

**An Archaeological Watching Brief
at Hammonds Farm, Billingshurst, West Sussex**

**NGR: NGR 509080 125980
(TQ 0908 2598)**

Planning Ref: Planning Ref: DC/10/2070

**Project No: 4632
Site Code: HFB10**

**ASE Report No: 2012111
OASIS id: archaeol6-125454
Horsham Museum, Accession No: HDM: 2011:105**

**Alice Thorne
With a contribution by
by Luke Barber**

Illustrations by Justin Russell

May 2012

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Abstract

Archaeology South-East was commissioned by CgMs Consulting Ltd to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundwork at Hammonds Farm, East Street, Billingshurst, West Sussex. A post-medieval ditch orientated on an east to west alignment was observed, which is thought to correspond to the alignment of a field boundary depicted on the 1876 Ordinance Survey map of the area. Fragments of domestic pottery recovered from the topsoil of the site spans a later 18th to 19th century date range.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Background

- 1.1.1 Archaeology South-East was commissioned by CgMs Consulting Ltd to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land at Hammonds Farm, East Street, Billingshurst, West Sussex (NGR 509080 125980, Fig. 1).

1.2 Geology and Topography

- 1.2.1 The underlying geology of the site is Weald Clay in the north of the site and Sandstone in Weald Clay to the south of the site (British Geological survey, England and Wales Sheet 301).
- 1.2.2 The site occupies a relatively flat area of land to the north with a steep sloping strip down towards East Street at the south of the site.

1.3 Planning Background

- 1.3.1 An Archaeological desk-based assessment (DBA) was prepared as part of the pre-application work (CgMs 2009). In response to this document, John Mills, Senior Archaeologist, West Sussex County Council, in his role as archaeological advisor to the Local Planning Authority, recommended that a condition be attached to the subsequent planning application (DC/09/1919).

- 1.3.2 The planning condition (5) stated:

An archaeological investigation shall be carried out within the site at the expense of the developer in accordance with a specification to be submitted to and agreed by the Local Planning Authority in writing and before the commencement of building works.

Reason: In order to ensure that archaeological features on the site will be properly recorded before development in accordance with policy DC10 of the Horsham District Local Development Framework: General control Policies (2007).

- 1.3.3 A Specification was initially prepared by CgMs Consulting Ltd for a five trench evaluation of the northern half of the site (CgMs 2010). This work was carried out and reported on by Archaeology South-East (ASE 2010). The scope of the original Specification allowed for the possibility of further archaeological work. The aims and methodology to be followed in the current watching brief were confirmed in a letter dated 30/11/10 from Suzanne Gailey of CgMs to John Mills, and approved in advance of the fieldwork.

1.4 Aims and Objectives

1.4.1 The following aims and objectives were set out in the original Specification (CgMs 2010) and apply to the current watching brief.

The broad aims were to:

- *determine, as far as is reasonably possible, the location, form, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains, irrespective of period, liable to be threatened by the proposed development.*
- *seek to clarify the nature and extent of existing disturbances and intrusions and hence assess the degree of archaeological survival of buried deposits and any surviving structures of archaeological significance.*

1.4.2 The specific objectives were to:

- *establish the presence or absence of archaeological deposits*
- *evaluate the likely impact of past land use and development*
- *identify any evidence of medieval or post-medieval occupation and its nature and extent.*

1.5 Scope of Report

1.5.1 This report outlines the results of the watching brief undertaken at the site, over 6 days between January and April 2012. The fieldwork was undertaken by Simon Stevens, Andy Margetts, Alice Thorne, John Cook and Ben Sharp. The project was managed by Neil Griffin (fieldwork) and Dan Swift (post excavation).

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Desk Based Assessment

2.1.1 An archaeological desk-based assessment was undertaken by CgMs Ltd as part of pre-application works (CgMs Ltd 2009). Information from the assessment is summarised below with due acknowledgement.

2.2 Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic

2.2.1 Isolated finds of Mesolithic flint blades and flakes have been found 600m to the south west of the site, and a further four polished flint axes are recorded as having been found 'near Billingshurst'.

2.3 Bronze Age and Iron Age

2.3.1 Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age features and fire cracked flint have been identified 1km to the west of the site with further deposits of the same date identified during monitoring of the Billingshurst Bypass. A hoard of palstaves is recorded as having been discovered in 1877-1909.

2.4 Roman

2.4.1 The Roman road, Stane Street, runs approximately 400m to the west of the study site. Coins, pottery and tesserae have been found along Billingshurst High street suggesting Roman settlement in the area.

