

**PROPOSED PRIMARY SCHOOL
HOLST AVENUE
WITHAM
ESSEX**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION



**Essex County Council
Field Archaeology Unit**

APRIL 2009

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**PROPOSED PRIMARY SCHOOL
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Client: NPS Group Property Consultants Ltd

NGR: TL 81350 13120

Site Code: WHML09

Oasis No.: essexcou1- 56316

Dates of Fieldwork: 23rd to 27th February 2009

SUMMARY

An archaeological evaluation was carried out on the site of a proposed new primary school at Holst Avenue, Witham. The site lies within the greater Maltings Lane development site, a large housing scheme that has previously been the subject of a range of archaeological investigations, culminating in a series of open-area excavations to the north of the current site, in 2000-02 (Robertson 2004), that revealed extensive concentrations of Prehistoric, Late Iron Age, Roman, Saxon and Medieval remains.

Fifteen trenches were excavated across the proposed school site. The earliest feature excavated was a pit of probable Early Iron Age date, while a second undated pit near-by may have been contemporary but is on balance thought more likely to be of recent date. No remains of Late Iron Age, Roman, Saxon or medieval date were present indicating that the main concentrations of activity seen in the 2000 – 2002 excavations did not extend this far.

Post-medieval features were restricted to trenches located to the west of a boundary hedge bisecting the site and may be associated with a former farm track, first depicted on the 1777 Chapman and Andre map, leading from Dengie Farm, to the south of the evaluation area, to the Hatfield Road, to the north. Two ditches were excavated, one of which may have bounded the western side of the track, whilst gravel deposits within a shallow linear feature may have formed part of the trackway itself.

The evaluation area to the east of the boundary hedge had been subject to considerable modern disturbance. Much of the area had previously been stripped of topsoil, some of which had subsequently been re-instated and numerous modern wheel-ruts were noted

along with other disturbances associated with the use of the area as a contractors' compound during the adjacent housing development.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report describes the results of an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching undertaken on the site of a new Primary School at Holst Avenue, Witham. The fieldwork was carried out by the Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit (ECC FAU) and commissioned by The Guildhouse Consultancy on behalf of NPS Group Property Consultants Ltd, acting for Essex County Council.

As the development site is situated on land with significant archaeological potential the Essex County Council Historic Environment Management (ECC HEM) team recommended that an archaeological investigation be undertaken prior to development. The required works were set out in a design brief (ECC HEM 2008) and the fieldwork was undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by ECC FAU (2009).

The brief required a three stage programme of archaeological work, commencing with a targeted desk-based assessment of the site and its immediate surroundings (Heppell & Atkinson 2009). Field evaluation formed the second stage of the programme with the potential for open-area excavation of significant archaeological remains forming the third.

The site archive will be deposited in Braintree Museum. A digital version of this report will be submitted, along with a project summary, to the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) (<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis>). The site code allocated for the project by ECC HEM is CF60.

2.0 BACKGROUND (Fig. 1)

2.1 Location, Topography and Geology

The site (centred on NGR TL 81350 13120) lies within the greater area of the Maltings Lane housing development, on the south-western edge of modern Witham.

The plot is broadly rectangular in plan and covers an area of approximately 1.7ha, lying to the south of Holst Avenue and to the immediate west of properties facing onto Hawkes Road. To the south the site is partially bounded by a substantial ditch and hedge, the latter turning northwest and crossing the development area. There is no physical boundary marking the western limit of the site, while the land to the south and west is currently undeveloped.

Located on the western slopes of the Blackwater valley at an approximate height of between 25m and 35m OD, the site straddles the 30m contour, lying just to the south of the ridgeline and sloping down to the southeast.

The British Geological Survey (BGS) maps the superficial geology of the overall development area as deposits of Lowestoft Formation chalky till and Head, in turn overlying London Clay.

2.2 Archaeological and Historical Background

This historical and archaeological background is based on information held in the Essex Historic Environment Record (HER), at County Hall, Chelmsford, and the recent desk-based assessment prepared as the first phase of this investigation (Heppell & Atkinson 2009).

This Witham area has been the subject of extensive archaeological investigation in the modern period. Much of this has already been presented in detail by Rodwell (1993) and by Turner (1999), but largely relates to land to the north of Maltings Lane. Various enclosures of Iron Age to Saxon date are discussed, including the Early to Middle Iron Age 'Witham Lodge Earthwork' and the Roman religious site at Ivy Chimneys.

Fieldwalking, evaluation and excavation in the immediate vicinity of the proposed site have uncovered a landscape that reveals near-continuous evidence of settlement activity from the Late Bronze age to the medieval period. Investigations commenced with fieldwalking in 1995 and concluded in 2000-2 with large scale excavation of a 6ha area 150m to the north-west of the present site. The excavation (Robertson 2004) revealed evidence of Bronze Age roundhouses, Early Iron Age pits, Middle and Late Iron Age enclosure systems, a Roman farmstead and associated field system, crop processing area and cemetery, early Saxon settlement and a medieval farmstead complex (EHER 18504, 18505, 18506).

No previous archaeological investigation, other than a fieldwalking survey in 1995 (Brooks 1995), has been carried out either within the Primary School site or its immediate vicinity. Few finds were recovered from the area during the fieldwalking survey, other than a scatter of post-medieval material typical for the development area as a whole and a small concentration of Roman brick and tile in a single collection unit that was not considered indicative of a 'site' *per se* but could possibly have derived from an archaeological feature.

The hedge that crosses the site from south-east to north-west is an extant historic boundary of unknown date. A track is depicted running to the west of it on the Chapman and Andre map of 1777, and subsequently on 19th century and later editions of the Ordnance Survey.

Until recently much of the site was used as a works compound for the adjacent housing development, since when some re-instatement works have taken place. Prior to this, the site was farmland under arable cultivation.

3.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 General aims

The main aim of the investigation was to determine the presence/absence, location, extent, date, character, condition and significance of any surviving archaeological remains within the area of proposed development and to record them.

In the event that significant archaeological remains were encountered further work was likely to be required in order to mitigate the impact of development and achieve *preservation by record* of the threatened remains.

3.2 Objectives

In the event that significant archaeological remains were encountered the evaluation report would have highlighted appropriate research themes for further work; however, due to the limited results the work has little potential to contribute to any relevant research themes.

Specific objectives of the investigation were to determine:

- the presence and nature of prehistoric remains
- whether there was a westward continuation of Iron Age and Roman remains, in particular the ditched trackway, from the 2000-02 area excavations
- the nature and date of the historic boundary and hedgeline, and of the former trackway alongside
- the impact of recent construction-related activities upon the survival of any remains present

4.0 METHOD

Fifteen evaluation trenches were excavated under archaeological supervision using a 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a flat-bladed bucket. All of the trenches were 30m long by 1.8m wide apart from Trench 7 which was reduced in length to 15m and Trench 8 which was expanded to a width of 6m to fully expose pit 7. Both variations were undertaken with the agreement of The Guildhouse Consultancy and the ECC HEM Monitoring Officer.

