

**An Archaeological Evaluation  
On Land at Brislands Lane,  
Four Marks, Hampshire**

**NGR: 466421 134403  
(SU 664 344)**

**Outline Planning Consent Ref: 53198**

**ASE Project No: 5855  
Site Code: BLS13**

**ASE Report No: 2014017  
OASIS id: archaeol6-169118  
Accession No: A20013.22**

**By Hayley Nicholls**

**With contributions by  
Anna Doherty, Karine Le Hégarat,  
and Dawn Elise Mooney**

**Illustrations by Justin Russell**

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**Abstract**

*Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Persimmon Homes (South-East), to undertake an archaeological evaluation in advance of redevelopment of land at Brislands Lane, Four Marks, Hampshire. A total of 34 trenches were excavated.*

*30 of the 34 trenches investigated were devoid of archaeological features. In total, 11 possible archaeological features were identified within the site area comprising of one linear ditch, one possible ditch terminus, four pits of which one was associated with three stake holes and a posthole, and one further isolated posthole.*

*Other than the ditch terminus which contained two sherds of later prehistoric pottery or Roman pottery and a pit which contained large quantities of fire cracked flint and oak charcoal, all other features were devoid of artefacts and remained undated. All features were sealed by a subsoil horizon.*

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Site Background**

1.1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE), the contracting division of the Centre for Applied Archaeology (CAA), Institute of Archaeology (IoA), University College London, was commissioned by Persimmon Homes (South East) to undertake an archaeological evaluation in advance of the redevelopment of land at Brislands lane, Four Marks, Hampshire (Figure 1; centred NGR SU 664 344).

### **1.2 Geology and Topography**

1.2.1 According to the British Geological Survey (BGS 2014) the site lies over bedrock geology of Seaford Chalk Formation. This is overlain by superficial deposits comprising of clay, silt, sand and gravel.

1.2.2 The site area is approximately 4.3 hectares and extends northwards from the Brislands Lane frontage. The site comprises agricultural land and buildings associated with Greenways Farm and is situated on a south-east facing slope. A plateau of level ground in the north-west corner of the site is located at approximately 185m AOD. The ground slopes from the plateau to the south-east to a height of approximately 180m AOD from where it falls more sharply south-east to a height of 170m AOD in the south-east corner.

### **1.3 Planning Background**

1.3.1 Outline planning consent was obtained for the construction of 110 dwellings, along with associated access routes and open spaces (Ref.: 52501/001). In support of this application a Desk Based Assessment was prepared (CgMs 2012). Ground investigations were also undertaken (SOILS 2011). Having considered these reports, Hampshire County Councils Senior Archaeologist, in their role as advisor to East Hampshire District Council, recommended that a condition be attached to planning consent for a programme of archaeological work. Accordingly, Condition 11 states:

“No work shall start on site until the developer has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation and recording which has first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority.”

Reason - To ensure that the archaeological interest of the site is properly safeguarded and recorded.

1.3.2 Subsequently, a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for an archaeological evaluation was prepared (ASE 2013) prior to the commencement of fieldwork. The document outlined the research aims and objectives of the current project and the methodology to be followed. It was submitted to and approved by the Hampshire County Council's Senior Archaeologist.

## **1.4 Aims and Objectives**

1.4.1 The general objective was to determine as far as reasonably possible, the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains likely to be threatened by the proposed new development.

1.4.2 The following specific research aims were laid out:

- Is there any evidence for Roman activity on the site, particularly remains associated with the postulated line of the Roman road along the southern boundary of the site?

1.4.3 The evaluation needed to be sufficient to enable the Senior Archaeologist at Hants CC to make an informed decision on any mitigation work that may be required.

1.4.4 The final aim was to make public the results of the work, subject to any confidentiality restrictions.

## **1.5 Scope of Report**

1.5.1 This report details the findings of the archaeological evaluation of the site which was carried out between 9<sup>th</sup> December 2013 and 10<sup>th</sup> January 2014. The fieldwork was undertaken by Kristina Krawiec (Archaeologist), Vasilis Tsamis (Surveyor), and Susan Chandler (Archaeologist), with Hayley Nicholls (Archaeologist) providing secondary supervisory cover. The project was managed by Paul Mason (Project Manager, fieldwork) and by Jim Stevenson (Project Manager, post-excavation).

## **2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

2.1 The following archaeological background has been derived from the desk-based assessment (CgMs 2012) with due acknowledgement. For a full background to the site the reader is directed to that document.

### **2.2 Early Prehistoric**

2.2.1 No Palaeolithic finds are recorded within the study area. A stray find of a Mesolithic 'Thames' pick found at Lymington Cottage, is the only evidence of the period recorded.

2.2.2 The presence of nearby underlying gravels does offer further opportunity to encounter stray early prehistoric finds. Such finds are likely to be residual, un-associated objects that will be found by chance.

### **2.3 Late Prehistoric**

2.3.1 A polished flint axe head dating from the Neolithic period was discovered opposite the study site on Brislands Lane. A flint knife dating from either the Late Neolithic or Early Bronze Age was discovered toward the centre of Four Marks approximately 800m east of the study site.

2.3.2 Although it is acknowledged that little archaeological investigation has taken place within the wider area the amount of stray and surface finds discovered to date do not suggest that widespread activity for the periods was taking place near the area of the site. Accordingly a low archaeological potential is considered at the study site for both the Neolithic and Bronze Age periods.

### **2.4 Roman**

2.4.1 The straight stretch of Road bordering the south of the site, now Brislands Lane, is suggested to be part of the Roman road from Winchester to London via Neatham. Evidence of Roman occupation is known to the north of the road approximately 1.1km to the west of the site. The evidence comprises a findspot of an assortment of pottery found with a quernstone, tile and Roman glass.

2.4.2 Two findspots, both of Roman coins, have been located to the north and the east of the site at distances of around 800m.

2.4.3 The possible presence of a Roman road immediately to the south of the site does offer potential for undiscovered roadside settlement. However, based on the level of findspots this area is more likely to produce evidence for outlying field systems.

### **2.5 Saxon and Medieval**

2.5.1 There is no evidence for the Saxon/early medieval period held on the HER within a 1km radius of the site.

2.5.2 The Parish of Four Marks was created in 1932 from parts of the six parishes of Medstead, Ropley, Chawton, East Tisted, Newton Vallence and Farrington suggesting that substantive settlement did not occur here until well into the post-medieval period. However, Soldridge located approximately 1km to the west of the site was first documented in 1233 as Solrigge, meaning ridge of land with muddy pool.

## **2.6 Post-medieval**

2.6.1 The settlement is not shown at Four Marks on Speed's Map of Hampshire drawn in 1611, although this may be due to the scale of the map. Alton can clearly be seen to the northeast as can the representation of the undulating countryside of the South Downs upon the fringe of which Four Marks is now placed. Settlement at Four Marks is also not shown on Kitchin's Map of Hampshire drawn in 1751 although the road on which the town is located is shown on its course to Winchester from Alton.

2.6.2 The 1st Edition Ordnance Survey Map of 1873 places the site in an extremely rural landscape pitted by chalk and gravel extraction. Common Farm is shown opposite the site and it is likely the land would have been under the farms tenant or ownership. Little change had occurred in the area by 1896 and 1910 with the exception of Common Farm having changed in name to Lymington Farm.