2.5 Anglo-Saxon/ Early Medieval

2.5.1 Only two late Saxon or early Norman pits containing pottery have been identified in the area and were located approximately 1400m south west of the site.

2.6 Late-Medieval and Post-Medieval

2.6.1 Billingshurst church was constructed in the 12th century and the town subsequently developed around it. The town had extended to the location of the site by the late post-medieval period. Hammonds Farm was constructed in the 18th century to the south east of the study site. The 1795 Gardner and Gream map indicates a possible building to the north of the site which may be a farm outbuilding.

2.6.2 Historic maps also indicate changing field boundaries over time with an east to west running boundary depicted on the 1876 Ordinance survey map moving northwards to a new location by the 1897 Ordinance survey map. This division remains on maps to the present day though no division is visible on the ground.

2.6.3 The historic maps indicate that the south of the site was under orchard until being cleared sometime after 1982 to become agricultural land.

2.7 Previous Evaluation on the Site

- 2.7.1 Archaeology South-East were commissioned by CgMs consulting to undertake an archaeological evaluation of northern half of the site in 2010 (Fig. 2). Five 20 metre trenches were excavated, revealing a scatter of Mesolithic or early Neolithic worked flint and a later medieval / early post-medieval ditch. An assemblage of later medieval pottery was also recovered. The location of a post-medieval field boundary depicted on the 1795 Gardner and Gream map and 1876 Ordnance survey map was also confirmed in the form of a lynchet and ditch (ASE 2010)

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

3.1 Fieldwork Methodology

- 3.1.1 Six site visits were undertaken by fieldwork staff. Monitored groundwork included the mechanical strip of the topsoil for the access road to the site and the excavation of a deep drainage trench, measuring 3m wide by 2m deep. Following these monitoring visits, it was agreed between CgMs Ltd and West Sussex County Council that a further proposed phase of watching brief during construction of a new pumping station on site would not be necessary.
- 3.1.2 All groundwork was undertaken utilising a machine fitted with a smooth blade ditching bucket.
- 3.1.3 All contexts were recorded on pro forma context recording forms. All finds were bagged and clearly labelled by context and retained for examination by ASE specialists.
- 3.1.4 A full photographic record was maintained of the groundwork.

3.2 The Site Archive

- 3.2.1 The site archive is currently held at the offices of ASE and will be deposited at Horsham museum in due course. The archive will be amalgamated with the results of the previous evaluation, and will be deposited under accession number HDM:2011:105. The contents of the archive are tabulated below (Table 1).

Number of Contexts	7
No. of files/paper record	1
Plan and sections sheets	0
Bulk Samples	0
Photographs	1 digital CD
Bulk finds	1 small box
Registered finds	0
Environmental flots/residue	0

Table 1: Quantification of site archive

4.0 RESULTS (Fig. 2)

4.1 Topsoil Stripping

4.1.1 The site visit of 17/01/12 monitored the stripping of topsoil across watching brief area. Approximately 150mm of topsoil was removed (Context [100]) and no underlying deposits were exposed.

4.2 Drainage Trench Monitoring

4.2.1 The site visits of 15/03/12 and 16/03/12 monitored the excavation of a drainage trench in the southern part of the site measuring 3m wide by 2m deep. One ditch, [103], measuring 0.80m in width by 0.40m in depth was exposed during this process, orientated on an east to west orientation, at a height of 46.34 AOD. This was filled by, [104], a firm mid yellowish brown silty clay from which no finds were recovered. This feature is thought to represent a field boundary ditch.

4.3 Roadway Monitoring

4.3.1 The site visits of 26/03/11, 03/04/12 and 4/04/12 monitored the roadway strip. At the entrance of the site 0.35m of mixed topsoil, [105], was uncovered. A variable bioturbated interface layer, [106], was also removed to allow clear exposure of the surface of the mottled orangish brown silty clay underlying geology, [107]. With the exception of two modern circular pits (probable planting pits) no additional archaeological features or deposits were exposed.

