

ROTTEN ROW FARM

Furneux Pelham, Hertfordshire

HN1299

Report No. 1025

Site name and address:	Rotten Row Farm, Furneux Pelham, Hertfordshire, SG9 0JP		
County:	Hertfordshire	District:	East Hertfordshire
Village/town:	Furneux Pelham	Parish:	Furneux Pelham
Planning reference:	3/16/1416/FUL	NGR:	TL 41785 27234
Client name and address:	Mrs Geraldine Phillips, Rotten Row Farm, Furneux Pelham, Hertfordshire, SG9 0JP		
Nature of development:	Manège	Previous land use:	Open field (Cultivated Land)
Site Status:	None	Reason for investigation:	Direction of local planning authority (NPPF)
Position in planning process:	After determination, as a condition	Project brief originator:	Local authority
Size of affected area:	1200m ²	Size of area investigated:	600m ²
HN Ref:	HN1299	HER consultation:	160/16
Organisation:	Heritage Network	Site Director:	David Hillelson
Project type, methods etc.	Monitoring	Archive Recipient:	Hertford Museum
Start of work	05/10/2016	Finish of work	05/10/2016
Related HER Nos:	None	Periods represented:	None
Oasis UID:	heritage1-261855	Significant finds:	None
Monument types:	None		
Physical archive:	None		
Previous summaries/reports:	None		

Introduction:

In response to a condition on planning consent for the installation of an equine arena (manège) on land at Rotten Row Farm, Furneux Pelham (Figure 1), the Heritage Network was commissioned by the owner to undertake a programme of archaeological monitoring of the development groundworks. Planning permission for the development (3/16/1416/FUL) was granted by East Herts District Council (EHDC), subject to a standard archaeological condition issued under the provisions set out in the Department of Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF). A full specification for the work carried out is contained in the Heritage Network's approved *Project Design* dated September 2016.

Narrative:

The development site, centred on TL 41785 27234, is located in a field 1.5km to the south-west of Furneux Pelham and approximately 160m to the south-east of the Rotten Row farmhouse. It lies within a documented archaeological landscape of dispersed rural settlements, with soilmarks, cropmarks and grassmarks denoting archaeological activity of undefined date from the prehistoric period to the present day. The site itself lies within the boundaries of the Rotten Row farmstead, which may be medieval or earlier in origin; the present farmhouse is believed to date to c.1500.

The proposed development has entailed the creation of a rectangular manège measuring 60m by 20m (Figure 2). The present investigation involved the monitoring of the groundworks associated with the development (Plate 2). Due to the natural slope of the site and the need to create a level finished surface, the plot was terraced with the western half being reduced and the spoil deposited and spread on the eastern half. The excavated area measured 30m by 20m, with the deepest point of excavation following the western edge of the plot to a depth of 0.35m. From this line the reduced area gradually became shallower until it was level with the existing ground surface.

11 Furnston Court, Icknield Way, Letchworth, SG6 1UJ

Tel: (01462) 685991 Fax: (01462) 685998 Email: enquiries@heritagenetwork.co.uk

Two transects were excavated along the width and length of the excavated plot to the impact depth of the groundworks (Plate 3 & 4). These demonstrated a stratigraphy that consisted of a grass covered firm very dark greyish brown (10YR 3/2) silty clay topsoil, 0.3m thick. This overlies a friable brown (10YR 4/3) silty sandy clay subsoil, 0.04m thick (Plate 5).

The maximum impact depth of the ground reduction did not breach the subsoil and, on this basis and with the agreement of the Historic Environment Team at Hertfordshire County Council, it was agreed that the full extent of the ground reduction would not require monitoring. Nevertheless, in order to establish the nature and depth of the natural substratum, two small sondages were excavated (Figure 2, Plate 6). They demonstrated a maximum thickness of the subsoil of 0.4m, and that this overlies a natural compact yellowish brown (10YR 5/4) silty clay.

No archaeological features, deposits or finds were revealed in the course of the groundworks.

Discussion:

The monitoring of the development groundworks at Rotten Row Farm, Furneux Pelham, demonstrated a stratigraphic sequence consisting of topsoil and subsoil. The undisturbed natural substrate was revealed within two sondages excavated within the stripped area. Despite the proximity of the site to areas of known archaeological activity, particularly relating to the medieval and post-medieval periods, no features, deposits or finds of archaeological significance were exposed during the works and any such remains, should they be present, will remain undisturbed beneath the manège.

