

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

**GR WAREHOUSE SITE  
OLD STATION ROAD  
MENDLESHAM  
SUFFOLK**

**ASE Project No: 8542  
Site Code: MDS 184**

**ASE Report No: 2016073**



**March 2016**

## Archaeological Evaluation

**GR Warehouse Site, Old Station Road  
Mendlesham, Suffolk**

**NGR: TM 1017 6544**

**Planning Ref: 15/0254**

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**Abstract**

*This report presents the results of an archaeological evaluation carried out by Archaeology South-East at the GR Warehouse Site, Old Station Road, Mendlesham, Suffolk, in January 2016. The fieldwork was undertaken on behalf of New Hall Properties (Eastern) Ltd in advance of residential development.*

*Fifteen trial trenches were excavated across the c.1.8 hectare development area. No archaeological remains of prehistoric, Roman, Saxon or medieval date were identified. Post-medieval remains were restricted to the south-east of the area and comprised only a field boundary ditch which ran parallel to the modern day road. Recovered brick fragments and the fact that the ditch is not shown on early Ordnance Survey mapping suggest that it pre-dated the 19th century.*

*Other remains of modern date encountered in the north of the site are likely associated with the Mid-Suffolk Light Railway which opened in 1904 and was in operation for about 50 years. Of note, were a series of parallel depressions overlain by cindery material which may be remains of the former track bed of the railway line. Truncation of deposits in this area may also have occurred during railway construction.*

*The evaluation has determined that few archaeological remains are present on site, which broadly reflects the sparse nature of known remains in the surrounding area. Prior to the construction of the railway the site would appear to have only been in agricultural use.*

*As the identified archaeological remains are few and of limited significance it is considered that the intended development of this site will have a negligible impact on the heritage resource of this location.*

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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 (UCL) was commissioned by New Hall Properties (Eastern) Ltd (the Client) to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land at the GR Warehouse Site, Old Station Road, Mendlesham, Suffolk. The evaluation was undertaken to assess the nature and potential of the site for archaeological remains in advance of groundworks associated with the construction of 56 dwellings and associated infrastructure (planning reference 15/0254). The scope of work complied with requirements set out in a *Brief for Archaeological Evaluation* by the Suffolk County Council Archaeology Service (Batt 2015).
- 1.1.2 The c.1.8 hectare development site is located on the south western edge of the village of Mendlesham, in central Suffolk (TM 1017 6544) (Figure 1). The site is bounded by Old Station Road to the east, agricultural land to the south and west and by school playing fields to the north.
- 1.1.3 The northern part of the site consists of concrete surfaces and a series of asbestos-clad warehouses and other structures, currently used by a haulage and warehousing business, whilst to the south is former agricultural land, now partially scrub and partially paddock. A timber building for stock and storage occupies the south-eastern portion of the site at the western end of a hedged, rectilinear paddock.

### **1.2 Geology and Topography**

- 1.2.1 The site is relatively flat at 55m above Ordnance Datum (AOD), although there are localised differences in height, particularly downwards along the southern boundary of the concrete surface where a localised deep excavation has also taken place.
- 1.2.2 The geology of the site dates to the Quaternary Period and comprises of bedrock sand of the Crag Group, overlain by superficial deposits (chalky till with outwash sands, gravels, silts and clays) of the Lowestoft Formation (British Geological Survey © NERC 2015). During fieldwork, the geological deposit was recorded mainly as light yellow to mid orange brown silty clay with occasional gravel inclusions. Chalk-flecked bluer clay was noted in Trench 1.

### **1.3 Planning Background**

- 1.3.1 Outline planning permission (Ref. No: 15/0254) was granted by Mid-Suffolk District Council for demolition of all existing buildings and erection of 56 dwellings with accompanying infrastructure and full planning permission for the provision of open space.
- 1.3.2 In their capacity as archaeological advisors to the local planning authority, Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service (SCCAS) identified the

proposed development as affecting an area of archaeological potential, defined by information held by the Suffolk Historic Environment Record (SHER) and summarised in an archaeological desk-based assessment (Newman 2012). Consequently, archaeological conditions were placed upon planning consent.

1.3.3 The conditions stated that:

**3. ACTION REQUIRED PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF DEVELOPMENT – ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORKS**

*No development shall take place within the site until the implementation of a programme of archaeological work has been secured, in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme of investigation shall include an assessment of significance and research questions: and:*

- a. The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording*
- b. The programme for post investigation assessment*
- c. Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording*
- d. Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation*
- e. Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation*
- f. Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the Written Scheme of Investigation*
- g. The site investigation shall be completed prior to development, or in such other phased arrangement, as agreed and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority*

*REASON: To safeguard archaeological assets within the approved development boundary from impacts relating to any groundworks associated with the development scheme and to ensure the proper and timely investigation, recording, reporting and presentation of archaeological assets affected by this development. This condition is required to be agreed prior to the commencement of any development to ensure matters of archaeological importance are secured early to ensure avoidance of damage or loss due to the development and/or its construction. If agreement was sought at any later stage there is an unacceptable risk of loss and damage to archaeological and historical assets.*

**4. ACTION REQUIRED PRIOR TO THE FIRST OCCUPATION OF DEVELOPMENT – ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORKS**

*No building shall be occupied until the site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed, submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition 3 and the provision made for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition.*

*Reason – To safeguard archaeological assets within the approved development boundary from impacts relating to any groundworks associated with the development scheme and to ensure the proper and timely*

*investigation, recording, reporting and presentation of archaeological assets affected by this development.'*

- 1.3.4 Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service (SCCAS) produced a *Brief for a Trenched Archaeological Evaluation* (Batt 2015) as a first stage of work, to assess the nature and potential of the site.
- 1.3.3 Subsequently, a *Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Evaluation* (ASE 2016) was produced detailing the archaeological evaluation methodology, in response to the brief. The planned programme for trial trenching was approved by SCCAS prior to the commencement of works and was monitored by SCCAS Senior Archaeological Officer Kate Batt.

#### **1.4 Scope of Report**

- 1.4.1 This report details the results of archaeological evaluation of an area of land prior to development. It also assesses the further archaeological potential of the site. The fieldwork was carried out by Trevor Ennis (Senior Archaeologist) between the 25th and 29th January 2016, and was managed by Niall Oakey.
- 1.4.2 Recipients of this report comprise New Hall Properties (Eastern) Ltd, SCCAS, and the Suffolk Historic Environment Record. Copies of the report will be submitted to support the current planning application.
- 1.4.3 The results of this evaluation will be used to inform decisions regarding the need for and extent of any further archaeological work required in order to mitigate the impact of the development on any heritage assets that are present where a design solution cannot be implemented to ensure their preservation in-situ.

