

HERITAGE NETWORK

Celebrating 20 years of independent professional service in the historic environment



**THE NODE,
Hitchin Road, Codicote**

HN1059

***ARCHAEOLOGICAL
EVALUATION REPORT***

THE HERITAGE NETWORK LTD

Registered with the Institute of Field Archaeologists as an Archaeological Organisation

Archaeological Director: David Hillelson, BA MIFA

THE NODE Hitchin Road, Codicote, Herts.

Project ref.: HN1059

Planning Refs: 12/01189/1 (Eastern); 12/01223/1 (Western)

HER consultation: 11/13

Archaeological Evaluation

Prepared on behalf of Court Homes

by

Daniel Phillips, BA (HONS)

and

Greg Jones, BA (HONS) MA AIFA

Report no. 814

September 2013

© The Heritage Network Ltd

11 FURMSTON COURT, ICKNIELD WAY, LETCHWORTH SG6 1UJ
TEL: (01462) 685991 FAX: (01462) 685998

Contents

	Summary	Page i
Section 1	Introduction	Page 1
Section 2	Fieldwork	Page 2
Section 3	Discussion	Page 10
Section 4	Sources Consulted	Page 13
Section 5	Illustrations	following Page 14
Appendix	OASIS summary sheet	Page 15

The cover illustration shows Trench 6, looking south

Acknowledgements

The evaluation fieldwork for this project was carried out by James Snee, Greg Jones, Robin Densem, and Daniel Phillips. The report text and illustrations were compiled by Daniel Phillips and Greg Jones and edited by David Hillelson.

The Heritage Network would like to express its thanks to: Jonathan Read, Pentangle Design, Robin Hayhurst and Gary Shaw, Court Homes, and Andy Instone and Isobel Thompson, Historic Environment Unit, Hertfordshire County Council, for their co-operation and assistance in the execution of this stage of the project.

Summary:

Site name and address:	The Node, Codicote, Hertfordshire, SG4 8TL		
County:	Hertfordshire	District:	North Herts DC
Village/town:	Codicote	Parish:	Codicote
Planning reference:	12/01189/1; 12/01223/1	NGR:	TL 216 202
Client name and address:	Court Homes, Ladygrove Court, Hitchwood Lane, Preston, Herts, SG4 7SA		
Nature of work:	Residential development	Former land use:	Country house & park
Site status:	None	Reason for investigation:	Direction of local planning authority
Position in planning process:	After full determination (as a condition)	Project brief originator:	Local authority
Size of affected area:	5390m ²	Size of area investigated:	248m ²
Site code:	HN1059	HER Consultation:	11/13
Organisation:	Heritage Network	Site Director:	David Hillelson
Project type, methods etc.:	Evaluation	Archive recipient:	North Herts Museums Service
Start of work:	05/09/13	Finish of work:	10/09/13
Related HER Nos:	HER 9592	Periods represented:	Post-Medieval
Oasis UID:	heritage1-148270	Significant finds:	Red Frogged Brick
Monument types:	Brick Wall, Brick Layer		
Material archive:	Red Frogged Brick		

Synopsis:

In order to investigate the archaeological potential of proposed new development located at The Node, Hitchin Road, Codicote, Hertfordshire, the Heritage Network was commissioned by the owners to undertake a programme of targeted trial trenching.

Eight trial trenches were excavated across the eastern area of the site (under planning ref. 12/01189/1), focussing on Plots 1 – 3 and a garage block. The trenches revealed natural silty clay and gravel, overlain by overburden of between 0.45m and 0.95m in depth. Features dating to the post-medieval period were revealed in Trenches 5 and

6, under the current car park. These included brick wall foundations and a brick floor, associated with 19th and 20th century glasshouses.

Three trial trenches were excavated across the western area of the site (under planning ref. 12/01223/1), focussing on Plot 4. The trenches revealed natural sandy clay and gravel, overlain by overburden of 0.75m in depth. No features, deposits or finds of archaeological significance were revealed in these trenches.

On the basis of the results of the evaluation, the risk that the proposed eastern development might disturb archaeological remains of any significance may be considered to be *Low* for all periods except the post-medieval period where the risk may be considered to be *High*. The post-medieval features are considered to be of no more than local significance. The risk for the western development area may be considered to be *Low* for all periods.

1 Introduction

1.1 This report has been prepared at the request of Court Homes, as part of a programme of archaeological work undertaken as a condition of the planning consent for the redevelopment of The Node, Hitchin Road, Codicote, Hertfordshire.

1.2 Planning and listed building consents for the development (refs:12/01189/1, 12/01223/1 & 12/01224/1LB) have been granted by North Hertfordshire District Council (NHDC), each consent being subject to a standard suite of archaeological conditions issued in line with the Department of Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF). A desk-based assessment of the archaeological potential of the site was completed in July 2013 (Ashworth, Hillelson & Jones 2013) and a full specification for the present evaluation works was contained in the Heritage Network's approved *Project Design*, dated April (Turner 2013).

1.3 The site, centred on NGR TL 2155 2030, is located on the west side of the B656 Hitchin Road, to the north of the village of Codicote, and approximately 10km south of Hitchin, Hertfordshire. The Node consists of a large 19th century mansion, with a stable block, cottage, coach house with associated outbuildings, set in extensive grounds including ornamental gardens. The property was, until recently, used as a conference and training centre.

1.4 The site is bounded by the Vanstone Park garden centre and Coombe Lodge to the south, woodland to the south west, an arable field to the west, The Japanese Garden and Churchfields to the north, and the Hitchin Road to the east. Within the boundaries of The Node estate, there are two private properties, Peach House and Bradley Springs, which are not part of the present development.

1.5 The aim of the evaluation has been to consider the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any remains that are liable to be threatened by groundworks for the development, and to provide a local and regional, archaeological and historical context for them, in accordance with the current published regional research agenda (Glazebrook 1997, Brown and Glazebrook 2000, Medlycott 2011), should they be discovered. It was considered that such investigation had the potential to contribute to an understanding of human activity on the site from the prehistoric period onwards and the layout and development of the 19th century country estate.

1.6 The proposed scheme proposes two areas of new build construction that are the focus of the evaluation (Figures 1-3). To the east, centred on NGR TL 2163 2020 and covered by consent ref.12/01189/1, it is proposed to build three new detached dwellings with garages (Plots 1-3). To the west, centred on NGR TL 2142 2042 and covered by consent refs. 12/01223/1 & 12/01224/1LB, it is proposed to build a new detached dwelling and garage (Plot 4).

2 Fieldwork

TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

2.1 The site lies on a gentle south facing slope at approximately 120mAOD. It is currently a mixture of landscaped gardens and parkland and hard standing for car parking.

2.2 The North Hertfordshire and Stevenage Landscape Character Assessment has designated the area as the Codicote Plateau (Landscape Character Area 205) described as a gently rolling upland plateau, with small incised valleys, defined to the south and west by the valley of the River Mimram and merging into the Knebworth Plateau to the north (Babtie Group 2005). Large blocks of ancient woodland, such as Graffridge/Winter Wood, are a feature of the northern part of the plateau. The historic field pattern is described as a mixture of large fields, the result of 18th century and later enclosure, with some pockets of irregular pre-18th century fields surviving.

