ease of description, the three trenches excavated on the former nursery site have been re-numbered. A previously-issued interim summary report (Robertson 2006 b) of these trenches numbered them 1 – 3, but for the purposes of this report former Trench 1 becomes Trench 28, Trench 2 becomes Trench 29 and Trench 3 becomes Trench 30.

Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit (ECC FAU) carried out the trenching for RPS Planning on behalf of Countryside Properties Plc. The project was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation produced by RPS Planning (RPS 2006) and approved by ECC HEM.

Both the fieldwork and the reporting have been carried out to professional standards and guidance issued by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (1999) and the ALGAO *Standards for Fieldwork* (Gurney 2003).

The report is structured to describe the background to the project, followed by the results of the fieldwork, and a discussion of the archaeological potential. Appendices include descriptions of the trenches, contexts and finds, details of the archive contents and the EHER summary. All illustrations and plates are placed together towards the back of the report.

The site archive will be deposited at Saffron Walden Museum. A copy of this report will be deposited with the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER). A further copy will also be uploaded to the OASIS database (<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis>).

## **2.0 BACKGROUND**

### **2.1 Location and Topography (Fig 1)**

Phase II of the Priors Green residential development is split into two distinct areas, separated by Broadfield Wood. To the west of the wood were Trenches 1 to 12 and Trenches 28 to 30 (previously Trenches 1 to 3 in the former nursery site) and to the east Trenches 13 to 27. The western part of the site was almost exclusively under rough pasture with some scrubby vegetation and semi-mature trees surrounding Trenches 15 to 18. The south eastern part of the site was formerly an orchard, but had become overgrown through neglect. The north eastern part was

formerly a nursery, although all the buildings and the majority of the modern debris have been recently removed.

It is bounded to the south by Dunmow Road (B1256), to the west by property boundaries, to the north by property boundaries and Jacks Lane and to the east by the Phase I area, which is currently under construction. Generally the land rises towards the north and Jacks Lane.

## **2.2 Geology**

Over the eastern part of the site the topsoil has been partially removed during remediation and clearing of vegetation. The depth of the topsoil averages c.0.3m, with between 0.05m and 0.25m of mid brown-grey clay subsoil below this. The observed undisturbed natural geology was a mixture of mid orange brown clay silt and pale yellow brown chalky clay.

The drift geology of the site is generally that of pale yellow brown chalky boulder-clay of the Lowestoft Formation, although this is mixed with mid orange brown silty clay. The underlying solid geology of the area is London Clay (BGS map EW222 Great Dunmow v.2).

## **2.3 History and Archaeology**

The site is located within a wider agricultural landscape, which has evolved from the Bronze Age through to the present day. This landscape is becoming increasingly better understood and documented as a result of archaeological fieldwork taking place in advance of extensive residential development in the Takeley area. This is particularly evident in the recent work at Stansted Airport (Havis & Brooks 2004; Framework Archaeology in prep), evaluation and excavation work undertaken in advance of the re-alignment and construction of the A120 (Fitzpatrick 2001), Frogs Hall (Ennis in prep) and also by recent work undertaken in Takeley itself (Robertson 2005 and 2006 a) and further west of the present site (Roberts 2003).

To the immediate south of the site, Dunmow Road is thought to be on the approximate line of Stane Street, the Roman road from Braughing/Puckridge to Colchester (Drury and Rodwell 1980). To the northeast at Frogs Hall is a presumptive Roman villa (EHER 9140) with associated Roman landscape features. Jacks Green medieval moated site, (EHER 4655), is located immediately to the north of the current investigation area. Warish Hall (EHER 4572), another medieval moated site (a Scheduled Ancient Monument), lies further to the north. Jacks Lane, a bridleway that runs east-west to the north of the site, is also thought to have medieval origins.

Recent excavations within the Phase 1 area of this development revealed a range of multi-period remains across a 10ha area, almost immediately to the east of the current site. This included Iron Age boundaries and occupation remains, a possible medieval farmstead alongside Jacks Lane, and three phases of apparently post-medieval cultivation trench systems (Robertson 2006 a).

The western area of the Phase II site has seemingly been open fields since the late 19th century, as evidenced by the 1st edition Ordnance survey map. To the south east of this area geotechnical test pit monitoring and trial trenching (Robertson 2006 e and f) were undertaken prior to this phase, with no archaeological remains identified. The eastern area was formerly a plant nursery and orchard, now both cleared. This side of the site has previously subject to geotechnical test pitting, which was monitored for archaeological remains (Robertson 2006 c) and to trenching along the Spine Route (Robertson 2006 d). No significant archaeological remains were identified in either.

### **3.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The general aim of the monitoring works was to establish the character, date and function of any archaeological features within the areas of development and link these results to existing Resource Assessments and Research Agenda (Brown and Glazebrook 2000).