## **2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The historical and archaeological background to the site is covered in detail in a desk-based assessment (Newman 2012). The following represents a summary of the information contained within that report. Pertinent site and findspots are located on Figure 1.
- 2.2 The desk-based assessment was based upon the results of a search of the Suffolk Historic Environment Record (SHER), historic maps regression and a walkover of the Site. The SHER revealed that the only previous archaeological work within 500m of the Site had been fieldwalking in various locations, building recording at Bendalls Farm, evaluation by trial trenching at 29 Front Street and monitoring at 32 Front Street. The works on Front Street encountered a ditch and medieval artefacts at 32 and post-medieval pits at 29. Further records comprise Listed Buildings, Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) metal-detecting records and casual finds.
- 2.3 Considering the evidence chronologically, very little is known from the prehistoric and Roman periods. There are no scatters of prehistoric pottery sherds, worked flints or metalwork and evidence of this period is restricted to one polished axe and another stone axe known to be from ballast imported

into the area. The only remains from the Roman period are scatters of pottery and other artefacts 450 - 500m east and south-east of the Site (SHER MDS 114 and PAS1).

- 2.4 A single possible middle Saxon sherd has been recovered from fieldwalking to the west (SHER MDS 054), but the place name and the mention of Mendlesham in Domesday Book in 1086 indicate that the settlement was present before the Norman Conquest.
- 2.5 The Site is located 250m south of the historic core of Mendlesham. This settlement is recorded in Domesday Book and flourished during the medieval period (i.e. a market was granted in 1280). The settlement focus is assumed to have been to the west of the parish church, the parallel streets of Front Street and Old Market Street perhaps formerly demarcating a market square, later infilled.
- 2.6 Further evidence from the medieval period is scattered along the lanes and roads emanating from the village core, including the current Old Station Road. A small amount of 13th-15th-century pottery was recovered from the entrance to the school field c.100m north of the Site (SHER MDS 126) and just to the south-east is Elms Farm, a Grade II\* listed building (DSF4817) of 15th-century date with 16th-century additions. Also, a few coins and non-ferrous artefacts of medieval/post-medieval date have been found in the field to the south of the site (PAS2).
- 2.7 The earliest map evidence is the 1839 Tithe map which shows the Site as farmed by the tenant at Elms Farm and mostly comprising pasture apart from a stack yard where the agricultural building currently stands. Two small buildings are shown in the south-east corner of the field and are probably agricultural in usage as they are not listed as domestic dwellings. A pond is shown in the north-east corner, where the current entrance is located.
- 2.8 The pond had been backfilled by the time of the 1902 Ordnance Survey, but another was present at the south-eastern corner of the main field adjacent to the southern rectilinear paddock (this area was very boggy and supported water-loving vegetation at the time of a site visit on 9th December 2015). This 1902 map shows a railway line "in course of construction" crossing the northern part of the Site. This was the Mid-Suffolk Light Railway which opened for goods in 1904 and passengers in 1908, but had closed by 1952, with the track being removed in 1953. A small timber station building existed to the north of the tracks and to the east of the current warehousing. The railway was largely single track, but the 1902 survey indicates a length of double track for passing on the north-western part of the Site. Little evidence survives of the railway as it is within the footprint of the concrete yard, but Newman speculates that there may have been some ground truncation to maintain a generally level gradient (Newman 2012, 8).
- 2.9 The next available mapping (1978) shows that the Site had largely attained its current layout, with the northern half labelled "Depot" and the warehousing in place. Subsequently, detail changes have taken place in the buildings near the entrance and a north-south ditch bisects the grassed southern part of the Site.



### 3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Project Aims and Objectives

- 3.1.1 The primary aim of the archaeological evaluation was to determine the presence or absence of any archaeological remains and to establish their character, location, extent, date, quality and significance.
- 3.1.2 In the case of the discovery of archaeological remains with potential to contribute to regional research objectives, the evaluation results were to be reviewed in relation to research questions and topics identified in *Research and Archaeology: a Framework for the Eastern Counties, 2. research agenda and strategy* (Brown and Glazebrook 2000) and *Research and Archaeology Revisited: a revised framework for the East of England* (Medlycott 2011).

#### 3.2 Fieldwork Methodology

- 3.2.1 According to the *Written Scheme of Investigation*, seventeen trenches were to be excavated providing a 5% sample of the approximate 1.8 hectare development area (ASE 2016, Figure 2). All of the trenches were to be 30m long by 1.8m wide, apart from Trench 5 which was to be 20m long. Due to a variety of on-site constraints, some man-made and some natural, several of the trench positions had to be adjusted in the field and in a few cases trench lengths shortened. Of main concern was the need to allow vehicular access to the warehouses and yard which remained operational throughout the evaluation project. All variations of significance were brought to the attention of the monitoring officer during her site visit. No additional work was requested.
- 3.2.2 Trenches 1, 2 and 3 were all located within the working yard. Trench 1 was positioned close to its proposed location but with a gap left in its centre to allow access to the adjacent warehouse. Trench 2 was moved 8m to the south due to the presence of two large semi-permanent metal shipping containers impeding machine access to its original location. Trench 3 was also moved slightly south so as not to restrict access to the yard. Trenches 2 and 3 were both shortened (to 24m and 20m respectively) due to the depth of overburden and the modern nature of the underlying remains. Also, a wide safety buffer zone was allowed for an underground electricity cable that passed north/south between these two trenches.
- 3.2.3 Trenches 4 and 5 were not excavated. The proposed location of Trench 4 mainly extended beneath a row of semi-permanent shipping containers which it was not practical to move. Trench 5 was located within a clearly truncated part of the site which, at 54.23 AOD, was approximately 1.5m lower than the top of the eastern end of near-by Trench 2 (55.7 AOD) and c.1.3m lower than the western end of Trench 3 (55.57 AOD). Trench 5 was located close to the foot of a lorry loading ramp and close to the route of the Mid-Suffolk Light railway, either or both of which may have led to truncation in this area.

- 3.2.4 The remaining trenches (6 to 17) were located in, or fairly close to, their proposed positions. Minor movements occurred due to the presence of tree canopies, a number of water-filled ditches, a few deeper open-pitted areas and other modern disturbances. All of these trenches were excavated to their full 30m length, except for Trenches 6 and 12. The extent of Trench 6 was shortened by 5m due to a combination of these factors (water-filled ditches, pits and trees) and Trench 12 was shortened a similar amount due to the presence of a modern pipe which also limited the depth of machining to above the potential archaeological horizon.
- 3.2.5 Machining of the trenches was conducted, under close archaeological supervision, by a 360° tracked excavator equipped with a toothless bucket in stages to reveal the stratigraphy. Modern surface deposits, topsoil and subsoil were removed down to the top of the natural geology or the top of any archaeological remains encountered.
- 3.2.6 All archaeological features were hand-excavated; either 50% of discrete features or 1m segments of larger features were excavated. Modern features were only excavated sufficient as to confirm their date and relationships.
- 3.2.7 Standard ASE excavation, artefact collection, and recording methodologies were employed throughout, with all work carried out in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) Code of Conduct, by-laws and guidelines (CIfA 2014a, 2014b) and in compliance with *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003).
- 3.2.8 All trenches were recorded regardless of the presence/absence of archaeological features. This included a record of soil stratigraphy at each end, and in the middle, and a post-excavation photograph as a minimum. Written records were maintained on pro forma trench sheets.
- 3.2.9 All features were digitally photographed and planned using GPS.
- 3.2.10 Where present, finds were retrieved from all excavated deposits and identified by context number to a specific deposit. These have been processed according CIfA guidelines (CIfA 2014c). Where appropriate, finds were marked with the site code and context number.