2.3 Locally the soils belong to the Hornbeam 3 Association (582d) described as *Deep fine loamy over clayey and clayey soils with slowly permeable subsoils and slight seasonal waterlogging. Some slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged fine loamy over clayey soils. Calcareous subsoils in places* (SSEW 1983).

2.4 The underlying solid geology across the site comprises Lewes Nodular Chalk Formation and Seaford Chalk Formation (Undifferentiated) - Chalk. Sedimentary Bedrock formed approximately 84 to 94 million years ago in the Cretaceous Period warm chalk seas (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>). The superficial deposit above the chalk consists of Diamicton of the Lowestoft Formation, formed in the Quaternary Period approximately 2 million years ago.

METHODOLOGY

2.5 All fieldwork was carried out in accordance with the approved Project Design, current health and safety legislation, and the appropriate IfA and ALGAO guidance documents.

2.6 Eleven trial trenches were located across the site, by triangulation from known points, using fibreglass tape measures.

2.7 Within each trench, topsoil and overburden were removed using an eight tonne 360-degree tracked excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. The trenches were machined to the first significant archaeological horizon, or to the natural geological horizon, as appropriate, and spoil from the machining was inspected for archaeological artefacts and scanned with a metal detector for metal finds.

2.8 The open trenches were cleaned by hand, and inspected for any potential archaeological features and deposits.

2.9 The stratigraphy within the trenches was photographed and recorded using the appropriate pro-forma. Plans of potential features and deposits were drawn on drafting film at a scale of 1:50, and sections at a scale of 1:50.

RESULTS**Eastern Area****Trench 1**

2.10 Trench 1 was located across the north-eastern side of Plot 1, (Figure 2, Plate 1). The trench was oriented approximately north to south, measured 10.30m in length, 2m in width, and was excavated to a maximum depth of c. 0.45m.

Trench data:

Length (m):	10.30	Width (m):	2.00	Maximum Depth (m):	0.45	Orientation	N-S		
Level at N End of Trench (mOD)			Top	127.96	Level at S End of Trench (mOD)			Top	127.59
			Base	127.77				Base	127.36
Context	Type	Description	Dimensions (m)						
			Length	Width	Depth				
-	Layer	10 YR 3/2 very dark greyish brown sandy silt w/gravel	>10.30	>2.00	0.35				
-	Layer	10 YR 5/6 yellowish brown silty clay w/gravel	>10.30	>2.00	>0.10				

2.11 The stratigraphy in Trench 1 comprised 0.35m of very dark greyish brown (10YR 3/2) sandy silt topsoil above the natural yellowish brown (10YR 5/6) silty clay with gravel.

2.12 No significant archaeological features, finds or deposits were revealed in Trench 1.

Trench 2

2.13 Trench 2 was located to the south of Trench 1, across the southern half of the new garage to Plot 1 (Figure 2, Plate 2). It was oriented approximately east-west and measured 10.40m in length, up to 2.0m in width and was excavated to a depth of c.0.70m.

Trench data:

Length (m):	10.40	Width (m):	2.00	Maximum Depth (m):	0.70	Orientation	E-W		
Level at E End of Trench (mOD)			Top	127.65	Level at W End of Trench (mOD)			Top	127.63
			Base	127.08				Base	127.01
Context	Type	Description	Dimensions (m)						
			Length	Width	Depth				
-	Layer	10 YR 3/2 very dark greyish brown sandy silt w/gravel	>10.40	>2.00	0.65				
-	Layer	10 YR 5/6 yellowish brown silty clay w/gravel natural	>10.40	>2.00	>0.05				

2.14 The stratigraphy in Trench 2 comprised 0.65m of very dark greyish brown (10YR 3/2) sandy silt topsoil above the natural yellowish brown (10YR 5/6) silty clay with gravel.

2.15 A line of modern metal stakes and a modern service trench crossed the eastern end of the trench on a north-south alignment. No significant archaeological features, finds or deposits were revealed in Trench 2.

Trench 3

2.16 Trench 3 was located to the west of Trench 1, within the access drive to Plot 1. (Figure 2, Plate 3). It was oriented approximately northeast-southwest and measured 11m in length, 2m in width and was excavated to a depth of c.0.65m.

Trench data:

Length (m):	11.00	Width (m):	2.00	Maximum Depth (m):	0.65	Orientation	NE-SW	
Level at NE End of Trench (mOD)			Top	127.92	Level at SW End of Trench (mOD)		Top	127.60
			Base	127.43			Base	127.16
Context	Type	Description	Dimensions (m)					
			Length	Width	Depth			
-	Layer	10 YR 3/2 very dark greyish brown sandy silt w/gravel	>11.00	>2.00	0.55			
-	Layer	10 YR 6/3 pale brown silty clay w/gravel natural	>11.00	>2.00	>0.10			

2.17 The stratigraphy in Trench 3 comprised 0.55m of very dark greyish brown (10YR 3/2) sandy silt with gravel topsoil above the natural pale brown (10YR 6/3) silty clay with gravel.

2.18 No significant archaeological features, finds or deposits were revealed in Trench 3.

Trench 4

2.19 Trench 4 was located across the footprint of Plot 2, within an existing car park (Figure 2, Plate 4). It was oriented approximately east-west and measured 20m in length, 2m in width and was excavated to a depth of c.0.6m.

Trench data:

Length (m):	20.00	Width (m):	2.00	Maximum Depth (m):	0.60	Orientation	E-W	
Level at E End of Trench (mOD)			Top	126.92	Level at W End of Trench (mOD)		Top	127.42
			Base	126.34			Base	126.78
Context	Type	Description	Dimensions (m)					
			Length	Width	Depth			
-	Layer	5 Y 2.5/1 black tarmac	>20.00	>2.00	0.10			
-	Layer	2.5 Y 6/2 pale red granular overburden	>20.00	>2.00	0.35			
-	Layer	10 YR 5/6 yellowish brown silty clay w/gravel	>20.00	>2.00	>0.15			

2.20 The stratigraphy in Trench 4 comprised 0.1m of tarmac overlying a layer, 0.35m thick, of pale reddish mixed granular overburden (MoT – type 1). Below the overburden the natural yellowish brown (10YR 5/6) silty clay with gravel.

2.21 No significant archaeological features, finds or deposits were revealed in Trench 4.

Trench 5

2.22 Trench 5 was located to the west of Trench 4, across the access drive to Plot 2 (Figures 2 & 4, Plate 5). It was oriented approximately north-south and measured 16m in length, up to 2m in width and was excavated to a depth of c.0.50m.

