

Archaeological Evaluation

**Land off Mill End,
Thaxted, Essex**

**ASE Project No: 170392
Site Code: TX27**

ASE Report No: 2017252



June 2017

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Abstract

Archaeology South-East was commissioned by A.J. Wadhams Construction to conduct an archaeological evaluation on Land off Mill End, Thaxted, Essex, in May 2017.

The 0.7ha site is occupied by a linear range of 16th and 19th century listed standing buildings along part of its Mill End road frontage. These, and a non-conformist burial ground occupying the northeast corner of the site, are shown on historic mapping. Subsequent mapping attests to the northern end of the site being later occupied by a Sunday School and then a sweet factory in the early 20th century. The south of the site was in use as allotments in the 19th century. More recently, the site has been under modern industrial usage, ending in 2012 with the closure of the Molecular Products works.

The evaluation has revealed the presence of buried archaeological remains in three of the five trenches investigated. The recorded remains survive below a variable thickness of c.0.18-1.23m of overburden, which generally increases northwards across the site.

No remains predating the medieval period have been found. The recorded medieval remains predominantly comprise a number of pits, together with a posthole, gully and possible ditch. It is likely that a modest density and low complexity of such features is present across the eastern side of the site and that these constitute the remains of domestic and possible manufacturing activities (production of bone and antler handles for the cutlery industry) undertaken to the rear of posited roadside properties during the 12th-15th centuries.

Tudor period pitting may represent continuing domestic activity, possibly behind and associated with one or both of the 16th century buildings still extant along part of the road frontage. The presence and extents of the non-conformist burial ground in the northeast of the site is confirmed by the evaluation results. It contains inhumation burials, at least some in brick-lined graves/vaults, the number, ordering and intercut complexity of which has not been fully established by this evaluation.

Although the burial ground boundary appears to have been maintained into the late post-medieval period, the remains of other inserted walls and brick-built buildings date to the post-chapel and cemetery use of the northern end of the site. It is likely that these relate to the later, 19th and early 20th century, use of the site as a Sunday School and then sweet factory. Broadly contemporary allotment use of the remainder part of the site does not appear to have had significant impact.

It is unlikely that significant archaeological remains are present within the west of the site. Although not investigated and demonstrated by this evaluation, it is probable that the more substantial industrial structures of the former Molecular Products complex, particularly the large structures in the middle of the site, will have impacted upon below ground remains to some extent, where present.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Background

- 1.1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE) undertook an archaeological evaluation commissioned by A.J. Wadhams Construction on Land off Mill End, Thaxted, Essex.
- 1.1.2 This archaeological work was undertaken in fulfilment of a condition attached to planning consent for the redevelopment of the site.

1.2 Location, Topography and Geology

- 1.2.1 The town of Thaxted is located in the north-west of Essex, in Uttlesford district. The site lies to the immediate south of the historic centre of the medieval market town. It is bounded by residential properties to the west, arable farmland to the south and a petrol station to the north. Mill End / Dunmow Road (B184) bounds the site to the east, which links the town with Saffron Walden to the north and Dunmow to the south (Figure 1)
- 1.2.2 The development site is c.0.7ha in extent and consists of gradually sloping land from c. 90m AOD at the northern end of the site to c. 85m AOD at the southern end. Prior to its redevelopment, it was under light industrial use and occupied by Molecular Products. In addition to historic buildings along the road frontage, the site was occupied by various modern industrial buildings (warehouses / production facilities) and offices, with exterior areas of the site laid to concrete and tarmac hardstanding. The majority of the modern buildings have since been demolished in preparation for redevelopment.
- 1.2.3 The underlying bedrock geology of the site is mapped by the British Geological Survey (BGS) as London Clay, overlain by Lowestoft Formation Diacton (BGS 2017).

1.3 Planning Background

- 1.3.1 A full planning application (UTT/16/0171/FUL) was submitted to Uttlesford District Council for the proposed redevelopment of the site for 22 new dwellings and the conversion of Listed Buildings into seven dwellings, with associated open space, roads, access alterations and landscaping.
- 1.3.2 As the site is located within a potentially archaeologically sensitive area, within the Thaxted Conservation Area, an archaeological condition was attached to the planning consent. This stipulated that a trial trench evaluation was required in order to determine the presence or absence of archaeological remains within the development area and, where present, allow informed mitigation measures to be put in place. This advice is in line with guidance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (DCLG 2012) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG 2014).
- 1.3.3 Accordingly, following discussions regarding the scope of work required, a brief of works was issued for the trial trench evaluation by the Essex County Council Place Services (ECC 2017)
- 1.3.4 A Written Scheme of Investigation for archaeological evaluation was subsequently prepared (ASE 2017a) and approved prior to the commencement of fieldwork.

1.4 Scope of Report

- 1.4.1 This report describes and assesses the results of the archaeological evaluation carried

out the between 15th and 19th of May 2017. The fieldwork was supervised by Angus Forshaw and managed by Andy Leonard. Mark Atkinson and Jim Stevenson managed the post-excavation process.

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 This archaeological background has been summarised from a DBA previously prepared for the site (OAE 2014), with due acknowledgement. The locations of sites and find spots are indicated on Figure 1.

2.2 Prehistoric

2.2.1 Minimal evidence for prehistoric activity has been found in the area. Limited primarily to isolated finds such as an undated stone axe (EHER1393) and finds from Weaverhead Lane, 215m to the north of the site (EHER14672/73). These are indicative of sporadic land use in this period.

2.2.2 The first settlement activity dates to the Bronze Age, with ceramics recovered on Wedow Road, 300m north of the site, and during excavations at Weaverhead Lane, where lithics and pottery were recovered.

2.2.3 Late Bronze Age and Iron Age settlement evidence is sparse, with a ditch containing occupation remains 340m west of the development (EHER46763) possibly representing a field boundary.

2.2.4 Later prehistoric evidence was recorded at a site uncovered on Stamford Road to the north of Thaxted town (EHER 46184), which contained a cemetery containing six cremations and five inhumations along with ditched boundaries suggestive of a farmstead or domestic occupation. The churchyard within the centre of town contained further evidence of burial, with a cremation including a brooch and ceramic vessel.

2.3 Roman

2.3.1 A Roman road, running north from Stane Street, has been uncovered 40m to the east of the site at Thaxted Primary School (EHER1452; EHER9967). The road measured 8.30m wide and is cambered to the sides by around 0.10m. Possible medieval repair of the road was uncovered to the north of the site at Weaverhead Lane (EHER1402).

2.3.2 Some evidence for foundations of Roman buildings were discovered 200m south-east of the site during excavations of clay pits (EHER 1478/79). Other Roman evidence is in the form of residual and metal detected finds including a number of coins and an early Roman brooch.

2.4 Anglo-Saxon and Medieval

2.4.1 There is no artefactual evidence of Saxon origins recovered from Thaxted, perhaps indicating that the bulk of Saxon Thaxted lies under the existing medieval buildings.

2.4.2 The medieval town gained prosperity stimulated by the granting of a market in 1205, when Thaxted Manor owned all of the land encompassing the town (Medlycott 1999, 6). It is thought that the manor house, along with associated buildings, was located to the west of town, 250m to the north-west of the site.

2.4.3 A rapid expansion of the town began in the 14th century (Medlycott 1999, 6) due to the increasing prosperity of Cutlers of the town. Evidence of the cutlery industry has been discovered in backyard plots on Town Street (EHER17910; Germany and Wade 1998

and EHER14675, Medlycott 1996), Park Street (EHER45644; Roy 2004a), and Weaverhead Lane (EHER45648; Andrews 1989) in the form of bone working and copper alloy waste.

- 2.4.4 Additional backyard activity was uncovered in an excavation 170m to the north-west of the site, including property boundaries and a cesspit as well as domestic and industrial waste, indicating the presence of a cutlery workshop facing onto Town Street (EHER45645; Roy 2004b).
- 2.4.5 More recently, excavation on land north of the junction between Orange Street and St Clements found a number of medieval pits and a property boundary ditch, as well as post-medieval pits and quarries (Pooley 2016). These features reportedly contained large quantities of medieval/post-medieval domestic and cutlery waste, and it was concluded that the site appeared to have been used primarily as a rubbish dump, probably for the market at Middle Row. Recovered cutlery waste included worked-bone and broken bone handles, iron-working waste, iron blade fragments and copper-alloy scrap including sheets and rivets.
- 2.4.6 Possible evidence of a medieval tile kiln may have been located 200m to the southeast of the site at Clay Pits Farm (EHER1478/79).

2.5 Post-Medieval and Modern

- 2.5.1 There are three listed post-medieval standing buildings located within the site area, forming a long range along the road frontage. An early 16th century red brick house (EHER25783) is located near the northeast corner. A 16th century timber framed building (EHER 25782) is located on the end of this house. A further early 19th century red brick building (EHER25781) is also present to its south.
- 2.5.2 During the 17th and 18th centuries the town became a stronghold of religious non-conformism and John Reynolds was granted a licence to hold Presbyterian meetings in his house at Mill End in 1622 (Medlycott 1999, 15). The 1844 tithe map shows the site area divided between four properties, all three listed buildings being present by this time. The accompanying apportionment lists that the northernmost was owned and occupied by the 'Society of Friends'. It is possible that this was the Meeting House or chapel. The same apportionment also indicates that the southern two buildings were occupied by a maltster, presumably undertaking brewing-related activities on the premises.
- 2.5.3 The 1876 1st edition OS map labels the same building as the 'Friends Meeting House' and labels the northern garden plots to the rear as 'Burial Ground'. The rest of the site is seemingly shown set out as allotments.
- 2.5.4 The site is shown on the 1897 OS map to be occupied by part of a Sunday School, which appears to have acquired the use of the Meeting House building. The burial ground is no longer labelled and has presumably ceased to be used as such.
- 2.5.5 The Sunday School, and probably the maltsters premises, has been replaced by a sweet factory by the time of the 1920 OS map, with new buildings located in the northeast and east of the site, arranged around two yards. The rest of the site area is clearly labelled as allotment gardens.
- 2.5.4 The site was located on the southern edge of the town throughout the post-medieval period. It remains so to the present day, the landscape to its south being predominantly

agricultural with some modern residential development to its west.

- 2.5.5 Modern usage of the site for industrial purposes, by Molecular Products, began in 1976 and continued until 2012. This incorporated the listed buildings along its frontage.

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

3.1 Project Aims and Objectives

3.1.1 The general 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. Any archaeological remains uncovered by the evaluation would be assessed against the wider background of previous fieldwork in the area.

3.1.2 Specific aims of the fieldwork were:

- Determine the presence of any medieval or post-medieval occupation associated with the historic settlement.
- Determine the presence of any industrial activity in the area, particularly the medieval cutlery industry.
- Determine the presence for earlier activity or settlement of the area.

3.1.3 In the event that significant discoveries were made, the significance and potential of the results were to be considered with reference to pertinent research themes and questions 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 Method

3.2.1 The archaeological evaluation was conducted in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation (ASE 2017a) and Method Statement (ASE 2017b).

3.2.2 Five evaluation trenches were excavated under direct archaeological supervision using a JCB equipped with a toothless ditching bucket. Three of the trenches measured 30m long and 1.80m wide, and two trenches measured 15m long and 3.60m wide. Mechanical excavation was undertaken to the depth of the natural stratum and/or the top of any archaeological deposits present. All spoil heaps were scanned visually for artefacts during machining of the trenches.