### **3.3 Archive**

- 3.3.1 Subject to the landowner's permission, Archaeology South-East will arrange with the Suffolk HER for the deposition of the archive and artefact collection, currently held at the offices of ASE. The contents of the archive are tabulated below (Tables 1 and 2).

<b>Item</b>	<b>Quantity</b>
Context sheets	10
Section/Plan sheets	4
Digital photos	50
Drawing register	1
Trench Record forms	15

Table 1: Quantification of site paper archive

Bulk finds (quantity)	0.5 box
Environmental sample residues & flots	0

Table 2: Quantification of artefacts and environmental samples

## 4.0 RESULTS

### 4.1 Summary

4.1.1 A total of 15 trenches were excavated. Most measured 30m in length by 1.8m in width. Of the four trenches which varied, Trench 3 measured 20m in length, Trench 2 measured 24m and Trenches 6 and 12 both measured 25m. Final trench locations are shown on Figure 2.

4.1.2 Mechanical excavation of the trenches reached depths that varied from 0.40m to 1.30m. Three distinct areas could be distinguished. In the yard to the north, trench depths were between 1.1m and 1.3m with the overburden primarily consisting of concrete overlying modern deposits (Trenches 1 - 3). Trench depths in the south-west of the site (Trenches 6 – 10) were similar, with the land here having been artificially raised by anything up to 0.90m by the addition of modern deposits on top of buried topsoil. By contrast, land in the south-east was relatively undisturbed with topsoil overlying subsoil and trench depths of around 0.50m to 0.60m.

4.1.3 Encountered archaeological remains were few, consisting of a post-medieval ditch identified in Trenches 16 and 17 and modern features probably associated with the former light railway in Trenches 2 and 3. All features were cut into the natural deposit which consisted of bright light yellow to mid orange brown silty clay. The ditch was sealed by subsoil. Feature legibility was good for the modern features and reasonable for the post-medieval ditch.

4.1.4 The four trenches containing remains of interest are described below in sections 4.2-4.5. The remainder, containing no archaeological deposits or features, are summarised in Appendix 1.

### 4.2 Trench 2 (Figure 3)

Heights at W end of trench = 55.89m AOD (top) 54.69m AOD (base)

Heights at E end of trench = 55.70m AOD (top) 54.41m AOD (base)

Context	Type	Description	Max Dimensions (L x W x D in m)
2/001	Layer	Topsoil – black sandy silt and turf	c.5 x 1.8 x 0.10
2/002	Layer	Subsoil – greyish yellow sand, concrete & rubble	24+ x 1.8 x 0.28
2/003	Layer	Subsoil – black sand and brick	24+ x 1.8 x 0.32
2/004	Layer	Subsoil – mid grey sandy silt	c.10 x 1.8 x 0.18
2/005	Layer	Subsoil – orangey yellow/light brownish grey sand	18+ x 1.8 x 0.18
2/006	Layer	Subsoil – concrete and Light greyish yellow sand	18+ x 1.8 x 0.22
2/007	Layer	Black cindery sandy gravel	18+ x 1.8 x 0.23
2/008	Cut	Depression	0.8+ x 0.7 x 0.23
2/009	Layer	Natural – orangey yellow clay	-

Table 3: Trench 2 list of recorded contexts

- 4.2.1 Trench 2 was orientated east/west and was located in the centre north of the site (Figure 2). It was re-positioned approximately 8m south of its proposed WSI location.
- 4.2.2 The trench was excavated to a depth of around 1.2-1.3m with overburden [2/001] to [2/007] consisting entirely of modern deposits overlying disturbed and probably truncated natural clay [2/009] (Figure 3, Section 1). The trench was fully machine-excavated for a length of 18m, part-excavated for a further 6m and then discontinued due to the excessive trench depth and the modern nature of the deposits encountered.
- 4.2.3 At the east end of the trench was a series of parallel north/south aligned depressions cutting into the natural clay (Figure 3). One of these depressions was investigated (as [2/008]) and found to be over 0.8m long by 0.7m wide and 0.23m deep. All of the depressions appeared to be filled by a uniform black cindery gravel-like material, [2/007], which also overlay them and became thicker and more apparent (c.0.2m thick) in section in the west of the trench. One large iron bolt of modern date was recovered from this deposit. Trench 2 was positioned within the probable route of the former Mid-Suffolk Light Railway (Figure 2) and it is highly likely that the parallel depressions and cindery material are remains of the track bed.

### 4.3 Trench 3

Heights at W end of trench = 55.57m AOD (top) 54.52m AOD (base)

Heights at E end of trench = 55.23m AOD (top) 54.45m AOD (base)

Context	Type	Description	Max Dimensions (L x W x D in m)
3/001	Fill	Main fill of 3/005 – dark grey silty clay	10 x 1.5 x 0.30
3/002	Fill	Upper fill of 3/005 – Brown clay	7 x 0.6 x ?
3/003	Layer	Natural – Mid brown silty clay	-
3/004	Structure	Modern brick wall	2+ x 0.10+ x 0.75
3/005	Cut	Rectangular feature	10 x 1.5 x 0.3
3/006	Layer	Surface – concrete over gravel	20 x 1.7 x 0.30
3/007	Layer	Subsoil – dark greyish brown silty clay	20 x c.1.3 x 0.50
3/008	Layer	Surface – concrete over brick rubble	20 x 0.10+ x 0.70
3/009	Layer	Subsoil – brown and greyish brown silty clay	20 x c.0.5 x 0.40

Table 4: Trench 3 list of recorded contexts

4.3.1 Trench 3 was located in the north-east of the site and was moved slightly south from its original proposed position (Figure 2). The trench was just over 20m long by 2m wide and varied in depth from 0.80m to a maximum depth of 1.1m. The overburden appeared to be entirely of modern origin and there was some deposit variation between the north and south sides of the trench. The north side consisted of 0.20-0.30m of concrete and yellow gravel levelling [3/006] overlying up to 0.50m of dark greyish brown subsoil [3/007] containing brick and other modern inclusions. The southern side consisted of 0.60-0.70m of concrete slab and brick rubble [3/008] over 0.30-0.40m of mixed brown and greyish brown silty clay [3/009]. This lower deposit directly overlay fill [3/002] of feature [3/005].

4.3.2 Slightly dirty mid brown silty clay [3/003], exposed in the eastern half of the

trench, was confirmed as the top of a natural deposit by means of a machine-cut sondage. With depth, and where exposed in the western half of the trench, this deposit became lighter and more yellowish in colour. The natural at the eastern end of Trench 3 was crossed by a modern service trench.