Trench data:

Length (m):	16.00	Width (m):	1.80	Maximum Depth (m):	0.50	Orientation	N-S
Level at N End of Trench (mOD)		Top	127.83	Level at S End of Trench (mOD)		Top	127.25
		Base	127.55			Base	126.85
Context	Type	Description	Dimensions (m)				
			Length	Width	Depth		
-	Layer	10 YR 3/2 very dark greyish brown silty clay	>16.00	>1.80	0.10		
-	Layer	10 YR 5/6 yellowish brown silty clay	>16.00	>1.80	0.30		
-	Layer	10 YR 6/8 brownish yellow silty clay.	>16.00	>1.80	>0.10		
501	Structure	Brick wall. 19/20 th C. Related to [502]	1.85	0.30	>0.15		
502	Structure	Brick wall. 19/20 th C. Related to [501]	1.80	0.30	>0.25		
503	Structure	Brick wall base. 19/20 th C. Related to [504]	1.75	0.35	>0.31		
504	Structure	Brick wall base. 19/20 th C. Related to [503]	1.80	0.35	>0.31		
505	Structure	“S” shaped brick wall. 19/20 th C.	3.25 max	0.25 max	>0.05		
506	Deposit	Fill of [505]. Demolition material	3.00 max	1.80 max	>0.05		
507	Structure	Brick wall. 19/20 th C.	1.80	0.36	>0.25		

2.23 The stratigraphy in Trench 5 (Figure 5, Plate 5) comprised 0.10m of very dark greyish brown (10YR 3/2) silty clay topsoil overlying 0.3m of yellowish brown (10YR 5/6) silty clay overburden, which contained fragments of brick rubble. Below the overburden was the brownish yellow (10YR 6/8) silty clay natural.

2.24 Cutting into the natural silty clay were a number of post-medieval features which probably relate to the late 19th and 20th century glass houses to the north of the kitchen garden (Ashworth et al 2013, Figures 5-11). At the northern end of the trench were two parallel wall foundations, [501] and [502], running east-west. Both comprised a single line of red frogged bricks laid in header bond. In the middle of the trench were another two parallel wall foundations [503] and [504], running east-west. Both of these had concrete footings and the remains of red frogged bricks were evident.

2.25 Towards the southern end of the trench was a ‘dog-legged’ red frogged brick wall foundation [505]. The wall comprised a single line of bricks laid in header bond. This wall has subsequently been filled by (506), which contained demolition material including a large piece of concrete. At the southernmost end of the trench was another brick wall [507] formed of red frogged bricks again running east-west. This wall was at least three courses high.

2.26 No other archaeological features, finds or deposits were revealed in Trench 5.

Trench 6

2.27 Trench 6 was located to the south of Trench 4, across the footprint of Plot 3 and within an existing car park. (Figures 2 & 5, Plates 6 & 7). It was oriented approximately northeast-southwest and measured 15m in length, up to 2m in width and was excavated to a depth of c.0.85m.

Trench data:

Length (m):	15.00	Width (m):	2.00	Maximum Depth (m):	0.85	Orientation	NE-SW
Level at NE End of Trench (mOD)		Top	126.54	Level at SW End of Trench (mOD)		Top	126.24
		Base	125.57			Base	125.62
Context	Type	Description	Dimensions (m)				
			Length	Width	Depth		
-	Layer	5 Y 2.5/1 black tarmac	>15.00	>2.00	0.10		
-	Layer	2.5 Y 6/2 pale red granular overburden	>15.00	>2.00	0.35		
-	Layer	5Y 3/1 very pale grey. Demolition material	>15.00	>2.00	0.15		
-	Layer	10 YR 5/6 yellowish brown silty clay w/gravel	>15.00	>2.00	>0.25		
601	Structure	Double skinned brick wall, aligned NE-SW, constructed of red frogged bricks. Possibly N wall to glasshouse shown on OS map of 1898.	2.50	0.35	0.24		
602	Structure	Thin brick wall, aligned NE-SW. Related to [603]	2.00	0.11	>0.30		
603	Structure	Thin brick wall, aligned NE-SW. Related to [602]	2.00	0.11	>0.25		
604	Structure	Brick surface to S of [601]. Butts [601]. Related to [605]	1.05	1.00	NA		
605	Structure	Brick surface to S of [601]. Butts [601]. Related to [604]	3.00	0.25	NA		
606	Structure	NW-SE aligned wall, constructed of red bricks. Butts [601]	0.50	0.30	0.23		
607	Cut	Foundation trench cut for wall [606]. Contains 608	0.50	0.05	0.23		
608	Fill	10 YR 4/3 loose brown sandy silty clay with occasional gravel. Fill of 607.	>0.50	0.05	0.23		
609	Cut	NE-SW aligned cut for rubble layer 610	>2.90	>2.00	>0.22		
610	Fill	Red brick rubble, possible from demolition.	>2.90	>2.00	>0.22		
611	Layer	10YR 4/3 brown silty clay. Cut by 609. Over [604], [605]	3.50	>1.85	0.30		
612	Layer	10YR 5/4 yellowish brown silty clay, with frequent white mortar flecks and occasional brick & tile fragments. Interpreted as a buried subsoil.	>6.90	>0.30	1.85		

2.28 The stratigraphy in Trench 6 comprised a layer of tarmac, 0.10m thick, overlying 0.35m of banded pale red granular overburden (MoT – type 1) (Figure 5, Plates 6 & 7). Below this was 0.15m of building demolition material, which overlay 0.25m of yellowish brown (10YR 5/6) silty clay natural.

2.29 Cutting into the natural silty clay were a number of post-medieval features, possibly representing the remains of a north – south aligned glass house shown on the 1st edition OS map of 1881 (Ashworth et al, Figure 6). A substantial double-skinned brick wall [601], running northeast-southwest, crossed the middle of the trench (Plate 8). It was constructed of red frogged bricks, laid in a random mixture of headers and stretchers and stood at least two courses high.

2.30 Approximately 0.22m to the north of wall [601], were two parallel lines of red frogged brick [602] and [603] laid in stretcher bond. They were at least two courses deep and 0.2m apart. The space between them contained two cast iron pipes.

2.31 A rough brick and stone paved surface, [604] and [605], butted the southern side of [601]. This contained red frogged bricks, was uneven and appears to have been laid dry (Figure 5, Plate 8). The floor surface covered the entire width of the trench and was sealed by a dumped layer (611), comprising brown (10YR 4/3) silty clay. Both the surface and the overlying deposit continue southwards for approximately 3.42m until they were cut by [609].

2.32 A further wall [606] butted against [601] on the eastern side of the trench. This was aligned northwest - southeast and was constructed of red bricks. It stood at least three courses high. Only the northern end was visible as the wall extended into the eastern section. The western side of the foundation trench for this wall, cut [607], was visible. This was filled with context (608), a brown (10YR 4/3) sandy silty clay with occasional gravel. No finds were recovered from this fill to date the context.

2.33 At the south-western end of the trench, the brick surface was truncated by cut [609] which contained a dumped fill of brick rubble and mortar (610), probably a demolition layer.

2.34 No other archaeological features, finds or deposits were revealed in Trench 6.

Trench 7

2.35 Trench 7 was located to the south of Trench 6, and across the northern end of the new garage block (Figure 2, Plate 9). It was oriented approximately east-west and measured 8m in length, 2m in width and was excavated to a depth of c. 1m.

Trench data:

Length (m):	8.00	Width (m):	2.00	Maximum Depth (m):	1.00	Orientation	E-W
Level at E End of Trench (mOD)		Top	124.83	Level at W End of Trench (mOD)		Top	127.60
		Base	124.29			Base	127.16
Context	Type	Description	Dimensions (m)				
			Length	Width	Depth		
-	Layer	10 YR 4/2 dark greyish brown sandy clay w/chalk & charcoal flecks	>8.00	>2.00	0.50		
-	Layer	10 YR 6/3 pale brown sandy clay w/chalk & charcoal flecks	>8.00	>2.00	0.45		
-	Layer	10 YR 5/6 yellowish brown silty clay w/gravel	>8.00	>2.00	>0.05		

2.36 The stratigraphy in Trench 7 comprised 0.5m of dark greyish brown (10YR 4/2) sandy clay topsoil overlying a layer, 0.45m thick, of pale brown (10YR 6/3) sandy clay subsoil. Both layers contained charcoal and chalk flecks. The natural yellowish brown (10YR 5/6) silty clay with gravel was directly below the subsoil.