In general, while the trenches were positioned to sample the entire development area, Trench 5 was located to test for the presence of the projected trackway from the main 2000-2 excavation area, Trenches 7 and 10 were located to investigate the concentration of Roman brick and tile from the 1995 fieldwalking survey and trenches 2 and 6 were located to examine the origins of the hedgeline and adjacent trackway.

The trenches were cleaned and potential features were hand-excavated. All work was carried out in accordance with the Institute of Field Archaeologists' standards and guidance for archaeological evaluation (IFA 2001) and complied with Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England (Gurney 2003). Standard ECC FAU excavation, artefact collection and recording methodologies were employed throughout.

5.0 FIELDWORK RESULTS (Figs 2 - 5)

A number of archaeological features and deposits were identified and are described in trench order. Trench information can be found in Appendix 1 and additional context information in Appendix 2.

Evaluation Trenches 1-4, located to the west of the boundary hedge, were cut through a dark brownish grey plough soil, between 0.28-0.38m in depth. Underlying the plough soil were natural deposits of light brown/orange silty clay and chalk-flecked yellow clay.

Trenches 5-15, located to the east of the boundary hedge, were cut through previously disturbed ground some of which had been reinstated, having previously been stripped of topsoil. Trenches 5, 6, 8, 9, 12 and 15 were cut through re-deposited dark brownish grey topsoil that varied from 0.10m to 0.38m in depth. This material was shallowest in the north-east of the site (around Trenches 8, 9, and 12), where in a few places natural deposits were directly exposed. In Trenches 7, 10, 11 and the western halves of Trenches 13 and 14 the overburden was substantially thicker, at 0.5m to 0.84m deep, and consisted of compacted

topsoil overlain by a thick layer of re-deposited dark brownish clay silt containing organic matter and a variety of modern finds (brick, plastic etc.). The underlying natural deposits were similar to those in the west but with a higher proportion of chalk-flecked yellow clay within which patches of light brown/orange silty clay occurred.

5.1 Trench 1 (Fig. 3)

A small north/south aligned ditch (13) was investigated in the eastern half of the trench. The ditch was 1m wide by 0.4m deep and was filled with a yellowish brown silty clay (14) that produced one sherd of unidentifiable pottery and two fragments of post-medieval roof tile. At the east end of the trench was a modern, north-south aligned, linear feature (15) that was not excavated as it contained pieces of plastic bag and plastic drain pipe.

5.2 Trench 2 (Fig. 3)

Ditch 21 was aligned north/south and appeared to be a continuation of ditch 13 from Trench 1. Its fill (22), which was truncated to the north by a modern service trench, contained further fragments of post-medieval roof tile and a sherd of c. 17th century pottery. Linear feature 17, at the edge of the trench, also appeared to be a continuation of a feature from Trench 1, in this case ditch 15. Although a number of post-medieval finds were recovered it is likely that this feature, perhaps the edge of a field boundary ditch or service trench, was back-filled in comparatively recent times. In the centre of the trench was a large north/south aligned ditch (23), 2.45m wide by 0.75m deep (plate 2). It was filled with brownish grey silty clay that produced one piece of animal bone and fragments of post-medieval brick. To the east of this ditch were several modern wheel ruts.

5.3 Trench 3

A linear deposit of light greyish brown clay silt in the eastern half of the trench appeared to be a continuation of ditch 23 from Trench 2. One small piece of abraded peg tile was noted but not retained. Further fragments of peg tile were also noted in the fill of two large wheel ruts at the east end of the trench.

5.4 Trench 4

Three small parallel gullies (26, 28 and 30) were excavated at the east end of the trench. All were aligned north-west/south-east and had a concave profile. Gullies 28 and 30 ran adjacent to each other and gully 26 was located 1.8m to the east. The gullies ranged in depth from 0.09m to 0.18m and were all filled with a similar mid greyish brown clay silt. Two sherds of post-medieval pottery and a fragment of roof tile were recovered from fill 25 (ditch 26) and three sherds of post-medieval pottery from fill 27 (ditch 28). The south western edge

of gully 26 was poorly defined due to the presence of a mole drain and adjacent modern disturbance.

5.5 Trench 5

A single east/west aligned linear feature (3) of recent origin was investigated in Trench 5. Its dark clay compressed fill (4) contained a modern fencing iron.

5.6 Trench 6

A single north-east/south-west linear feature (5) was investigated in the centre of the trench. The fill (6) contained semi-decayed grass, a sherd of modern pottery and an un-corroded iron nail (not retained).

5.7 Trench 7

No archaeological features were observed in Trench 7.

5.8 Trench 8

Two pits (7 and 9) were investigated in the eastern half of Trench 8. Pit 7 was oval in plan, 2.3m long by 1.8m wide and 0.9m deep. The base of the pit sloped southwards to a deeper bowl-shaped area visible in section. The pit contained two main fills (8 and 12) separated by a thin dark grey band (11). Iron Age pottery, animal bone, baked clay fragments and burnt flint were recovered from fills 8 and 12 (see plate 1).

Pit 9 was located mid-way between pit 7 and an area of modern disturbance at the east end of the trench. The pit was 1.66m long by 0.17m deep and filled with dark brownish grey silty clay (10). No finds were recovered from the fill which was compact and similar in colour to many of the more modern features in surrounding trenches.

5.9 Trenches 9 - 15

Patches of modern disturbance were noted in Trenches 9, 12 and 15, and more distinct areas of wheel rutting in Trenches 10, 11, 13 and 14. One wheel rut (1) investigated in Trench 10 was 0.11m deep and was filled by dark brownish grey silty clay (2) containing compressed semi-decayed grass and fragments of brick. Modern material (brick, glazed pottery, concrete etc.) was observed in the top of many of the unexcavated wheel ruts (see plate 3).

6.0 FINDS REPORT by Joyce Compton

6.1 Introduction

Finds were recovered from eight contexts across four of the excavated trenches. All of the finds have been recorded by count and weight, in grams, by context; full quantification details can be found in Appendix 3. There are two separate datable components to the assemblage, one prehistoric (Trench 8) and the second post-medieval (Trenches 1-4). The finds are described by category below.