4.3.3 In the western half of Trench 3 was a rectangular, flat-bottomed feature [3/005], 10+m long by 0.3m deep and which appeared to continue beyond the edge of the site to the south (Figure 4). The feature was mainly filled with dark grey silty clay [3/001] and had traces of a possible later fill [3/002] along its southern edge. No dating evidence was recovered from either fill although modern inclusions were apparent within fill [3/002]. At the west end of the trench was a modern, north/south aligned, brick wall [3/004]. Both the wall and the rectangular feature are also likely to be remains associated with the Mid-Suffolk Light Railway, the line of which which ran immediately south of Trench 3 (Figure 2).

#### 4.4 Trench 16

Heights at W end of trench = 54.37m AOD (top) 53.67m AOD (base)

Heights at E end of trench = 53.60m AOD (top) 53.25m AOD (base)

Context	Type	Description	Max Dimensions (L x W x D in m)
16/001	Layer	Topsoil – darkish greyish sandy silt	30 x 1.8 x 0.25
16/002	Layer	Subsoil – mid brownish grey sandy silt	30 x 1.8 x 0.35
16/003	Layer	Natural – Light orange brown silty clay	-
16/004	Fill	Light brownish grey sandy silt	1.8+ x 1.6 x 0.25
16/005	Cut	Ditch segment	1.8+ x 1.6 x 0.25

Table 5: Trench 16 list of recorded contexts

4.4.1 Trench 16 was aligned west-north-west/east-south-east and located in the south-east corner of the large field making up the southern half of the site (Figure 2). The trench was 30m long by 1.8m wide and up to 0.59m deep. The removed overburden consisted of 0.20-0.25m of dark grey topsoil [16/001] above c.0.35m of mid brownish grey sandy silt subsoil [16/002]. The eastern end of the trench was only excavated to a depth c.0.44m due to the presence of a modern pipe trench and field drain. Elsewhere in the base of the trench natural light orangey brown clay [16/003] was exposed.

4.4.2 In the western half of the trench was a shallow north-north-east/south-south-west aligned boundary ditch [16/005] that cut into the natural clay and had been sealed by the subsoil. The ditch was 1.6m wide by 0.25m deep with a broadly concave profile and a very gradually sloping upper western side (Figure 5, Section 2). It had a single fill, [16/004], of light brownish grey sandy silt. No finds were recovered.

#### 4.5 Trench 17

Heights at W end of trench = 54.34m AOD (top) 53.39m AOD (base)

Heights at E end of trench = 52.92m AOD (top) 52.35m AOD (base)

Context	Type	Description	Max Dimensions (L x W x D in m)
17/001	Layer	Topsoil – dark grey silty clay	30 x 1.8 x 0.20
17/002	Layer	Subsoil – Light grey & brown silty clay	30 x 1.8 x 0.18

Context	Type	Description	Max Dimensions (L x W x D in m)
17/003	Layer	Natural – mid yellowish brown silty clay	-
17/004	Fill	Brownish grey clay silt (not exc.)	1.8+ x 0.9
17/005	Cut	Ditch segment (not exc.)	1.8+ x 0.9

Table 6: Trench 17 list of recorded contexts

4.5.1 Trench 17 was aligned similarly to Trench 16 and was located to its south in a separate small rectilinear paddock (Figure 2). The maximum depth of removed overburden was 0.40m, consisting of roughly equal amounts of topsoil [17/001] and subsoil [17/002]. Frequent stones within the topsoil suggest the presence of a former cobbled trackway leading into the field from the east.

4.5.2 Toward the western end of Trench 17 was a small boundary ditch [17/005] (Figure 2) filled with brownish grey clay silt [17/004]. The ditch was not excavated as it appeared to be a continuation of ditch 16/005 in Trench 16, and also because of the high water table. However, two fragments of brick of c.17th-18th century date were recovered from the top of its fill.

#### 4.6 Metal-detecting

4.6.1 The spoil heaps of all of the trenches in the south-east of the site (i.e. 11-17) were metal-detected. No finds of any antiquity were discovered and so were not retained. Spoil heaps alongside the remaining trenches in the north and south-west of the site were not investigated due to the high levels of modern metallic contamination in the overburden.

### 5.0 FINDS

#### 5.1 Summary

5.1.1 A small assemblage of finds was recovered during the evaluation. All finds were washed and dried or air dried as appropriate. They were subsequently quantified by count and weight and were bagged by material and context (Table 7). All finds have been packed and stored following ClfA guidelines (2014c). No further conservation is required.

Context	CBM	Weight (g)	Fe	Weight (g)	Stone	Weight (g)
2/007			1	354		
17/004	2	576			1	1038
<i>Total</i>	2	576	1	354	1	1038

Table 7: Finds quantification

#### 5.2 Ceramic Building Material by Isa Benedetti-Whitton

5.2.1 Two pieces of brick weighing 570g were recovered from evaluation context [17/004]. Both brick fragments were made from the same fabric, a dense, medium orange fabric with common granular quartz, sparse white calcareous inclusions up to 3mm and sparse pebble fragments up to 10mm (but mainly <5mm). Although the brick pieces were too broken to measure either length

or width, both had a thickness of 62mm and there was no indication of frogging. The larger fragment had a patch of sandy lime mortar on its upper surface, and apart from being broken the bricks seemed well-made and regularly formed. Collectively these fragments are suggestive of a c.17th-18th century date.

### **5.3 Geological Material** by Luke Barber

5.3.1 The evaluation recovered a single piece of stone from the site. This consists of an irregular weathered piece (1040g) of iron-stained Sarsen sandstone from context [17/004]. The stone shows no signs of human modification.

### **5.4 Metalwork** by Susan Chandler

5.4.1 A single metal find was recovered during the evaluation, from context [2/007]. This is a large iron bolt measuring 170mm long, with a shank diameter of 20mm and a 30mm square head. This screw is of modern date.

## **6.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SAMPLES**

6.1 No suitable features were identified for bulk environmental sampling during the evaluation.

## **7.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

### **7.1 Overview of stratigraphic sequence**

7.1.1 The natural geological deposit was encountered at a range of heights between 55.26m AOD in the north-west (Trench 17) and 52.35m AOD in the south-east (Trench 1) and reflects a gradual slope downwards from north to south with most of the intervening trenches having AOD's of around 53 to 54m.

7.1.2 Where undisturbed (Trenches 11-17), the overburden consisted of topsoil above varying amounts of subsoil above natural clay. This sequence was also present in the south-west of the site although the land here had been raised by up to 0.9m by the addition of modern deposits. The recovery of a temporary number plate from a trailer suggested that this may have occurred in the late 1970s or early 80s. Trenches 1 to 3 in the north of the site were cut through concrete yard and modern make-up deposits. Buried topsoil was present in Trench 1 overlying natural but was absent in Trenches 2 and 3 the deposit sequences in which which consisted entirely of modern deposits.

7.1.3 The density and distribution of archaeological remains was very low with a single, north-east/south-west aligned, ditch located in Trenches 16 and 17 in the south-east corner of the site and modern railway-related features in Trenches 2 and 3 in the north.