Illustrations:

Figure 1 Site location

Figure 2 Site layout

Plate 1 General view of site, looking north

Plate 2 Pre-excavation view of area for manège, looking west

Plate 3 Stripped transect for manège, looking east

Plate 4 Stripped transect for manège, looking south

Plate 5 Section of stripped area for manège, looking south

Plate 6 Sondage to expose natural substrate, looking south

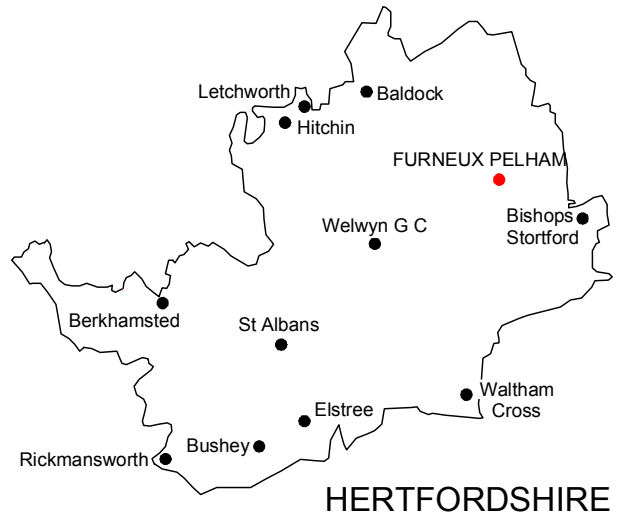
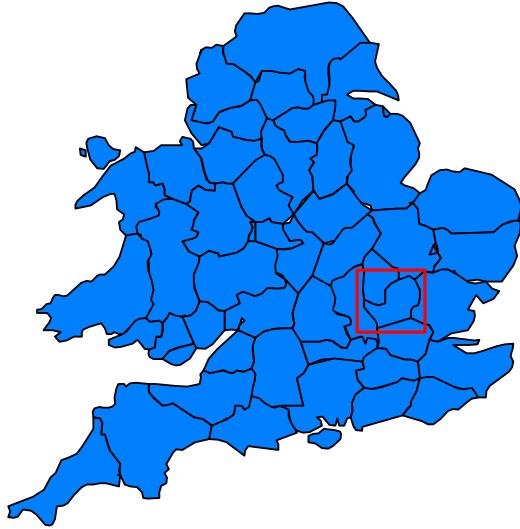
Daniel Phillips, BA (Hons) ACIfA

October 2016

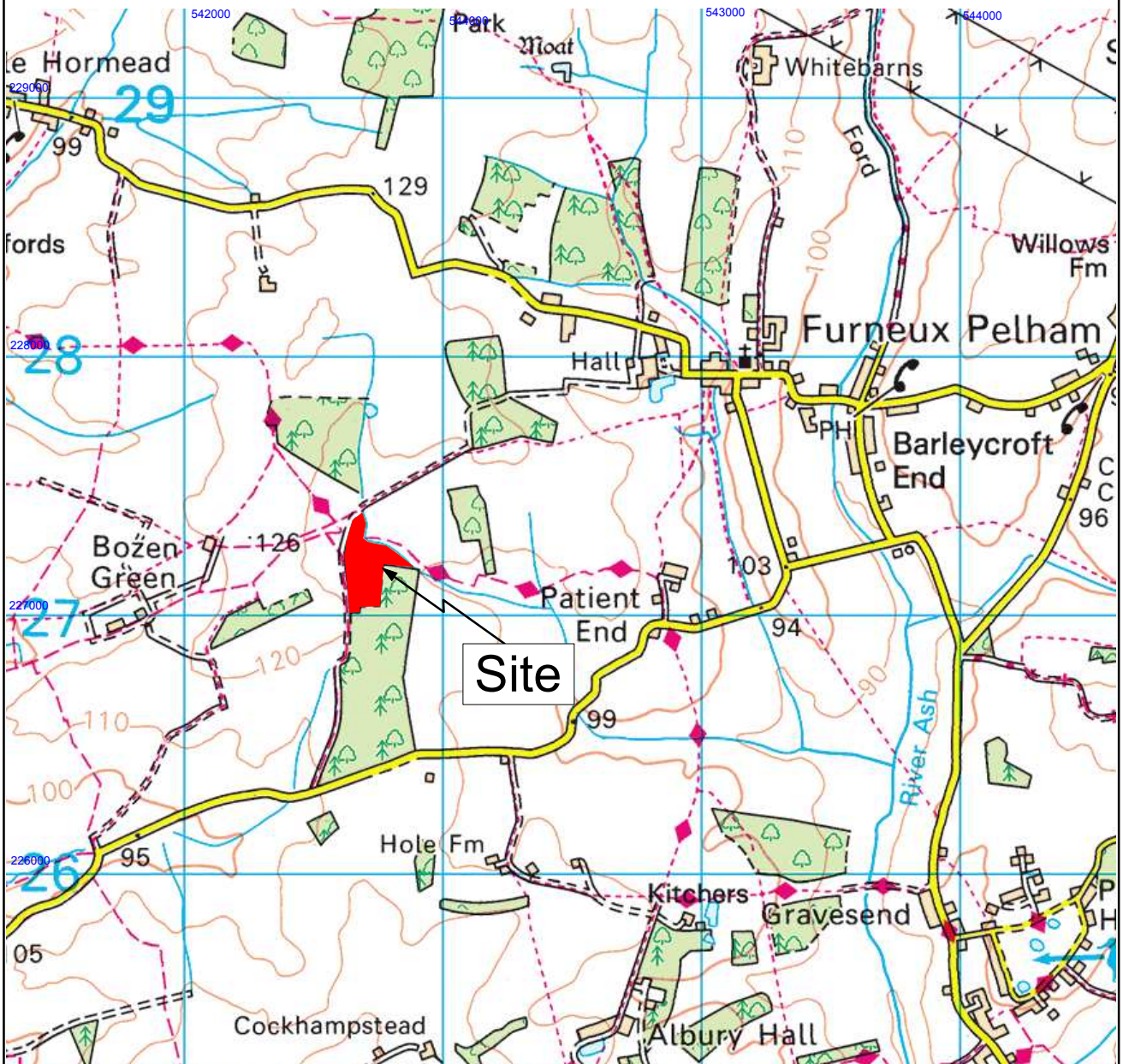
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Rotten Row Farm, Furneux Pelham