2.6.3 By 1936 the site has been apportioned into three separate areas. Built development has taken place just to the south of the study site on the frontage of what was then called Pilgrim's Way (now Brislands Lane). Pilgrim's Way was called such as it was believed that the road marked the route of the Pilgrim trail from Winchester to Canterbury.

2.6.4 A WWII searchlight battery was located approximately 500m to the north of the site near Lymington Farm. The surrounding ring ditch and trenches are thought to survive.

2.6.5 By 1962 the expansion of Four Marks has reached land to the east of the site with the study site remaining untouched. By 1981 outbuildings associated with Greenways Farm are shown in the south-west area of the site. The site remains unchanged from this point up until present day.

## **2.7 Negative Evidence**

2.7.1 An archaeological watching brief was undertaken on the opposite side of the Roman road 500m to the east of the study site from which no archaeological features or deposits were recorded.



### **3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Fieldwork methodology**

- 3.1.1 The archaeological methodology was initially set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation (ASE 2013). All work was carried out in accordance with this document as well as the relevant Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) procedural documents (IfA 2001, 2010).
- 3.1.2 The proposed locations of trenches were scanned using a Cable Avoidance Tool (CAT scanner) in order to check for services.
- 3.1.3 Trenches 8 and 34 were not excavated, as agreed with the archaeological advisor for East Hants District Council, as they were situated close to Greenways farmyard within orchards. Trench 9 and parts of Trenches 1, 2, 6, 7, 10, 11, 14, 15 and 29 were unexcavated as they lay outside a constructed newt fence or within a designated 5m exclusion zone of existing trees and hedgerows.
- 3.1.4 The stripping and storing of topsoil for an ecological investigation in the areas of Trenches 35 to 38 prevented their excavation in the intended locations and alignments. Only three trenches, numbered 35 to 37 were able to be excavated around the stored topsoil, with a combined length of 80m.

#### **3.2 The Archive**

- 3.2.1 The site archive is currently held at the offices of ASE. Hampshire County Museum Service have issued an accession number for the site (A20013.22) and the archive will be deposited with them in due course. The contents of the archive are tabulated below (Table 1).

Number of Contexts	124
No. of files/paper record	1 file
Plan and sections sheets	1
Bulk Samples	1
Photographs	102
Bulk finds	1 small box
Registered finds	0
Environmental flots/residue	1 box

Table 1: Quantification of site archive

## 4.0 RESULTS

### 4.1 Overburden and Geology

- 4.1.1 The stratigraphic sequence was consistent across the site. The natural substrate comprised a compact mid pink-orange silt-clay with frequent small-medium flint nodules. The natural geology was encountered at between 182.26m AOD and 180.39m AOD across Trenches 1 to 7 with a gradual slope from north-west to south-east towards the centre of the site. Similarly, a gradual slope from north-west to south-east was seen between Trenches 15 to 25 with the natural substrate encountered at between 182.26m AOD and 180.59m AOD. Towards the south-east end of the site the gradient of the slope increased with the natural geology encountered at between 179.72m AOD and 177.49m AOD across Trenches 19 to 28 and between 178.40m AOD and 173.85 across trenches 35 to 37.
- 4.1.2 A deposit of subsoil directly overlay the natural substrate and comprised moderately compact mid orange-brown silt-clay with occasional small flint nodules. The deposit measured between 0.03m and 0.30m in thickness.
- 4.1.3 Topsoil overlay the subsoil deposit and comprised loose dark brown-grey clay-silt with occasional small flint nodules. The deposit was fully stripped across the site during a program of ecological investigation, prior to the commencement of the archaeological evaluation. As a result, the depth of this deposit was unknown.
- 4.1.4 11 possible archaeological features were identified within the site area comprising of one linear ditch, one possible ditch terminus, four pits of which one was associated with three stake holes and a posthole, and one further isolated posthole. Other than the ditch terminus which contained two sherds of later Prehistoric pottery, and a pit in Trench 11 which contained large quantities of fire cracked flint and oak charcoal, all other features were devoid of artefacts and remained undated. However, all features were sealed by a subsoil horizon.

### 4.2 Trenches 1 - 7, 10, 12 - 17, 19, 21 - 23, 25 - 33, and 35 – 37

- 4.2.1 All of these trenches were devoid of archaeology and demonstrated a stratigraphic sequence consistent with that seen elsewhere within the site area. A single piece of struck flint, considered to be of Neolithic date, was retrieved from the topsoil in Trench 21. No other finds were retrieved from these trenches.

Trench Number	Context	Type	Description	Deposit Thickness m
1	001	Layer	Topsoil	NA
1	002	Layer	Subsoil	0.10 – 0.17
1	003	Layer	Natural	NA
2	001	Layer	Topsoil	NA
2	002	Layer	Subsoil	0.13 – 0.15
2	003	Layer	Natural	NA
3	001	Layer	Topsoil	NA
3	002	Layer	Subsoil	0.17

3	003	Layer	Natural	NA
4	001	Layer	Topsoil	NA
4	002	Layer	Subsoil	0.12 – 0.17
4	003	Layer	Natural	NA
5	001	Layer	Topsoil	NA
5	002	Layer	Subsoil	0.10 – 0.15
5	003	Layer	Natural	NA
6	001	Layer	Topsoil	NA
6	002	Layer	Subsoil	0.10 – 0.20
6	003	Layer	Natural	NA
7	001	Layer	Topsoil	NA
7	002	Layer	Subsoil	0.10 – 0.16
7	003	Layer	Natural	NA
10	001	Layer	Topsoil	NA
10	002	Layer	Subsoil	0.11 – 0.16
10	003	Layer	Natural	NA
12	001	Layer	Topsoil	NA
12	002	Layer	Subsoil	0.15 – 0.19
12	003	Layer	Natural	NA
13	001	Layer	Topsoil	NA
13	002	Layer	Subsoil	0.11 – 0.18
13	003	Layer	Natural	NA
14	001	Layer	Topsoil	NA
14	002	Layer	Subsoil	0.10 – 0.17
14	003	Layer	Natural	NA
15	001	Layer	Topsoil	NA
15	002	Layer	Subsoil	0.15 – 0.20
15	003	Layer	Natural	NA
16	001	Layer	Topsoil	NA
16	002	Layer	Subsoil	0.17 – 0.22
16	003	Layer	Natural	NA
17	001	Layer	Topsoil	NA
17	002	Layer	Subsoil	0.15 – 0.18
17	003	Layer	Natural	NA
19	001	Layer	Topsoil	NA
19	002	Layer	Subsoil	0.11 – 0.20
19	003	Layer	Natural	NA
21	001	Layer	Topsoil	NA
21	002	Layer	Subsoil	0.12 – 0.20
21	003	Layer	Natural	NA
22	001	Layer	Topsoil	NA
22	002	Layer	Subsoil	0.02 – 0.15
22	003	Layer	Natural	NA
23	001	Layer	Topsoil	NA
23	002	Layer	Subsoil	0.10 – 0.18
23	003	Layer	Natural	NA
25	001	Layer	Topsoil	NA
25	002	Layer	Subsoil	0.09 – 0.30
25	003	Layer	Natural	NA
26	001	Layer	Topsoil	NA
26	002	Layer	Subsoil	0.10 – 0.27
26	003	Layer	Natural	NA
27	001	Layer	Topsoil	NA
27	002	Layer	Subsoil	0.14 – 0.24
27	003	Layer	Natural	NA