6.2 Pottery

Seven contexts produced pottery, amounting to 101 sherds, weighing 711g. Almost all of the pottery is prehistoric, deriving from the fills of a single feature (pit 7, Trench 8). Trenches 2 and 4 produced small amounts of post-medieval pottery, and a single sherd with no surfaces, which may be medieval, was recovered from Trench 1. Both assemblages form the subject of separate reports, as follows;

6.2.1 Prehistoric pottery by N. J. Lavender

A small assemblage of prehistoric pottery (92 sherds, weighing 620g) was recovered. The pottery was recorded according to a system devised for prehistoric pottery in Essex and adjacent areas (Brown 1988; details in archive), with subsequent reference to the guidelines outlined by the Prehistoric Ceramics Research Group (PCRG 1991; revised 1997; 1992). The pottery was examined with the aid of a hand lens and recorded by fabric, class (after Barrett 1980), form, decoration, surface treatment and condition. The assemblage was quantified by sherd count and weight.

The assemblage comprises mainly small (average weight 6.7g), but not heavily flint-tempered sherds, which are not closely datable within the prehistoric period. A single sherd, from fill 8, was in sand-tempered Fabric G, suggesting a possible Middle Iron Age date. The date is reinforced by a flat-topped, out-turned rim from the same context, which probably comes from an Early or Middle Iron Age jar. A sharply carinated sherd from fill 12 is from a Form K bowl, also of earlier Iron Age date.

6.2.2 Medieval and later pottery by Helen Walker

A small collection of pottery, eight sherds, weighing 87g, was excavated from five contexts (see Appendix 4 for further details). All the identifiable pottery is post-medieval, comprising sherds of locally-made post-medieval red earthenware and black-glazed ware. There is also a sherd of Staffordshire-type slipware, which was at its most popular during the early 18th century, and a sherd of Nottingham/Derby stoneware, produced from the 18th to 20th

centuries. All the pottery could have been current during the earlier 18th century. However, as each feature produced only small amounts of pottery, and that from gully 28 (Trench 4) is very abraded, all of the post-medieval pottery may be residual, although its presence certainly indicates activity in the area during this period.

6.3 Brick and tile

Five contexts produced post-medieval brick and tile fragments, amounting to 26 pieces, weighing 610g. The pieces are mainly small and abraded, with no diagnostic elements and almost all of the assemblage came from features in Trench 2.

6.4 Animal bone

Except for a single cattle metapodial shaft from Trench 2, the animal bone is associated with the prehistoric pottery in pit 7 (Trench 8). A total of 18 pieces, weighing 186g, was recorded, all of which derives from cattle. It was noted that the bone from both fills of pit 7 is in poor condition, comprising molars and tooth fragments, along with a single phalanx.

6.5 Other finds

Pit 7 produced baked clay fragments and a small quantity of burnt and unworked flints. Finds of post-medieval date came from Trench 2, comprising a piece of iron wire and single fragments of slate, coke and slag. Also present was a piece of natural ironstone.

6.6 Comments on the assemblage

Small groups of finds were recorded. Of interest are the prehistoric (probably Early Iron Age) finds from pit 7 (Trench 8). It is probably worth noting that the post-medieval material was recovered from trenches to the west of the evaluation area only. No further work is required on any of the finds. The coke and ironstone fragments have been discarded following recording. Further discard of the post-medieval material could take place at the archiving stage. All of the pottery and the other finds from pit 7 should be retained.

7.0 DISCUSSION

Archaeological remains dating to the prehistoric and post-medieval periods were recorded during the evaluation. Significantly, no features of Roman, Saxon or Medieval date were encountered.

7.1 Prehistoric

Evidence of prehistoric activity was limited to one pit of probable Early Iron Age date, although an undated near-by pit (9) could have been contemporary but is more likely to be of recent date. It is probable that the pit is an outlier from more extensive areas of Early Iron Age settlement to the north-west of the site. Although Early Iron Age remains were present in the 2000-02 Maltings Lane excavations (Robertson 2004) the main focus of activity appears to be to the north of Maltings Lane, in the area of the 'Witham Lodge Earthwork' (Rodwell 1993) and the Ivy Chimneys excavation site (Turner 1999).

7.2 Post-medieval

Post-medieval features were restricted to the four trenches to the west of the boundary hedge and may be associated with a former farm track leading from Dengie Farm, to the south of the evaluation area, to Hatfield Road, to the north. The boundary hedge is believed to mark the eastern side of the track, the date and origin of which is unknown, although the track is depicted on the 1777 Chapman and Andre map, and 19th and 20th century editions of the Ordnance Survey. The track effectively went out of use as a route-way in the 1960s when it was bisected by the construction of the A12 Witham Bypass, although its northern extent is still shown on Ordnance Survey mapping to this day.

Most of the excavated features were broadly aligned north-west/south-east and ran parallel with the former position of the track. Ditches 13 and 21 were clearly one and the same feature and may have formed the western boundary to the track. The function of linear feature 15/17 was unclear from its partial exposure at the end of two trenches. It may be a later and more recently backfilled phase of boundary ditch or an unknown service trench. It is also feasible that it marks the edge of the track itself and that the gravelly fills are actually levelling deposits within a shallow hollow-way.

Ditch 23 was located slightly farther away from the track and was on a different, diverging alignment. It was recorded as a linear deposit in Trench 3 but did not continue into Trench 4, suggesting that it had terminated or changed direction by this point. Instead, in its projected position in Trench 4 there were a series of three parallel, shallow, gullies that all cut natural clay and could be evidence of post-medieval rutting.

7.3 Modern

Much of the evaluation area had been subject to some degree of modern disturbance. The bulk of this was recorded to the east of the boundary hedge in the area recently used as a contractors' compound. The northern part of this area had clearly been stripped down to the top of the natural clay and subsequently had a thin covering of topsoil reinstated. In the south-west, compacted topsoil in the base of the trench sections may have been in-situ, although truncated and later sealed beneath a thick layer of re-deposited make-up. Numerous wheel-ruts were present along with other areas of disturbance that may have been associated with temporary structures within the compound. Modern wheel-ruts were also present to the west of the boundary hedge suggesting that dumper trucks had also been running up and down the hedge line either during recent development or perhaps during the construction of the A12.

8.0 ASSESSMENT OF RESULTS

The evaluation has shown that few remains of archaeological significance are present within the site of the proposed primary school. This agrees with the Desk-based Assessment which concluded that the potential 'for the presence and survival of significant archaeological remains is low' (Heppell & Atkinson 2009, 18) and also re-affirms the somewhat negative results of the earlier fieldwalking survey of the area (Brooks 1995).

Most of the archaeological features investigated during the evaluation were of post-medieval or more recent date. The only earlier feature was a single prehistoric pit probably dating to the Early Iron Age. No other later Iron Age or Roman remains were present and there was no evidence that the trackway projected from the main excavation area continued (over 200m) into the proposed school site. Similarly, no archaeological features of Roman date were found in the area of the brick and tile 'hotspot'.