2.37 No significant archaeological features, finds or deposits were revealed in Trench 4.

Trench 8

2.38 Trench 8 was located to the south of Trench 7, at the southern end of the new garage block (Figure 2, Plate 10). It was oriented approximately northwest - southeast and measured 15.70m in length, 2m in width and was excavated to a depth of c.0.6m.

Trench data:

Length (m):	15.70	Width (m):	2.00	Maximum Depth (m):	0.60	Orientation	E-W
Level at E End of Trench (mOD)		Top	124.71	Level at W End of Trench (mOD)		Top	125.14
		Base	124.83			Base	124.33
Context	Type	Description	Dimensions (m)				
			Length	Width	Depth		
-	Layer	10 YR 4/2 dark greyish brown sandy silt w/gravel	>15.70	>2.00	0.30		
-	Layer	10 YR 6/3 pale brown sandy silt w/chalk & gravel	>15.70	>2.00	0.20		
-	Layer	10 YR 5/6 yellowish brown silty clay w/gravel	>15.70	>2.00	>0.10		

2.39 The stratigraphy in Trench 8 comprised 0.30m of dark greyish brown (10YR 4/2) sandy clay topsoil overlying a layer, 0.20m thick, of pale brown (10YR 6/3) sandy clay subsoil. Both layers contained gravels. Below the subsoil was the yellowish brown (10YR 5/6) silty clay with gravel.

2.40 The trench contained a modern, square, brick-built manhole half way along its length.

2.41 No significant archaeological features, finds or deposits were revealed in Trench 4.

Western Area**Trench 9**

2.42 Trench 9 was located on the eastern side of Plot 4. The Victorian peach house lies to the northeast (Figure 3, Plate 11). The trench was oriented approximately northeast-southwest and measured 15.00m in length and 2m in width. It was excavated to a depth of c.0.8m.

Trench data:

Length (m):	15.00	Width (m):	2.00	Maximum Depth (m):	0.80	Orientation	NE-SW
Level at NE End of Trench (mOD)		Top	130.65	Level at SW End of Trench (mOD)		Top	130.49
		Base	130.02			Base	130.90
Context	Type	Description	Dimensions (m)				
			Length	Width	Depth		
-	Layer	10 YR 4/1 dark grey sandy silt	>15.00	>2.00	0.50		
-	Layer	10 YR 6/2 light brownish grey sandy silt	>15.00	>2.00	0.20		
-	Layer	10 YR 6/8 yellow sandy silt	>15.00	>2.00	>0.10		

2.43 The stratigraphy in Trench 9 comprised 0.50m of dark grey sandy silt topsoil overlying a layer, 0.20m thick, of light brownish grey sandy silt subsoil. Below the subsoil was 0.10m of yellow sandy silt.

2.44 No significant archaeological features, finds or deposits were revealed in Trench 4.

Trench 10

2.45 Trench 10 was located on the northern side of Plot 4, to the northwest of Trench 9 (Figure 3, Plate 12). It was oriented northwest-southeast and measured 15.00m in length, 2m in width and was excavated to a depth of c.0.8m.

Trench data:

Length (m):	15.00	Width (m):	2.00	Maximum Depth (m):	0.80	Orientation	NW-SE
Level at NW End of Trench (mOD)		Top	130.18	Level at SE of Trench (mOD)		Top	130.19
		Base	129.49			Base	129.49
Context	Type	Description	Dimensions (m)				
			Length	Width	Depth		
-	Layer	5 YR 5/2 reddish grey sandy silt	>15.00	>2.00	0.50		
-	Layer	10 YR 6/2 light brownish grey sandy silt	>15.00	>2.00	0.20		
-	Layer	10 YR 7/8 yellow sandy clay w/gravel	>15.00	>2.00	>0.10		

2.46 The stratigraphy in Trench 10 comprised 0.50m of reddish grey (5YR 5/2) sandy silt topsoil overlying a layer, 0.20m thick, of light brownish grey (10YR 6/2) sandy silt subsoil. Below the subsoil was the yellow (10YR 7/8) sandy clay with gravel.

2.47 No significant archaeological features, finds or deposits were revealed in Trench 4.

Trench 11

2.48 Trench 11 was located across the footprint of the new garage to Plot 4, to the southwest of Trench 10 (Figure 3, Plate 13). It was oriented approximately north-south and measured 10.00m in length, 2m in width and was excavated to a depth of c.0.8m.

Trench data:

Length (m):	10.00	Width (m):	2.00	Maximum Depth (m):	0.80	Orientation	N-S
Level at N End of Trench (mOD)		Top	130.17	Level at S End of Trench (mOD)		Top	130.03
		Base	129.42			Base	129.28
Context	Type	Description	Dimensions (m)				
			Length	Width	Depth		
-	Layer	5 YR 5/2 reddish grey sandy silt	>10.00	>2.00	0.50		
-	Layer	10 YR 6/2 light brownish grey sandy silt	>10.00	>2.00	0.20		
-	Layer	10 YR 7/8 yellow sandy clay w/gravel	>10.00	>2.00	>0.10		

2.49 The stratigraphy in Trench 11 comprised 0.50m of reddish grey (5YR 5/20) sandy silt topsoil overlying a layer, 0.20m thick, of light brownish grey (10YR 6/2) sandy silt subsoil. Below the subsoil was the yellow (10YR 7/8) sandy clay with gravel.

2.50 No significant archaeological features, finds or deposits were revealed in Trench 4.

3 Discussion

Archaeological Background

3.1 The study area lies to the north of the historic core of Codicote. The site is situated in an agricultural landscape of dispersed settlements, with several remnants of ancient woodland connected by hedgerows to the north and south west. Knebworth Park, a Grade II* registered park (ref.1169), which has its origins in the Medieval period, lies to the north east. Evidence for activity from the prehistoric period onwards is recorded from within a 1km radius of the site on the Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record (HER).

3.2 Three barrows situated within woodland, lie to the north of the study area. A bell barrow (HER: 51) with traces of a ditch, which is thought to be prehistoric, lies 685m to the north west of the main house. A Romano-British bowl barrow (HER: 4213) lies immediately to west of a Bronze Age bowl barrow (HER: 11508). Both of these barrows are located 760m north of the main house. All three are scheduled monuments SM: 27907, 27906 & 27906, respectively.

3.3 The main house was built in the early 19th century, sited in a parkland setting covering c.11ha. The surrounding grounds (HER: 9592) are shown on Bryant's 1822 map and on the 1st edition OS map (1832-33) of the area. The existing formal and informal gardens are thought to have been created in the early 20th century, including a parterre garden, formal garden with ha-ha, large rock garden with water, and a rose garden.