The specific aims for the project are based upon those for the Phase 1 excavation at Priors Green (Robertson 2006 a), with the following additions:

- Do the Iron Age landscape features, identified at Priors Green Phase I, extend into Phase II and if so is there evidence of associated settlement?
- Do the possible horticultural ditches of post-medieval date, seen on the Priors Green Phase I area, extend into the Phase II area?

### **4.0 METHOD**

The project comprised the excavating and recording of thirty trenches across the development area. The trenches were excavated using a mechanical excavator under the supervision of an archaeologist. The sections and location of each trench were recorded, a written description on a *pro forma* trench sheet compiled and a photographic record comprising monochrome print and digital images was maintained throughout the fieldwork. With the exception of particularly large ditches all features were hand-excavated and recorded using standard FAU methodologies. All plans were linked to the Ordnance Survey National Grid.

All IFA standards and by-laws and ALGEO's *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003) were adhered to throughout the project.

## 5.0 FIELDWORK RESULTS (Fig 1)

Thirty trenches were machine-excavated under archaeological supervision across the investigation area. All measured 30 x 2m and were between 0.27 and 0.7m deep. Trenches 1, 2, 3, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26 and 27 were all devoid of archaeological remains. However, a description of each, including a representative trench section, was compiled on a *pro forma* recording sheet. The remaining trenches are briefly described below. A summary of all the trench information can be found in Appendix 1 and context information in Appendix 2.

### 5.1 Trench 4 (Figs 1, 2 and 5c)

Trench 4 was located to the south of the former nursery, along the eastern edge of Broadfield Wood. It was orientated east – west and excavated to a depth of 0.35m. The topsoil was 0.25m thick and overlay 0.1m of mid brown silty clay subsoil. The undisturbed natural geology was a mixture of pale yellow brown chalky clay and mid orange brown clay silt.

A single feature was identified within this trench. Ditch 636 ran approximately north – south through the western end of this trench. It was 3.3m wide and had a depth of 1.25m. Three fills were noted in this feature; 367 the top fill, the middle fill 368 and 369 the primary fill. With the exception of the top fill 367, which contained a moderate amount of topsoil, the other two fills were particularly clean, suggesting that they may have been deposited relatively quickly, perhaps as a consequence of deliberate backfilling of the feature. No finds were recovered from any of these fills, apart from pieces of ceramic land drain from 367.

This ditch was also identified in Trenches 5 and 6, where it was planned only. The ditch runs approximately north – south, it is slightly angled to the northwest and runs parallel to an extant boundary to the west. It also runs parallel to Ditch 634 identified in Trenches 7 and 8 to the east. The projected line of the ditch indicates that it should have been further intersected by Trench 30, to the north. However, no sign of the ditch was uncovered in Trench 30 suggesting that it did not extend this far.

### 5.2 Trench 5 (Figs 1 and 2)

Situated to the south of Trench 4, Trench 5 was orientated north – south. It was excavated to a depth of 0.5m. The topsoil was 0.27m deep lay above a 0.13m thick mid grey brown silty clay subsoil. The undisturbed natural geology was a pale yellow brown chalky clay.

A single ditch ran the length of this trench. This feature was not excavated as it is highly probable that it is the same feature as Ditch segment 636 in Trench 4, and ditch seen in Trench 6. No finds were identified along the length of this feature.



### **5.3 Trench 6** (Figs 1 and 2)

Trench 6 was situated to the south of Trench 5. Orientated east – west it contained a single ditch which ran across the centre of the trench. This was not excavated as it was considered the same as Ditch 636 in Trench 4 and the ditch that runs along Trench 5. No finds were observed on the surface of this feature.

The trench itself was excavated to a depth of 0.35m. The topsoil was 0.23m thick and lay on top of 0.12m of mid brown silty clay subsoil, which in turn lay on top of mid orange brown clay silt natural geology.

### **5.4 Trench 7** (Figs 1, 3 and 5b)

Trench 7 was located to the east of Trench 4 and lay along the eastern boundary of the Phase II site. It was orientated east - west and excavated to a depth of 0.4m. The topsoil was 0.27m thick and lay on top of 0.13m of mid brown silty clay subsoil, which in turn lay on top of a mixture of mid orange brown clay silt and pale yellow brown chalky clay natural geology. The eastern end of the trench was heavily disturbed by root action.

A single, north south running, Ditch, 634, was excavated within this trench. The ditch was 1.5m wide and 0.56m deep. It contained a single mid grey brown clay silt fill, 635, from which no finds were recovered. This ditch was further identified in Trench 8. It is evident that it runs parallel to the extant field boundaries and also to Ditch 636, in Trenches 4, 5 and 6.