It is clear that the site to the east of the boundary hedge had been subject to major groundworks and subsequent reinstatement. However, the presence of the prehistoric pit, located just below the restored surface, implied that deeper features of other periods should also survive if present. However, the near complete lack of features suggests that the main area of Late Iron Age and Roman occupation did not extend this far south-west. Indeed no remains of this date were found in the two outlying areas (A and D), situated 120m to the south-west and 400m to the south east of the present site, during the 2000-02 excavations (Robertson 2004).

Post-medieval features were restricted to the west of the boundary hedge and may be associated with the trackway first depicted on the Chapman and Andre map of 1777. The small amount of recovered pottery had a broad date range from the 17th to the 20th century and most could have been current in the early 18th century. However, as some of the pottery was very abraded and given that there is no known settlement in the immediate vicinity of the site it is probable that the pottery, along with the recovered roof tile, is residual material, perhaps resulting from manuring of the adjacent field or trackway repairs. The origin of this material was most likely Dengie Farm, located at the end of the track, some 200m to the south-east. Although no definitive date for the origin of the boundary hedge and trackway can be given it is reasonable to assume this occurred in the 17th or 18th century, given the cartographic evidence and the complete lack of any earlier residual medieval material from the site.

Overall, the impact of the proposed primary school on the archaeological record appears to be negligible given the low level of remains within the development area.

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APPENDIX 1: TRENCH DATA

All dimensions given in metres

Trench	Measurements	Co-ordinates
1	30m x 1.8m x 0.38m deep, orientated NW/SE	581261.1, 213174.1 581289.5, 213164.6
2	30m x 1.8m x 0.28m deep, orientated E/W	581268.1, 213125.5 581297.3, 213132.2
3	30m x 1.8m x 0.38m deep, orientated NW/SE	581278.3, 213114.2 581304.7, 213099.9
4	30m x 1.8m x 0.3m deep, orientated NW/SE	581286.3, 213091.3 581314.8, 213082.1
5	30m x 1.8m x 0.38m deep, orientated N/S	581310.9, 213176.5 581320.8, 213148.2
6	30m x 1.8m x 0.29m deep, orientated E/W	581308.0, 213132.6 581337.2, 213139.4
7	15m x 1.8m x 0.6m deep, orientated NW/SE	581320.2, 213107.8 581329.3, 213095.3
8	30m x 1.8m x 0.26m deep, orientated E/W	581337.8, 213169.0 581367.8, 213169.0
9	30m x 1.8m x 0.15m deep, orientated N/S	581359.8, 213159.8 581359.8, 213129.8
10	30m x 1.8m x 0.84m deep, orientated E/W	581319.4, 213117.6 581349.4, 213117.6
11	30m x 1.8m x 0.5m deep, orientated N/S	581353.6, 213108.3 581353.6, 213078.3
12	30m x 1.8m x 0.10m deep, orientated N/S	581395.1, 213171.5 581395.1, 213141.5
13	30m x 1.8m x 0.5m deep, orientated NE/SW	581377.9, 213110.9 581400.9, 213130.2
14	30m x 1.8m x 0.7m deep, orientated N/S	581367.7, 213092.6 581397.7, 213092.6
15	30m x 1.8m x 0.24m deep, orientated N/S	581406.2, 213102.5 581406.2, 213072.5

APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT DATA

All dimensions given in metres

Context	Trench	Type	Description	Period
01	10	Wheel rut	2m+ x 0.67m x 0.11m deep	Modern
02	10	Fill of 1	Dark brownish grey silty clay	Modern
03	5	Wheel rut	1.8m+ x 0.8m x 0.06m deep	Modern
04	5	Fill of 3	Dark brownish grey silty clay	Modern
05	6	Wheel rut	2.5m+ x 0.59m x 0.10m deep	Modern
06	6	Fill of 5	Dark brownish grey silty clay	Modern
07	8	Pit	Oval, 2.3m x 1.8m x 0.90m deep	Iron Age
08	8	Fill of 7	Greyish brown silty clay, 0.48m thick	Iron Age
09	8	Pit	Sausage-shaped, 1.8m x 0.75m x 0.17m deep	Undated
10	8	Fill of 9	Dark brownish grey silty clay	Undated
11	8	Fill of 7	Dark grey silty clay, 0.03m thick	Iron Age
12	8	Fill of 7	Yellowish brown silty clay, 0.42m thick	Iron Age
13	1	Ditch	2.2m+ x 1m x 0.40m deep	Post-medieval
14	1	Fill of 13	Yellowish brown silty clay	Post-medieval
15	1	Linear	1.8m+ long x 1m+ wide (not excavated)	Modern
16	1	Fill of 15	Greyish brown silty clay with abundant gravel	Modern
17	2	Linear	1.8m+ x 0.75m+ x 0.43m deep	Modern
18	2	Fill of 17	Brownish orange silty clay, 0.03m thick	Modern
19	2	Fill of 17	Brownish grey silty clay with frequent gravel, 0.11m thick	Modern
20	2	Fill of 17	Yellowish brown silty clay with abundant gravel, 0.19m thick	Modern
21	2	Ditch	1.8m + x 1.03m x 0.33m deep	Post-medieval
22	2	Fill of 21	Yellowish brown silty clay	Post-medieval
23	2	Ditch	1.8m+ x 2.45m x 0.83m deep	Post-medieval
24	2	Fill of 23	Brownish grey silty clay	Post-medieval
25	4	Fill of 26	Mid greyish brown silty clay	Post-medieval
26	4	Gully	2m+ x 0.40m x 0.12m deep	Post-medieval
27	4	Fill of 28	Mid greyish brown clay silt	Post-medieval
28	4	Gully	2.5m+ x 0.30m x 0.18m deep	Post-medieval
29	4	Fill of 30	Mid greyish brown clay silt	Post-medieval
30	4	Gully	1.8m+ x 0.28m x 0.09m deep	Post-medieval

APPENDIX 3: FINDS DATA

All weights in grams

Context	Feature	Count	Weight	Description	Date
8	7	16	132	Animal bone; cattle molars and fragments, all poor condition, one burnt	-
		5	32	Unworked flints	-
		9	86	Burnt flints	-
		84	472	Pottery; rim and body sherds	Prehistoric
12	7	1	20	Animal bone; cattle phalanx, poor condition	-
		6	38	Baked clay fragments	-
		9	152	Pottery; base and body sherds	Prehistoric
14	13	2	24	Roof tile fragments	Post med.
		1	4	Pottery; body sherd	Undated
19	17	1	4	Iron wire fragment	-
		1	12	Slate fragment, abraded	-
		1	4	Slag	-
		14	86	Brick and tile fragments, abraded	Post med.
		1	12	Pottery; ?stoneware base sherd	Post med.
22	21	1	4	Brick fragment	Post med.
		3	126	Roof tile fragments, one with peg hole	Post med.
		1	1	Pottery; tiny glazed body sherd	Post med.
24	23	1	34	Animal bone; cattle metapodial shaft, unfused, poor condition	-
		2	10	Coke/ironstone (Discarded)	-
		5	354	Brick fragments	Post med.
25	26	1	16	Roof tile fragment	Post med.
		2	14	Pottery; body sherds	Post med.
27	28	3	56	Pottery; glazed body sherds, abraded	Post med.