3.4 Approximately 50m to the east of the proposed Plot 4, situated in the former kitchen garden, is the Grade II listed 'Peach House' (ref.161988). This is a long narrow glasshouse, about 2m wide and 27m long, with a semi-circular barrel roof and ribbed glass panes. The structure was designed by Joseph Paxton and bears the glaziers signature and date (18th November 1854) etched on one of the glass panes.

3.5 There are three listed buildings located in the vicinity of the study area, mainly dating from the 17th century. Troopers Cottage (HER: 2914) is a Grade II listed 17th century timber-framed farmhouse (ref.161960), located 280m to the east of the main house. Three Houses Farm (HER:17635), is a farmstead of medieval origins with a Grade II listed 17th century farmhouse (ref.162128) and barns (refs.162129 & 16130), located 1980m to the west of the main house. Chandlers Cottage (HER:18681), a Grade II listed 17th century farmhouse and farm (ref. 161961), which may also have medieval origins, located 490m to the south east of the main house.

3.6 Node Court (HER:7277) is a dairy and stud farm designed in 1927, which is also Grade II listed (ref.161962). The buildings are in an eccentric style being circular, with a circular courtyard, thatched roof, a 'very fantastically detailed' entrance arch and a silo disguised as a tower, located 540m to the south east of the main house.

3.7 Two undated earthwork features have been identified in aerial photographs c.840m to the north east of the main house, in Knebworth Park. One consists of a linear earthwork feature (HER:10296), the other consists of straight earthwork ditches in a rectilinear pattern (HER:10297).

3.8 To the rear of Three Houses Farm there is evidence of 19th century gravel extraction (HER:15506).

Research aims

3.9 The aims of the present project have been:

- to characterise the identified risk that development of the study area would encounter buried archaeological remains, in terms of the location, depth, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of such remains, through a programme of intrusive sampling (eg. trial trenches or test pits), and provide a local and regional, archaeological and historical context for them;
- to investigate and record such archaeological remains as would inevitably be damaged or destroyed by the development, or ensure their preservation in situ, as appropriate.

3.10 It was considered that the investigation process had the potential to contribute to an understanding of:

- human activity on the site and in the wider region from the prehistoric onwards;
- the layout and development of The Node estate.

Collected Data

3.11 The excavation of 11 trial trenches across the eastern and western areas of the site did not reveal any significant archaeological features, deposits or finds, with the exception of a number of post-medieval or modern features recorded in Trenches 5 and 6 (Plots 2 and 3), to the north east of the house.

3.12 In Trench 5, to the west of Plot 2 and north east of the main house, six separate wall foundations were exposed, all aligned east-west. This area was formerly part of the kitchen garden and contained a varying number of glasshouses. The number of these structures increased between 1898 and 1924 and again between 1946 and the early 1970s (Ashworth et al 2013).

3.13 Further brick walls were encountered in Trench 6, to the south-east of Trench 5. A substantial brick wall foundation [601], which ran northeast to southwest, was exposed across the centre of the trench. A solid brick and stone floor, [604] and [605], lay immediately to the south, while a conduit containing iron pipes, [602] and [603], lay to the north. It is possible that these features represent the northern side of a glasshouse, marked on the 1st edition OS map of 1881, and which survived until the mid 20th century (Ashworth et al 2013, Figures 6-10). It was demolished between 1946 and the early 1970s (ibid, Figures 10-11).

3.14 The brick floor had been truncated at the south-western end of the trench by a cut, [609], containing brick rubble, possibly associated with the demolition of this structure when the car park was constructed.

3.15 All of the features from the site are 19th or 20th century in date and relate to The Node mansion and its outbuildings.

Conclusions

3.16 Although the site lies in an area of archaeological potential defined by entries on the county HER, no evidence of prehistoric, Roman, Saxon or medieval activity was revealed during the investigation.

3.17 Eight trial trenches were excavated across the eastern area of the site (under planning ref. 12/01189/1), focussing on Plots 1 – 3 and a garage block. The trenches revealed natural silty clay and gravel, overlain by overburden of between 0.45m and 0.95m in depth. Features dating to the post-medieval period were revealed in Trenches 5 and 6, under the current car park. These included brick wall foundations and a brick floor, associated with 19th and 20th century glasshouses.

3.18 Three trial trenches were excavated across the western area of the site (under planning ref. 12/01223/1), focussing on Plot 4. The trenches revealed natural sandy clay and gravel, overlain by overburden of 0.75m in depth. No features, deposits or finds of archaeological significance were revealed in these trenches.

3.19 On the basis of the results of the evaluation, the risk that the proposed eastern development might disturb archaeological remains of any significance may be considered to be *Low* for all periods except the post-medieval period where the risk may be considered to be *High*. The post-medieval features are considered to be of no more than local significance. The risk for the proposed western development may be considered to be *Low* for all periods.

Confidence Rating

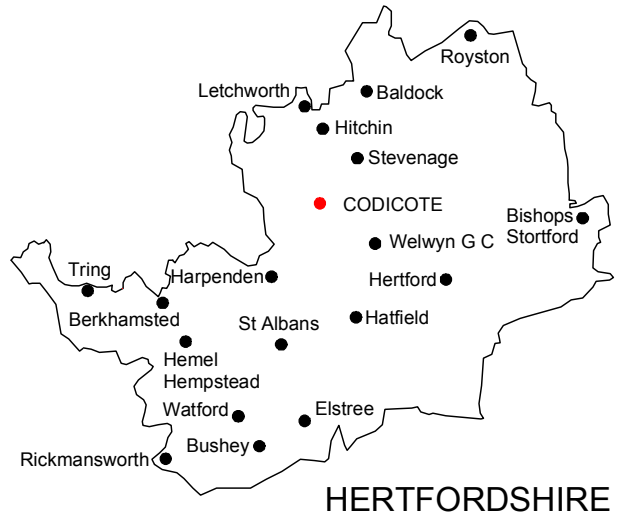
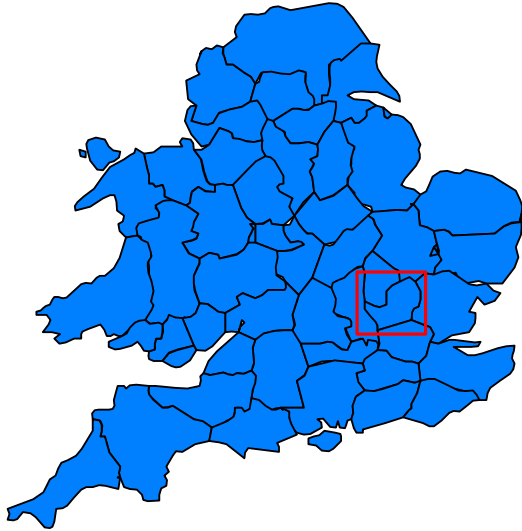
3.20 In the course of the trial trenching programme, the weather, ground and light conditions were acceptable for the identification of potential features and deposits, and for their investigation. On this basis, there are no circumstances that would lead to a confidence rating for this stage of the project that was less than *High*.

