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**LAND AT WEDOW ROAD,
THAXTED, ESSEX**

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

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NGR: TL 6142 3126	Report No. 4061
District: Uttlesford	Site Code: N/A
Approved: Claire Halpin MlfA	Project No. 4043
Signed:	Date: April 2012

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OASIS SUMMARY SHEET

Project details			
Project name	<i>Land at Wedow Road, Thaxted, Essex</i>		
<i>Project Description:</i>			
<i>In March and April 2012 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological trial trench evaluation of land at Wedow Road, Thaxted, Essex (NGR TL 6143 3123). The evaluation was carried out in compliance with the requirements of a planning condition attached to planning approval for the construction of 55 dwellings (Uttlesford approval ref. UTT/1562/11, and UTT/1477/11/OP, APP/C1570/A/11/2158376).</i>			
<i>Thaxted was granted a market in 1205, and it became a major centre of cutlery production, with the town expanding rapidly in the 14th century. Knife handles of medieval date have been found in numerous locations in and around Thaxted. A late Iron Age enclosure and a cemetery of 1st-3rd century AD date have been identified to the north of the development area (HER 46184).</i>			
<i>In the event the evaluation revealed two post-medieval ditches (F1032 & F1042, possibly part of the same field boundary), two post-medieval pits (F1007 & F1013), and a small number of undated features. Two sherds of Bronze Age pottery were found in silt layer L1038, and abraded residual late medieval (mid 13th – 15th century) pottery was recovered.</i>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	<i>26.03.12- 04.04.12</i>		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>	Future work (Y/N/?)	<i>Tbc</i>
P. number	<i>4043</i>	Site code	<i>-</i>
Type of project	<i>Archaeological evaluation</i>		
Site status	<i>None</i>		
Current land use	<i>Disused scrubland</i>		
Planned development	<i>Residential development</i>		
Main features (+dates)	<i>Pits, ditches</i>		
Significant finds (+dates)	<i>Mid Bronze Age – Early Iron Age pottery, residual late medieval (mid 13th – 15th century) pottery.</i>		
Project location			
County/ District/ Parish	<i>Essex</i>	<i>Uttlesford</i>	<i>Thaxted</i>
HER/ SMR for area	<i>EHER</i>		
Post code (if known)	<i>-</i>		
Area of site	<i>c. 1.2 ha.</i>		
NGR	<i>TL 6142 3126</i>		
Height AOD (max/ min)	<i>c. 87 - 96m AOD</i>		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	<i>ECC HEM</i>		
Project supervisor/s (PO)	<i>Archaeological Solutions</i>		
Funded by	<i>Endurance Estates Strategic Land Ltd</i>		
Full title	<i>Land at Wedow Road, Thaxted, Essex. An Archaeological Evaluation</i>		
Authors	<i>Higgs, K & Leonard, C.</i>		
Report no.	<i>4061</i>		
Date (of report)	<i>April 2012</i>		

LAND AT WEDOW ROAD, THAXTED, ESSEX AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

SUMMARY

In March and April 2012 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological trial trench evaluation of land at Wedow Road, Thaxted, Essex (NGR TL 6143 3123). The evaluation was carried out in compliance with the requirements of a planning condition attached to planning approval for the construction of 55 dwellings (Uttlesford approval ref. UTT/1562/11 and (UTT/1477/11/OP, APP/C1570/A/11/2158376).

Thaxted was granted a market in 1205, and it became a major centre of cutlery production, with the town expanding rapidly in the 14th century. Knife handles of medieval date have been found in numerous locations in and around Thaxted. A late Iron Age enclosure and a cemetery of 1st-3rd century AD date have been identified to the north of the development area (HER 46184).