### **7.2 Deposit survival and existing impacts**

7.2.1 The ditch in Trenches 16 and 17 was located beneath topsoil and subsoil and

appeared to not have been greatly disturbed.

- 7.2.2 Truncation of underlying deposits was only obvious in Trenches 2 and 3 where some terracing of the land may have occurred during construction of the Mid-Suffolk Light Railway. Although the ground level in the south-west of the site has been raised significantly, perhaps during construction works for the modern depot, this may not have adversely impacted upon any potential archaeological remains and indeed may assist in their survival if/where present.

### **7.3 Discussion of archaeological remains by period**

- 7.3.1 No evidence was found for any prehistoric or Roman activity on site which reflects the sparse nature of known remains of this date in the immediate area. Similarly, no evidence of Saxon or medieval activity was identified. Mendlesham is mentioned in the Domesday Book but the site is located well away from the historic core of the village, although is closer to Elms Farm, on the opposite side of the road, which may have 15th-century origins. It is therefore probable that the site was used solely for agriculture in the medieval period.
- 7.3.2 The ditch located in Trenches 16 and 17 is likely to be a field boundary ditch dating to the earlier post-medieval period. The ditch appeared to run parallel to the modern day road but its position does not directly correlate with any boundaries shown on the Tithe map or early Ordnance Survey mapping. It may therefore pre-date the 19th century. The recovered brick fragments of possible 17th-18th century date would appear to be consistent with this assumption.
- 7.3.3 Other recorded remains all date to the modern period and are likely associated with the construction and functioning of the Mid-Suffolk Light Railway which opened in 1904 and was dismantled in 1953. The parallel depressions and overlying cindery material in Trench 2 are highly likely to be remains of the track bed for the railway line, as may also be the recovered large iron bolt. The exact purpose of the rectangular cut in Trench 3 is less certain, although its shape is reminiscent of a track-side horticultural border. The adjacent brick wall ran perpendicular to the line of the railway and may be part of some track-side structure continuing west of the trench.

### **7.5 Consideration of research aims**

- 7.5.1 The evaluation has achieved its primary research aim in that it has demonstrated that very few archaeological remains predating the railway are present on site and the date and significance of those that are has been established. The development area would appear to have been entirely in agricultural use until the construction of the railway in north part of the site in the early 20th-century. Following the railway's demise, a warehouse depot was established in its place in the latter part of the 20th century.
- 7.5.2 In view of the limited archaeological remains encountered the results of the evaluation have no potential to contribute to regional research objectives as identified in *Research and Archaeology: a Framework for the Eastern*



*Counties, 2. research agenda and strategy* (Brown and Glazebrook 2000) and *Research and Archaeology Revisited: a revised framework for the East of England* (Medlycott 2011).

## **7.6 Conclusions**

- 7.6.1 The evaluation has demonstrated that the GR Warehouse site is unlikely to contain any archaeological remains of significance. The isolated post-medieval ditch found here is not considered to be of importance. The railway-related remains are of low significance and interest and are adequately documented by modern mapping.
- 7.6.2 It is considered that the proposed development of this site will have a negligible impact on the heritage resource of this location.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

ASE would like to thank New Hall Properties (Eastern) Ltd for commissioning the work and for their assistance throughout the project. Kate Batt of Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service is thanked for her guidance and monitoring undertaken on behalf of the LPA. The excavation was undertaken by Trevor Ennis with assistance from Marek Kamysz and Tom Lyons. Site survey was carried out by Lukasz Miciak and report figures were prepared by Andrew Lewsey. The fieldwork was project managed by Niall Oakey and the post-excavation process was project managed by Mark Atkinson.

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**Appendix 1: Archaeologically negative trenches - list of recorded contexts**

Context	Type	Description	Deposit thickness m	Height m AOD
1/001	Layer	Modern deposits	0.48-0.68	55.93-56.21
1/002	Layer	Buried topsoil	0.22-0.50	
1/003	Layer	Natural	-	54.98-55.26
6/001	Layer	Modern deposits	0.58-0.75	55.93-56.0
6/002	Layer	Buried topsoil	0.23-0.39	
6/003	Layer	Natural	-	54.94-55.01
7/001	Layer	Topsoil	0.14-0.32	55.98-56.19
7/002	Layer	Modern deposit	0.63-0.70	
7/003	Layer	Natural	-	54.85-55.06
7/004	Layer	Buried topsoil	0.25-0.38	
8/001	Layer	Modern deposit	0.45-0.67	55.50-55.90
8/002	Layer	Buried topsoil	0.28-0.33	
8/003	Layer	Natural	-	54.88-55.10
9/001	Layer	Topsoil	0.05-0.10	55.34-55.73
9/002	Layer	Modern deposit	0.20-0.40	
9/003	Layer	Buried topsoil	0.25-0.40	
9/004	Layer	Subsoil	0.10-0.15	
9/005	Layer	Natural	-	54.58-54.88
10/001	Layer	Topsoil	0.30-0.35	54.96-55.85
10/002	Layer	Modern deposit	0.30-0.56	
10/003	Layer	Natural	-	54.36-54.73
10/004	Layer	Buried topsoil	0.30-0.32	
10/005	Layer	Subsoil	0.08	
11/001	Layer	Topsoil	0.30-0.45	54.25-54.61
11/002	Layer	Subsoil	0.10-0.20	
11/003	Layer	Natural	-	53.71-54.11
12/001	Layer	Topsoil	0.32-0.38	53.80-54.04
12/002	Layer	Subsoil	0.12-0.16	
12/003	Layer	Natural	-	53.30-53.55
13/001	Layer	Topsoil	0.10-0.15	54.62-54.80
13/002	Layer	Subsoil	0.20-0.25	
13/003	Layer	Natural	-	54.24-54.38
14/001	Layer	Topsoil	0.10-0.15	54.25-54.52
14/002	Layer	Subsoil	0.25	
14/003	Layer	Natural	0.05+	53.84-54.07
15/001	Layer	Topsoil	0.10-0.15	53.98-54.42
15/002	Layer	Subsoil	0.20-0.35	
15/003	Layer	Natural	0.20+	53.70-53.90