3.2.3 The trenches were arranged across the site area. Trenches were realigned slightly from the position shown in the WSI due to the presence of standing buildings, demolition material and welfare cabins. All trenches were accurately located using Global Positioning System (GPS) survey equipment.

3.2.4 Standard ASE excavation, artefact collection and recording methodologies were employed throughout, with all work carried out in accordance with the ClfA (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists) Code of Conduct (ClfA 2014a), *Standard and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (ClfA 2014b) and in compliance with *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003).

3.2.5 All stratigraphy was recorded using the ASE context recording system, with all exposed archaeological features and deposits recorded and sample excavated, except obviously modern features and disturbances.

- 3.2.6 Where required, a 50% sample of all contained features and a minimum of 1m length of linear features was excavated. Post-medieval and modern features were excavated as necessary in order to establish their date and significance. Features were excavated using hand tools and planned by hand and using digital survey equipment.
- 3.2.7 Due to the large quantity of modern metal within the overlying made-ground deposits, spoil heaps were not scanned with a metal detector, but were scanned visually for artefacts.
- 3.2.8 Where present, all finds were collected from all excavated deposits and retained for specialist identification and study.
- 3.2.9 Bulk soil samples were collected for the purposes of the recovery of environmental material and small artefacts. Samples were taken from deposits from uncontaminated and potentially dated deposits judged to have the potential for the survival of plant macrofossils.

3.3 Archive

- 3.3.1 The site archive is currently held at the offices of ASE and will be deposited at Saffron Walden Museum in due course. The contents of the primary archive are tabulated below (Table 1).

Description	Number	Type
Trench sheets	5	A4 paper
Context sheets	52	A4 paper
Plan and section sheets	3	Permatrace
Environmental sample register	0	A4 paper
Bulk sample sheets	0	A4 paper
Drawing register	1	A4 paper
Site photographic register	3	A4 paper
Digital images	109	Hi-res JPGS

Table 1: Quantification of site archive

4.0 RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 Archaeological remains were encountered in three of the evaluation trenches, as described in sections 4.3-4.5 below. Elsewhere, the evaluation generally revealed a sequence of tarmac or concrete over made-ground deposits, with occasional underlying subsoil deposits being present on top of natural geology.
- 4.1.2 The results from the archaeologically negative trenches are briefly described in section 4.6 with further detail of their recorded deposit sequences tabulated in Appendix 1.
- 4.1.3 Excavated trench positions are shown in Figure 2 and recorded features/deposits in Figures 3-6.

4.2 General Soil descriptions

- 4.2.1 The trench locations were all covered by a tarmac or concrete surface that overlay a layer of modern made-ground, which varied between 0.07m – 0.50m in thickness. The majority of trenches contained further, underlying, deposits of made-ground, which in some cases continued beyond their base.
- 4.2.2 Where exposed, the natural geology was generally compact mid yellow brown clay, with areas of mid brown silty clay.
- 4.2.3 Archaeological remains were encountered either cutting the subsoil or, where this was not present, directly into the underlying geological deposits. Where archaeological features or significant artefactual remains were found above height of the natural, excavation was stopped at this level.

4.3 Trench 2 (Fig. 3)

*Dimensions: 23.00m x 2.10m x up to 0.63m deep
 Ground level: 86.74m AOD (NW), 87.43m AOD (SE)*

Context	Type	Description	Length & Width (m)	Depth / Thickness (m)
2/001	Layer	Tarmac	trench	0.09 – 0.18
2/002	Layer	Made-ground	trench	0.07
2/003	Layer	Subsoil	trench	0.21 – 0.29
2/004	Layer	Natural	trench	-
2/005	Fill	Single fill of [2/006]	-	0.53
2/006	Cut	Ditch terminus?	trench x 0.89	0.53
2/007	Fill	Single fill of [2/008]	-	0.09
2/008	Cut	Posthole	0.24 x 0.27	0.09
2/009	Fill	Upper fill of [2/011]	-	0.33
2/010	Fill	Basal fill of [2/011]	-	0.23
2/011	Cut	Pit	1.09	0.57
2/012	Fill	Single fill of [2/013]	-	0.06

2/013	Cut	Pit	0.46 x 0.45	0.06
2/014	Fill	Single fill of [2/015]	-	0.24
2/015	Cut	Pit	1.50	0.24
2/016	Fill	Single fill of [2/017]	-	0.21
2/017	Cut	Pit	1.42 x 1.41	0.21
2/018	Fill	Single fill of [2/019]	-	0.28
2/019	Cut	Gully terminus	1.10 x 0.71	0.28
2/020	Fill	Single fill of [2/021]	-	0.41
2/021	Cut	Pit	1.55	0.41

Table 2: Trench 2 list of recorded contexts

- 4.3.1 Trench 2 was aligned northwest/southeast and ran parallel to the road on the eastern side of the site. Natural deposits of mid reddish brown silty clay [2/004] were located at the base of the trench. These were overlain by mid grey brown subsoil [2/003], beneath a modern made-ground deposit of compacted gravels [2/002]. The trench was sealed by tarmac [2/001]. Features were primarily encountered below the subsoil and cut into natural deposits; those features cut into subsoil deposits are specifically noted below.
- 4.3.2 A possible linear cut [2/006] ran northeast/southwest into the trench from the northeastern edge, and terminated within the trench. The ditch was 0.89m in width and 0.53m in depth with steep straight sides and a flat base. The feature was cut through the subsoil into the natural below, and contained a single fill [2/005] of firm dark greyish brown clayey silt with occasional oyster shell, charcoal. Six sherds of medieval pottery and a quantity of ceramic building material (CBM) were recovered from it.
- 4.3.3 An isolated posthole [2/008] measuring 0.24m x 0.27m x 0.09m was located to the south of ditch [2/006]. The posthole had shallow sloping sides, a u-shaped base and contained a single fill [2/007] of mid brownish grey silty clay, but no finds.
- 4.3.4 Pit [2/011] extended beyond the northeast baulk of the trench and was observed to cut the subsoil. It was probably square in plan with steep straight sides and a flat base. The basal fill of the pit [2/010] was formed of light greyish brown silty sand and was 0.23m thick. An upper fill [2/009] of greyish brown silty clay contained two sherds of medieval pottery, bone, CBM and oyster shell. A piece of worked antler (RF<1>) was also retrieved. This is likely to be a waste piece, possibly deriving from medieval cutlery manufacture.
- 4.3.5 Three intercutting pits were located in the centre of the trench. The largest of these was [2/015], which was rectangular in plan with moderate sloping sides and a flat base, and continued off the southwestern baulk. The cut measured 0.24m deep and 1.50m wide. It contained a single fill [2/014] of mid grey brown silty clay containing moderate charcoal and mortar fragments as well as bone, CBM and six sherds of medieval pottery. This pit was truncated by two smaller pits, [2/013] and [2/021].
- 4.3.6 Pit [2/013] was cut into the top of [2/015] and measured 0.46m x 0.45m x 0.07m with shallow sides and a flat base. The single fill of dark greyish brown silty clay [2/012] contained three probably medieval pottery sherds, bone and CBM fragments.

- 4.3.7 Pit [2/021] extended beyond the southeastern baulk of the trench and cut pit [2/015] at its northwest point. The pit was 1.55m wide and 0.42m deep with straight sides and a flat base. The single fill [2/020] was a light brownish grey silty clay with occasional charcoal flecks, from which two sherds of medieval pottery were retrieved.
- 4.3.8 A further rectangular pit [2/017] was found in the southwest of the trench, continuing off the southwestern baulk of the trench. The pit contained a single fill [2/016] of light grey brown silty clay measuring 1.41m wide and 0.21m deep. It had straight sloping sides and a flat base and contained three sherds of medieval pottery, bone and CBM.
- 4.3.9 At the southeastern end of the trench was a gully [2/019] running from the middle of the trench off the southwestern baulk aligned northeast/southwest. The feature contained a single fill [2/018] of dark brown silty clay.

4.4 Trench 4 (Fig.4)

Dimensions: 15.00m x 3.60m x up to 1.08m deep

Ground level: 86.55m AOD (NW), 86.18m AOD (SE)

Context	Type	Description	Length & Width (m)	Depth / Thickness (m)
4/001	Layer	Tarmac	trench	0.06 – 0.09
4/002	Layer	Made-ground	trench	0.28 – 0.50
4/003	Layer	Made-ground	trench	0.42 – 0.50
4/004	Cut	Pit	0.78 x 0.74	0.18
4/005	Fill	Upper fill of [4/004]	-	0.11
4/006	Fill	Fill of [4/004]	-	0.02
4/007	Fill	Basal fill of [4/004]	-	0.16
4/008	Cut	Pit	0.78	0.58
4/009	Fill	Single fill of [4/008]	-	0.58
4/010	Masonry	Wall	trench x 0.34	0.44
4/011	Cut	Wall cut	trench x 0.34	0.44
4/012	Masonry	Wall	0.34	0.15
4/013	Cut	Wall cut	0.34	0.55
4/014	Masonry	Wall	trench x 0.15	0.14
4/015	Cut	Wall cut	trench x 0.33	0.39
4/016	Cut	Pit	-	1.07+
4/017	Fill	Single fill of [4/016]	-	1.07+
4/018	Cut	Pit recut	1.00	0.81
4/019	Fill	Upper fill of [4/018]	-	0.12
4/020	Fill	Fill of [4/018]	-	0.35
4/021	Fill	Basal fill of [4/018]	-	0.65
4/022	Masonry	Wall	trench x 0.22	0.39
4/023	Cut	Wall cut	trench x 0.22	0.59

4/024	Cut	Pit	0.57	0.43
4/025	Fill	Single fill of [4/024]	-	0.43
4/026	Fill	Upper fill of [4/027]	-	unex
4/027	Cut	Pit	1.70 x 1.70	unex
4/028	Fill	Hard core underlying [4/012]	-	0.40
4/029	Fill	Brick rubble underlying [4/014]	-	0.25
4/030	Fill	Hard core underlying [4/022]	-	0.20
4/031	Layer	Natural	trench	-
4/032	Layer	Deposit in structure defined by [4/014 with [4/010]	4.0+ x 3.50	0.10+

Table 3: Trench 4 list of recorded contexts

- 4.4.1 Trench 4 was located in the northwest of the site and was aligned northwest/southeast having had to be moved to the southwest of its planned location due to the presence of standing buildings. The trench was targeted on the cemetery and its southeastern boundary as shown on historic mapping.
- 4.4.2 The natural deposit of mid orange-brown silty clay [4/031] was exposed at the base of the trench. This was overlain by a mottled layer of dark grey brown compact made-ground [4/003]. This in turn was overlain by an overburden of compacted building rubble containing brick fragments and gravels [4/002], beneath a layer of tarmac [4/001]. In total, this sequence was c.0.7-1.08m thick. The made-ground [4/003] was cut by a number of walls and a single pit, while its removal exposed a number of underlying pits.
- 4.4.3 Within the centre of the trench, and cut into the top of made-ground [4/003], was a modern pit [4/027] containing glass, CBM, metal and leather. The pit was not excavated but was noted to be filled by a mottled dark grey brown and mid orange brown clay [4/026] with common stones. Surface finds, including a glass bottle and a stoneware ink bottle both of 19th/20th century date, were collected from it.
- 4.4.4 Brick wall [4/010] ran northeast/southwest across the trench, and possibly represents the southeastern boundary of the cemetery, or else a later wall that lies along the same alignment. The wall remains consisted of five courses of bricks and measured 0.34m wide and 0.44m in depth. The bricks were dark red, unfrogged and measured 0.22m x 0.11m x 0.06m, being bonded by a light yellow mortar. Other walls, [4/012] and [4/014], of different construction, butted up against [4/010] within the trench.
- 4.4.5 Wall [4/012] ran perpendicular to the boundary wall, to its north, and could represent the return of the wall as indicated on historic maps; however, it was not confirmed as to whether this was a corner or not. The wall was aligned northwest/southeast and measured 0.15m in depth, surviving as two courses of brickwork bonded by yellow mortar. Underlying the brickwork was a thick layer of dark compact gravel hardcore [4/028], measuring 0.44m thick. The relationship of walls [4/010] and [4/012] with surrounding made-ground [4/003] was not determined.