28	001	Layer	Topsoil	NA
28	002	Layer	Subsoil	0.09 – 0.10
28	003	Layer	Natural	NA
29	001	Layer	Topsoil	NA
29	002	Layer	Subsoil	0.14 - 0.16
29	003	Layer	Natural	NA
30	001	Layer	Topsoil	NA
30	002	Layer	Subsoil	0.14 – 0.22
30	002	Layer	Natural	NA
31	001	Layer	Topsoil	NA
31	002	Layer	Subsoil	0.14 – 0.25
31	003	Layer	Natural	NA
32	001	Layer	Topsoil	NA
32	002	Layer	Subsoil	0.07 – 0.17
32	003	Layer	Natural	NA
33	001	Layer	Topsoil	NA
33	002	Layer	Subsoil	0.14 – 0.19
33	003	Layer	Natural	NA
35	001	Layer	Topsoil	NA
35	002	Layer	Subsoil	0.03 – 0.08
35	003	Layer	Natural	NA
36	001	Layer	Topsoil	NA
36	002	Layer	Subsoil	0.05 – 0.10
36	003	Layer	Natural	NA
37	001	Layer	Topsoil	NA
37	002	Layer	Subsoil	0.05
37	003	Layer	Natural	NA

Table 2: Trenches 1 - 7, 10, 12 - 17, 19, 21 - 23, 25 - 33, and 35 - 37 list of recorded contexts

### 4.3 Trench 11 (Figure 3)

4.3.1 Trench 11 was located close to the north-west site boundary, on a gentle slope immediately below the plateau in the north-west corner of site. The trench measured 18.8m in length, 1.8m wide and was orientated on an east to west alignment. The natural substrate occurred at between 181.89m AOD at the west end of the trench and 180.59m AOD at the east end.

4.3.2 Two possible archaeological features were identified within the trench, comprising of a pit, and a possible ditch (Figure 3).

4.3.3 Pit [11/004] was partially revealed for a length of 1.16m within the trench area and appeared sub-rectangular in plan. The pit had a width of 0.80m and a depth of 0.20m and was encountered at 181.56m AOD. The pit was sealed by subsoil [11/002] and cut the natural substrate [11/003]. Pit fill [11/005] comprised of friable, dark, black-grey silt clay. Large quantities of wood charcoal, predominantly oak, along with fire cracked flint were recovered from a bulk soil sample taken from the fill, however, no datable finds were present.

4.3.4 Possible ditch [11/006] was linear in plan, orientated on a north-north-east to south-south-west alignment. The ditch was exposed for a length of 1.77m, had a width of 0.74m and a depth of 0.45m, and was encountered at 181.61m AOD. The ditch cut the natural substrate [11/003], however, the relationship of the ditch to the subsoil [11/002] was uncertain as the subsoil

and ditch fill [11/007] were similar in colour, composition and consistency. No dating evidence was retrieved from ditch fill [11/007] which comprised of moderately compact mid yellow-brown silt clay with occasional flint and gravel inclusions.

Context	Type	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Deposit Thickness m
11/001	Layer	Topsoil	NA	NA	NA
11/002	Layer	Subsoil	NA	NA	0.10 – 0.22
11/003	Layer	Natural	NA	NA	NA
11/004	Cut	Pit	>1.16	0.80	0.20
11/005	Fill	Fill of [11/004]	>1.16	0.80	0.20
11/006	Cut	Ditch	>1.77	0.74	0.45
11/007	Fill	Fill of [11/006]	>1.77	0.74	0.45

Table 3: Trench 11 list of recorded contexts

#### 4.4 Trench 18 (Figure 4)

- 4.4.1 Trench 18 was located in the northern half of the site. The trench measured 30m in length, 1.8m wide and was orientated on a north to south alignment. The natural substrate occurred at between 179.74m AOD at the north end of the trench and 179.76m AOD at the south end.
- 4.4.2 Three possible archaeological features were identified within the trench, comprising of a possible isolated posthole, a possible ditch terminus or animal burrow and a probable tree bole (Figure 4).
- 4.4.3 Posthole [18/004] was oval in plan with a length of 0.75, a width of 0.45, and a depth of 0.22m. The posthole was encountered at 179.79m AOD, was sealed by subsoil [18/002] and cut the natural substrate [18/003]. No dating evidence was retrieved from posthole fill [18/005] which comprised of moderately soft mid orange-brown silt clay.
- 4.4.4 Ditch terminus [18/006] appeared to be linear in plan and orientated on an east to west alignment. A 1.55m length of the ditch terminus was exposed whilst the remainder of the feature extended beyond the west edge of the trench. The ditch measured 0.53m wide and 0.35m deep, and was encountered at 179.78m AOD. As there was no evidence of the ditch in Trenches 14 and 16, located to the east and west of Trench 18 respectively, it is also possible that cut [18/006] represented an elongated oval pit. The feature was sealed by subsoil [18/002] and cut the natural substrate [18/003]. Two sherds of pottery of probable Iron Age/ early Roman date were retrieved from ditch fill [18/007], which comprised of moderately compact mid grey-brown silt clay with occasional inclusions of flint nodules and charcoal flecks.
- 4.4.5 Pit [18/008] lay at 179.62m AOD and was partially revealed for a length of 0.95m against the east edge of the trench. The pit had a width of 2.42m and a depth of 0.43m. The pit was sealed by subsoil [18/002] and cut the natural substrate [18/003]. No dating evidence was retrieved from pit fill [18/009] which comprised of moderately compact, mottled mid grey-brown and mid red-brown silt clay. The fill contained occasional flint nodules and rare flecks of charcoal.

Context	Type	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Deposit Thickness m
18/001	Layer	Topsoil	NA	NA	NA
18/002	Layer	Subsoil	NA	NA	0.18 – 0.21
18/003	Layer	Natural	NA	NA	NA
18/004	Cut	Posthole? Pit?	0.75	0.45	0.22
18/005	Fill	Fill of [18/004]	0.75	0.45	0.22
18/006	Cut	Ditch terminus	>1.55	0.53	0.35
18/007	Fill	Fill of [18/006]	>1.55	0.53	0.35
18/008	Cut	Pit?	>0.95	2.42	0.43
18/009	Fill	Fill of [18/008]	>0.95	2.42	0.43

Table 4: Trench 18 list of recorded contexts

#### 4.5 Trench 20 (Figure 5)

- 4.5.1 Trench 20 was located on a gentle slope towards the north-west corner of the site, a short distance below the natural plateau. The trench measured 30m in length, 1.8m wide and was orientated on a north-west to south-east alignment. The natural substrate occurred at between 181.35m AOD at the north-west end of the trench and 180.75m AOD at the south-east end.
- 4.5.2 Five archaeological features were identified within the trench, comprising of a pit, a posthole, and three stake holes. All were situated in close proximity to one another, towards the centre of the trench.
- 4.5.3 Pit [20/004] was encountered at 180.79m AOD, partially revealed against the south-west edge of the trench for a length of 0.7m. The pit appeared to be sub-rectangular in plan with a width of 1.68m and a depth of 0.3m. The pit was sealed by subsoil [20/002] and cut the natural substrate [20/003]. No dating evidence was retrieved from pit fill [20/005] which comprised of compact mid grey-brown silt clay with rare flint nodules.
- 4.5.4 Stake holes [20/006], [20/008], and [20/010] were circular in plan with diameters of between 0.07m and 0.08m and depths of between 0.07m and 0.08m. The features were sealed by subsoil [20/002] and cut the natural substrate [20/003]. No dating evidence was retrieved from stake hole fills [20/007], [20/009], and [20/011] which comprised of mid grey-brown silt clay with rare flint inclusions.
- 4.5.5 All three stake holes were located internally to pit [20/004] and aligned along the pit's north edge, strongly suggesting a relationship between all four features. The pit fill [20/005] had the same consistency, colour and composition as that of the fills of the stake holes, further suggesting the features may be contemporary and likely fell into disuse concurrently.
- 4.5.6 Posthole [20/012] was circular in plan with a diameter of 0.22m and a depth of 0.17m. The feature was sealed by subsoil [20/002] and cut the natural substrate [20/003]. No dating evidence was retrieved from posthole fill [20/013] which was similar to all other fills within Trench 20, comprising of compact mid grey-brown silt clay with rare flint inclusions.
- 4.5.7 Posthole [20/012] was located externally to pit [20/004], at a distance of