### **5.5 Trench 8** (Figs 1 and 3)

Trench 8 lies to the south of Trench 7. It was excavated to a depth of 0.38m. The topsoil was 0.27m deep and lay above 0.11m of mid brown grey silty clay subsoil, which in turn lay over a mixture of mid orange brown silty clay and pale yellow brown chalky clay natural geology. The western end of this trench was heavily disturbed by roots.

A single north - south running ditch was situated towards the eastern end of this trench. This feature was unexcavated in this trench but is likely to be the same feature as Ditch 634 in Trench 7. No finds were identified on the surface of this feature.

### **5.6 Trench 15** (Fig 1 and 4)

This trench was situated towards the north eastern corner of the western part of the site. It was orientated northwest – southeast and excavated to a depth of 0.33m. The topsoil was 0.24m deep; below this was 0.09m of mid brown silt clay subsoil which in turn overlay mid orange brown clay silt natural geology. The whole length of this trench was disturbed by root action.

A single feature, Gully 630, was identified towards the northern end. It contained a single dark brown grey clay-loam fill, 631. The gully measured 0.26m wide and 0.03m deep and ran northeast – southwest across the trench. Within the fill were pieces of plastic and modern insulated wire, which were all discarded on site. Although no function for the feature could be discerned, it is clearly modern in origin and no other features were deemed to be associated with it.

### **5.7 Trench 16 (Fig 1, 4 and 5a)**

Positioned to the south of Trench 15, Trench 16 was orientated approximately east – west. It was excavated to a depth of 0.4m. 0.25m of topsoil overlay 0.15m of mid grey brown silty clay subsoil, which overlay a mixture of mid orange brown clay silt and pale yellow brown chalky clay natural geology.

One feature was excavated within this trench a north - south running Ditch 632. It measured 2.7m wide, was 0.69m deep and ran across the centre of the trench. The section showed that it was cut through the subsoil suggesting that the feature was relatively modern. The finds collected from its single fill were pottery and brick/ tile and were all post-medieval / modern in date. None of the finds were particularly diagnostic and but do confirm that the feature is of relatively modern origin. The ditch was not identified in any other trenches, but it is likely that it is the remains of a field boundary.

### **5.8 Trench 28 (Fig 1)**

Trench 28 lay in the south east corner of the former Nursery site and was orientated northeast – southwest. It was excavated to a depth of 0.4m through 0.3m topsoil, heavily contaminated by modern debris, and 0.1m of mid brown silty clay subsoil which lay on top of pale brown chalky till natural geology. Only modern pipe trenches and a number of roughly rectangular concrete blocks were identified, within this trench. The concrete blocks probably represent modern post footings associated with the former nursery and were also observed in Trench 30. No archaeological features or deposits were identified and no finds were collected.

### **5.9 Trench 29 (Fig 1)**

Trench 29 was situated towards the south edge of the former Nursery site. It was aligned northnorthwest – southsotheast and was excavated to a depth of 0.4m. Below the 0.2m thick topsoil, containing a large amount of modern debris, and 0.2m of mid brown silty clay the undisturbed natural geology was a pale brown chalky till. The only features present were a number of modern gullies filled with degraded breezeblock. No archaeological features or deposits were identified and no finds were collected.

### **5.10 Trench 30 (Fig 1)**

Trench 30 ran east – west and was located in the north west of the former Nursery site. No archaeological remains or deposits were identified and only a modern pipe trench and a number of concrete post settings were recorded in this trench. No finds were collected.

## **6.0 FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL MATERIAL**

Only a few finds were collected for analysis, with modern material being discarded on site. These finds are discussed in relation to their contexts above. Further details can be found in the Archive and Appendix 3. None of the finds were retained after cataloguing. No deposits with perceived environmental potential were identified and so no soil samples were taken for analysis.

## **7.0 CONCLUSIONS**

The lack of archaeological features within the majority of the trenches suggests that there is unlikely to be significant further archaeological remains in the surrounding area. Overall, very few archaeological features were identified on this phase of the Priors Green housing development. A total of three ditches and one gully were investigated.

Only two features were positively dated, Ditch 632 in Trench 16 and gully 630 in Trench 15, and both were modern. The remaining two Ditches, 634 and 636, run parallel to the extant field boundaries, as well as to each other. While neither is positively dated, they can be ascribed a pre-1875 date as they do not appear on the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map. However, both undated ditches were observed to have been excavated through the subsoil, which suggests that they are not of any great antiquity. A tentative date of post-medieval is therefore suggested for them, although a late medieval date is not out of the question especially given the proximity of the Jacks Green moated site, Jacks Lane and the Phase I possible medieval farmstead remains. It is likely that they both represent field boundaries. Whether they are part of an earlier land management system, or simply now defunct elements of the extant boundary divisions, due to subsequent enlargement of fields, is unproven.