HN1299



HERTFORDSHIRE



Site Location

Scale 1:25000

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Figure 1

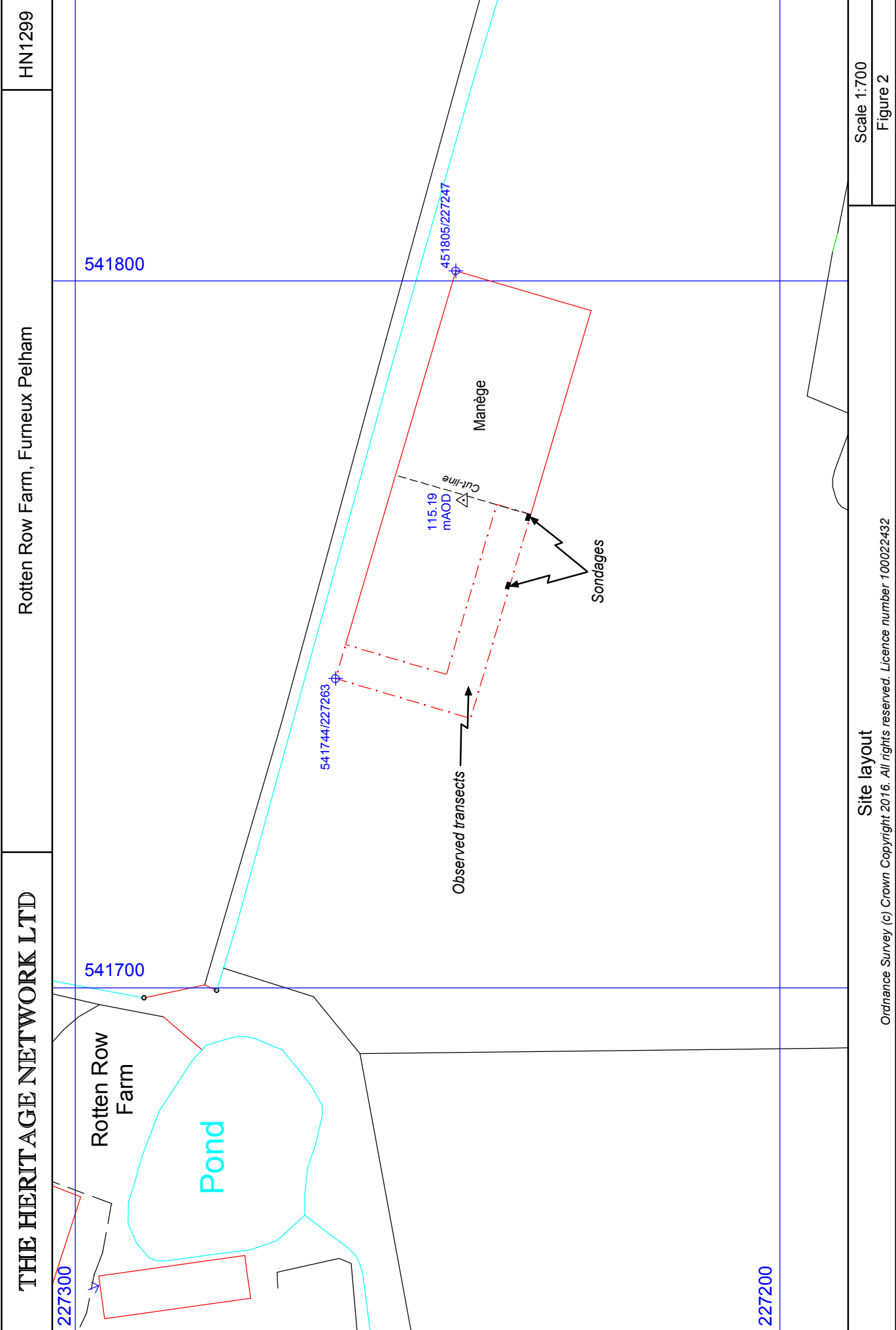




Plate 1: General view of site, looking north



Plate 2: Pre-excitation view of area for manège, looking west



Plate 3: Stripped transect for manège, looking east



Plate 4: Stripped transect for manège, looking south



Plate 5: Section of stripped area for manège



Plate 6: Sondage to expose natural substrate, looking south