0.05m beyond the pit's east edge. The posthole was not within the same alignment as stake holes [20/006], [20/008], and [20/010]. However, the proximity of posthole [20/012] to pit [20/004] could suggest a relationship between the features. Furthermore, posthole fill [20/013] had the same consistency, colour and composition as that of the pit and stake hole fills.

4.5.8 No artefacts were recovered from any of the features in Trench 20.

Context	Type	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Deposit Thickness m
20/001	Layer	Topsoil	NA	NA	NA
20/002	Layer	Subsoil	NA	NA	0.10 – 0.26
20/003	Layer	Natural	NA	NA	NA
20/004	Cut	Pit	1.68	>0.7	0.30
20/005	Fill	Fill of [20/004]	1.68	>0.7	0.30
20/006	Cut	Stake hole	0.08	NA	0.07
20/007	Fill	Fill of [20/006]	0.08	NA	0.07
20/008	Cut	Stake hole	0.07	NA	0.07
20/009	Fill	Fill of [20/008]	0.07	NA	0.07
20/010	Cut	Stake hole	0.08	NA	0.08
20/011	Fill	Fill of [20/010]	0.08	NA	0.08
20/012	Cut	Posthole	0.22	NA	0.17
20/013	Fill	Fill of [20/012]	0.22	NA	0.17

Table 5: Trench 20 list of recorded contexts

## 4.6 Trench 24 (Figure 6)

4.6.1 Trench 24 was located close to the north-east site boundary. The trench measured 30m in length, 1.8m wide and was orientated on a north-west to south-east alignment. The natural substrate occurred at between 178.43m AOD at the north-west end of the trench and 177.52m AOD at the south-east end.

4.6.2 A single possible archaeological feature was identified within the trench, comprising of a pit situated towards the north-west end of the trench (Figure 5).

4.6.3 Pit [24/004] was oval in plan and was encountered at 177.96m AOD. The pit had a length of 0.97m, a width of 0.67m and a depth of 0.35m. The feature was sealed by subsoil [24/002] and cut the natural substrate [24/003]. No dating evidence was retrieved from pit fill [24/005] which comprised of moderately compact mid orange-brown silt clay with occasional flint and rare charcoal inclusions.

Context	Type	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Deposit Thickness m
24/001	Layer	Topsoil	NA	NA	NA
24/002	Layer	Subsoil	NA	NA	0.03 – 0.06
24/003	Layer	Natural	NA	NA	NA
24/004	Cut	Possible pit	0.97	0.67	0.35
24/005	Fill	Fill of [24/004]	0.97	0.67	0.35

Table 6: Trench 24 list of recorded contexts

## 5.0 THE FINDS

### 5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 A small amount of finds were recovered during the evaluation at Brislands Farm. Finds were all washed and dried or air dried as appropriate. They were subsequently quantified by count and weight (Table 7) and were bagged by material and context. Packaging and storage was carried out following IFA guidelines (2008). No further conservation is required.

Context	Pottery	Wt (g)	Flint	Wt (g)
18/007	2	10		
21/001			1	<2
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>

Table 7: Quantification of the finds assemblage

### 5.2 Worked Flint by Karine le Hegerat

5.2.1 A single piece of struck flint weighing 2g was hand collected from the topsoil in Trench 21. It consists of a broken flake the proximal end of which is absent. The thin translucent piece of flint débitage displays small multi-directional flake scars on the dorsal surface. This suggests a careful reduction strategy, and the artefact could represent waste from tool production such as an axe thinning flake, and it may therefore be Neolithic in date. Environmental sample < 01> from pit fill context [11/005] produced a large quantity of burnt unworked flint. The material has been heavily calcined to a grey-white colour. Although undatable, fragments of burnt unworked flint are often encountered on prehistoric sites.

### 5.3 Prehistoric Pottery by Anna Doherty

5.3.1 Two cross-fitting bodysherds of pottery, weighing 10 grams, were recovered from context [18/007]. The sherds are oxidised and reasonably well-fired with sparse flint-tempering and a sandy background matrix, with moderate quartz grains of c.0.2-0.4mm and rare large red iron-rich inclusions. In isolation this fabric type cannot be dated with much precision or certainty within the prehistoric period. However, as a rule, sandier flint-tempered wares with sparser tempering would be more typical of the Iron Age than of earlier periods. Fabrics of this type may also have survived into the first decades of the Roman period.

### 5.4 Finds Summary

5.4.1 A small amount of pottery and flint was recovered, suggesting low level prehistoric activity. Neither categories can be dated with any precision but a later prehistoric date is most likely.



**6.0 THE ENVIRONMENTAL SAMPLES** by Dawn Elise Mooney and Karine Le Hégarat

**6.1 Introduction and Methodology**

6.1.1 During evaluation a single bulk environmental sample <1> was taken from the fill [11/005] of pit feature [11/004], to recover environmental indicators such as wood charcoal, charred macrobotanical remains, fauna and mollusca as well as to assist finds recovery. The sample measured 40 litres in volume, and was processed and analysed at Archaeology South-East, Portslade during January 2014.

6.1.2 The sample was processed in a flotation tank and the residue and flot were retained on 500µm and 300µm mesh respectively and air dried. The residue was passed through graded sieves of 8mm, 4mm and 2mm and each fraction sorted for environmental and artefactual remains (Table 8). The flot was analysed under a stereozoom microscope at x7-45 magnifications and its contents was recorded in Table 9. Identifications of macrobotanical remains were made through comparison with published reference atlases (Cappers *et al.* 2006, Jacomet 2006) and reference material. Nomenclature used follows Stace (1997).

6.1.3 Charcoal fragments recovered from the heavy residue of the sample were fractured along three planes (transverse, radial and tangential) according to standardised procedures (Gale & Cutler 2000). Specimens were viewed under a stereozoom microscope for initial grouping, and an incident light microscope at magnifications up to 400x to facilitate identification of the woody taxa present. Taxonomic identifications were assigned by comparing suites of anatomical characteristics visible with those documented in reference atlases (Hather 2000, Schoch *et al.* 2004), and by comparison with modern reference material held at the Institute of Archaeology, University College London. Identifications have been given to species where possible, however genera, family or group names have been given where anatomical differences between taxa are not significant enough to permit satisfactory identification. Nomenclature used follows Stace (1997), and taxonomic identifications of charcoal are recorded in Table 8.

**6.2 Results**

6.2.1 The large flot (275ml) was dominated by uncharred vegetation consisting mainly of uncharred fine rootlets fragments as well as a few uncharred elderberry (*Sambucus nigra*) seeds. The significant level of roots present in the shallow pit (0.20m deep) together with the presence of uncharred seeds could indicate a small degree of modern disturbance and potential contamination of the deposit.