Neither the Iron Age nor post-medieval remains identified on Phase I of the development were seen to continue into Phase II, despite the close proximity of the two phases. While the Iron Age remains were not particularly abundant and only one large ditch was projected to enter this phase, the post-medieval 'horticultural' ditches exhibited a high potential for continuing westwards.

The extant boundary between Phases I and II may in fact define the westward extent of the post-medieval ditches. Although the date of this boundary is unestablished, it is known that it pre-dates the 1875 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map. Based upon its morphology (relatively straight and perpendicular to the main road), it seems likely that it is either very late-medieval or post-medieval in origin. There is no reason to suggest that the other extant field boundaries in and around this phase, with the exception of the clearly modern property boundaries, are not in origin contemporary with it. If this is indeed the case, it further strengthens the suggested dating of the Phase I 'horticultural' ditches as post-medieval, rather than significantly earlier, in that they seemingly respect these extant boundaries and may well once have co-existed with them.

In overview, the evidence from the evaluation indicates that this area of the landscape was divided into long narrow fields during the post-medieval period, but was probably not heavily occupied or exploited in earlier periods.

### **Acknowledgements**

This project was commissioned by RPS Planning on behalf of Countryside Properties Plc. Thanks go to Simon Blatherwick for his assistance throughout the project and to Breheny Projects for supplying the mechanical excavator. The author carried out the fieldwork, J. Compton identified the finds, A. Lewsey undertook the surveying and produced the digital illustrations and M. Atkinson managed the project. R Havis of HEM monitored the work on behalf of the Local Planning Authority.