- 4.4.6 The remains of narrow wall [4/014] lay to the south of [4/010]. As exposed, the wall ran southeast from the posited corner formed by [4/010] and [4/012] before turning southwest and continuing beyond the western trench edge. The wall was of single brick width and survived as two courses of bricks overlying a thick layer of brick rubble [4/029] measuring 0.26m wide and 0.25m deep. It is possible that this wall constitutes the remains of a later post-medieval structure constructed against the outside of the burial ground wall. It seemingly cut made-ground [4/003]. The interior of this tentative building was not further investigated. It was noted to be filled by a dark grey-brown clay-silt [4/032] which contained brick rubble, perhaps including sections of demolished wall.
- 4.4.7 Another wall [4/022] ran northeast/southwest across the northwestern end of the trench. This wall was formed of four courses of brickwork measuring 0.39m deep and 0.22m wide, constructed on top of a layer of compact gravel hardcore [4/030], which measured 0.20m thick. The wall ran parallel with the burial ground wall, c.6m to its northwest and therefore within the perceived extents of the cemetery. It was cut into made-ground [4/003], potentially intruding into the top of underlying pit [4/016] from which a sherd of Tudor red earthenware pottery was recovered.
- 4.4.8 To the northwest of the burial ground boundary, but also underlying made-ground [4/003], were five pits. All were cut into the top of the natural deposit. Pit [4/004] was circular in plan with a diameter of 0.78m. The pit contained three fills, a basal lining [4/007] of light yellow clay with occasional chalk. This was overlain by a narrow dark brown organic layer [4/006], which was 0.02m thick at its thickest. The upper fill of the pit [4/005] consisted of compact dark brown clay silt with common CBM fragments and was 0.11m thick.
- 4.4.9 Pit [4/008] was located against the southwestern baulk of the trench and had sharp straight sides and a flat base. The pit measured 0.78m wide and 0.58m in depth, with a single fill [4/009] of moderately compact mid greyish brown silty clay, with occasional charcoal and sub-rounded stones. Animal bone and three pottery sherds of medieval date were retrieved from it. The pit cut a smaller pit [4/024] to its north. Pit [4/024] was circular and measured 0.57m wide and 0.43m deep. It contained a single mid orange brown fill [4/025] with occasional charcoal flecks.
- 4.4.10 Large rounded pit [4/016] is presumed to have extended northwards under wall [4/022] and the made-ground deposit left *in situ* beyond it. The exposed area of the pit measured 2.84m wide and 1.83m in length and was excavated to a depth of 1.07m below the base of the trench. The pit had very steep/vertical sides and was not bottomed. The single fill [4/017] was a mid grey brown silty clay that contained flecks of charcoal. A quantity of CBM and a single sherd of Tudor red earthenware pottery were recovered from it, along with a piece of worked bone waste (RF<2>).
- 4.4.11 Infilled pit [4/016] had evidently been recut by a smaller circular pit [4/018], which measured 1.35m x 1.51m x 1.0m, with gradually sloping sides and U-shaped base. This recut contained three fills. Basal fill [4/021] was a dark brown grey clay silt containing moderate quantities of oyster shell, CBM and charcoal flecks. Middle fill [4/020] a 0.35m-thick mid grey brown deposit containing with CBM and charcoal flecks. Upper fill [4/019] was a dark grey clay silt 0.12m thick-backfill. This final fill also contained CBM, including tile fragments of post-medieval date.
- 4.4.12 Within the centre of the trench was a modern pit [4/027] containing glass, CBM, metal and leather. The pit was not excavated but was noted to be filled by a mottled dark grey brown and mid orange brown clay [4/026] with common stones. Surface finds,

including a glass bottle and a stoneware ink bottle both of 19th/20th century date, were collected from it.

4.5 Trench 5 (Fig. 5)

*Dimensions: 15.00m x 3.60m x up to 1.23m deep
 Ground level: 86.39m AOD (NE), 85.51m AOD (SW)*

Context	Type	Description	Length & Width (m)	Depth / Thickness (m)
5/001	Layer	Tarmac	trench	0.09
5/002	Layer	Made-ground	trench	0.23 – 0.36
5/003	Masonry	Wall of 5/011	2.28 x 0.25	0.14
5/004	Masonry	Wall of 5/012	trench x 0.23	0.62
5/005	Masonry	Brick lining of 5/013	0.94 x 0.48	unex
5/006	Masonry	Brick lining of 5/014	0.74 x 0.64	unex
5/007	Layer	Made-ground	trench	0.30
5/008	Layer	Made-ground	trench	0.42
5/009	Layer	Natural	trench	-
5/010	Layer	Made-ground	trench	0.83 – 0.86+
5/011	Cut	Wall cut	trench x 0.25	0.14
5/012	Cut	Wall cut	trench x 0.23	0.62
5/013	Cut	Grave cut	0.94 x 0.48	unex
5/014	Cut	Grave cut	0.74 x 0.64	unex
5/015	Fill	Burial soil	trench	0.20+

Table 4: Trench 5 list of recorded contexts

- 4.5.1 Trench 5 was located on the northwest extent of the site and was aligned northeast/southwest. The trench was moved slightly to the north of its original location due to the location of a drain. It was targeted on the location of the non-conformist cemetery and its southwestern boundary as shown on historic mapping.
- 4.5.2 The entirety of the trench was covered by a layer of tarmac [5/001] with underlying very dark black-brown compact gravels and silty sand [5/002]. The underlying stratigraphy varied along the trench, either side of wall remains [5/004].
- 4.5.3 Northwest/southeast aligned wall [5/004] ran across the trench toward its SW end and correlates closely with the position of the burial ground boundary as shown on historic mapping, and which evidently survived for a period of time after the disuse of the cemetery. The wall measured 0.23m wide and survived to a depth of 0.62m, consisting of eight courses of unfrogged bricks in a light yellow mortar bonding. The sampled brick is identified as being of probable 20th century date (see 5.3.3) which may suggest this boundary has been repaired or rebuilt. Its persistence as a relatively long-lived boundary is emphasised by the presence of three later drains/services running along either side of the wall.
- 4.5.4 East of wall [5/004], the trench contained a 0.6m+ layer of mid brown silt-clay deposit

of made- or reworked ground [5/010] that included common CBM, charcoal and bone fragments. As this deposit was removed/reduced by machine a number of vaguely-defined archaeological features became apparent in what was tentatively identified as a separate underlying deposit. This underlying deposit [5/015] had a very diffuse horizon with [5/010], being slightly mottled with patches of mid yellow clay within the darker mid grey brown matrix, and contained bone fragments within a number of poorly-defined cut features with slightly darker slit clay fills. Given their generally grave-like appearance, it is likely that deposit [5/015] was a reworked cemetery soil. A decision was taken at this point to only record and minimally investigate these grave-like remains. Consequently, the underlying stratigraphic sequence was not further investigated and the natural deposit was not exposed at any point across this greater part of the trench.

- 4.5.5 Two brick-lined graves, both covered by layer [5/010], were found approximately 1.2m below ground level, apparently cut into deposit [5/015]. Grave [5/013] was lined with at least two courses of dark red unfrosted bricks [5/005] which defined the north end and west side of the cut. The feature was not excavated but was recorded to contain a mid grey-brown silty clay fill.
- 4.5.6 Adjacent grave [5/014] was of similar construction to [5/013] and clearly aligned with it. At least five courses of dark red unfrosted bricks [5/006] survived, lining the northern end and parts of the splayed sides – presumably defining a coffin-shaped plan form, rather than a plain rectangle. The grave was filled by a mid grey brown silty clay, which was again similar to the overlying deposit [5/010]. It was not excavated.
- 4.5.7 Machine reduction of reworked soil [5/015] halted at a depth of c.1.2m below ground level, where the outlines of possible grave cuts/fills and human remains started to become apparent. In addition to the two brick-lined graves, parts of a further six possible graves were tentatively identified before rainwater flooding of the trench prevented their accurate location and further definition. Indicative grave positions are shown on Figure 5. At the height encountered, grave fills were slightly darker, but otherwise not markedly different from deposit [5/015]. It is notable that all appear to be aligned roughly NW/SE, the presence of two protruding skulls indicating that their heads were at the northern ends. On the basis of the rough plan of the eight identified graves, two NE/SW rows may be discerned, with some probable *ad hoc* insertions. One tentative grave was seemingly placed along the foot of boundary wall [5/004] and later cut by a service run.
- 4.5.8 A second brick wall [5/003] ran across the northern end of the trench on a slightly differing alignment to that of [5/004], being more WNW/ESE orientated. It was probably cut into the top of reworked layer [5/010]. It measured 0.25m wide and survived as two courses of bricks, the top of it being 0.23m below ground level. There was very little evidence of surviving mortar bonding. It appeared to end before reaching the eastern edge of the trench and does not correlate with any structure or boundary shown on historic mapping.
- 4.5.9 The north-easternmost c.3m of Trench 5, either side of wall [5/003], was not machined as deeply as the rest, leaving much of the full thickness of reworked soil [5/010] *in situ* and so not exposing any further grave-like features. However, it is likely that this cemetery activity continued north-eastwards within/below it.
- 4.5.10 West of wall [5/004] (i.e. outside the burial ground) the trench contained a 0.30m-thick layer of dark grey clay [5/007] with common CBM, overlying a 0.42m-thick deposit of mid grey brown clay [5/008], which contained CBM and charcoal. No cut features were

identified cut into or underlying either of these deposits. Natural yellow grey brown clay [5/009] was exposed across the southwest end at a depth of 1.17m below ground surface.

4.6 Archaeologically Blank Trenches (Figure 2)

- 4.6.1 Two of the evaluation trenches (Trenches 1 and 3) were established to contain no archaeological remains. Though both were located in the southwest of the site, they contained differing deposit sequences (Appendix 1).
- 4.6.2 Trench 1 was located in the southwest corner and was aligned broadly north/south, it being angled in order to avoid having to break it out across multiple concrete slabs. In the southern 2m of the trench, a topsoil of friable mid greyish brown silty clay containing occasional angular stones [1/003] was present rather than concrete slab. Elsewhere across the trench the old ground surface had evidently been lowered and covered with concrete [1/001] overlying a made-ground deposit [1/002] of compact dark grey brown silty clay with common CBM and stones. Natural deposits of compact yellow grey silt clay with common chalk [1/004] were found at the base of the trench.
- 4.6.3 A previous rectangular excavation trench was visible at the approximate middle of Trench 1, measuring 1.2m wide and 8m in length and aligned NNW/SSE. Its base was not reached and it was filled with dark grey brown silt clay. Its purpose was not established. Two land drains were present running southeast/northwest and southwest/northeast across the trench, and a gas pipe ran southeast/northwest across the southern end.
- 4.6.4 Trench 3 was located in the middle of the site, though moved from its planned position to the south and shortened due to the presence of obstructions. The stratigraphy of the western end of the trench was similar to that in Trench 1, comprising concrete [3/001] over made-ground deposits [3/002] over natural strata [3/004]. The rest of the trench had been truncated and contained a thick deposit [3/003] of dark black/brown and mid grey brown mottled clay made-ground containing common CBM. The base of the deposit was not reached and excavation continued to a maximum depth of 1.13m or until groundwater started to enter the trench. A land drain ran northwest/southeast across the southwestern half of the trench.