APPENDIX 4: MEDIEVAL AND LATER POTTERY

All weights in grams

Context	Feature	Count	Weight	Description	Date
14	13	1	4	Unidentifiable, both surfaces missing	-
19	17	1	12	Nottingham/Derby stoneware recessed base sherd, under-fired	18th to 20th C
22	21	1	1	Black-glazed ware, tiny sherd all over glaze	most likely 17th C
25	26	1	10	Post-medieval red earthenware, thick-walled, all over glaze	17th to 19th C
		1	4	Staffs-type slip-trailed ware sherd from press-moulded dish	c.1670 to later 18th C
27	28	3	56	Post-medieval red earthenware internally glazed body and base sherds, v. abraded	17th to 19th C
		8	87		

APPENDIX 5: CONTENTS OF ARCHIVE

SITE NAME: Proposed Primary School, Holst Avenue, Witham

SITE CODE: WHML09

Index to Archive:

1. Introduction

1.1 ECC HEM Brief

1.2 ECC FAU WSI

2. Research Archive

2.1 Client Report

2.2 Finds Reports

3. Site Archive

3.1 Context Record Register

3.2 Context Records (1 to 30)

3.3 Plan Register

3.4 Section Register

3.5 Levels Register

3.6 Trench location plan

3.7 Trench Record Sheets

3.8 Photographic Register

3.9 Site Photographic Record (1 set of Black & White prints, 1 Set of digital images on disk)

3.10 Miscellaneous notes/plans

Not in File

4 large plan sheets, 1 large section sheets

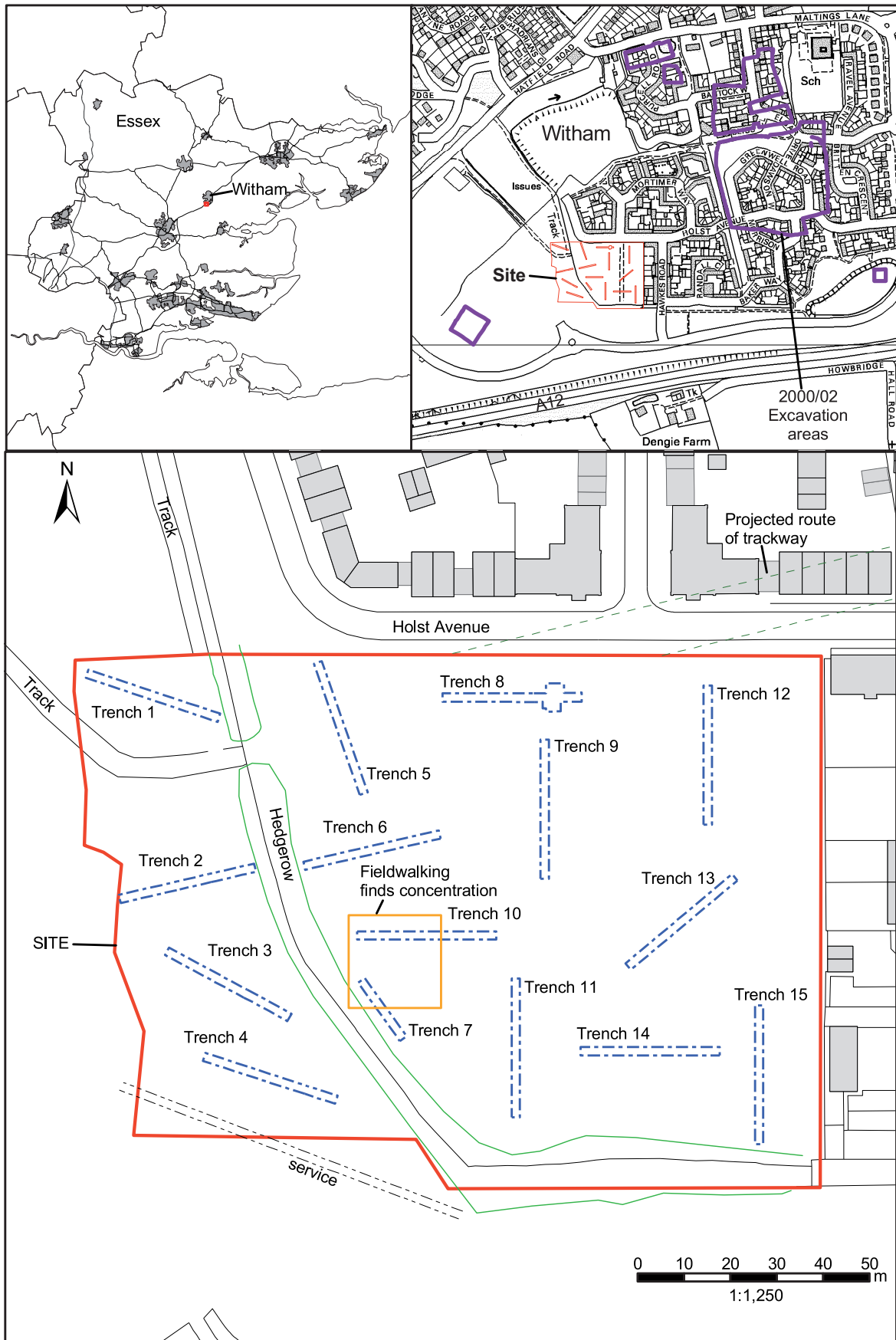
Finds

The finds occupy less than one box.