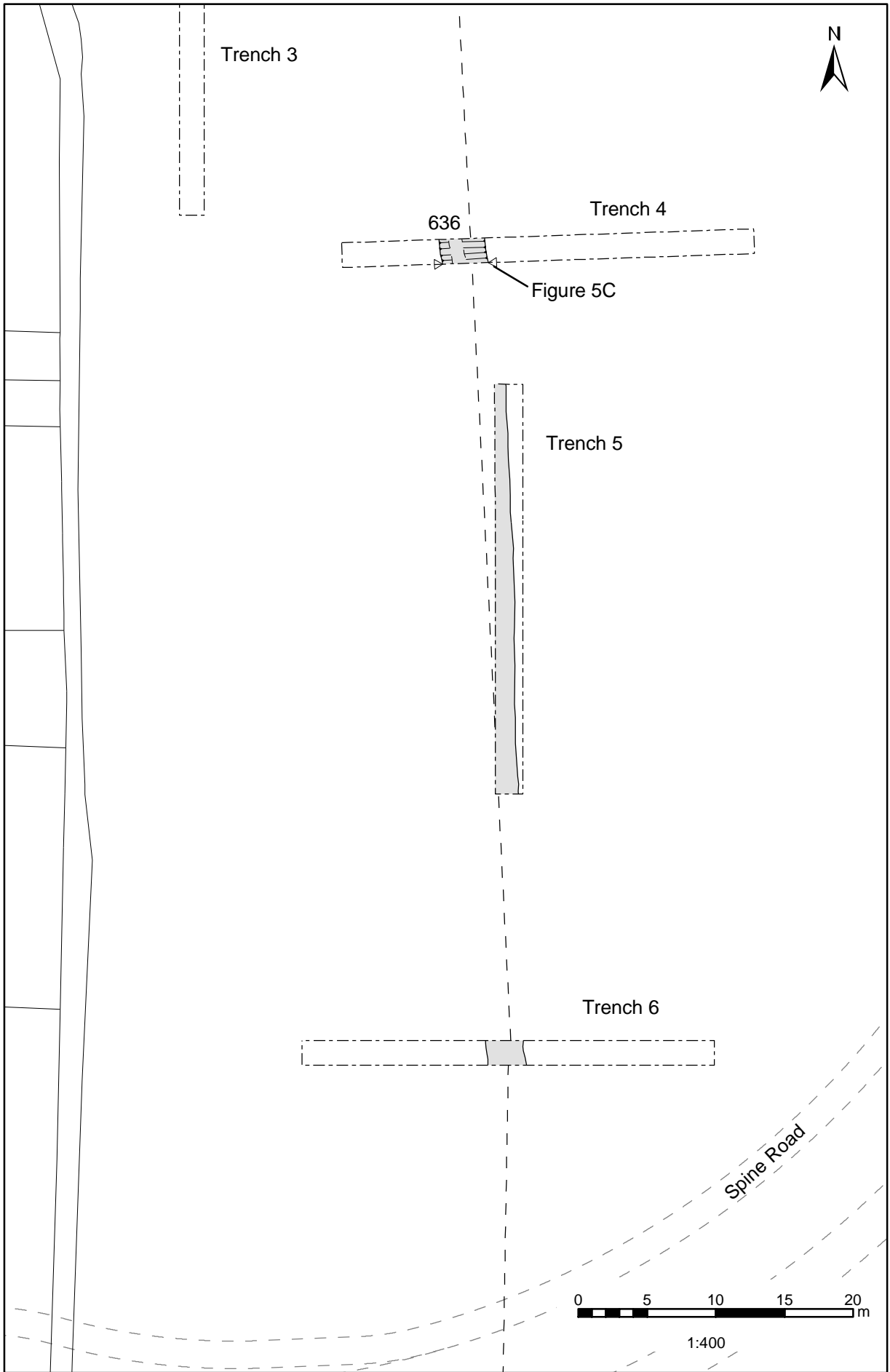
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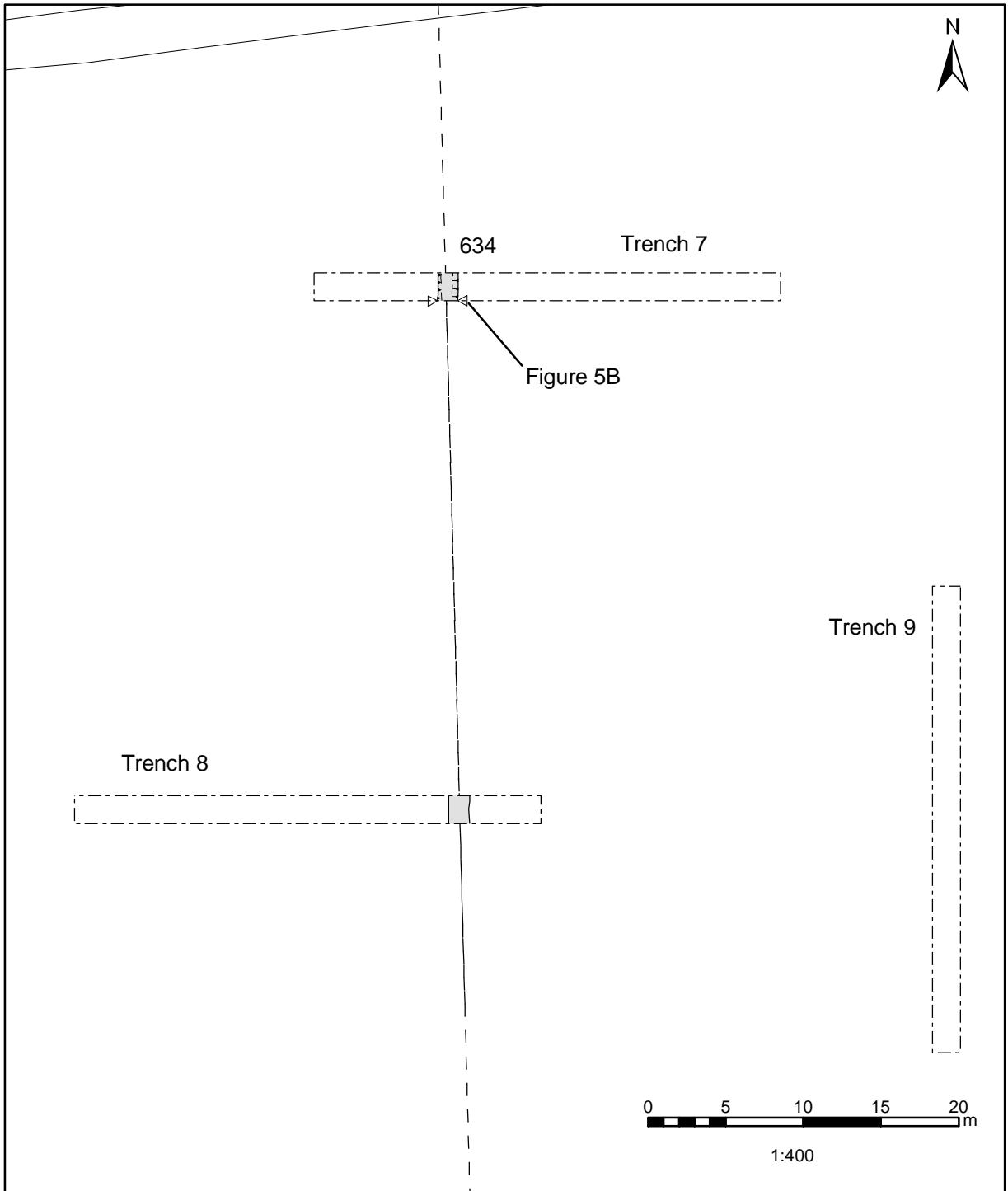
Fig.1. Site and trench location plan