6.2.2 No charred macroplant remains were noticed, but a moderate assemblage of charcoal was recorded in the flot and residue. Charred wood fragments from the residue were identified as oak (*Quercus* sp.). The charcoal was moderately well-preserved, although fragments were somewhat abraded and displayed low levels of sediment concretion and infiltration related to fluctuations in groundwater level.

- 6.2.3 The residue of the sample also contained a small quantity of magnetised material, and a very large amount of burnt flint.

### **6.3 Discussion**

- 6.3.1 The bulk environmental sample confirmed the presence of a large quantity of uncharred roots providing evidence for modern disturbances, potential contamination and movement within the deposit. Their presence could potentially lessen the value of remains within this sample for scientific dating, however the quantities of charred wood and burnt flint present are unlikely to represent contaminants.
- 6.3.2 The moderate assemblage of charred wood remains recovered was predominantly composed of oak charcoal. The frequent occurrence of wood charcoal along with the large amount of burnt flint recorded in the feature may indicate *in situ* burning, or at least the deliberate deposition of burnt material. However, the environmental remains recovered are insufficient to determine the nature of the burning event in question. Oak is known to be an excellent firewood, and may have been specifically selected as fuel. However, oak wood is also valued as timber due to its strength and durability (Taylor 1981), and its use as fuel is likely to indicate that this taxon was widespread in the landscape surrounding the site.
- 6.3.3 Oak charcoal is not ideal for scientific dating, as the trees are very long-lived and their valuable timber could potentially have formed part of a structure before being burnt. Further to this, when submitting charcoal fragments for radiocarbon dating it is best to use material identified to two different species, to limit the potential for inaccurate dates from residual fragments. For these reasons, the charcoal assemblage from the site is likely to be unsuitable for scientific dating.

**Table 8** Residue quantification (\* = 1-10, \*\* = 11-50, \*\*\* = 51-250, \*\*\*\* = >250) and weights in grams

Sample Number	Context	Context / deposit type	Sample Volume litres	Sub-Sample Volume litres	Charcoal >4mm	Weight (g)	Charcoal <4mm	Weight (g)	Charcoal Identifications	Other
1	11/005	P	40	40	***	16	****	10	<i>Quercus</i> sp. (20)	Magnetised material ***/4g - FCF ****/12648g

**Table 9** Flot quantification (\* = 1-10, \*\* = 11-50, \*\*\* = 51-250, \*\*\*\* = >250) and preservation (+ = poor, ++ = moderate, +++ = good)

Sample Number	Context	Weight g	Flot volume ml	Volume scanned	Uncharred %	Sediment %	Seeds uncharred	Charcoal >4mm	Charcoal <4mm	Charcoal <2mm
1	11/005	26	275	275	90	2	* <i>Sambucus nigra</i>	**	***	****

## **7.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

### **7.1 Stratigraphic Sequence**

7.1.1 The evaluation has revealed that natural deposits within the site consisted of compact mid pink-orange silt-clay. The natural geology was encountered at 182.26m AOD within Trench 1, on a natural plateau close to the north-west site corner. Towards the base of the slope, within Trench 37, the natural geology was encountered at 173.85m AOD. A subsoil horizon was identified across the entirety of the site, overlying the natural deposits. Topsoil was removed prior to the archaeological evaluation but was previously present across the site.

7.1.2 With the exception of ditch, ([11/006] in Trench 11), all of the archaeological features were cut in to the natural geology and sealed by the subsoil, which is likely to be of some antiquity. The relationship between ditch [11/006] and the subsoil could not be ascertained but in all likelihood it was sealed by this deposit.

### **7.2 Degree of Truncation**

7.2.1 Undisturbed subsoil was present in all of the trenches suggesting that there has been very little truncation of the natural geology. The depth of this subsoil varied considerably across the site from 0.03m to 0.3m. The depth of subsoil was less than 0.10m in Trenches 22, 24, 35, 36, and 37.

### **7.3 Distribution of the archaeological remains**

7.3.1 30 of the 34 trenches investigated were devoid of archaeological features. In total, 11 possible archaeological features were identified comprising of a ditch, one possible ditch terminus, four pits, of which one was associated with three stake holes and a posthole, and one further isolated posthole. These remains were identified in Trenches 11, 18, 20 and 24 all of which lay in the northern half of the site.

### **7.4 Date and type of archaeological remains**

7.4.1 Other than a ditch terminus, which contained two sherds of later prehistoric / Early Roman pottery, and a pit which contained large quantities of fire cracked flint, all other features were devoid of artefacts. The cross-fitting bodysherds from ditch terminus fill [18/007] cannot be dated with much precision within the prehistoric period although the fabric is more typical of an Iron Age or possibly Roman date rather than of earlier periods.

7.4.2 Conceivably, ditches present in Trench 11, and Trench 18, which are aligned at right angles could form the remnant of a wider late prehistoric field system although this has not been detected in any other trenches.

7.4.3 In the absence of contrary dating evidence and given their morphology, it is reasonable to assume that the undated features, sealed beneath the intact subsoil horizon, are of broadly the same prehistoric origin as the dated examples. However, even given this assumption, the archaeological remains

are sparsely distributed and it is considered are more indicative of isolated pits within, or at the edges of, fields for example (such as it [11/004]), rather than being characteristic of a dense pattern of settlement activity

- 7.4.3 Generally, it is not possible to speculate on specific pit function because of the lack of cultural material. The exceptions to this are pit [11/004] in Trench 4, which contained frequent charcoal in association with burnt flint and could indicate in situ burning activity, perhaps cooking for example. Pit [20/004] may have had a superstructure because of the stakeholes present in its base, although what this may have represented is not clear.

## **7.5 Archaeological significance and recommendations**

- 7.5.1 The results of the evaluation indicate that the southern half of the site (encompassing Trenches 25-37) are devoid of archaeological remains and as such, this area has no archaeological significance.
- 7.5.2 The evaluation has identified archaeological remains in the northern part of the site (broadly, north of Trench 24) preserved beneath an intact subsoil. These remains are poorly dated, although presumed prehistoric, are dispersed and not directly related to intensive settlement activity. Given this data, it is considered that they are of low to moderate significance.
- 7.5.4 Regarding the specific research aim, other than two later prehistoric pottery sherds which were not easily datable but may have been of late Iron Age/early Roman date, no other evidence of Roman activity was identified within the site area. No remains which could be interpreted as being associated with the postulated line of the Roman road.
- 7.5.5 The HCC Archaeological officer has asked that recommendations for potential mitigation are included in this report. Given the dispersed nature of the archaeological remains, an archaeological watching brief during groundworks is an appropriate mitigation strategy. However, if the archaeological remains are deemed of sufficient wider significance by the HCC Archaeological Officer, a combined strategy of watching brief and targeted strip map and sample excavation could be employed. Consideration should also be given to preservation in situ if areas of no impact (landscaping for example) can be positioned in the location of key archaeological features.

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

ASE would like to thank Persimmon Homes for commissioning the work and for their assistance throughout the project, and Hannah Fluck, HCC's, archaeological advisor for East Hampshire District Council for her guidance and monitoring.