APPENDIX 6: EHER SUMMARY SHEET

EHER SUMMARY SHEET

Site name/Address: Proposed Primary School Site, Holst Avenue, Witham, Essex	
Parishes: Witham	District: Braintree
NGR: TL 81350 13120	Site Code: WHML09
Type of Work: Archaeological Evaluation	Site Director/Group: T. Ennis, ECC Field Archaeology Unit
Date of Work: 23rd–27th February 2009	Size of Area Investigated: 1.7 ha
Location of Finds/Curating Museum: Braintree	Funding source: ECC - Schools
Further Seasons Anticipated?: No	Related HER Nos.: EHER 18504, 18505, 18506
Final Report:	Oasis No.: essexcou1- 56316
Periods Represented: post-medieval, modern	
<p>SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:</p> <p>An archaeological evaluation was carried out on the site of a proposed new primary school at Holst Avenue, Witham. The site lies within the greater Maltings Lane development site, a large housing scheme that has previously been the subject of a range of archaeological investigations, culminating in a series of open-area excavations to the north of the current site, in 2000-02 (Robertson 2004), that revealed extensive concentrations of Prehistoric, Late Iron Age, Roman, Saxon and Medieval remains.</p> <p>Fifteen trenches were excavated across the proposed school site. The earliest feature excavated was a pit of probable Early Iron Age date, while a second undated pit near-by may have been contemporary but is on balance thought more likely to be of recent date. No remains of Late Iron Age, Roman Saxon or medieval date were present implying that the main concentrations of activity seen in the 2000 – 2002 excavations did not extend this far.</p> <p>Post-medieval features were restricted to trenches located to the west of a boundary hedge bisecting the site and may be associated with a former farm track, first depicted on the 1777 Chapman and Andre map, leading from Dengie Farm, to the south of the evaluation area, to the Hatfield Road, to the north. Two ditches were excavated, one of which may have bounded the western side of the track, whilst gravel deposits within a shallow linear feature may have formed part of the trackway itself.</p> <p>The evaluation area to the east of the boundary hedge had been subject to considerable modern disturbance. Much of the area had previously been stripped of topsoil, some of which had subsequently been re-instated and numerous modern wheel-ruts were noted along with other disturbances associated with the use of the area as a contractors' compound during the adjacent housing development.</p>	
Previous Summaries/Reports: Heppell, E. & Atkinson, M., 2009, <i>Proposed Primary School, Maltings Lane, Witham, Essex: Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment</i> . ECC FAU rep. 2014	
Author of Summary: T. Ennis	Date of Summary: April 2009