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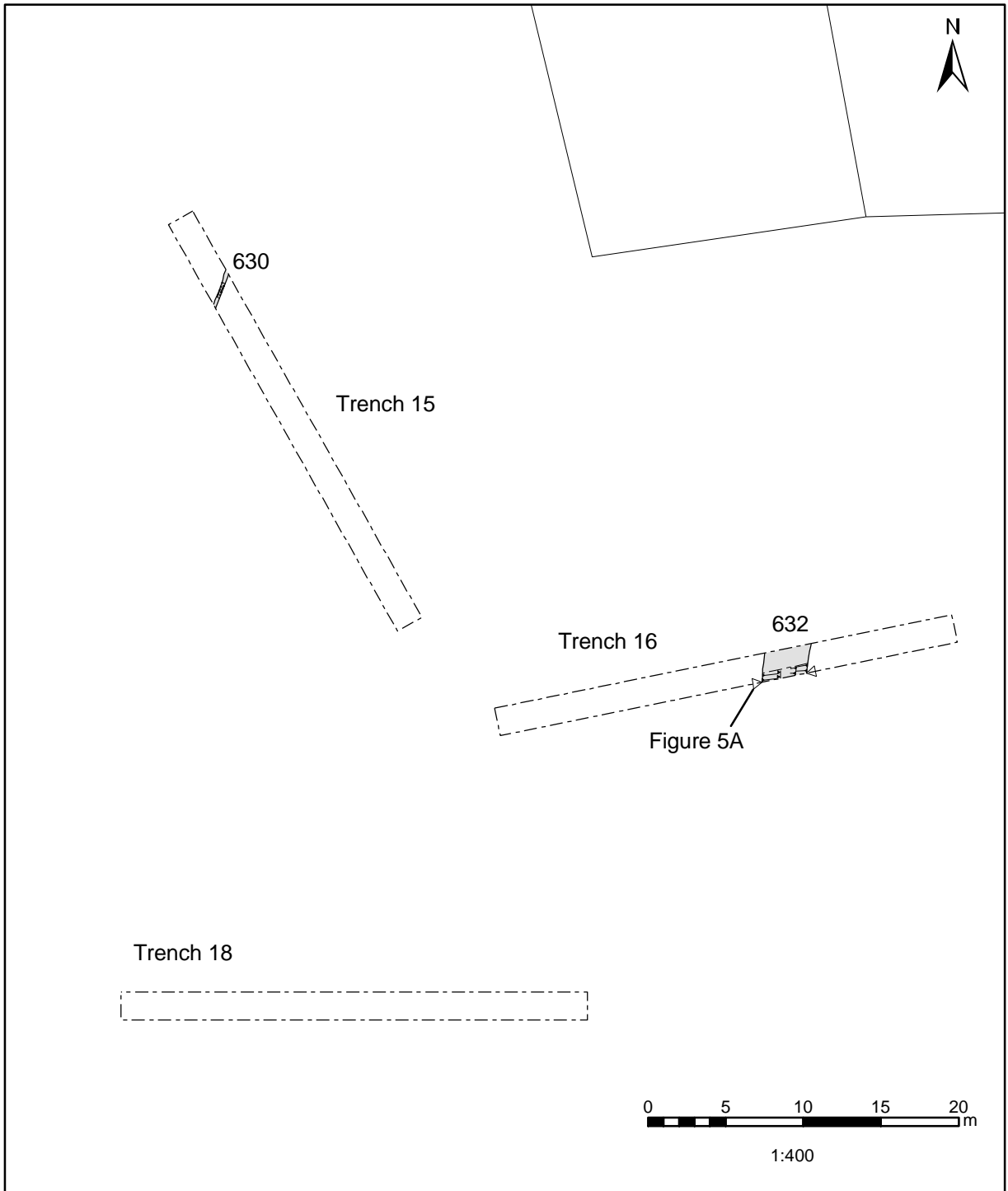
Fig.2. Trenches 4, 5 and 6