4 Sources Consulted

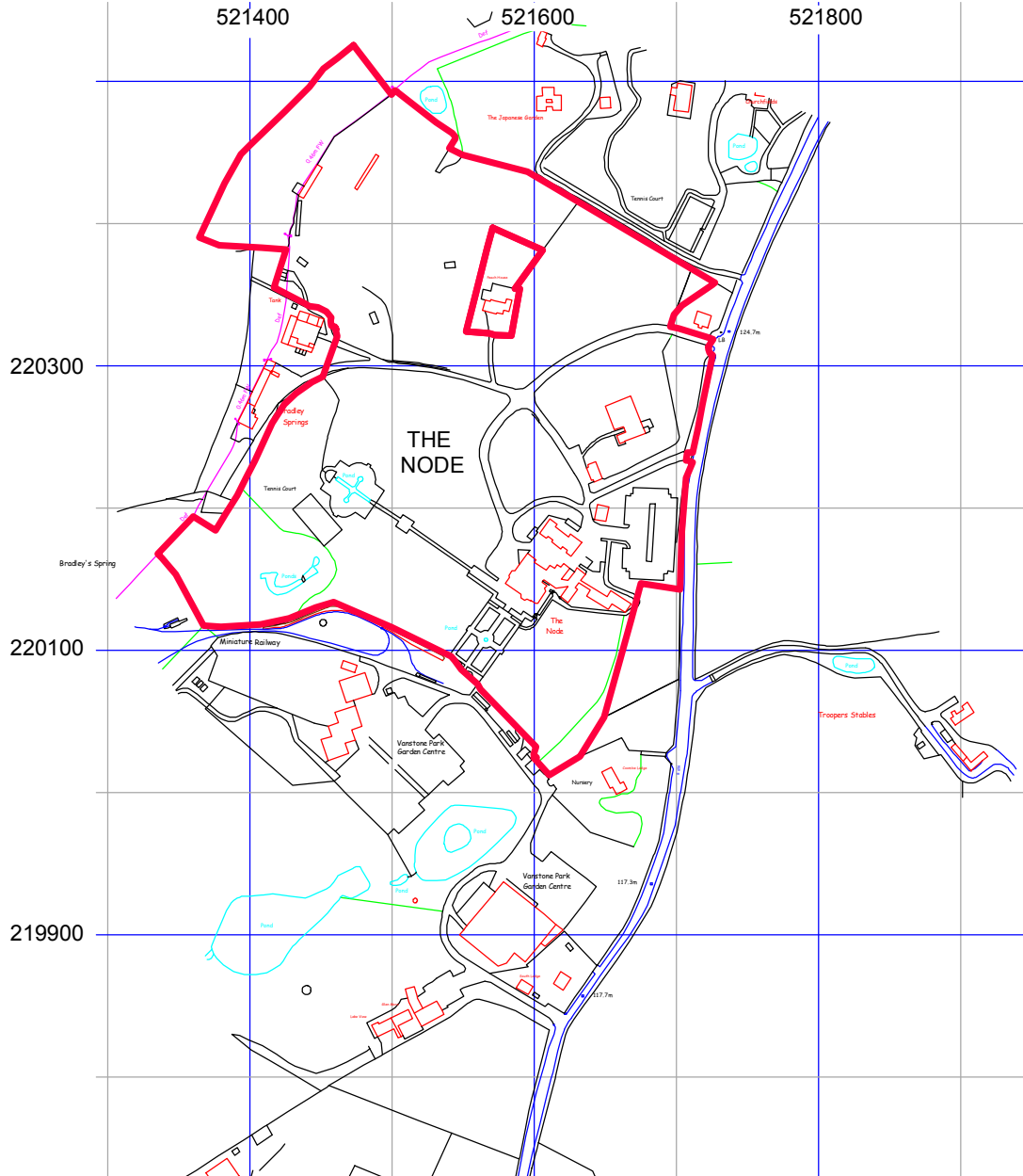
- Anon., 2012, *Landscape Assessment and Proposals. The Node, Codicote*. Chorus Landscape Architects
- Anon, 2012. *The Node, Codicote. Herts. Ecological appraisal*. Catherine Bickmore Associates Ltd
- Anon, 2012. *The Peach House, The Node, Codicote, Hertfordshire. Conservation Statement for Enabling Development*. James Ross Ltd.
- Babtie Group 2005 *North Hertfordshire and Stevenage landscape Character Assessment*. NHDC
- Brown, N. & Glazebrook, J. 2000 *Research and Archaeology: a framework for the eastern counties, 2. Research agenda and strategy*. East Anglian Archaeology
- Dobney et al. 1995, *Environmental Archaeology and Archaeological evaluations: recommendations concerning the environmental component of archaeological evaluations in England*. Working Papers of the Association for Environmental Archaeology, Number 2
- Dept. of Communities and Local Government, 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*. (TSO)
- English Heritage 1991 *Management of Archaeological Projects*. (HBMC)
- English Heritage 2006 *Management of Field Projects in the Historic Environment: The MoRPHE Project Managers' Guide*. (HBMC)
- English Heritage 2008a *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: Archaeological Excavation* (HBMC)
- English Heritage 2010 *Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide*. (HBMC)
- English Heritage, 2011, *Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-excavation (second edition)*. (HBMC)
- Gurney, D. et al 2003 *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*. ALGAO (EER)
- Grant, J. 2003 *Land West of Hoddesdon, Broxbourne, Hertfordshire: an Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment*. Archaeological Solutions report no.1463
- Institute for Archaeologists, 2008, *Standard and Guidance for Field Evaluation*. (IfA)
- Medlycott, M. (ed.) 2011 *Research and Archaeology Revisited: A Revised Framework for the East of England*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper no.24
- Morris, J. 1976 *Domesday Book: Hertfordshire*. Chichester: Phillimore

5 Illustrations

Figure 1	Site location
Figure 2	Trench layout: Plots 1 -3 & garage block
Figure 3	Trench layout: Plot 4
Figure 4	Trench 5: plan and section
Figure 5	Trench 6: plan and section
Plate 1	Trench 1, looking south
Plate 2	Trench 2, looking west
Plate 3	Trench 3, looking northeast
Plate 4	Trench 4, looking northeast
Plate 5	Trench 5, looking south
Plate 6	Trench 6, looking southwest
Plate 7	Trench 6, looking northeast
Plate 8	Brick wall [601], looking east
Plate 9	Trench 7, looking west
Plate 10	Trench 8, looking west
Plate 11	Trench 9, looking southwest
Plate 12	Trench 10, looking east
Plate 13	Trench 11, looking south