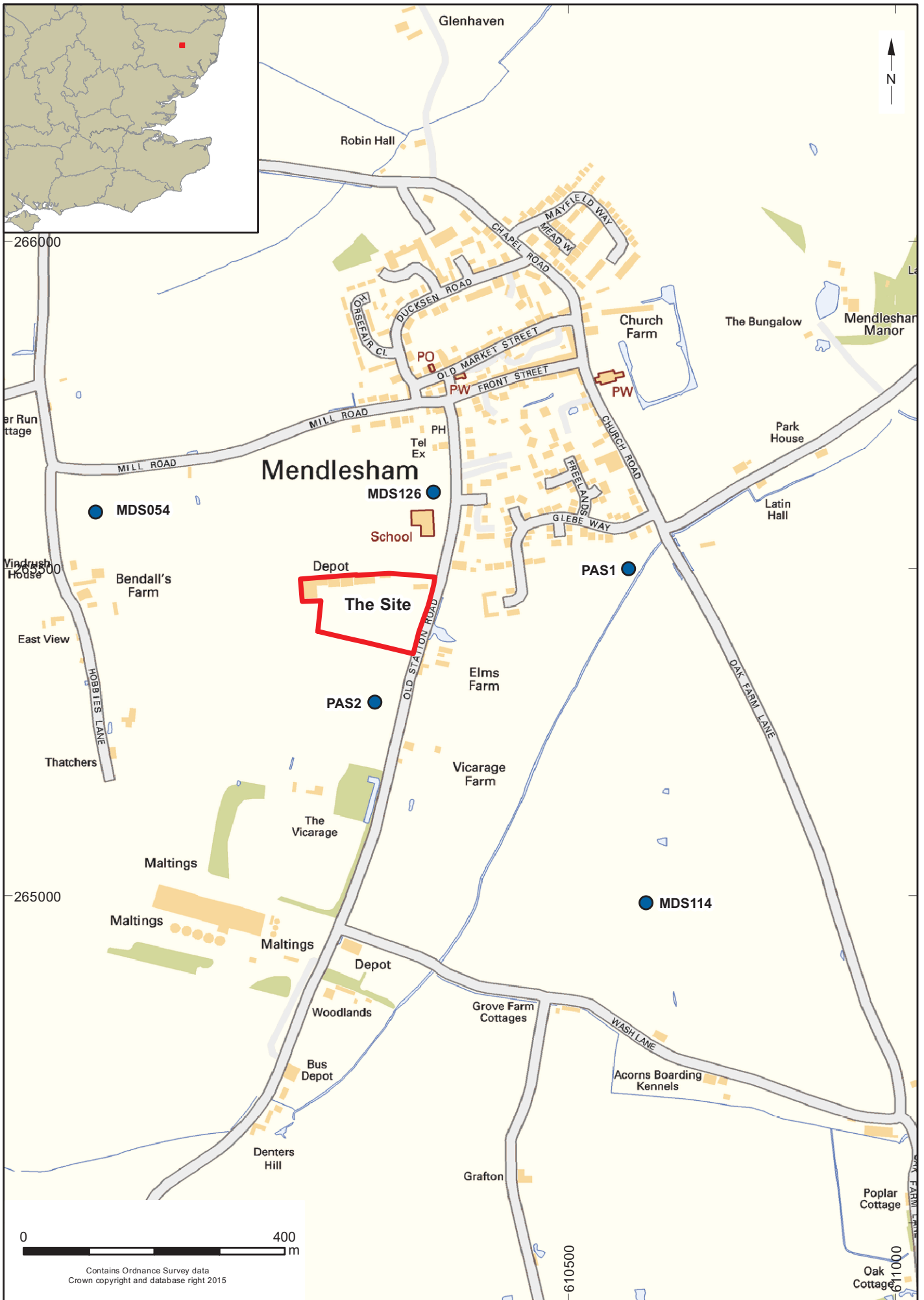
## Appendix 2: HER Summary Form

Site Code	MDS 184					
Identification Name and Address	GR Warehouse Site, Old Station Road, Mendlesham, Suffolk					
County, District &/or Borough	Mid-Suffolk District Council					
OS Grid Ref.	TM 1017 6544					
Geology	Mixed deposits (chalky till with outwash sands, gravels, silts and clays) of the Lowestoft Formation over Crag Group sand					
Archaeol. South-East Project Number	8542					
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	<b>Eval. 25/01/16- 29/01/16</b>	Excav.	WB.	Other		
Sponsor/Client	New Hall Properties (Eastern Ltd)					
Project Manager	Niall Oakey					
Project Supervisor	Trevor Ennis					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED	<b>PM</b>			
<p>Fifteen trial trenches were excavated across the c.1.8 hectare development area. No archaeological remains of prehistoric, Roman, Saxon or medieval date were identified. Post-medieval remains were restricted to the south-east of the area and consisted only of a post-medieval field boundary ditch which ran parallel to the modern day road. Recovered brick fragments and the fact that the ditch did not show on tithe and early OS mapping suggests that it pre-dated the 19th century.</p> <p>Other remains of modern date in the north of the site are likely associated with the Mid-Suffolk Light Railway which opened in 1904 and was in operation for about 50 years. Of note, was a series of parallel depressions overlain by cindery material which are probably remains of the former track bed of the railway line. Truncation of deposits in this area may also have occurred during railway construction.</p> <p>The evaluation has determined that few archaeological remains are present on site and broadly reflects the sparse nature of known remains in the surrounding area. Prior to the construction of the railway the site would only appear to have been in agricultural use.</p>						
Associated reports: none						