5.0 FINDS

5.1 Summary

5.1.1 A small assemblage of finds were recovered during the evaluation on land at Mill End, Thaxted. 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 5). In addition, two fragments of bone and antler working waste were assigned unique registered finds numbers (Table 10). They were packaged and recorded individually. All finds have been packed and stored following ClfA guidelines (2014).

Context	Pottery		CBM		Iron		Bone		Glass	
	Ct	Wt	Ct	Wt	Ct	Wt	Ct	Wt	Ct	Wt
2/005	6	23								
2/009	2	28	3	379			19	427		
2/012	3	11								
2/014	6	80								
2/016	3	71								
2/020	2	8								
3/004			1	2405						
4/005			14	1469						
4/009	3	148					8	690		
4/017	1	71	15	882						
4/019			13	1819						
4/021			13	1307						
4/026	1	491							2	445
5/006			1	2487						
12/014			3	83						
12/015					1	8				
<i>Total</i>	<i>27</i>	<i>931</i>	<i>63</i>	<i>10831</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>27</i>	<i>1117</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>445</i>

Table 5: Finds quantification (weight in grammes)

5.2 Medieval pottery by Helen Walker and Luke Barber

Summary

5.2.1 A total of twenty-seven sherds of pottery weighing 931g was excavated from nine contexts and has been catalogued according to Cunningham's typology of post-Roman pottery in Essex (Cunningham 1985a, 1-16; expanded by Drury *et al.* 1993 and Cotter 2000). Some of Cunningham's vessel form rim form codes are quoted in this report. The pottery data have been entered onto an Excel spreadsheet and the pottery is tabulated by ware in Table 6.

5.2.2 Medieval and late medieval pottery was excavated from a number of pits and a ditch terminus (mainly with single fills) and is discussed in approximate chronological order. The earliest pottery was excavated from pit [2/017] (fill 2/016), which produced a shell-and-sand-tempered ware thumbled, beaded rim from a large vessel, either a storage jar or a large cooking-pot, or perhaps a bowl. This rim type is datable to the 12th century. Also present is a single sherd of Hedingham fineware made in north Essex; instead of showing the typical uniform creamy orange fabric, this sherd has a buff exterior surface and margin and a thin greenish glaze, both characteristic of early Hedingham ware datable to the mid-12th to early 13th centuries. However, the latest

pottery from this pit is a single sherd of late medieval sandy orange ware, which appears to be from the same vessel as a sherd from pit [2/011] although the sherds do not join. Perhaps this sherd is intrusive.

Pottery by ware	Sherd No	Wt (g)
Shell-and-sand-tempered ware	1	63
Medieval coarseware	3	10
Hedingham fineware	2	9
Hedingham coarseware – standard fabric	2	111
Hedingham coarseware - fine sands	3	73
Hedingham coarseware – coarse sands	1	37
Mill Green fineware	2	9
Sandy orange ware	10	39
Buff surfaced ware	1	19
Tudor red earthenware	1	71
<i>Total</i>	26	441

Table 6: Pottery quantification by ware

- 5.2.3 A number of features produced pottery datable to the 13th to 14th centuries, of these, pit [4/008] (fill 4/009), produced exclusively examples of Hedingham coarseware which can be sub-divided according to the relative coarseness of its sand-tempering (following Walker 2012, table 4). In the standard Hedingham coarseware fabric is a fragment of jug showing a B2 rim and a ribbed strap handle attaching at the rim. It is comparable to an example from the Clare Cottage production site at Sible Hedingham (Walker 2012, fig.33.184) and probably dates to the mid-13th to earlier 14th centuries. Also present is a thick-walled sherd of Hedingham coarseware tempered with coarse sands, which is decorated with a thumbled applied strip. The lack of curvature of the sherd indicates it is from a large vessel, probably a storage jar, which has the suggested date of late 12th or 13th century, somewhat earlier than the date of the jug fragment. A single body sherd of Hedingham coarseware with relatively fine sands is also present in this context. Pit [2/021] (fill 2/020) produced only a single body sherd of Hedingham coarseware in the standard fabric and a single body sherd of medieval coarseware.
- 5.2.4 A second sherd of Hedingham fineware was excavated from pit [2/015] (fill 2/014), unlike that from pit [2/017], this sherd shows the typical creamy-orange fabric and is decorated with vertical applied strips under a full mottled green glaze. This is almost certainly from a stamped strip jug, the most common decorative style in the Hedingham industry's repertoire and the most long-lived, spanning the early 13th to early 14th centuries. A second glazed sherd is present in this context, a sherd of sandy orange ware with a reduced fabric showing a white slip-coating beneath a greenish glaze flecked with copper-green, probably datable to the mid-13th to 14th centuries. The remaining pottery in this context is made up of coarsewares comprising undiagnostic sherds of medieval coarseware and further examples of Hedingham coarseware with fine sand, comprising a body sherd and a sagging base sherd.
- 5.2.5 Two sherds of Mill Green fineware, made in south Essex, occurred in ditch terminus [2/006]. One shows the typical white slip-coating under a mottled green glaze and is datable to the mid-13th to 14th centuries. The second is more unusual, showing a partial yellow glaze and the remains of sgraffito decoration, where a pattern is scored through the white slip-coating to reveal the colour of the body of the pot beneath. This is a later style of decoration dating from the 14th to early 15th century. The remaining pottery in the ditch terminus comprises sherds of sandy orange ware, one is slip-coated and green-glazed much like the sherd of Mill Green fineware and therefore of a similar

date, two are non-descript and one shows an internal glaze indicating a late medieval of 15th or even 16th century. This feature therefore contains a mixture of pottery of medieval and late medieval dates.

- 5.2.6 Finds from the upper fill of pit [2/011] (fill 2/009) comprise two sherds of late medieval pottery, a sherd of buff surfaced ware with a reddish core and a sherd of late medieval sandy orange ware showing slip-painted decoration under a partial plain glaze. Like some of the sandy orange ware encountered in other features, it has a hard, uniform orange fabric containing sparse red iron oxides and is similar to sandy orange wares found at previous excavations at Thaxted (Walker 1996; 1998) suggesting a source quite near to the town. Buff surfaced ware has also been found at previous excavations. Both sherds are datable to the later 14th to 15th centuries. Pit [2/013] (fill 2/012) produced further examples of sandy orange ware, again with a similar fabric to that described above and can be assigned a late medieval date. The upper fill of pit [4/016] (fill 4/017) produced perhaps the latest pottery, the pedestal base from a Tudor red earthenware standing cup, (Cunningham's form E3B (Cunningham 1985a, fig.9.59), commonest at Moulsham Street, Chelmsford during the 15th century (Cunningham 1985b, 71).
- 5.2.7 A post-Roman vessel was recovered from context [4/026]. This consists of a complete late English stoneware necked ink bottle with carinated shoulder and vertical sided cylindrical body (492g: rim diameter 37mm, base diameter 72mm, height 120mm). The vessel, which has a grey Bristol glaze, is most likely to have been made between c. 1850 and 1925.

Discussion

- 5.2.8 The pottery spans the later 12th to 15th centuries and all is fairly local with no evidence of traded wares or imports. Only the Mill Green ware, manufactured at a site near Ingatestone to the south of Chelmsford, has come any distance. Hedingham ware, which predominates at this site was manufactured at sites much closer to Thaxted, the main focus of the industry being in the area of Sible Hedingham about 15km to the east. In addition, the buff surfaced ware and the late medieval sandy orange fabric may be products of a later expression of the Hedingham ware industry as similar fabrics have been found a possible late medieval Hedingham production site at Blackmore End, only about 10km from Thaxted (Walker 2012, 7, 133-4). The assemblage is too small to comment on status or function other than to say the assemblage appears domestic, the medieval assemblage comprising a mixture of finewares/glazed wares (Hedingham fineware, Mill Green fineware and sandy orange ware) and utilitarian coarsewares, coarseware vessel forms comprising the jug and possible storage jar. The only late medieval vessel form is the pedestal-base cup. The pottery is similar to that from earlier excavations in the town (for example Walker 1996; 1998), but at these excavations late medieval pottery predominates, whereas here, in terms of weight, medieval pottery is the more frequent.

5.3 Ceramic Building Material by Isa Benedetti-Whitton

- 5.3.1 A total of sixty-two pieces of ceramic building material (CBM) weighing 9951g were hand-collected from nine evaluation contexts, including brick samples from two standing structures. The assemblage included bricks, roof tile and floor tile, all of which was post-medieval in date and much of which was formed of very similar fabric types suggesting the material was sourced and manufactured locally.

Brick

- 5.3.2 The bricks recovered were nearly all made from red-brick fabric type B1 (see Table 7), and generally were hard fired and of a sharp form most typical of the mid-later 17th or 18th century. When present the mortar on these bricks was off-white sandy lime mortar, with the exception of one intact B1 brick with dimensions of 221 x 107 x 60mm recovered from grave-lining structure [5/006] that had remnants of a grey-coloured mortar with charcoal flecks that is most typical of the post-1666 period. Brick fragments from pit fill [4/005] all displayed very abraded upper surfaces which could suggest they functioned as paving bricks.
- 5.3.3 A single brick in Museum of London Archaeology (MOLA) fabric 3038 was collected from burial ground boundary wall [5/004]. This is a very common fabric type, used well into the 20th century, and indicates a date later than 1910 for this context.

Tile

- 5.3.2 Both flat peg tile and s-shaped pantile fragments were recovered from site. Peg tile pieces were far more numerous and displayed a greater range of fabrics, but cannot be dated with any accuracy as peg tile changes very little in form between the 14th and 19th centuries. However, pantile only starts being used in Britain after 1650, and manufactured in Britain even later, c. the late 17th-18th century, and as the pantile fabric in this instance was very similar to peg tile fabric T1 local production is likely. A later post-medieval date is therefore proposed for much of the roof tile, but it is probable that the pantile, found in context [2/009], is amongst the latest pieces of CBM collected during the evaluation.
- 5.3.3 Floor tile fragments were found in two contexts, [4/019] and [4/021]. These were both in fabric FT1 and of similar thickness, 28-29mm. Only one of the fragments still revealed a trace of glaze, although this was discoloured to a brown-black colour. Tiles of this type are of Tudor or later date, c.16th-18th century.