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Fig.1. Site location

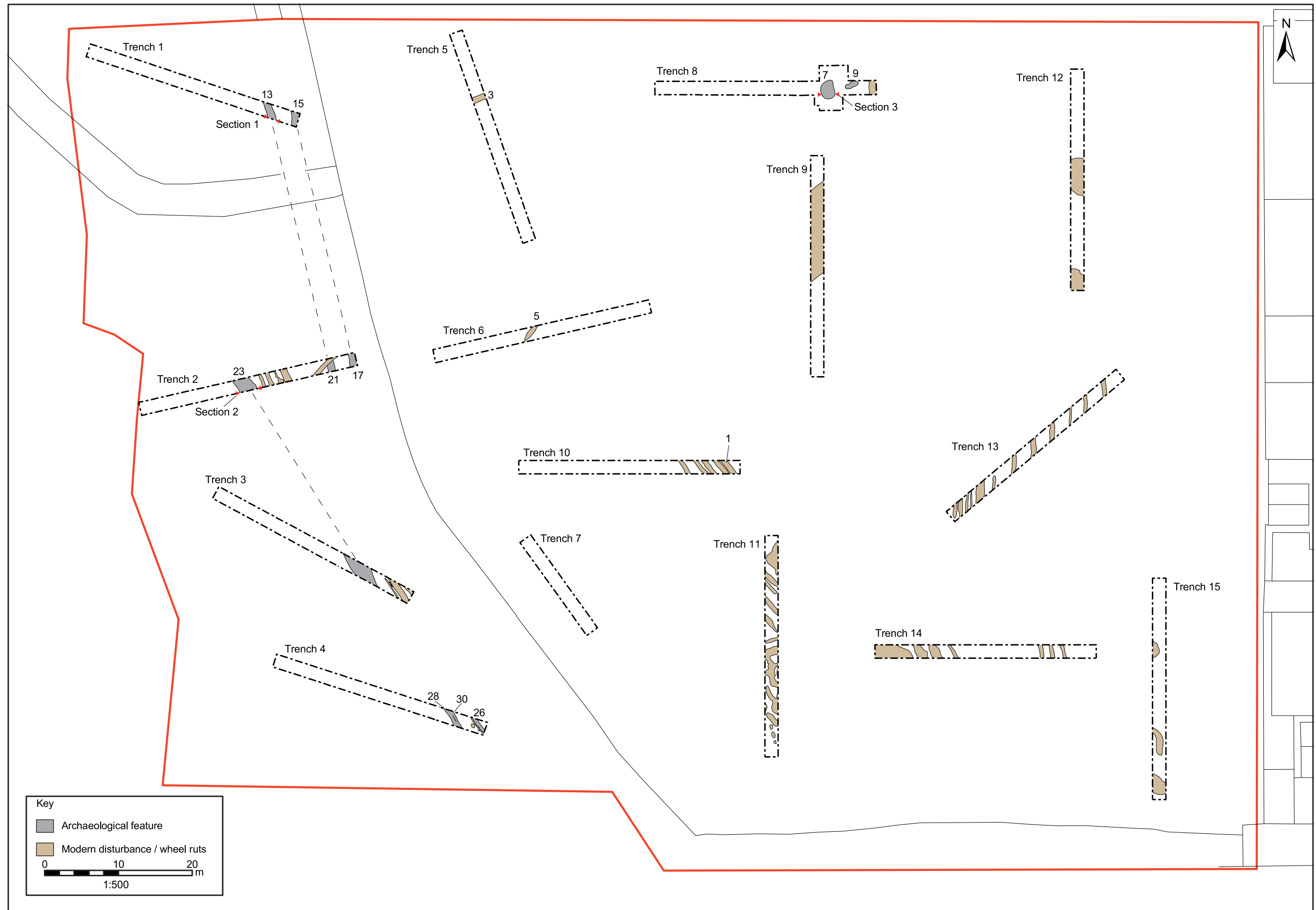


Fig.2. Archaeological and modern features

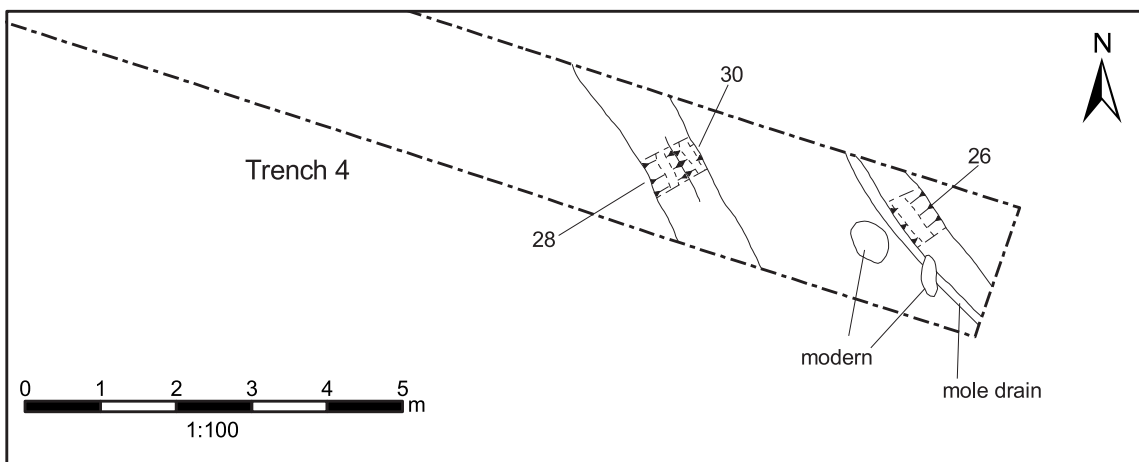
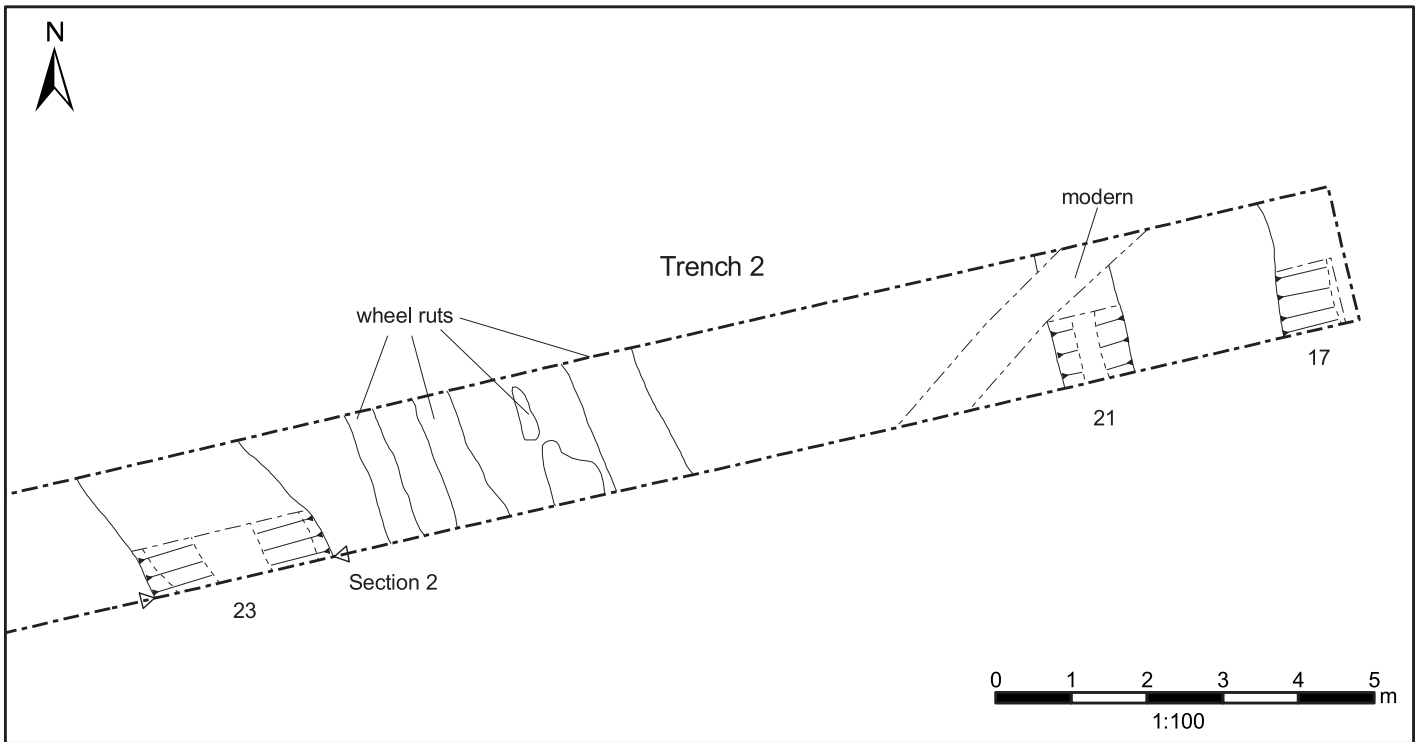
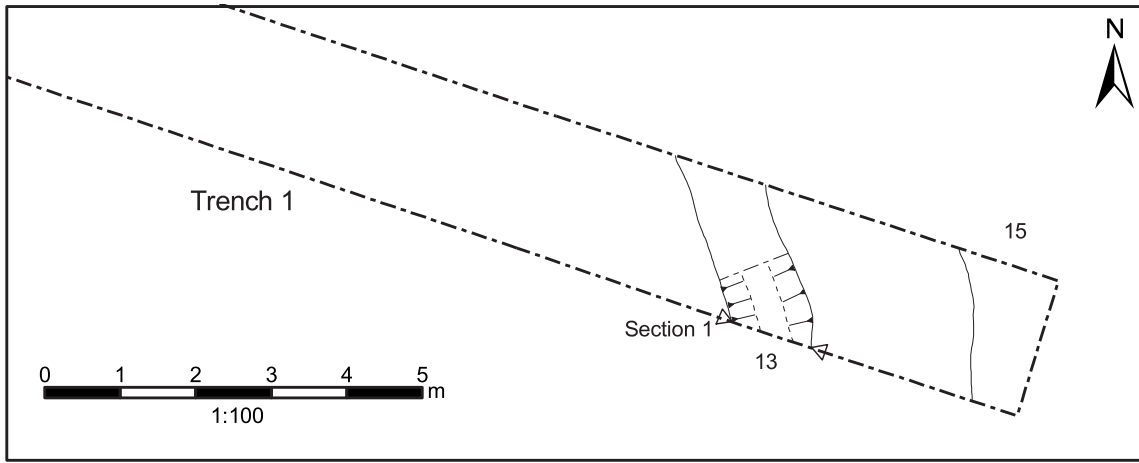