Context	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width m	Deposit Thickness m
100	Layer	Topsoil	-	-	0.35m
102	Layer	Natural geology	-	-	-
103	Cut	Ditch Cut	-	0.80m	0.40m
104	Fill	Ditch fill	-	0.80m	0.40m
105	Layer	Topsoil	-	-	0.35m
106	Layer	Interface	-	-	0.05m
107	Layer	Natural geology	-	-	-

Table 2: List of recorded contexts

5.0 THE FINDS

5.1 The Post-Roman Pottery by Luke Barber

The archaeological monitoring recovered a small assemblage of pottery all of which was recovered from topsoil [100]. The assemblage spans the later 18th to 19th centuries and appears typical of a domestic range of wares. There are two local glazed red earthenware sherds as well fragments of two creamware vessels. The latter includes part of a toy plate with moulded (feather-edge) rim under a thin green glaze. All these vessels are likely to be of later 18th- or early 19th- century date. The remaining two pieces are of mid/late 19th- century date and consist of a sherd from a red transfer-printed cup with floral design and part of a cylindrical mug in English porcelain.

6.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Natural Geology and Overburden

- 6.1.1 Throughout the watching brief area, natural geology was preserved beneath a relatively thick layer of topsoil. There was no evidence that the potential archaeological horizon had been significantly truncated or disturbed

6.2 Post-Medieval Field Boundary

- 6.2.1 An east to west orientated ditch observed during fieldwork corresponds with the line of a deposit of material (interpreted as a possible lynchet) identified within the 2010 evaluation Trench 1 (Fig. 2). Although no dating evidence was recovered, this feature is thought to demark the alignment of a field boundary depicted on the 1876 Ordnance Survey map of the area. This feature is also represented on the Gardner and Gream map of 1795 (ASE 2010). Pottery recovered from the topsoil of the site spans a similar later 18th to 19th century date range, and represents a typically domestic range of wares.
- 6.2.2 No continuation of the north-east south-west aligned late medieval/post-medieval ditch located in Trench 1 was observed.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

ASE, 2010 An Archaeological Evaluation on Land at Hammonds Farm, East Street, Billingshurst, West Sussex. ASE Unpublished Report 2010185

CgMs Ltd 2009 *Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment: Land North of Hammonds, East Street, Billingshurst, West Sussex*. Unpublished Report.

CgMs Ltd 2010 *Specification for an Archaeological Evaluation: Land at Hammonds Farm, East Street, Billingshurst, West Sussex*. Unpublished Report.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ASE would like to thank the client for commissioning the work and for their assistance throughout the project.

HER Summary Form

Site Code	HFB10					
Identification Name and Address	Hammonds Farm, Billingshurst					
County, District &/or Borough	West Sussex					
OS Grid Refs.	NGR 509080 125980					
Geology	Sandstone in Weald Clay					
Arch. South-East Project Number	4632					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	Watching Brief ✓	Standing Structure	Survey	Other
Type of Site	Green Field ✓	Shallow Urban	Deep Urban	Other		
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	WB. Jan - April 2012	Other		
Sponsor/Client	CgMs Consulting					
Project Manager	Neil Griffin					
Project Supervisor	Simon Stevens, Andy Margetts, Alice Thorne, John Cook and Ben Sharp					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED	PM ✓	Other Modern		
<p>Summary</p> <p>Archaeology South-East was commissioned by CgMs Consulting Ltd to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundwork at Hammonds Farm, East Street, Billingshurst, West Sussex. A post-medieval ditch orientated on an east to west alignment was observed, which is thought correspond to the alignment of a field boundary depicted on the 1876 Ordinance Survey map of the area. Fragments of domestic pottery recovered from the topsoil of the site spans a later 18th to 19th century date range.</p>						

OASIS ID: archaeol6-125454

Project details

Project name	Hammonds Farm, Billingshurst
Short description of the project	Archaeology South-East was commissioned by CgMs Consulting Ltd to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundwork at Hammonds Farm, East Street, Billingshurst, West Sussex. A post-medieval ditch orientated on an east to west alignment was observed, which is thought correspond to the alignment of a field boundary depicted on the 1876 Ordnance Survey map of the area. Fragments of domestic pottery recovered from the topsoil of the site spans a later 18th to 19th century date range.
Project dates	Start: 15-03-2012 End: 04-04-2012
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	HFB10 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Vacant Land 2 - Vacant land not previously developed
Monument type	DITCH Post Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Post Medieval
Investigation type	'Watching Brief'
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS

Project location

Country	England
Site location	WEST SUSSEX HORSHAM BILLINGSHURST Hammonds Farm
Postcode	XXXXXX
Study area	100.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 09080 25980 51.0222855169 -0.444546096761 51 01 20 N 000 26 40 W Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Archaeology South East
Project brief originator	CgMs Consulting
Project design originator	CgMs Consulting
Project director/manager	Neil Griffin
Project supervisor	Alice Thorne/Simon Stevens
Type of sponsor/funding body	CgMs Consulting