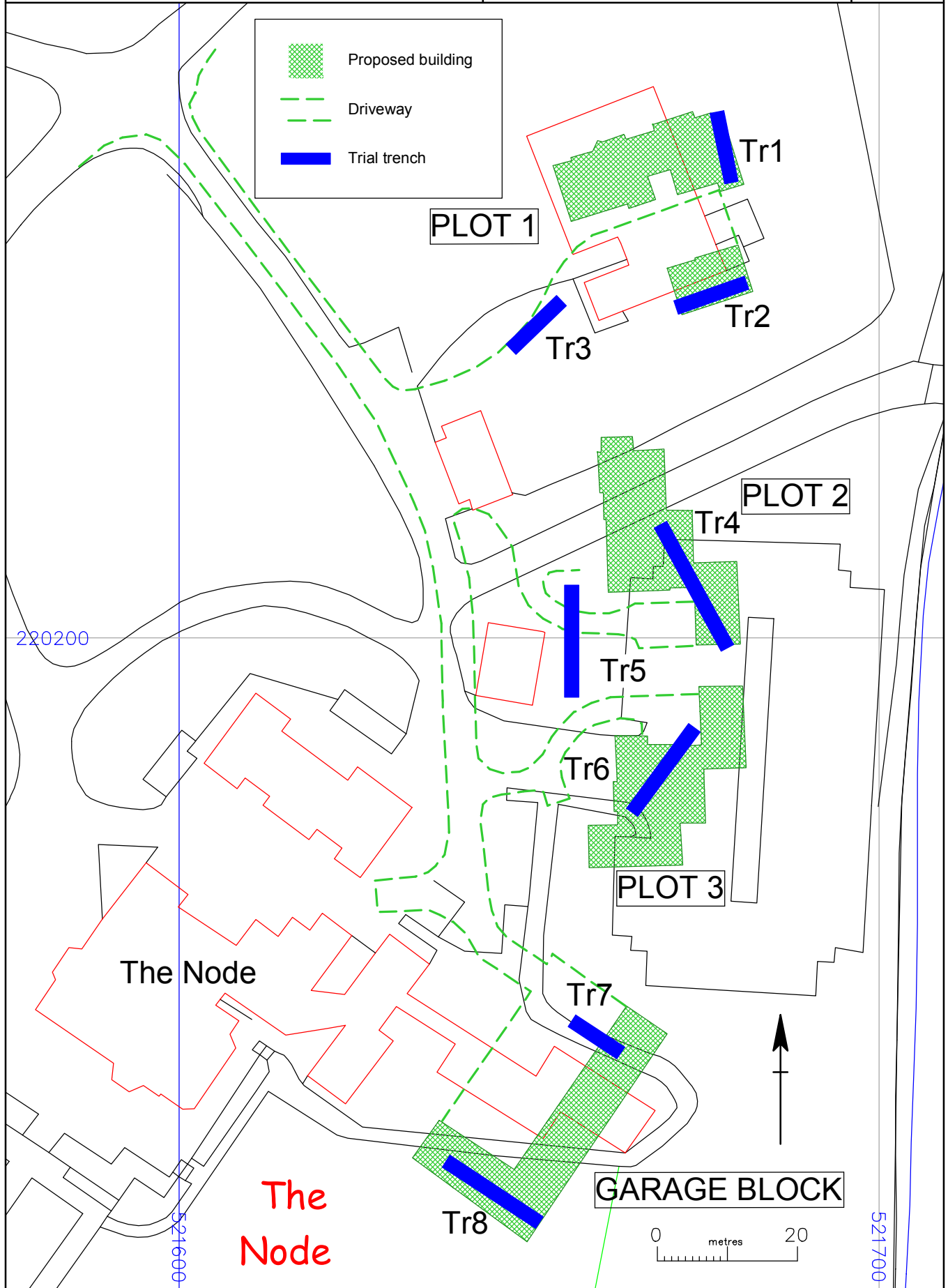


HERTFORDSHIRE



Site Location

Scale 1:5000



Trench layout: Plots 1 - 3 and garage block

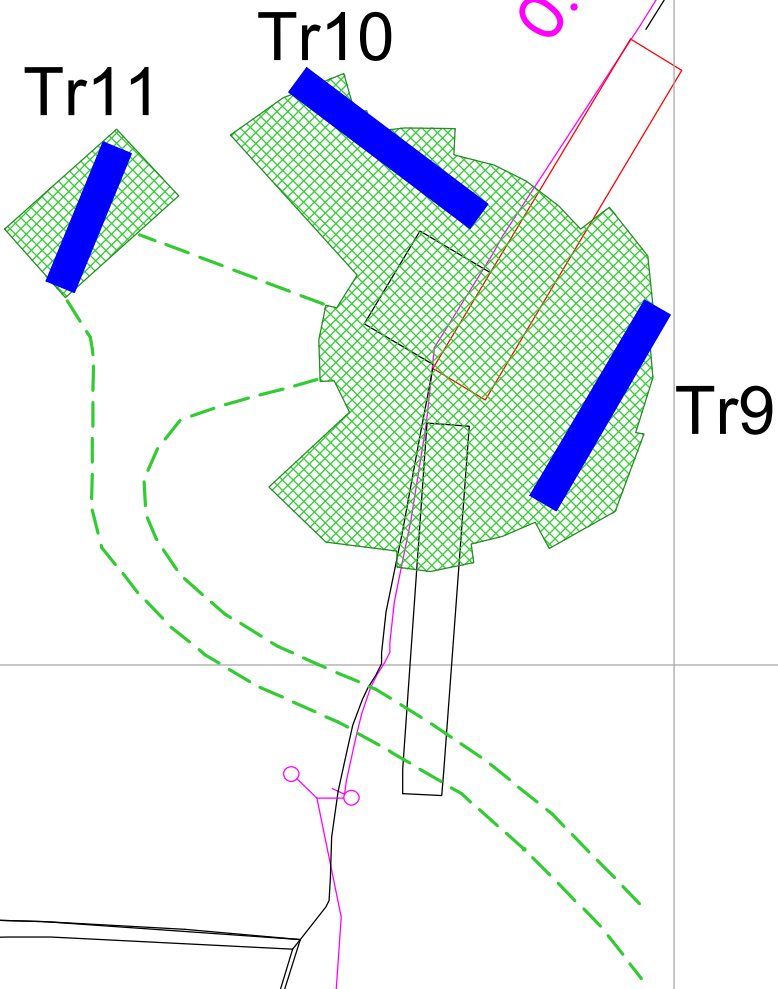
Scale 1:750

Figure 2

Proposed building
Driveway
Trial trench

521450

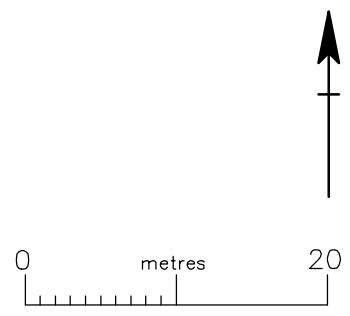
0.46m FW



Peach house

PLOT 4

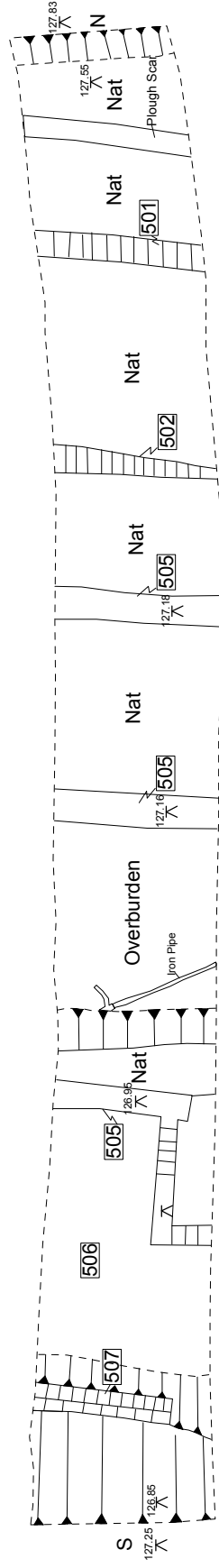
220400



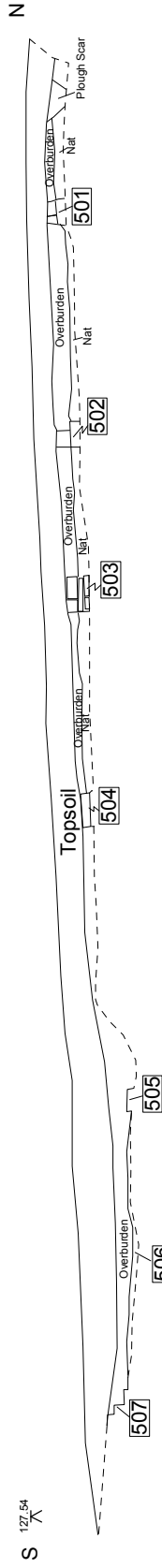
Trench layout: Plot 4

Scale 1:500

Figure 3



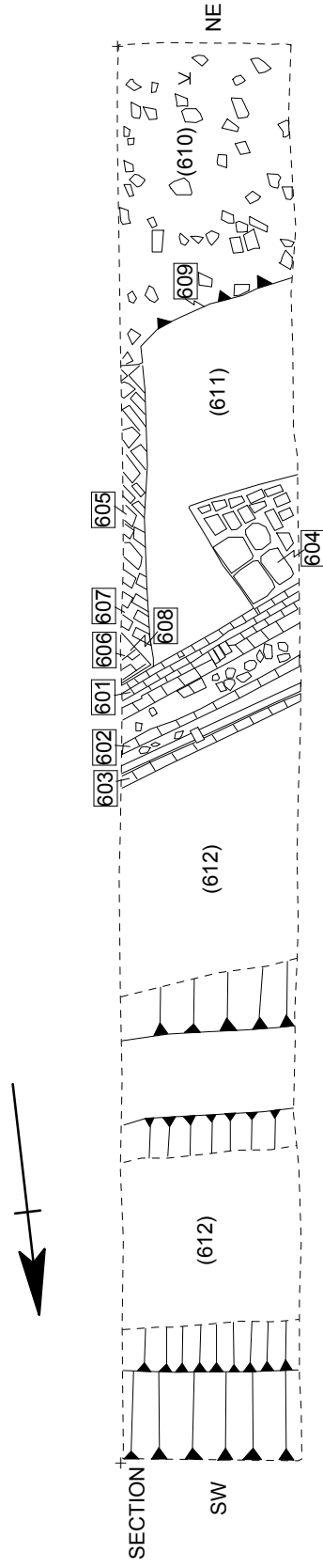
Trench 5 Plan



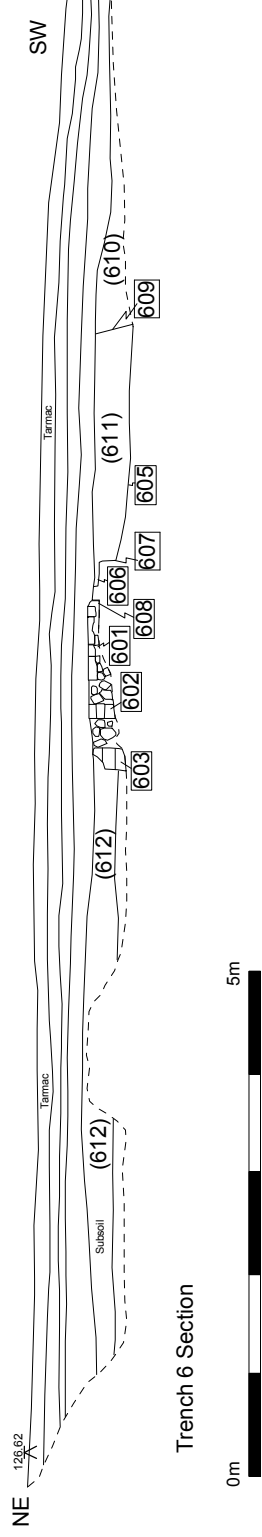
Trench 5 Section



Trench 5: Plan and Section



Plan of Trench 6



Trench 6 Section



Plate 1: Trench 1, looking south



Plate 2: Trench 2, looking west



Plate 3: Trench 3, looking north-east



Plate 4: Trench 4, looking north-east



Plate 5: Trench 5, looking south



Plate 6: Trench 6, looking south-west



Plate 7: Trench 6, looking north



Plate 8: Linear wall (601), looking east



Plate 9: Trench 7, looking west



Plate 10: Trench 8, looking west



Plate 11: Trench 9, looking south-west



Plate 12: Trench 10, looking east



Plate 13: Trench 11, looking south

Appendix

Oasis Summary Sheet

<i>OASIS ID: heritage1-148270</i>	
Project details	
Project name	Codicote, The Node, Hitchin Road
Short description of the project	<p>In order to investigate the archaeological potential of proposed new development located at The Node, Hitchin Road, Codicote, Hertfordshire, the Heritage Network was commissioned by the owners to undertake a programme of targeted trial trenching.</p> <p>Eight trial trenches were excavated across the eastern area of the site (under planning ref. 12/01189/1), focussing on Plots 1 – 3 and a garage block. The trenches revealed natural silty clay and gravel, overlain by overburden of between 0.45m and 0.95m in depth. Features dating to the post-medieval period were revealed in Trenches 5 and 6, under the current car park. These included brick wall foundations and a brick floor, associated with 19th and 20th century glasshouses.</p> <p>Three trial trenches were excavated across the western area of the site (under planning ref. 12/01223/1), focussing on Plot 4. The trenches revealed natural sandy clay and gravel, overlain by overburden of 0.75m in depth. No features, deposits or finds of archaeological significance were revealed in these trenches.