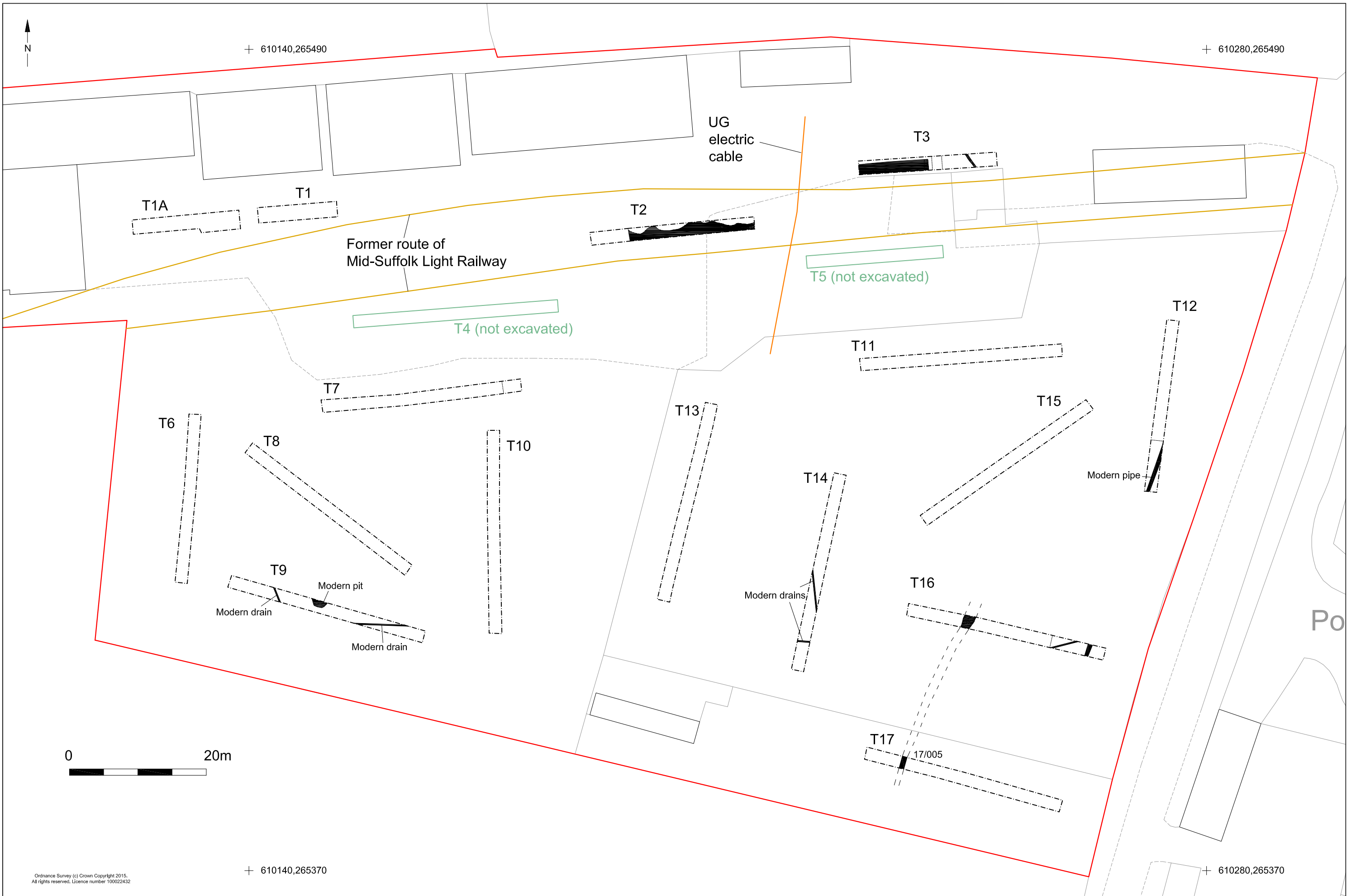
**OASIS Form**

<b>OASIS ID: 238871</b>	
<b>Project details</b>	
Project name	GR Warehousing, Old Station Road, Mendlesham
Short description of the project	Fifteen trial trenches were excavated across the c.1.8 hectare development area. No archaeological remains of prehistoric, Roman, Saxon or medieval date were identified. Post-medieval remains were restricted to the south-east of the area and consisted solely of a post-medieval field boundary ditch which ran parallel to the modern day road. Recovered brick fragments and the fact that the ditch did not show on early mapping suggests that it pre-dated the 19th century. Other remains of modern date in the north of the site are likely associated with the Mid-Suffolk Light Railway which opened in 1904 and was in operation for about 50 years. Of note, were a series of parallel depressions overlain by cindery material which may be related to the former track bed of the railway. Truncation of deposits in this area may also have occurred during railway construction.
Project dates	Start: 25-01-2016 End: 29-01-2016
Previous/future work	Not known / Not known
Any associated project ref. codes	MDS 184 – Site code
Type of project	Field evaluation
Current Land use	Industry and Commerce 4 - Storage and warehousing
Monument type	DITCH Post Medieval
Significant Finds	CBM Post Medieval
Methods & techniques	"Targeted Trenches"
Development type	Rural residential
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)
<b>Project location</b>	
Country	England
Site location	SUFFOLK MID SUFFOLK MENDLESHAM GR Warehousing, Old Station Road, Mendlesham
Study area	1.8 Hectares
Site coordinates	TM 1017 6544 52.24643389295 1.07905538009 52 14 47 N 001 04 44 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 52.35m Max: 55.26m
<b>Project creators</b>	
Name of Organisation	Archaeology South East
Project brief originator	Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service

Project design originator	Archaeology South-East
Project director/manager	Niall Oakey
Project supervisor	Trevor Ennis
Type of funding body	client
<b>Project archives</b>	
Physical Archive recipient	Suffolk County Council Archive Store
Physical Archive ID	MDS 184
Physical Contents	"Ceramics", "Metal"
Digital Archive recipient	Suffolk County Council Archive Store
Digital Archive ID	MDS 184
Digital Contents	"Ceramics", "Metal"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography", "Survey", "Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Suffolk County Council Archive Store
Paper Archive ID	MDS 184
Paper Contents	"Ceramics" ,"Metal"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Photograph" ,"Plan", "Report", "Section", "Survey "
<b>Project bibliography</b>	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	GR Warehouse Site, Old Station Road, Mendlesham: Archaeological Evaluation
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Ennis, T.
Other biblio. details	Rep. No. 2016073
Date	2016
Issuer or publisher	Archaeology South-East
Place of issue	Witham, Essex
Description	A4 blue spine, c.30 pages with illustrations
Entered by	Trevor Ennis (T.Ennis@ucl.ac.uk)
Entered on	1 March 2016



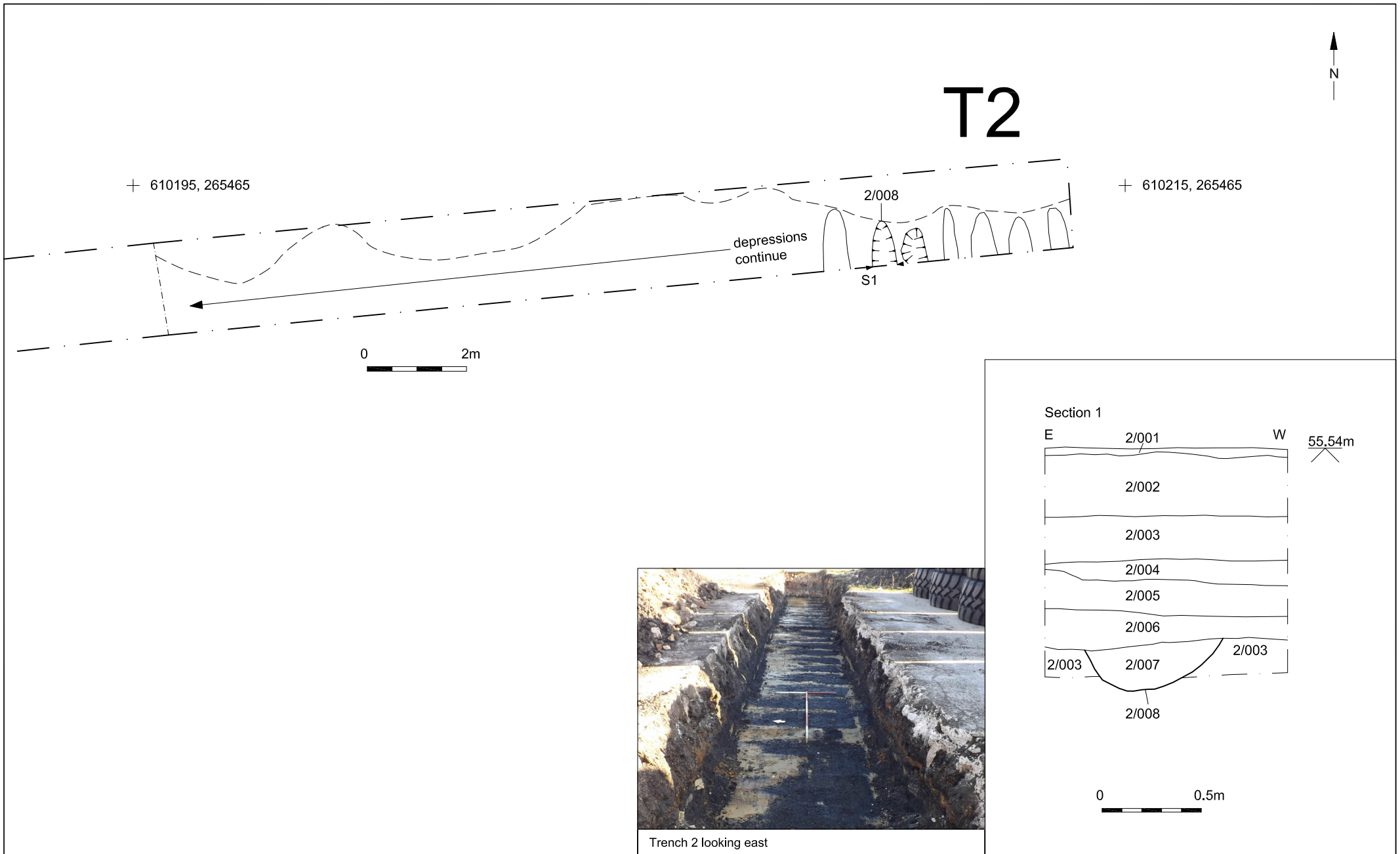
© Archaeology South-East		GR Warehousing Site, Old Station Road, Mendlesham, Suffolk	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 8542	Feb 2016	Site location and SHER references mentioned in the text	
Report No: 2016073	Drawn by: APL		