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Horsham Museum
Physical Contents	'Ceramics'
Digital Archive recipient	Horsham Museum
Digital Contents	'other'
Digital Media available	'Images raster / digital photography'
Paper Archive recipient	Horsham Museum
Paper Contents	'Ceramics','other'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet','Diary','Notebook - Excavation','Research',' General Notes','Photograph','Plan','Report'

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	An Archaeological Watching Brief
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Thorne, A
Other bibliographic	2012111

details

Date 2012

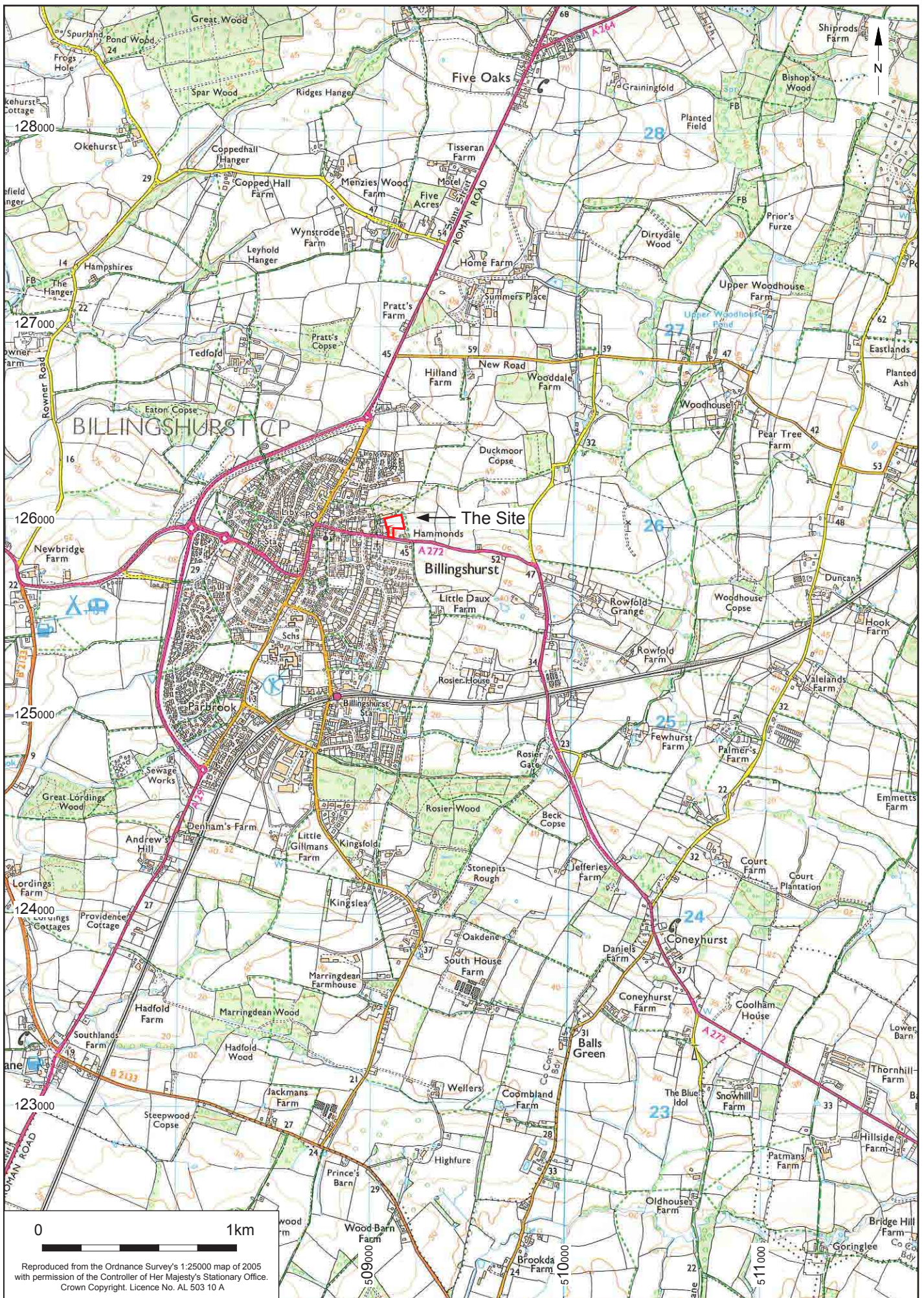
Issuer or publisher Archaeology south-east