### HER Summary Form

Site Code	BLS13					
Identification Name and Address	Brislands Lane, Four Marks, Hampshire					
County, District &/or Borough	East Hampshire District Council					
OS Grid Refs.	466421 134403					
Geology	Seaford Chalk Formation overlain by clay, silt, sand and gravel.					
Arch. South-East Project Number	5855					
Type of Fieldwork	<b>Eval.</b>	Excav.	Watching Brief	Standing Structure	Survey	Other
Type of Site	<b>Green Field</b>	Shallow Urban	Deep Urban	Other		
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval. 06/12/13 – 10/01/14	Excav.	WB.	Other		
Sponsor/Client	Persimmon Homes					
Project Manager	Paul Mason/ Dan Swift					
Project Supervisor	Hayley Nicholls					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	<b>Meso.</b>	<b>Neo.</b>	BA	<b>IA</b>	<b>RB</b>
	AS	MED	<b>PM</b>	Other Modern		
<p>Summary</p> <p><i>Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Persimmon Homes (South-East), to undertake an archaeological evaluation in advance of redevelopment of land at Brislands Lane, Four Marks, Hampshire. A total of 34 trenches were excavated.</i></p> <p><i>30 of the 34 trenches investigated were devoid of archaeological features. In total, 11 possible archaeological features were identified within the site area comprising of one linear ditch, one possible ditch terminus, four pits of which one was associated with three stake holes and a posthole, and one further isolated posthole.</i></p> <p><i>Other than the ditch terminus which contained two sherds of later prehistoric pottery or Roman pottery and a pit which contained large quantities of fire cracked flint and oak charcoal, all other features were devoid of artefacts and remained undated. All features were sealed by a subsoil horizon.</i></p>						



## OASIS Form

**OASIS ID: archaeol6-169118**

### Project details

Project name	An archaeological evaluation on land at Brislands Lane, Four Marks
Short description of the project	<p><i>Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Persimmon Homes (South-East), to undertake an archaeological evaluation in advance of redevelopment of land at Brislands Lane, Four Marks, Hampshire. A total of 34 trenches were excavated.</i></p> <p><i>30 of the 34 trenches investigated were devoid of archaeological features. In total, 11 possible archaeological features were identified within the site area comprising of one linear ditch, one possible ditch terminus, four pits of which one was associated with three stake holes and a posthole, and one further isolated posthole.</i></p> <p><i>Other than the ditch terminus which contained two sherds of later prehistoric pottery or Roman pottery and a pit which contained large quantities of fire cracked flint and oak charcoal, all other features were devoid of artefacts and remained undated. All features were sealed by a subsoil horizon.</i></p>
Project dates	Start: 06-12-2013 End: 10-01-2014
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	BLS13 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	53198 - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Cultivated Land 3 - Operations to a depth more than 0.25m
Current Land use	Other 10 - Orchard
Monument type	DITCH Late Prehistoric
Significant Finds	FLINT FLAKE Neolithic
Significant Finds	POTTERY Late Prehistoric
Methods & techniques	"Annotated Sketch", "Environmental Sampling", "Sample Trenches"
Development type	Rural residential

Prompt                      Planning condition

Position in the              After full determination (eg. As a condition)  
planning process

---

### Project location

Country                      England

Site location                HAMPSHIRE EAST HAMPSHIRE ALTON Land at Brislands Lane,  
Four Marks, Hampshire

Postcode                    GU34 5BB

Study area                  4.30 Hectares

Site coordinates            SU 664 344 51.1045195684 -1.05148867043 51 06 16 N 001 03 05  
W Point

Lat/Long Datum          Unknown

Height OD / Depth        Min: 173.85m Max: 182.26m

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### Project creators

Name of                      Archaeology South-East  
Organisation

Project brief                Archaeology South-East  
originator

Project design              Archaeology South-East  
originator

Project                        Paul Mason  
director/manager

Project supervisor        Hayley Nicholls

Type of                        Developer  
sponsor/funding  
body

Name of                        Persimmon Homes  
sponsor/funding  
body

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### Project archives

Physical Archive          Hampshire County Council Museums Service  
recipient

Physical Contents        "Ceramics", "Environmental", "Worked stone/lithics", "other"

Digital Archive            Hampshire County Council Museums Service  
recipient

Digital Contents          "none"

Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Survey","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Hampshire County Council Museums Service
Paper Contents	"none"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Correspondence","Drawing","Map","Report","Section","Survey","Unpublished Text"

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**Project bibliography 1**

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	An Archaeological Evaluation on land at Brislands Lane, Four Marks, Hampshire
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Nicholls, H.
Other bibliographic details	2014017
Date	2014
Issuer or publisher	ASE
Place of issue or publication	Portslade

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Entered by	Hayley Nicholls (h.nicholls@ucl.ac.uk)
Entered on	21 January 2014

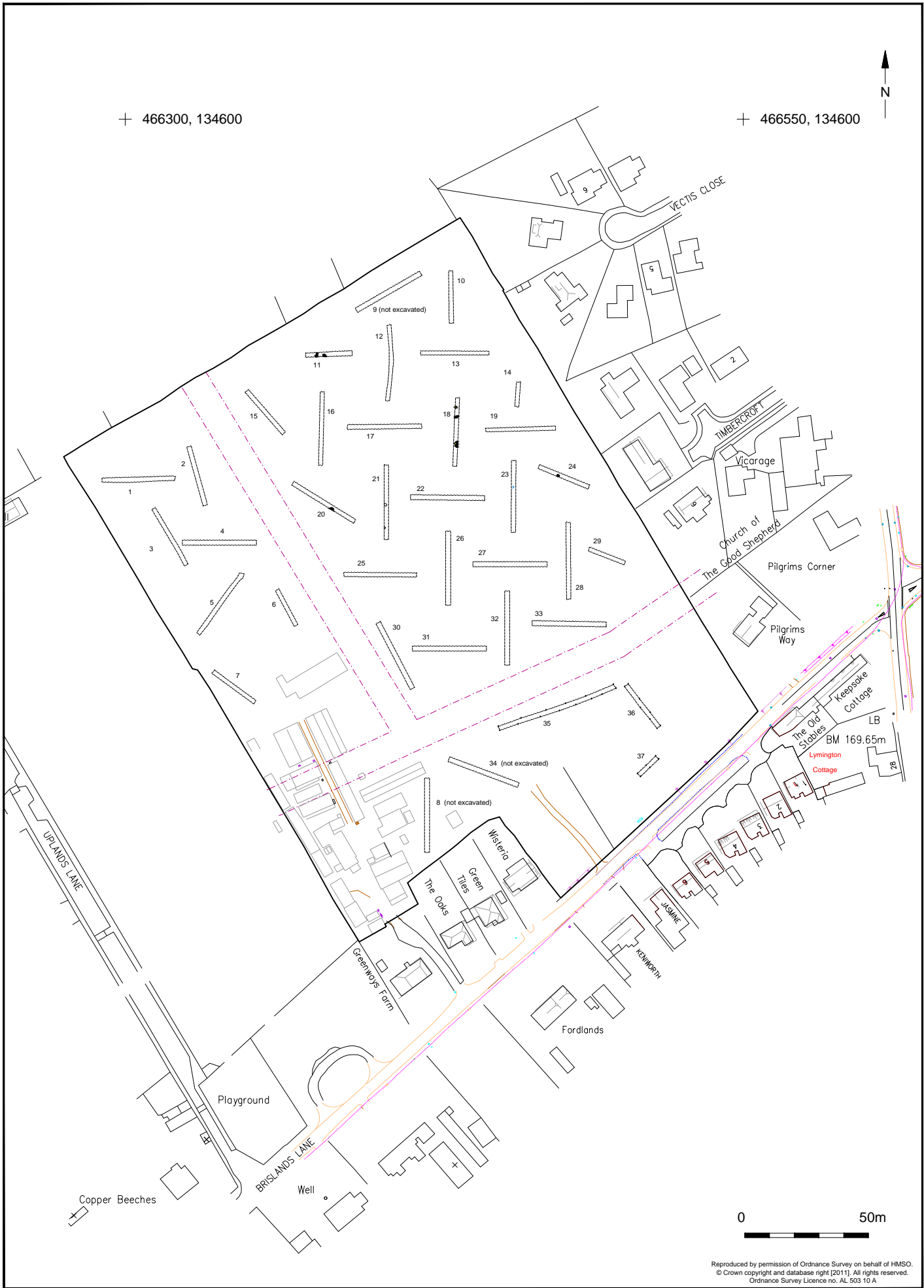
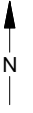