Fabric	Description
T1	Coarse and gritty fabric with common unsorted quartz, much of which is very coarse, with common medium black and white speckle; ferrous material and shell?
T2	Similar to T1 but sparse-moderate pieces of very coarse quartz and other stone pieces up to 5mm.
T3	Slightly micaceous orange fabric with sparse quartz; hard fired.
T4	Less coarse version of T1. Same gritty texture but sparse - no quartz. Very evenly fired.
B1	Fine orange-red fabric; sparse sugary quartz.
MOLA 3038	Very hard and distinctive granular fabric with numerous small white inclusions
FT1	Floor tile version of T1.

Table 7: CBM fabric descriptions

5.4 Glass by Elke Raemen

- 5.4.1 Two fragments of glass were encountered (weight 445g), both from [4/026]. Included is a loose aqua marble from a Codd bottle, as well as a complete Codd bottle, the latter with in situ marble. The Codd bottle (height 196mm) is embossed "ROBSON & SONS"

above "SAFFRON WALDEN", with on the front "PURE MINERAL WATERS DOBSON & SONS TRADEMARK". The bottle dates to the later 19th to early 20th century.

5.5 Bulk Ironwork by Elke Raemen

5.5.1 A general purpose nail fragment was recovered from [2/015]. The fragment weighs 8g.

5.6 Animal Bone by Hayley Forsyth-Magee

5.6.1 A small assemblage of animal bone containing 27 fragments weighing 1159g was recovered from the evaluation. The faunal remains were hand-collected from four contexts; pits [2/009], [2/012], [4/009] and [4/017]. The bones are in a good state of preservation with minimal signs of surface erosion evident. Domestic and wild fauna are present in the assemblage with the main domestic species dominating overall. A small number of complete bones have been recorded, the remainder of the assemblage consists of fragments.

5.6.2 The assemblage has been recorded onto an Excel spreadsheet in accordance with the zoning system outlined by Serjeantson (1996). Wherever possible the fragments have been identified to species and the skeletal element represented (Schmid, 1972). Elements that could not be confidently identified to species, such as long-bone and vertebrae fragments, have been recorded according to their size and categorised as large, medium or small mammal. Mammalian age at death data has been collected for each specimen where observable, the state of epiphyseal bone fusion has been recorded as fused, unfused and fusing. The assemblage contains three measurable long-bones and no ageable mandibles. Specimens have been studied for signs of butchery, burning, gnawing, non-metric traits and pathology.

5.6.3 A limited range of taxa have been identified (Table 8) comprising domestic and wild fauna. The assemblage is dominated by mammal bones, the majority of which have been identified to the three main domestic species; cattle, sheep/goat and pig. A small number of wild taxa have been identified within the assemblage and include fallow deer antler, bird and cat bones. Large and medium mammal bone fragments are also present due to preservation levels and taphonomic processes.

Taxa	NISP
Cattle	7
Sheep/goat	3
Pig	1
Deer Fallow	2
Large Mammal	3
Medium Mammal	5
Cat	1
Bird	2
Total	24

Table 8: Animal bone NISP (Number of Identifiable Specimens) count

5.6.4 Of the 27 faunal bone fragments present, 24 were identified to taxa (Table 8). Both meat and non-meat bearing bones are present within the assemblage, with no obvious patterns of dispersal. Context [2/009] produced the majority of the faunal remains with a cattle metapodial and pelvis fragment, a sheep/goat calcaneus, and a fragment of subadult bird humerus. A naturally shed young fallow deer antler, in fragments was recovered, along with an offcut/waste piece of worked fallow deer antler. Two large

mammal rib fragments, a long bone fragment and two medium mammal long bone fragments were also recovered. Context [2/012] contained a medium mammal skull fragment, a single subadult bird femur fragment and a fragment of pig maxilla. Context [4/017] produced a fragment of sheep/goat proximal radius and distal tibia, along with a medium mammal long bone fragment that showed signs of working. The majority of context [4/009] contained four cattle metacarpals and a metatarsal as well as a medium mammal tibia fragment and a cat femur fragment.

- 5.6.5 Three bone fragments including two cattle metacarpals and a medium mammal long bone retrieved from features within Trench 4, contexts [4/009] and [4/017] respectively, exhibited signs of working. The two cattle metacarpal fragments had been sawn towards the distal 1/3 of the bone shaft. Given Thaxted's importance as a medieval cutlery production centre, the two cattle bones retrieved from context [4/009] likely represent the waste offcuts from the initial stage of cutlery production. Similar finds of cattle metapodial bone working waste were recovered, albeit in greater quantities, from excavations near to Mill End at Weaverhead Lane (Andrews 1989) and at Town Street (Germany and Wade 1989). The presence of worked fragment of medium mammal long bone from context [4/017], which appears to have been shaped and filed, may suggest further that cutlery production was also undertaken at Mill End.
- 5.6.6 Evidence of butchery was observed in several specimens including a large mammal rib fragment chopped midshaft and a cattle pelvis chopped at the ilium and ischium from context [2/009]. Two cattle metacarpals from context [4/009] exhibited saw marks to the distal shaft aspects, possibly for marrow extraction or working waste. A sheep/goat tibia fragment from context [4/017] had been chopped at the distal aspect. This type of butchery suggests that carcass portioning occurred in the area.
- 5.6.7 Canid gnawing was recorded in a sheep/goat calcaneus from context [2/009] and a cattle metacarpal fragment from context [4/009]. Both adult and juvenile animals are represented within the assemblage based on the fusion data available. An unfused cattle metatarsal fragment from context [4/009] suggests the animal was younger than 21/4-3years old at death (Silver 1969). A cattle metacarpal also from context [4/009] is fusing which suggests the animal may have been younger than 2-21/2 years old at death (Silver, 1969). An unfused proximal cat humerus from context [4/009] indicates that the animal was approximately less than 12 months old at death (Habermehl 1975).
- 5.6.8 Three specimens produced measurements (Table 9) including a sheep/goat calcaneus from context [2/009] and two cattle metacarpals from context [4/009].

Taxa	Bone	Greatest Length
Sheep/goat	Calcaneus	49.95mm
Cattle	Metacarpal	198mm
Cattle	Metacarpal	200mm

Table 9: Measurable bones Greatest Lengths.

- 5.6.9 The animal bone assemblage suggest that butchery and domestic refuse disposal was undertaken in this area. No evidence of burning, non-metric traits or pathology were observed.

5.7 Registered Finds by Elke Raemen

- 5.7.1 Two objects were assigned registered finds numbers (Table 10). RF <1> (weight 86.5g) comprises a section of fallow deer antler (identification Hayley Forsyth) with

several of its tines removed. One of these now missing tines appears to have had a hole drilled through its centre. The fragment represents antler working waste.

Context	Feature	RF No	Material	Object	Weight (g)
2/009	2/011	1	ANTL	WASTE	87
4/017	4/016	2	BONA	WASTE	4

Table 10: Summary of Registered Finds

- 5.7.2 A second piece of waste (RF <2>), from [4/017], comprises a knife-trimmed bone fragment with squared off section. Both waste fragments can only be dated very broadly to the medieval or early post-medieval period, but could indicate bone working – perhaps associated with Thaxted’s cutlery industry – on or within the vicinity of this site.

6.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Overview of stratigraphic sequence

- 6.1.1 The trenches all revealed a sequence of made-ground deposits with overlying concrete or tarmac surfaces, suggesting significant truncation/leveling of the site. The total thickness of overburden and made ground deposits varied between 0.18m (Trench 2) and 1.23m (Trench 5) and continued below the excavated depth in parts of Trenches 3 and 5. Subsoil was only found within Trench 2, overlying the natural deposit and measuring between 0.21m–0.29m thickness.
- 6.1.2 Of the five trenches excavated, three contained archaeological features (Trenches 2, 4 and 5). These remains were encountered either cutting or underlying made-ground deposits and to be cut into subsoil, where present, or else directly into the natural deposit.
- 6.1.3 A generally low-density, low-complexity and limited range of types of remains were present across the majority of the site. An increased density, complexity and depth/thickness of remains was recorded in the northeast of the site, within and adjacent to perceived burial ground associated with the non-conformist chapel (Trenches 4 and 5).
- 6.1.4 The recorded remains comprised ditches, pits, walls, layers and graves. Cultural material was common within the excavated fills, and consisted of pottery, CBM, animal bone, glass and occasional metalwork.

6.2 Deposit survival and existing impacts

- 6.2.1 All of the trenches contained significant made-ground deposits, generally increasing in thickness toward the northeast of the site.
- 6.2.2 Truncation was evident across the entire and was probably due to ground preparation ahead of its modern industrial use. Topsoil was only encountered in the southwest corner of the site against the site boundary, where a c.0.5m thickness was present overlying natural strata immediately alongside the edge of the site. Elsewhere, modern hard surfaces and their bedding layers directly overlay truncated brick walls and apparent made- or reworked ground.
- 6.2.3 Land drains and other service pipes were encountered in three of the trenches. These were all located cutting into overburden-and made ground deposits except in Trench 1, where one was cut into natural deposits. Due to the depth of overburden deposits, the impact of these service pipes upon underlying archaeological remains is negligible.
- 6.2.4 Beyond the trenches, the modern industrial buildings are likely to have had some level of impact upon below-ground survival of remains within the site. As yet, the extent of such impact has not been established, but is likely to have been fairly extensive and severe, particularly across much of the central part of the site.

6.3 Discussion of the archaeological remains by period

- 6.3.1 No remains earlier than the medieval period were encountered within the evaluation trenches.

Medieval

- 6.3.2 Medieval remains were concentrated to Trench 2 with the majority of the eight recorded pits, posthole, gully and possible ditch containing small but consistent quantities of pottery spanning the later 12th to 15th centuries. This said, the pottery from [2/011] and [2/006] could be residual in nature, as these features appeared to be cut through the subsoil deposit rather than underlie it. A single pit in Trench 4, [4/008], contained three sherds of pottery of 13th to 14th century date and serves to show that a probable low density of medieval remains is likely to extend northwards toward the core of the medieval town, at least along the eastern side of the site nearest the road.
- 6.3.3 These recorded features likely represent domestic and manufacturing activity, perhaps to the rear of properties fronting onto Mill End/Dunmow Road, on this southern periphery of the medieval town. The presence of quantities of animal bones such as metatarsals, and antler fragments, some showing signs of working, suggests that crafts such as handle-making related to Thaxted's cutlery industry were being carried out here, as well as elsewhere in the town. The nearest previously excavated sites with bone-working remains are those that at the corner of Orange Street and St Clements c.100m to the north (Pooley 2016), and the former St Johns Ambulance site on Park Street c.120m to the northwest (Roy 2004a).

Post-medieval

- 6.3.4 Demonstrably post-medieval remains were encountered only within the two trenches located in the northeast of the site (Trenches 4 and 5).
- 6.3.5 Relatively substantial brick walls [4/010 / 4/012] and [5/004] correlate closely with mapped historic features and almost certainly mark the southern and western boundaries of the small burial ground that was presumably located behind/alongside the non-conformist chapel. The sample brick retrieved [5/004] indicates a post-1910 date, though this may merely date a repair or rebuild of the wall at the time of the development of the sweet factory.
- 6.3.6 Trench 5 encountered a number of graves within the southern part of the cemetery; some of relatively ornate construction, with a degree of spatial order into rows evident. A sample brick recovered from one of the lined graves has been dated only as post-dating 1666 on the basis of its adhering mortar bonding. The number and intercut complexity/density of these burials has not been clearly defined; it is possible that only the latest interments showed-up within the otherwise homogenous and reworked graveyard soil [5/015]. Overlying 'made-ground' [5/010] may constitute a late post-medieval episode of build-up and levelling, though equally it could perhaps be a further homogenous graveyard soil within which no indication of upper grave cuts and fills has survived.
- 6.3.7 Burials do not appear to have extended as far eastwards as Trench 4 and the eastern boundary wall. Instead, this side of the burial ground seems to have been used for pit-digging and disposal. Indeed, historic mapping shows a subdivision of the chapel land plot (indicated on Fig. 2) that probably defined this differing use. The investigated pits include the apparently medieval example [4/008] mentioned above, the large circular [4/016] of possible Tudor date, and three other pits of likely slightly later post-medieval date.