Place of issue or publication Archaeology South-East

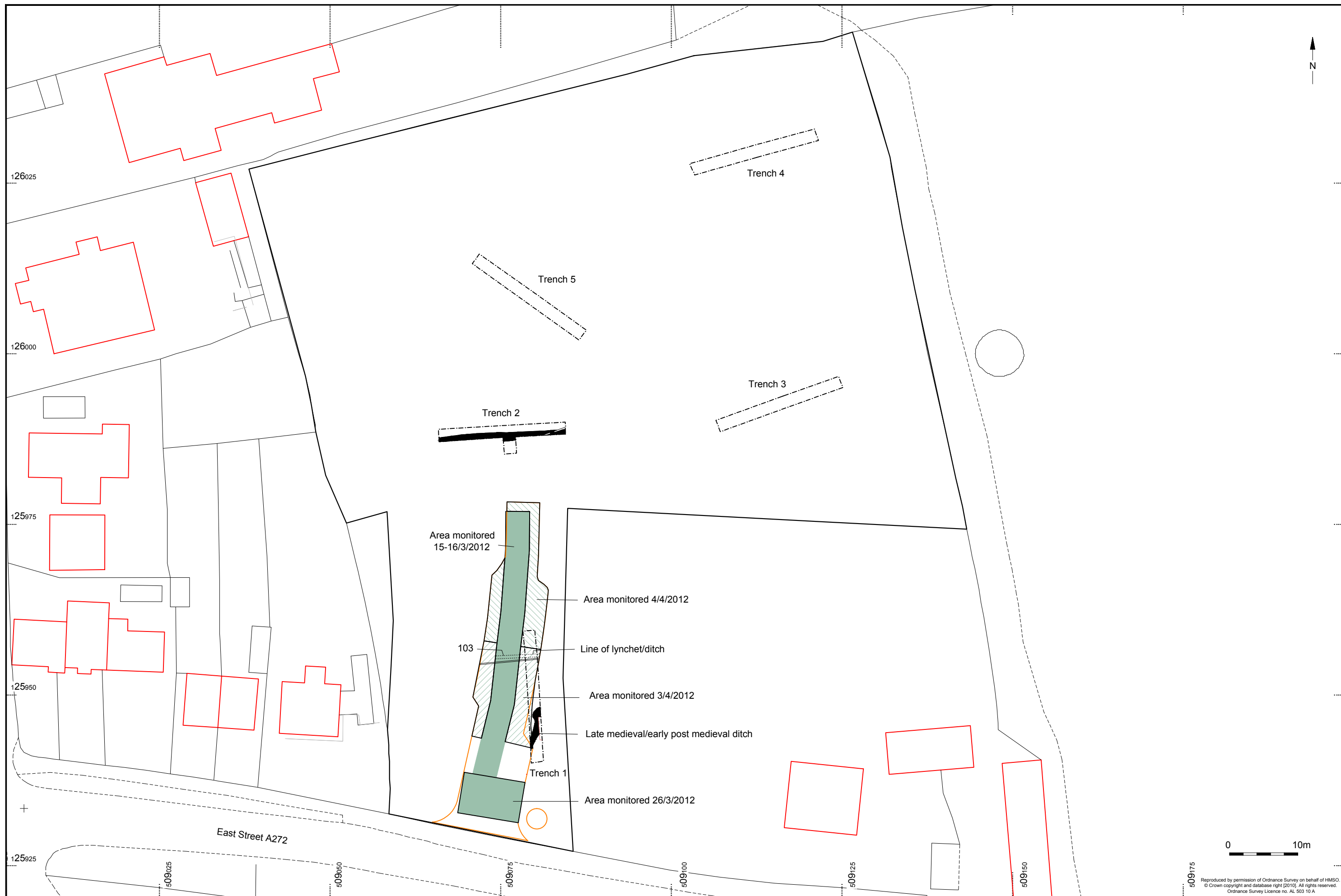
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Entered on 9 May 2012



© Archaeology South-East		Land at Hammonds Farm, Billingshurst		Fig. 1
Project Ref: 4632	May 2012	Site location		
Report Ref: 2012111	Drawn by: JLR			



© Archaeology South-East		Land at Hammonds Farm, Billingshurst	Fig. 2
Project Ref: 4632	May 2012	Site plan showing monitored groundworks	
Report Ref: 2012111	Drawn by: JLR		

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