In the event the evaluation revealed two post-medieval ditches (F1032 & F1042, possibly part of the same field boundary), two post-medieval pits (F1007 & F1013), and a small number of undated features. Two sherds of Bronze Age pottery were found in silt layer L1038, and abraded residual late medieval (mid 13th – 15th century) pottery was recovered.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In March and April 2012 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological trial trench evaluation of land at Wedow Road, Thaxted, Essex (NGR TL 6143 3123; Figs. 1 - 2). The evaluation was carried out in compliance with advice received from Essex County Council Historic Environment Team, and in accordance with the requirements of a planning condition attached to planning approval for the construction of 55 dwellings (Uttlesford approval ref. UTT/1562/11 & UTT/1477/11/OP, APP/C1570/A/11/2158376).

1.2 This project was undertaken in accordance to a brief issued by the Historic Environment Management Team of the Essex County Council Historic Environment Branch (ECC HEM; *Archaeological Trial Trenching and Excavation at Wedows Road, Thaxted*, dated November 2011), and a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by AS (dated 6th February 2012) and approved by ECC HEM.

1.3 The main aims and objectives of the project were to determine the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains and geological deposits that may be threatened by the proposed development, in order that appropriate mitigation

measures can take place. Specific aims were to define evidence of settlement of prehistoric and Roman date; and to identify any evidence of cutlery production in the late medieval period and any evidence of the extent of the historic town. It is understood that an archaeological trial trench evaluation was required in the first instance, followed by a separate programme of open area archaeological investigation if significant remains are encountered.

Planning policy context

1.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2012) states that those parts of the historic environment that have significance because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest are heritage assets. The NPPF aims to deliver sustainable development by ensuring that policies and decisions that concern the historic environment recognise that heritage assets are a non-renewable resource, take account of the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits of heritage conservation, and recognise that intelligently managed change may sometimes be necessary if heritage assets are to be maintained for the long term. The NPPF requires applications to describe the significance of any heritage asset, including its setting that may be affected in proportion to the asset's importance and the potential impact of the proposal.

1.5 The NPPF aims to conserve England's heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance with substantial harm to designated heritage assets (i.e. listed buildings and scheduled monuments) only permitted in exceptional circumstances when the public benefit of a proposal outweighs the conservation of the asset. The effect of proposals on non-designated heritage assets must be balanced against the scale of loss and significance of the asset, but non-designated heritage assets of demonstrably equivalent significance may be considered subject to the same policies as those that are designated. The NPPF states that opportunities to capture evidence from the historic environment, to record and advance the understanding of heritage assets and to make this publicly available is a requirement of development management. This opportunity should be taken in a manner proportionate to the significance of a heritage asset and to impact of the proposal, particularly where a heritage asset is to be lost.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

2.1 The site is located within the historic town of Thaxted, which lies within the district of Uttlesford and within the county of Essex. It is situated on the east side of the town. It is located 450m to the east of the B184 Walden Road/Dunmow Road, which runs through Thaxted and along the original course of a Roman road between Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow. To the immediate west of the site are residential properties on Weaverhead Close, Wedow Road and Brook View. The southern boundary of the site is demarcated by a small watercourse with a playing field and Copthall Lane beyond. To the north and east of the site lies agricultural land.

2.2 The site comprises approximately 1.2 hectares of agricultural land, which is currently scrubland and used for informal dog walking (Fig. 2). It is irregular in plan and occupies the majority of a single agricultural field. It is accessed principally via Wedow Road, although there is pedestrian access via Brook View and an existing public footpath traverses the site's south-western and southern boundaries. The site lies just beyond the development boundary as identified in the adopted local plan, within unallocated Greenfield and within the special landscape area surrounding Thaxted (Anon. 1999).

3 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND SOILS

3.1 The meandering course of the River Chelmer lies 780m to the west of the site, and a smaller watercourse forms the southern boundary of the site. The latter lies on a varying relief and slopes significantly downwards from c.96m AOD in its northern section to c. 87m AOD at its southern boundary. Geologically, the site lies on Palaeogene marine silty clays, clayey and sandy silts of the London Clay association overlying Cretaceous white chalk with flints of the Upper Chalk association (BGS 1978). Its soils are those of the Ludford association, which are described as deep well drained fine loamy, coarse loamy and sandy soils, locally flints and in places over gravel (SSEW 1983).