Modern

- 6.3.9 Walls [5/003 and [4/022], and probable building [4/014], likely represent late post-medieval land use that post-dates the active use of the burial ground. They appear to be aligned upon, or even be built onto, the cemetery boundary wall. This suggests that the cemetery boundary wall was still in *situ* or was maintained/rebuilt at this time, perhaps relating to the Sunday School and/or later sweet factory use of the site.
- 6.3.7 Other than drains, service runs and the rectangular excavation in Trench 1, pit [4/027] was the only clearly modern feature found within the site, probably being of early 20th century date. The allotment land use across the east of the site does not appear to have had a significant impact that has resulted in the creation of identifiable below-ground remains.

Undated

- 6.3.8 Two of the recorded features (posthole [2/008] and gully [2/019]) in Trench 2 were undated, though their close proximity and similarity of fills to medieval dated remains suggests that these are likely contemporary.
- 6.3.9 A single small pit [4/024] in Trench 5 was undated, though its recorded relationship with adjacent larger pit [4/008], which cuts it, suggests that it is a medieval or earlier feature.

6.4 Consideration of research aims

- 6.4.1 The evaluation has successfully identified the presence/absence, type, date and distribution of archaeological remains within the development site. It has also characterised the varying nature and complexity of the deposit sequence.

6.4.2 *Determine the presence for earlier activity or settlement of the area:*

No evidence of pre-medieval activity has been found within the evaluated site area. While it is possible that such early remains have been removed by disturbance and truncation associated with the later, post-medieval and modern, use of the site, known prehistoric, Roman and Saxon remains are scarce in this wider vicinity of Thaxted. The lack of residual artefacts would seem to suggest a genuine absence of earlier remains. The site has low to negligible potential for the study of pre-medieval occupation and land use.

6.4.3 *Determine the presence of any medieval or post-medieval occupation associated with the historic settlement:*

The site is demonstrated to contain archaeological remains that relate to the medieval and post-medieval occupation of the historic settlement of Thaxted. The pits found in Trenches 2 and 4 suggest that the site has significant potential to elucidate the nature of occupation and land use along the roadside on this southern periphery of the medieval town and may constitute backyard domestic and/or manufacturing activity to the rear of road frontage properties of 12th-15th century date.

The presence and apparent extents of the post-medieval non-conformist burial ground has been confirmed. Non-conformist religious practice is a prominent feature of many of the towns and villages of north-west Essex. This site has the clear potential for research into the nature of burial practice within this small cemetery. In addition, the presence of pits in the eastern part of the cemetery and perhaps beyond may relate to domestic occupation of one or more of the 16th century listed buildings along the road

frontage and so the site has potential to investigate the nature of household activities, their wealth and status and to inform understanding of the post-medieval town in general. Later post-medieval site development is evident in the maintenance of the cemetery wall and the insertion of additional walls and structures. These are likely to provide insights into the nature of change in relation to the site's former use as a Sunday School and then sweet factory and to inform upon the late use of the listed buildings along the road frontage.

6.4.3 *Determine the presence of any industrial activity in the area, particularly the medieval cutlery industry:*

The presence/survival of quantities of animal bone and antler in the medieval and Tudor pits, particularly fragments showing signs of working and the potentially conspicuous occurrence of metatarsals, suggests that the craft manufacturing of items such as handles may have been carried out on this site. The site therefore has significant potential to contribute to research on the medieval cutlery industry at Thaxted. The evaluation has not produced evidence for other industrial activity.

6.5 Updated Research Agenda

6.5.1 Given the consideration of the fulfilment of the original research aims and the further potential of the site, the following updated site-specific research aims can be proposed.

- Can it be confirmed if the earlier pits and their contents are the product of craft manufacture associated with the medieval Thaxted cutlery industry? If so, how is this activity organised? Is it undertaken in/to the rear of properties fronting onto the Mill End/Dunmow Road thoroughfare? What are its products, as well as its debris/waste? Research into medieval towns as centres of supply and demand, and identification of industrial and commercial buildings and structures are identified as requiring further study (Brown and Glazebrook 2000, 46; Medlycott 2011, 70-1).
- Can the extent of the Quaker burial ground, and the extent of the burials within it, be further defined? How was it organised / laid out? What is the nature of its burial practice? Are there variations in the forms of burials (e.g. lined and unlined; single and multiple burials; defined plots, etc.)? When does burial activity cease? How does the graveyard relate to the chapel and other buildings along the road frontage?
- Is there further non-burial activity in the post-medieval period that relates to the later occupation/use of the listed frontage buildings? Can the nature of the occupation of these buildings be discerned? As for the medieval period, the industry and commerce of towns is considered to require further study (Medlycott 2011, 78).
- Can the development of the site post- chapel and burial ground use be recorded and understood? What was the layout of the Sunday School and sweet factory use of the site? Can specific functional areas and buildings be discerned? How much of the preceding chapel site was incorporated into these later uses?

6.6 Conclusions

6.6.1 The evaluation has revealed the presence of buried archaeological remains in three of the five trenches investigated. The recorded remains survive below a variable thickness of c.0.18-1.23m of overburden and/or made-ground, which generally

increases in thickness northwards.

- 6.6.2 No remains predating the medieval period have been found.
- 6.6.3 The recorded medieval remains predominantly comprise pits, together with a posthole, gully and possible ditch. It is likely that a modest density and low complexity of such features is present across the eastern side of the site and constitute the remains of domestic and possible manufacturing activities (particularly cutlery-related bone working) undertaken to the rear of posited roadside properties during the period 12-15th centuries.
- 6.6.4 Tudor period pitting may represent continuing domestic activity, possibly behind and associated with one or both of the 16th century buildings still extant along part of the road frontage. The presence and extents of the non-conformist burial ground is confirmed by the evaluation results. This occupies the northeast corner of the site, as shown on historic mapping. It contains inhumation burials, at least some in brick-lined graves/vaults, the number, ordering and intercut complexity of which has not been fully established by this evaluation. The tangible remains of this cemetery activity have been encountered at a depth of c.1.2m below modern ground surface, though could perhaps survive at a higher level elsewhere in the northeast corner of the site.
- 6.6.5 Although the burial ground boundary appears to have been maintained into the late post-medieval period, the remains of other inserted walls and brick-built buildings date to the post-chapel and cemetery use of the northern end of the site. It is likely that these relate to the later, 19th century, use of the site as a Sunday School and then sweet factory. Broadly contemporary allotment use of the southern part of the site does not appear to have impacted upon the site.
- 6.6.6 It is likely that significant archaeological remains are not present within the west of the site. Although not investigated and corroborated by this evaluation, it is probable that the more substantial industrial structures of the former Molecular Products complex, particularly the large structures in the middle of the site will have impacted upon below ground remains to some extent.

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Appendix 1: Summary of archaeologically blank trenches

Trench	Context	Description	Depth/thickness	Height (m AOD)
1	1/001	Concrete	0.13	85.22
	1/002	Made-ground	0.29	-
	1/003	Topsoil	0.50	-
	1/004	Natural	-	84.79
3	3/001	Concrete	0.13	85.24
	3/002	Made-ground	0.25 – 0.43	-
	3/003	Made-ground	0.25 – 0.70+	-
	3/004	Natural	-	84.56