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Fig.3. Trenches 7 and 8





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Fig.4. Trenches 15 and 16

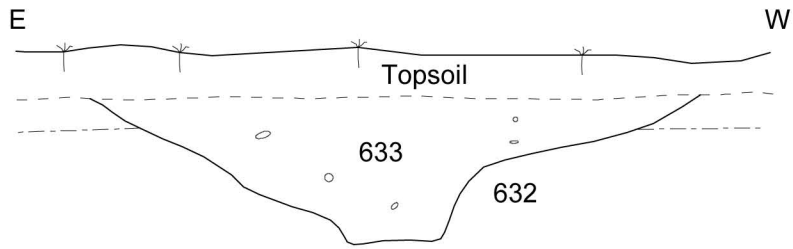


Figure 5A

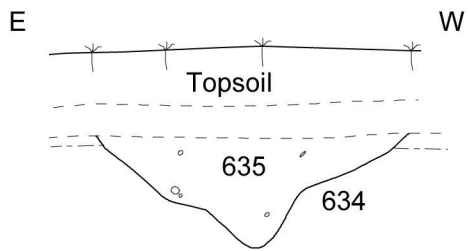


Figure 5B

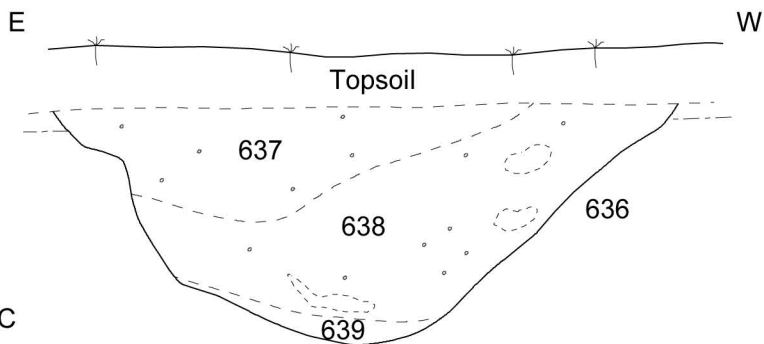


Figure 5C



All photographs not to scale

Fig.5. Sections A, B and C

## APPENDIX 1: TRENCH DATA

All dimensions are given in metres.

Trench	Dimensions (L x W)	Depth	Truncation of ground level?	Archaeological Features	Co-ordinates
1	30 x 2	0.6	No	No	TL 57067 21476 / TL 57097 21476
2	30 x 2	0.7	No	No	TL 57089 21463 / TL 57089 21433
3	30 x 2	0.35	Yes	No	TL 57076 21408 / TL 57106 21408
4	30 x 2	0.35	Yes	Yes	TL 57131 21381 / TL 57161 21381
5	30 x 2	0.5	Yes	Yes	TL 57146 21370 / TL 57146 21340
6	30 x 2	0.35	Yes	Yes	TL 57130 21322 / TL 57160 21322
7	30 x 2	0.4	Yes	Yes	TL 57220 21389 / TL 57250 21389
8	30 x 2	0.38	Yes	Yes	TL 57204 21355 / TL 57234 21355
9	30 x 2	0.4	Yes	No	TL 57260 21370 / TL 57260 21340
10	30 x 2	0.4	Yes	No	TL 57219 21326 / TL 57219 21296
11	30 x 2	0.24	Yes	No	TL 57161 21290 / TL 57191 21290
12	30 x 2	0.35	Yes	No	TL 57239 21283 / TL 57269 21283
13	30 x 2	0.4	No	No	TL 56801 21359 / TL 56831 21359
14	30 x 2	0.4	No	No	TL 56860 21375 / TL 56860 21345
15	30 x 2	0.33	No	Yes	TL 56907 21400 / TL 56907 21370
16	30 x 2	0.4	No	Yes	TL 56923 21366 / TL 56953 21366
17	30 x 2	0.3	No	No	TL 56966 21372 / TL 56966 21342
18	30 x 2	0.37	No	No	TL 56905 21336 / TL 56935 21336
19	30 x 2	0.35	No	No	TL 56746 21322 / TL 56776 21322
20	30 x 2	0.4	No	No	TL 56794 21336 / TL 56794 21306
21	30 x 2	0.38	No	No	TL 56828 21311 / TL 56858 21311
22	30 x 2	0.38	No	No	TL 56787 21282 / TL 56787 21252
23	30 x 2	0.45	No	No	TL 56843 21276 / TL 56843 21246
24	30 x 2	0.4	No	No	TL 56775 21234 / TL 56805 21234
25	30 x 2	0.44	No	No	TL 56787 21217 / TL 56787 21187
26	30 x 2	0.4	No	No	TL 56842 21217 / TL 56842 21187
27	30 x 2	0.3	No	No	TL 56769 21174 / TL 56799 21174
28	30 x 2	0.4	Yes	No	TL 57257 21453 / TL 57239 21430
29	30 x 2	0.4	Yes	No	TL 57147 21445 / TL 57160 21418
30	30 x 2	0.4	Yes	No	TL 57132 21484 / TL 57161 21483

## APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT DATA

All dimensions are given in metres

Context No	Type	Filled By	Trench No	Dimensions (L x W)	Depth	Date
630	Gully	631	15	1+ x 0.26	0.03	Modern
631	Fill	-	15	1+ x 0.26	0.03	Modern
632	Ditch	633	16	2+ x 2.7	0.69	Post-Med / Modern
633	Fill	-	16	2+ x 2.7	0.69	Post-Med / Modern
634	Ditch	635	7	2+ x 2.7	0.56	Undated
635	Fill	-	7	2+ x 2.7	0.56	Undated
636	Ditch	637; 638; 639	4	2+ x c.3.3	1.25	Undated
637	Top Fill	-	4	2+ x c.2.4	0.6	Undated
638	Mid Fill	-	4	2+x c.2.8	1.15	Undated
639	Primary Fill	-	4	2+ x 1.4	0.15	Undated