Fig.3. Trenches 1, 2 & 4

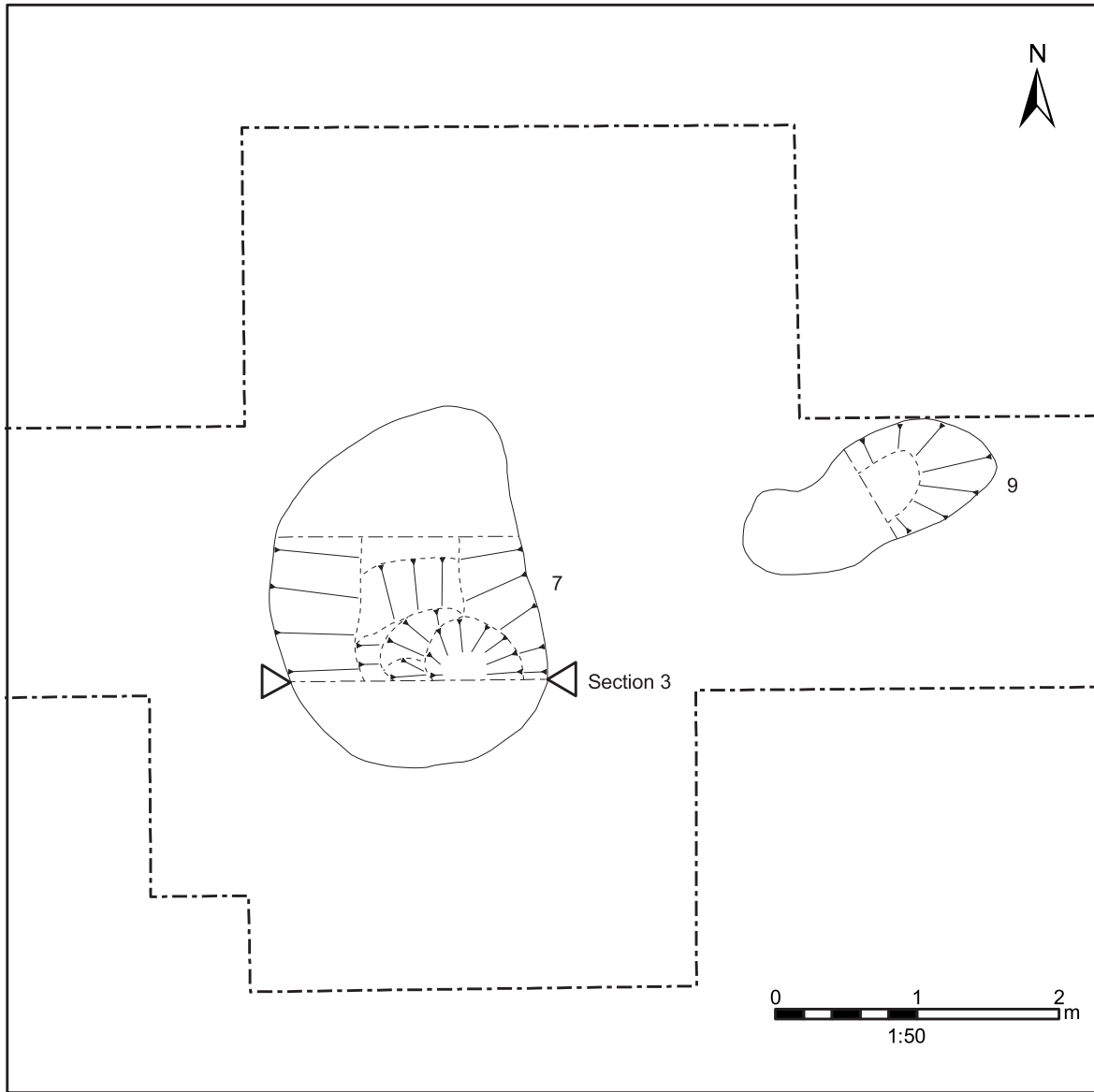


Fig.4. Trench 8

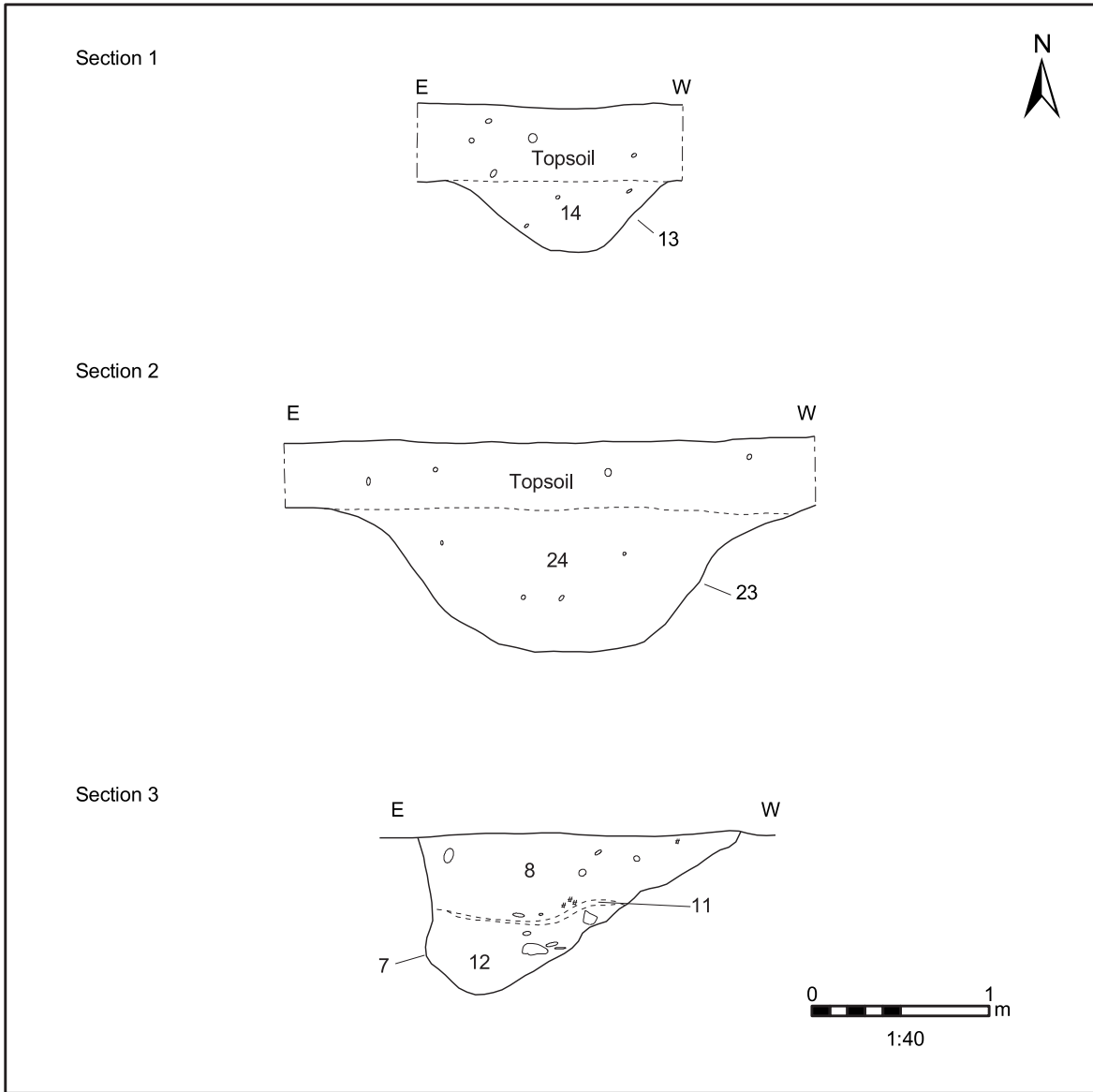


Fig.5. Sections



Plate 1. Iron Age pit (7) – Trench 8



Plate 2. Post-medieval ditch (23) – Trench 2



Plate 3. Trench 11 showing modern disturbance and rutting