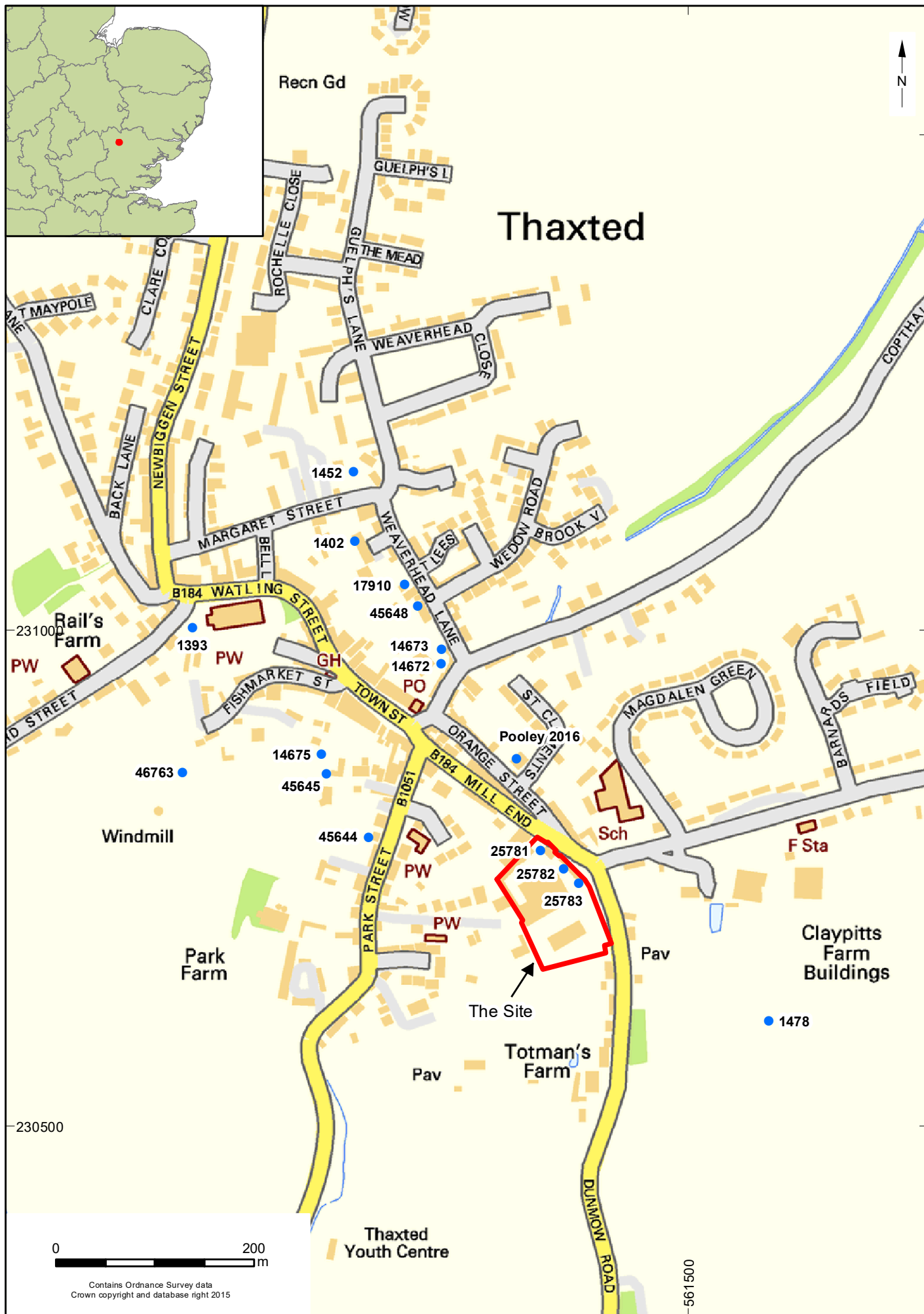
Appendix 2: HER Summary Form

Site name/Address: Land off Mill End, Thaxted, Essex, CM6 2LT	
Parish: Thaxted	District: Uttlesford
NGR: TL 61360 30730	Site Code: TX27
Type of Work: Archaeological Evaluation	Site Director/Group: A. Forshaw, Archaeology South-East
Date of Work: 15/5/2017 – 19/5/2017	Size of Area Investigated: 0.7 ha
Location of Finds/Curating Museum: Chelmsford Museum	Funding source: Landowner/Developer
Further Seasons Anticipated?: unknown	Related HER Nos: 25781-3
Final Report: annual summary	OASIS No: 287289
Periods Represented: medieval, post-medieval	
SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:	
<p>The 0.7ha site is occupied by a linear range of 16th and 19th century listed standing buildings along part of its Mill End road frontage. These, and a non-conformist burial ground occupying the northeast corner of the site, are shown on historic mapping. Subsequent mapping attests to the northern end of the site being later occupied by a Sunday School and then a sweet factory in the early 20th century. The south of the site was in use as allotments in the 19th century. More recently, the site has been under modern industrial usage, ending in 2012 with the closure of the Molecular Products works.</p> <p>The evaluation revealed the presence of buried archaeological remains in three of the five trenches investigated. The recorded remains survived below a variable thickness of c.0.18-1.23m of overburden and/or made-ground, which generally increases northwards across the site.</p> <p>No remains predating the medieval period were found. Medieval remains comprised a number of pits, together with a posthole, gully and possible ditch. It is likely that a modest density and low complexity of such features is present across the eastern side of the site and that these constitute the remains of domestic and possible manufacturing (bone working for the Thaxted cutlery industry) activities undertaken to the rear of posited roadside properties during the c.12th-15th centuries. Tudor period pitting may have represented continuing activity.</p> <p>The presence and extents of the non-conformist (Quaker) burial ground in the northeast of the site was confirmed by the evaluation results. It contained inhumation burials, at least some in brick-lined graves/vaults; the number, ordering and intercut complexity of which was not fully established by this evaluation.</p> <p>Although the burial ground boundary appeared to have been maintained into the late post-medieval period, the remains of other inserted walls and brick-built buildings dated to the post-chapel and cemetery use of the northern end of the site. It is likely that these related to the later use of the site as a Sunday School and then sweet factory.</p>	
Previous Summaries/Reports: None	
Author of Summary: A. Forshaw	Date of Summary: June 2017

Appendix 3: OASIS Form

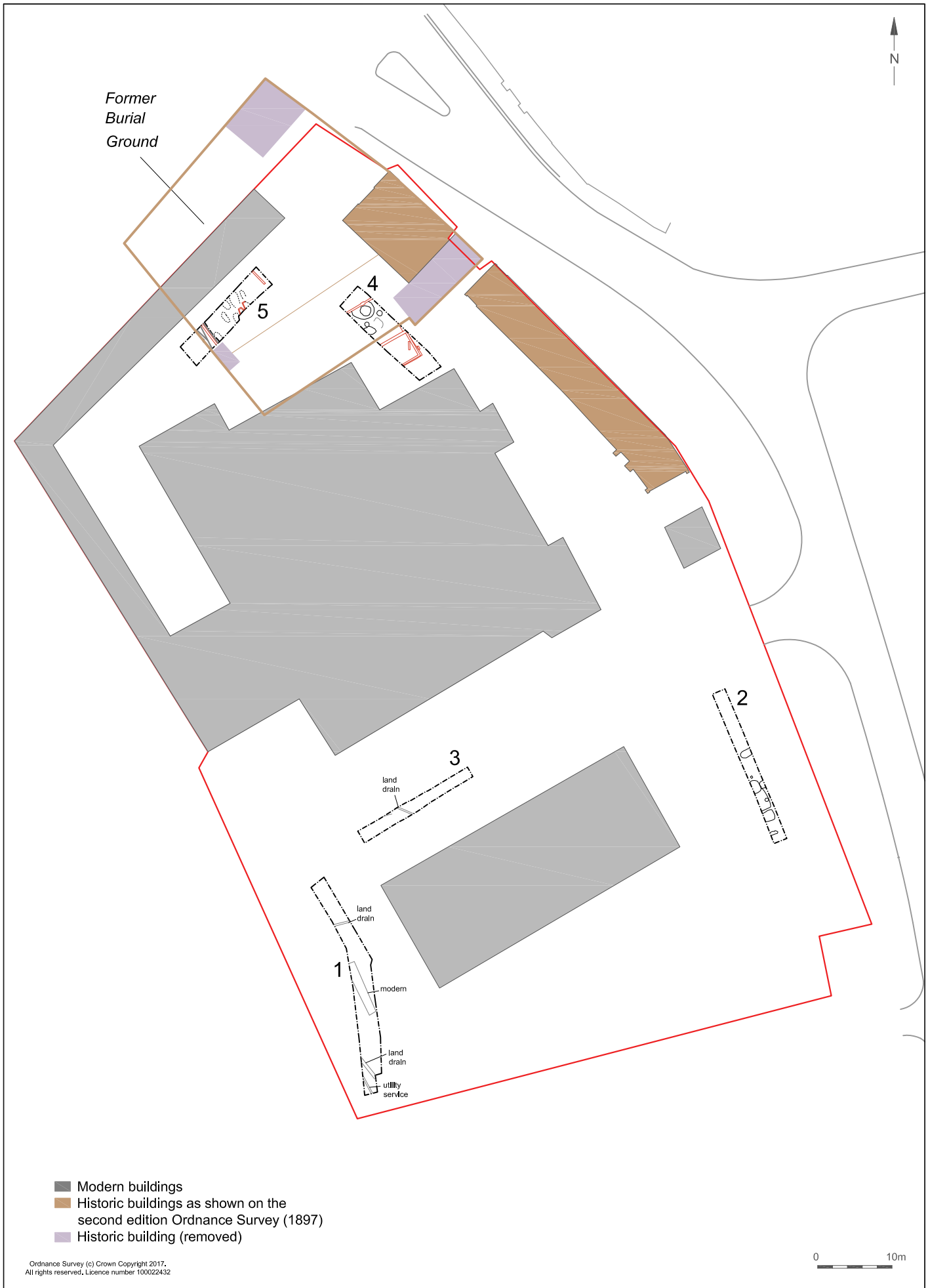
OASIS ID: archaeol6-287289	
Project details	
Project name	Land off Mill End, Thaxted
Short description of the project	Evaluation revealed the presence of buried archaeological remains in three of five trenches, under a variable thickness of c.0.18-1.23m of overburden and/or made-ground, which generally increased northwards across the site. Medieval remains mainly comprised pits, in the east of the site that constituted the remains of domestic and possible manufacturing (bone working for the Thaxted cutlery industry) activities undertaken to the rear of posited roadside properties during the c.12th-15th centuries. Tudor period pitting may have represent continuing activity. The presence and extents of a post-medieval non-conformist (Quaker) burial ground in the northeast of the site was confirmed. It included inhumation burials in brick-lined graves/vaults. Remains relating to subsequent use of the site as a Sunday School and then sweet factory were also found.
Project dates	Start: 15-05-2017 End: 19-05-2017
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Associated project reference codes	TX27 - Sitecode 170392 - Contracting Unit No.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	Conservation Area
Current Land use	Industry and Commerce 4 - Storage and warehousing
Monument type	DITCH Medieval PIT Medieval PIT Post Medieval WALL Post Medieval GRAVE Post Medieval LAYER Post Medieval GRAVEYARD SOIL Post Medieval
Significant Finds	POT Medieval POT Post Medieval BONE Medieval CBM Post Medieval GLASS Post Medieval IRON Post Medieval WORKED BONE Medieval
Methods & techniques	"Sample Trenches"
Development type	Rural residential
Prompt	Electricity Act 1989 Section 36
Position in the planning process	Not known / Not recorded
Project location	
Country	England

Site location	ESSEX UTTLESFORD THAXTED Land Off Mill End
Postcode	CM6 2LT
Study area	0.7 Hectares
Site coordinates	TL 61257 30768 51.951524241071 0.346806392281 51 57 05 N 000 20 48 E Point
Project creators	
Name of Organisation	Archaeology South-East
Project brief originator	Essex County Council Place Services
Project design originator	Archaeology South-East
Project director/manager	Andy Leonard
Project supervisor	Angus Forshaw
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Project archives	
Physical Archive recipient	Saffron Walden Museum
Physical Contents	"Animal Bones","Ceramics","Glass","Metal","Worked bone"
Digital Archive recipient	Saffron Walden Museum
Digital Contents	"Animal Bones","Ceramics","Glass","Stratigraphic","Worked bone"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Spreadsheets","Survey","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Saffron Walden Museum
Paper Contents	"Animal Bones","Ceramics","Glass","Metal","Stratigraphic","Worked bone"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Miscellaneous Material","Plan","Report","Section","Survey "
Project bibliography	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Archaeological Evaluation. Land off Mill End, Thaxted, Essex
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Forshaw, A.
Other biblio details	ASE rep. 2017252
Date	2017
Issuer or publisher	Archaeology South-East
Place of issue	Witham
Entered by	Mark Atkinson (mark.atkinson@ucl.ac.uk)
Entered on	26 June 2017

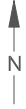


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© Archaeology South-East		Land at Mill End Thaxted	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 170392	June 2017	Site location and HER data	
Report No: 2017252	Drawn by: APL		



© Archaeology South-East		Land at Mill End Thaxted	Fig. 2
Project Ref: 170392	June 2017	Trench Locations	
Report Ref: 2017252	Drawn by: APL		