</p> <p>On the basis of the results of the evaluation, the risk that the proposed eastern development might disturb archaeological remains of any significance may be considered to be <i>Low</i> for all periods except the post-medieval period where the risk may be considered to be <i>High</i>. The post-medieval features are considered to be of no more than local significance. The risk for the western development area may be considered to be <i>Low</i> for all periods.</p>
Project dates	Start: 05-09-2013 End: 10-09-2013
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	HN1059 - Contracting Unit No.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Monument type	WALL Post Medieval
Significant Finds	BRICK Post Medieval
Methods & techniques	"Targeted Trenches"
Development type	Rural residential
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)
Project location	
Country	England
Site location	HERTFORDSHIRE NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE CODICOTE The Node, Hitchin Road
Postcode	SG4 8TL
Study area	5390.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TL 2155 2030 51 0 51 52 03 N 000 14 03 W Point

Project creators	
Name of Organisation	Heritage Network
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	Chris Turner
Project director/manager	David Hillelson
Project supervisor	James Snee
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Project archives	
Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	North Herts Museums Service
Digital Contents	"other"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	North Herts Museum Services
Paper Contents	"other"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Diary","Drawing","Photograph","Plan","Report","Section"
Project bibliography 1	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	The Node Hitchin Road, Codicote, Herts. Archaeological Evaluation
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Phillips, D.
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Jones, G.
Other bibliographic details	Report no.814
Date	2013
Issuer or publisher	Heritage Network
Place of issue or publication	Letchworth, Herts.
Description	A4 booklet, comb bound, green cover, 16 pages, 5 figures, 13 plates