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Project Ref: 8542	Feb 2016	Trench locations	
Report Ref: 2016073	Drawn by: APL		

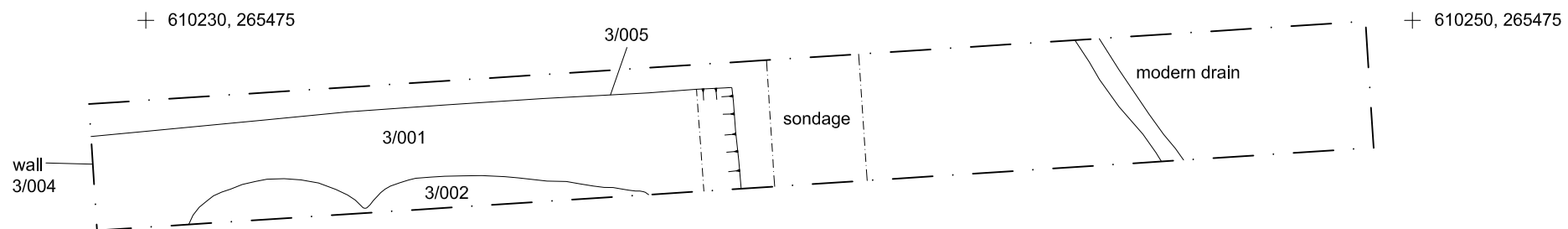




© <b>Archaeology South-East</b>		GR Warehousing Site, Old Station Road, Mendlesham, Suffolk	Fig. 3
Project Ref: 8542	Feb 2016	Trench 2 plan, section and photograph	
Report Ref: 2016073	Drawn by: APL		



# T3



Wall 3/004 looking west

Modern feature 3/005 looking west

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Project Ref: 8542

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Report Ref: 2016073

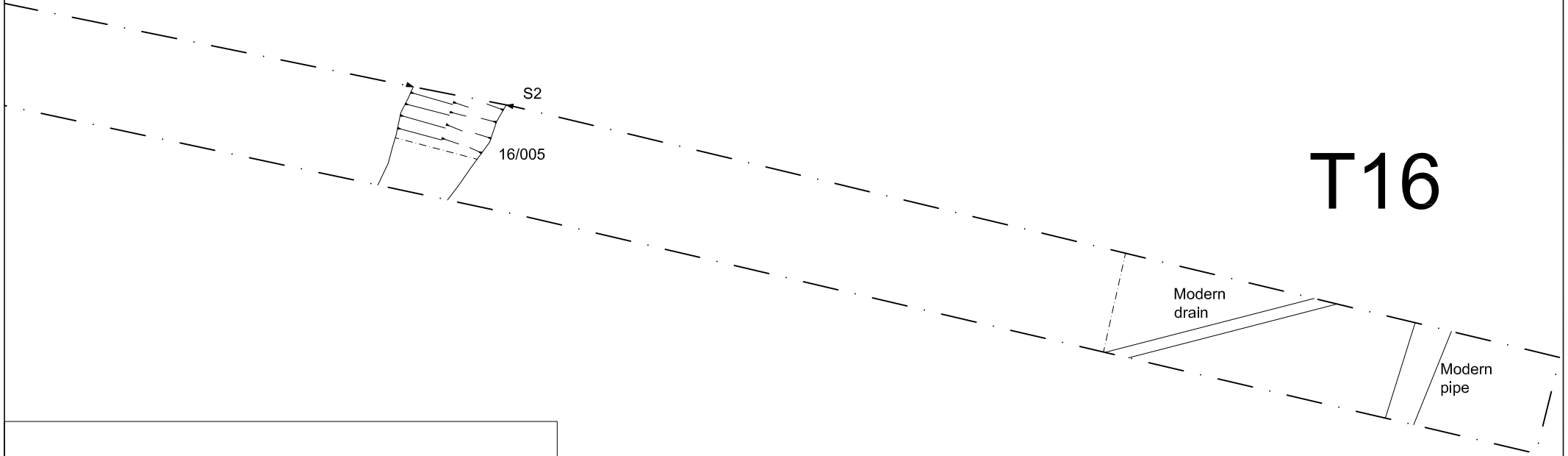
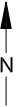
Drawn by: APL

Trench 3 plan and photographs

Fig. 4

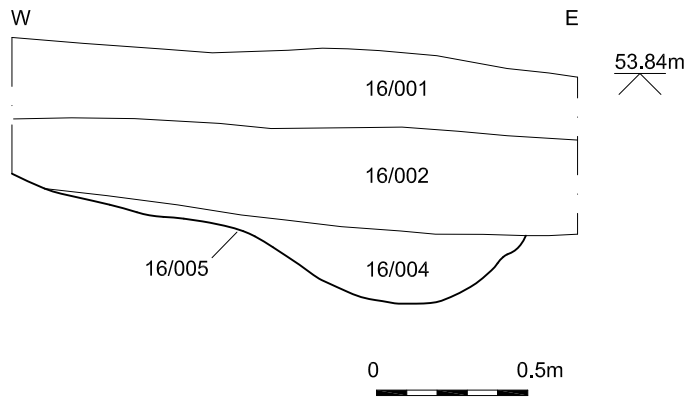
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+ 610260, 265410



# T16

Section 2



Ditch 16/005 looking north



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Project Ref: 8542

Feb 2016

Report Ref: 2016073

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Trench 16 plan, section and photograph

Fig. 5





© <b>Archaeology South-East</b>		GR Warehousing Site, Old Station Road, Mendlesham, Suffolk	Fig.6
Project Ref: 8542	Feb 2016	Trenches 1, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 & 17 photographs	
Report Ref: 2016073	Drawn by: APL		



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