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Report Ref: 2014017	Drawn by: JLR		

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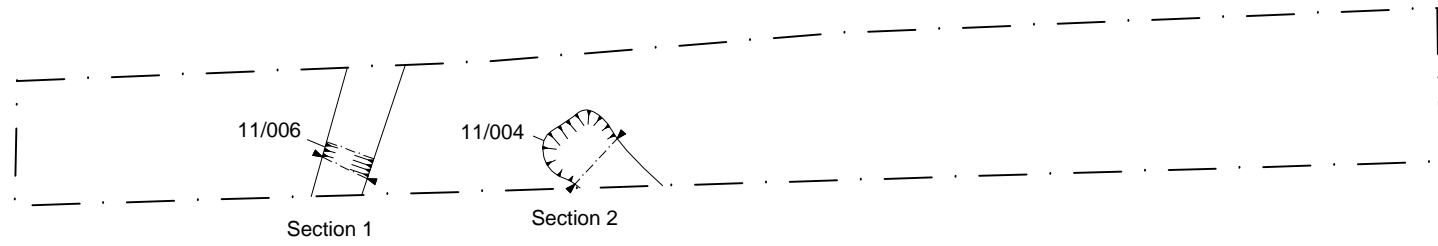


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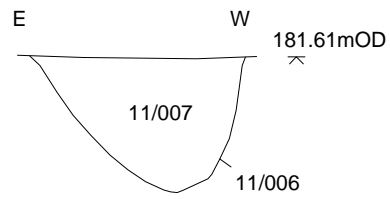
© Archaeology South-East		Land at Brislands Lane, Four Marks	Fig. 2
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Report Ref: 2014017	Drawn by: RHC		

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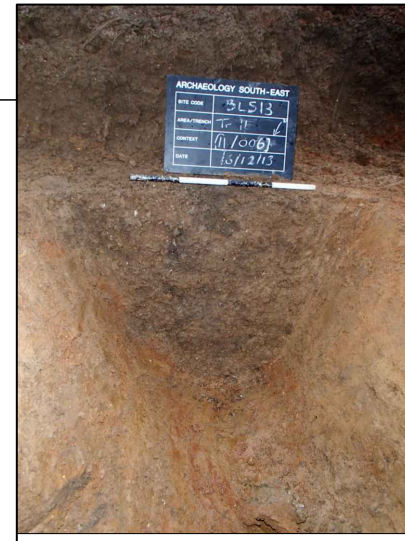
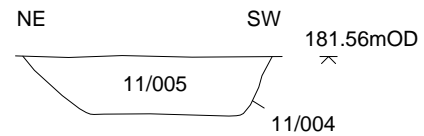
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Section 1



Section 2

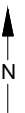


11/006 looking south

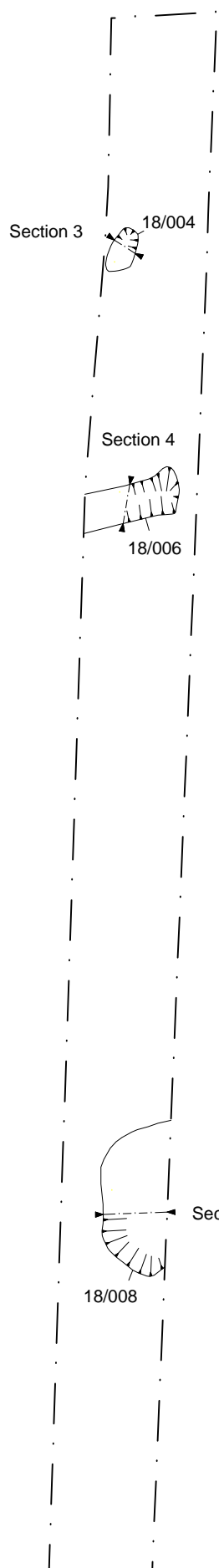


11/004 looking north-west

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Project Ref: 5855	Jan 2014	Trench 11 plan, sections and photographs	
Report Ref: 2014017	Drawn by: RHC		



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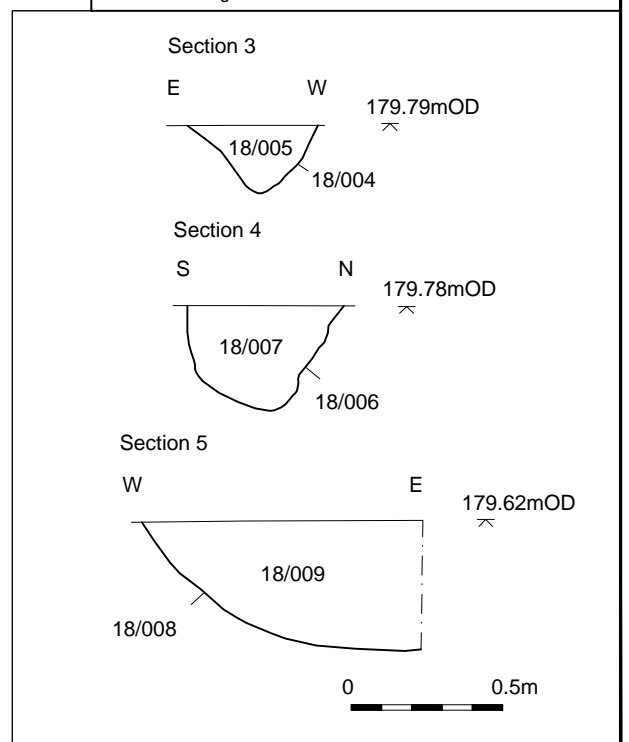