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUNDS

4.1 An archaeological desk-based assessment has been undertaken (Higgs 2010). It concluded:

On the basis of the known archaeological evidence, the site has only a low potential for prehistoric, Romano-British, Anglo-Saxon, post-medieval and early modern remains, and a moderate potential for finds and features dating to the medieval and modern periods. Relatively little recent archaeological work has taken place in the area and therefore the identified archaeological potential should be regarded with caution. Cartographic sources confirm that the site has remained as agricultural land throughout the early modern and modern periods. Relatively little is known of the site, although a gravel pit was located in its southern section from c. 1897 until at least 1920.

4.2 The brief also notes that a late Iron Age enclosure and a cemetery of 1st-3rd century AD date have been identified to the north of the development area (HER 46184).

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 Twelve linear trial trenches measuring 40 x 1.9m were excavated with a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, and represented a 4% sample of the site.

5.2 In consultation with RPS Ecology, the locations of trenches were slightly altered from the proposed locations to minimise the impact on local populations of common lizard, bee orchid and ground-nesting birds. The ends of all trenches were also ramped to an angle of less than 45 degrees to facilitate egress for wildlife.

5.3 Undifferentiated overburden was removed under full-time archaeological supervision using a 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.90m wide toothless ditching bucket. Thereafter, all further investigation was undertaken by hand. Exposed surfaces were cleaned as appropriate and examined for archaeological features and finds. Deposits were recorded using *pro-forma* recording sheets, drawn to scale and photographed. Excavated spoil was checked for finds and the trenches were scanned by metal detector.

6 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS

Trench 1 (Fig. 2)

Sample Section 1A West end, north facing. 0.00= 96.89m		
0.00- 0.31m	L1000	Topsoil. Loose, dark greyish brown clay silt.
0.31- 0.53m	L1001	Subsoil. Compact, mid orange brown clay silt.
0.53- 0.92m	L1038	Silt layer. Loose, mid orange brown clay silt.
0.92m +	L1002	Natural. Compact yellow orange clay silt.

Sample Section 1B East end, north facing. 0.00= 97.30m		
0.00- 0.29m	L1000	As above.
0.29- 0.54m	L1001	As above.
0.54- 0.72m	L1038	As above.
0.72m+	L1002	As above.

Description: Trench 1 contained no archaeological features or finds.

Trench 2 (Figs. 2 - 3)

Sample Section 2A North end, east facing. 0.00= 95.23m		
0.00- 0.28m	L1000	As above, Tr. 1.
0.28- 0.48m	L1001	As above, Tr. 1.
0.48m+	L1002	As above, Tr. 1.

Sample Section 2B South end, east facing. 0.00= 94.38m		
0.00- 0.24m	L1000	As above, Tr. 1.
0.24- 0.37m	L1001	As above, Tr. 1.
0.37m+	L1002	As above, Tr. 1.

Description: Trench 2 contained two undated pits, F1005 and F1015.

Pit F1005 was sub-circular in plan (0.55 x 0.64 x 0.09m) with shallow, gently sloping sides and a flattish base. Its fill, L1006, was a compact light reddish grey clay silt with occasional chalk and charcoal flecks and occasional small, sub-rounded flint stones. No finds were present within the fill.

Pit F1015 was ovoid in plan (0.56+ x 1.58 x 0.15m) with gently sloping sides and a gradual break of slope to a flat base. Its basal fill, L1016, was a compact mid brownish grey silty clay with frequent chalk flecks, occasional chalk inclusions and occasional small, rounded flint stones. Small, heavily abraded CBM fragments were recovered from the fill. Its upper fill, L1017, was a compact grey brown silt clay. It contained no finds.

Trench 3 (Fig. 2)

Sample Section 3A North end, east facing. 0.00= 94.38m		
0.00- 0.31m	L1000	As above, Tr. 1.
0.31- 0.76m	L1001	As above, Tr. 1.
0.76- 1.26m	L1038	As above, Tr. 1.
1.26m+	L1002	As above, Tr. 1.