## APPENDIX 3: FINDS DATA

All weights are given in grams

Context	Feature	Count	Weight	Description	Date
633	632	1	2	Iron bradnail	-
		6	74	Brick and tile fragments, abraded	Post med.
		3	12	Pottery; body sherds, two PMRE, one modern stoneware	Post med/ modern

## **APPENDIX 4: ARCHIVE INDEX**

**SITE NAME: Phase II, Priors Green, Takeley (TAPG 06) (inc. The Former Nursery Site)**

### **Index to the Archive**

File containing:

#### **1. Research Archive**

- 1.1 2 x Brief of Archaeological Works
- 1.2 2 x Written Scheme of Investigation
- 1.3 Client Report (Phase II)
- 1.4 Interim Summary (Former Nursery Site)
- 1.5 Finds Report (Phase II)

#### **2. Site Archive**

##### PHASE II

- 2.1 27 x Trench recording Sheets (inc representative trench sections)
- 2.2 1 x Context Register
- 2.3 10 x Original Context sheets
- 2.4 1 x Photographic register
- 2.5 27 x Black and White photographic prints
- 2.6 14 x Digital images (and hard copies)
- 2.7 1 x Plan Register
- 2.8 1 x Section Register
- 2.9 2 x A0 permatrace plan sheets
- 2.10 2 x A5 permatrace section sheets
- 2.11 1 x Hard copy of trench co-ordinates

##### FORMER NURSERY SITE

- 2.12 3 x Trench recording Sheets (inc representative trench sections and Plans)
- 2.13 2 x Photographic registers
- 2.14 6 x Photographs (3 x B + W print & 3 x colour slide)
- 2.15 6 x Digital images (and hard copies)
- 2.16 1 x Hard copy of trench co-ordinates

No finds

## APPENDIX 5: EHER SUMMARY SHEET

<b>Site Name/Address:</b> Phase II, Priors Green, Takeley	
<b>Parish:</b> Takeley	<b>District:</b> Uttlesford
<b>NGR:</b> TL 56965 21363 (Centre)	<b>Site Code:</b> TAPG 06
<b>Type of Work:</b> Trial Trenching	<b>Site Director/Group:</b> A. Robertson ECC Field Archaeology Unit
<b>Date of Work:</b> 8th – 17th November 2006	<b>Size of Area Investigated:</b> Development area c.6.48ha 2.5 % = 1620 <sup>2</sup> m = 27 trenches 30m x 2m
<b>Location of Finds/Curating Museum:</b> Saffron Walden Museum	<b>Funding Source:</b> RPS Planning (on behalf of Countryside Properties Plc)
<b>Further Work Anticipated?</b> No	<b>Related EHER Nos:</b> 4572; 4655; 9140
<b>Final Report:</b> EAH Summary	
<b>Periods Represented:</b> Post-medieval / Modern	
<p><b>SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:</b></p> <p>As part of an ongoing programme of residential development works at Priors Green, Takeley, the site of the former Nursery and orchard and an area west of this along the northern side of Dunmow Road was evaluated by trial trench. The trenching was a follow up to the archaeological monitoring of geotechnical test pits previously undertaken on the former nursery and orchard.</p> <p>A total of thirty archaeological trial trenches were excavated across the area. Three north – south ditches and a single modern gully were uncovered. Although only one of the ditches was positively dated, it is likely that they are all post-medieval and represent further field divisions. All the ditches uncovered during the trenching were parallel to the extant north – south aligned boundaries, as well as to each other. This suggests that they may originally have been contemporary with the extant field boundaries, which are known to pre-date the 1875 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map but unlikely, based upon their morphology, to originate much before the post-medieval period. This suggests that the vicinity was divided into long narrow fields that ran down to suggested alignment of Stane Street, during the post-medieval period. However, there is little evidence for any substantive earlier activity and none of the remains identified on the adjacent Phase I of the Priors Green development were seen to continue into this phase.</p>	

**Previous Summaries/Reports:**

Robertson, A. 2006. *Nursery Site, Priors Green, Takeley, Essex. Archaeological Monitoring of Evaluation by Trial Trenching. Interim Report* ECC FAU/ RPS Interim rep 1700

Robertson, A. 2006. *Balancing Pond 2 and Former Nursery site, Priors Green, Takeley, Essex. Archaeological Watching Brief on Geotechnical site Investigation Test Pits.* ECC FAU/RPS client rep 1585

**Author of Summary:**

A. Robertson (ECC FAU)

**Date of Summary:**

December 2006