18/004 looking south-west

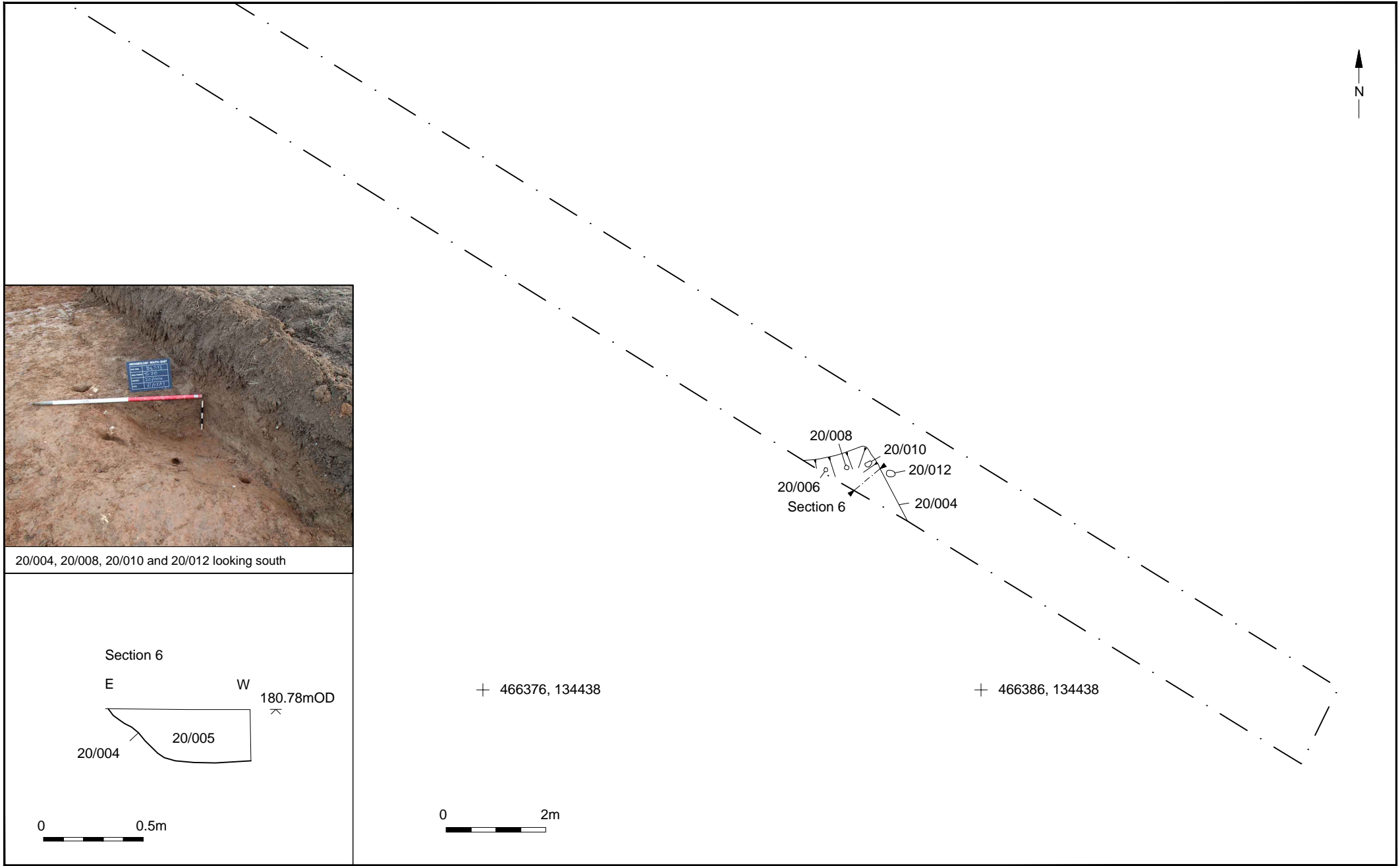


18/008 looking north

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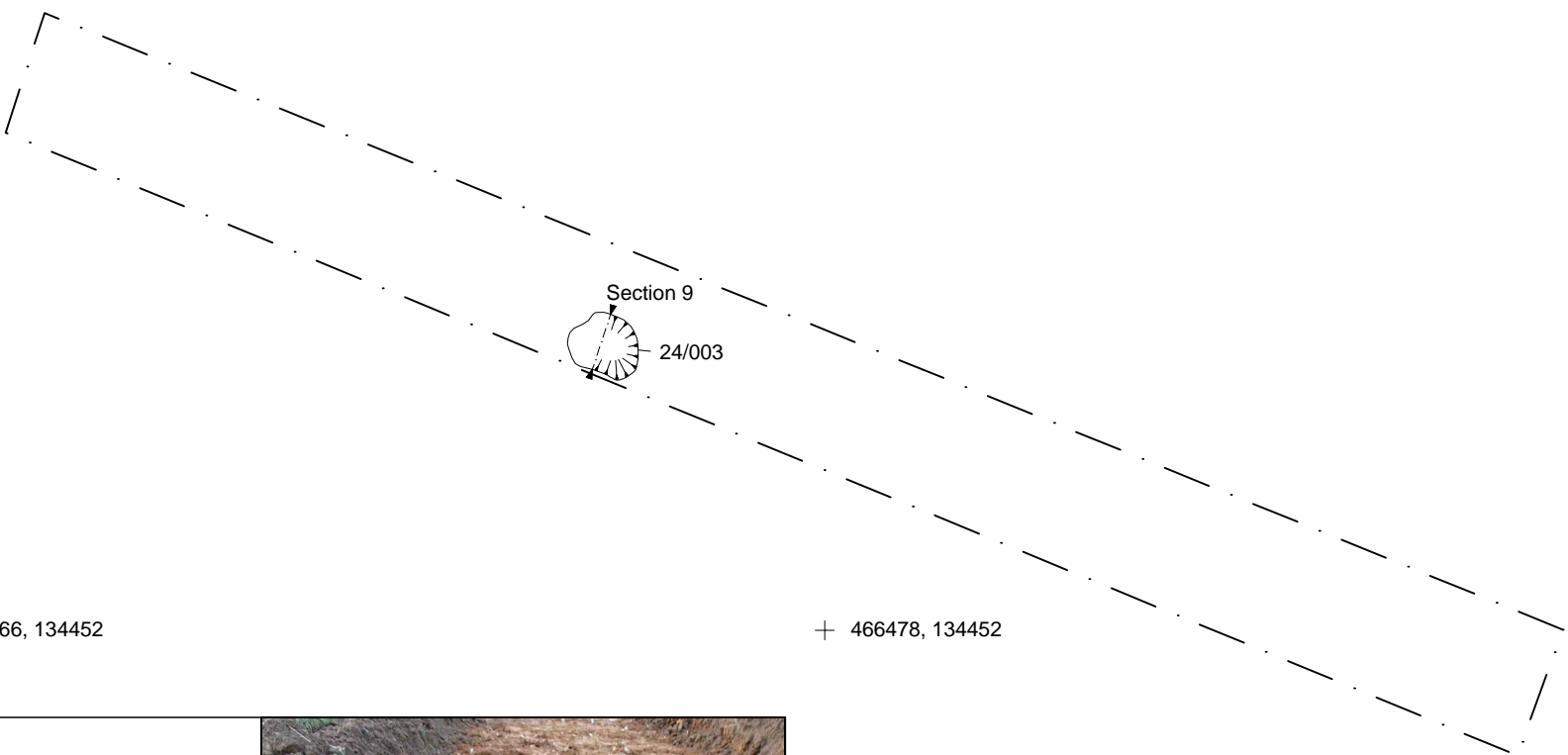
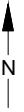


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Project Ref: 5855	Jan 2014	Trench 18 plan, sections and photographs	
Report Ref: 2014017	Drawn by: RHC		

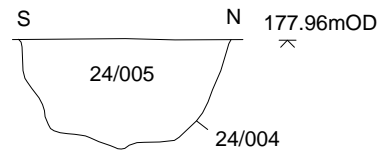


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Project Ref: 5855	Jan 2014	Trench 20 plan, section and photograph	
Report Ref: 2014017	Drawn by: RHC		





Section 7



24/004 looking north-west



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Project Ref: 5855	Jan 2014	Trench 24 plan, section and photograph	
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