+ 561410, 230715

2



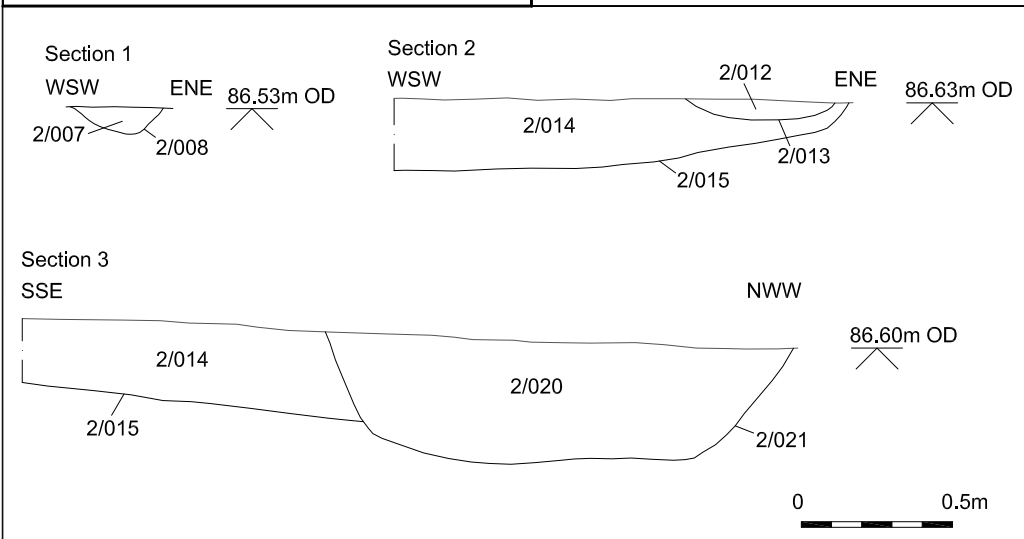
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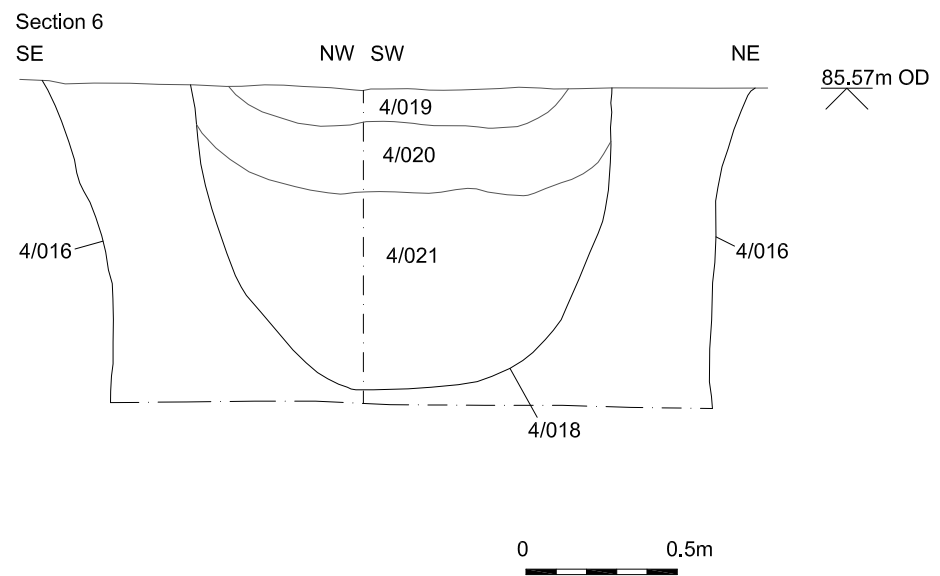
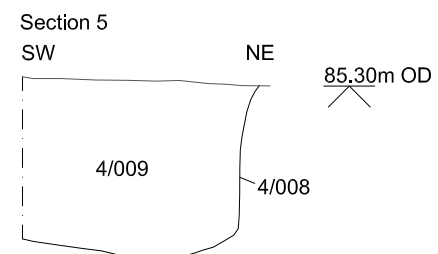
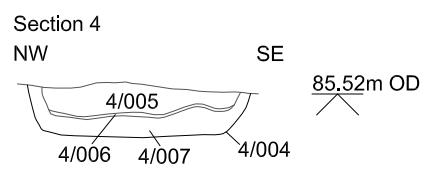
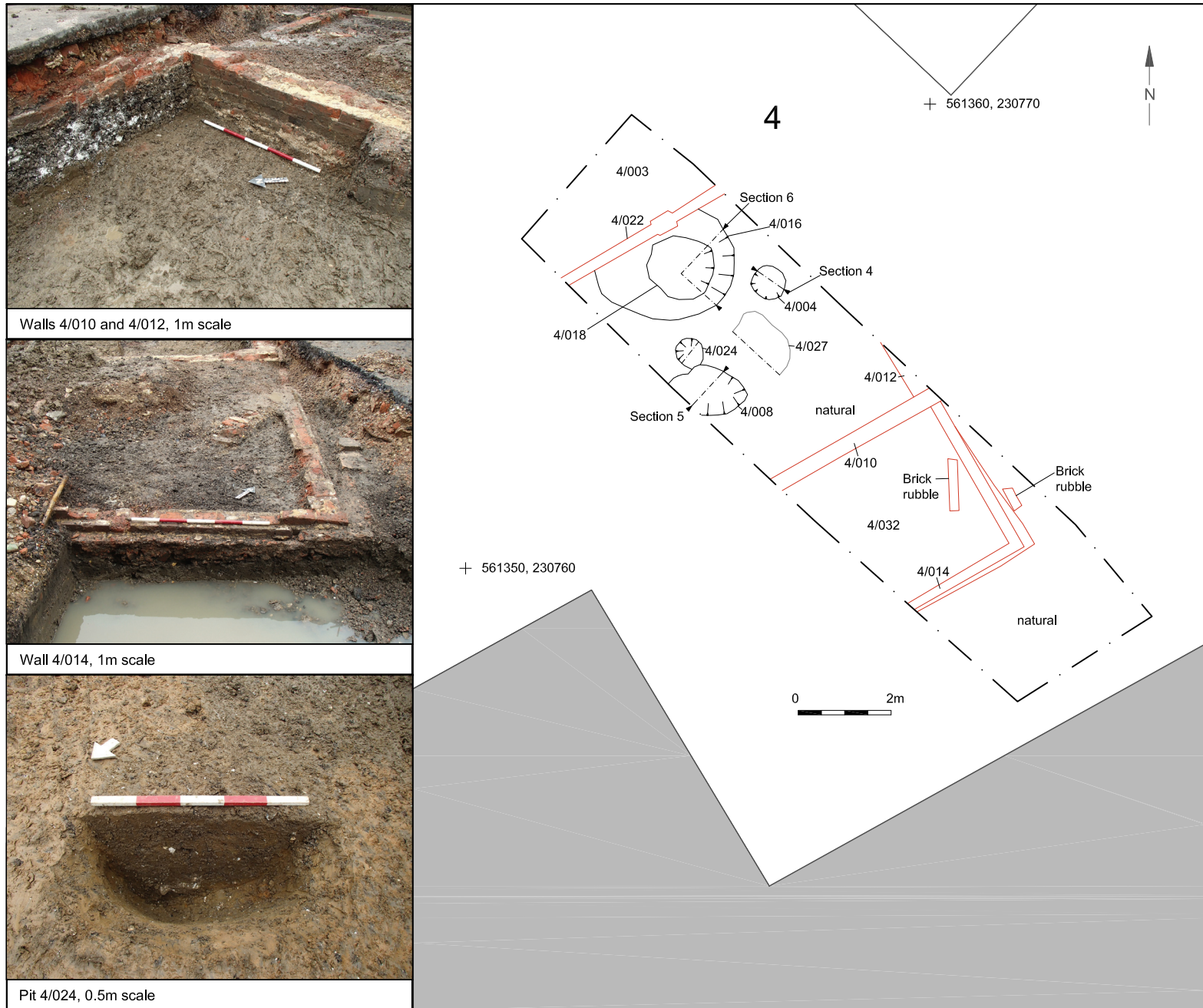


Ditch 2/011, 0.5m scale

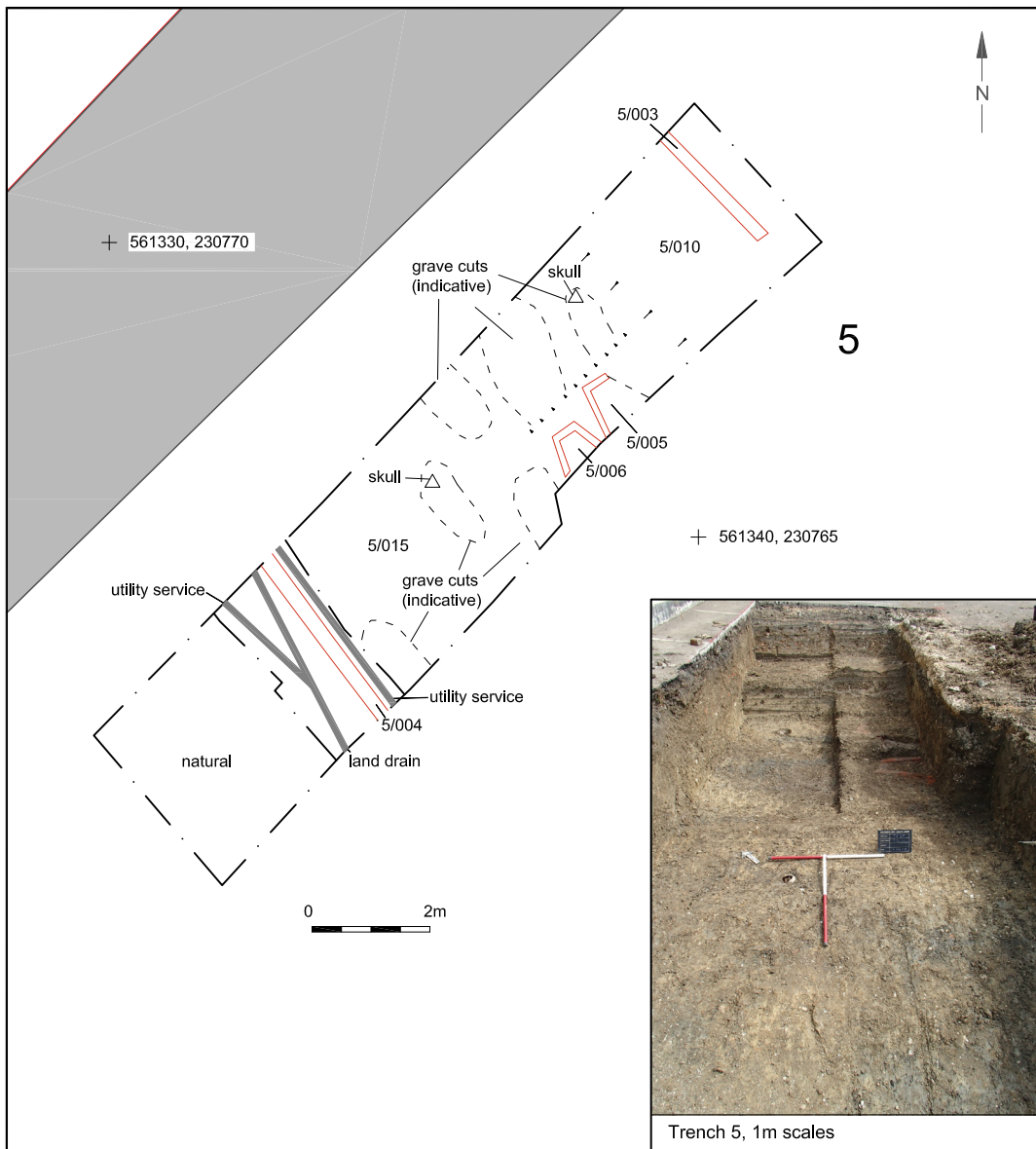
+ 561400, 230700

0 2m





© Archaeology South-East		Land at Mill End Thaxted	Fig.4
Project Ref: 170392	June 2017	Trench 4 plan, sections and photographs	
Report Ref: 2017252	Drawn by: APL		



Trench 5, 1m scales



Wall 5/004, 1m scale



Wall 5/003, 1m scale



Grave cuts 5/005 and 5/006, 2m scale



South-east facing trench section, 1m scale



Trench 1 looking north, 1m scales



Trench 3 looking north-east, 1m scales



Trench 3 looking south-west, 1m scales



Trench 3 south-east facing section, 1m scale

© Archaeology South-East		Land at Mill End Thaxted	Fig.6
Project Ref: 170392	June 2017	Trenches 1 and 3 photographs	
Report Ref: 2017252	Drawn by: APL		

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