Sample Section 3B South end, east facing. 0.00= 93.87m		
0.00- 0.28m	L1000	As above, Tr. 1.
0.28- 0.62m	L1001	As above, Tr. 1.
0.62- 1.09m	L1038	As above, Tr. 1.
1.09m+	L1002	As above, Tr. 1.

Description: Trench 3 contained no archaeological finds or features.

Trench 4 (Figs. 2 - 3)

Sample Section 4A West end, north facing. 0.00= 95.25m		
0.00- 0.23m	L1000	As above, Tr. 1.
0.23- 0.76m	L1001	As above, Tr. 1.
0.76m+	L1002	As above, Tr. 1.

Sample Section 4B East end, north facing. 0.00= 96.51m		
0.00- 0.31m	L1000	As above, Tr. 1.
0.31- 0.63m	L1001	As above, Tr. 1.
0.63m+	L1002	As above, Tr. 1.

Description: Trench 4 contained an undated ?ditch, F1003.

?Ditch F1003 was linear in plan (1.9+ x 1.08 x 0.14m), orientated northeast/southwest. It had steep sides and a flattish base. Its fill, L1004, was a compact mid orange brown clay silt with occasional manganese flecks and occasional small, rounded flint stones. No finds were present within the fill.

Trench 5 (Figs. 2 - 3)

Sample Section 5A North end, east facing. 0.00= 92.65m		
0.00- 0.29m	L1000	As above, Tr. 1.
0.29- 0.54m	L1001	As above, Tr. 1.
0.54m+	L1002	As above, Tr. 1.

Sample Section 5B South end, east facing. 0.00= 92.65m		
0.00- 0.30m	L1000	As above, Tr. 1.
0.30- 0.42m	L1001	As above, Tr. 1.
0.42m+	L1002	As above, Tr. 1.

Description: Trench 5 contained three pits (F1007, F1013 and F1018), two ditches (F1009 and F1011) and two gullies (F1020 and F1022). Pits F1007 and F1013 contained post-medieval CBM.

Pit F1007 was sub-circular in plan (0.35 x 0.44 x 0.15m) with steep sides and a concave base. Its fill, L1008, was a firm light brownish grey silty clay with occasional chalk and charcoal flecks and occasional small, rounded flint stones. It contained abraded and highly fragmented late medieval (mid 13th – 15th century) pottery (>1g) and CBM (8g).

Ditch F1009 was linear in plan (0.90+ x 0.78 x 0.16m), orientated northwest-southeast. It had shallow, gently sloping sides and a concave base. Its fill, L1010, was a firm mid orange brown clay silt with occasional chalk and charcoal flecks, occasional small, rounded flint stones and occasional small ironstones. Small, heavily abraded fragments of CBM were recovered from the fill. F1009 terminated within the trench.

Ditch F1011 was linear in plan (0.45+ x 0.80 x 0.14m), orientated northwest-southeast. It had irregular sides and an irregular base. Its fill, L1012, was a

firm mid orange brown clay silt with occasional chalk and charcoal flecks and occasional small, rounded flint stones. Small, heavily abraded CBM fragments were recovered from the fill. F1011 terminated within the trench.

Pit F1013 was sub-circular in plan (0.54+ x 0.73 x 0.20m) with moderately steep sides and a flattish base. Its fill, L1014, was a firm mid orange brown clay silt with occasional chalk flecks and occasional small, sub-rounded flint stones. It contained post-medieval CBM (10g).

Pit F1018 was sub-rectangular in plan (2.05 x 0.54+ x 0.26m) with steep sides and a flattish base. Its fill, L1019, was a firm mid orange brown clay silt with occasional chalk flecks and occasional small, sub-angular flint stones. No finds were present within the fill. F1018 cut Gully F1020.

Gully F1020 was curvilinear in plan, 4m in length. It generally had moderately steep sides and a flattish base. Its fill, L1021, was generally a firm mid greyish brown silty clay with moderately frequent chalk flacks and occasional small, sub-rounded chalk stones. F1020 was excavated in three slots (A-C), tabulated below. F1020 was cut by Pit F1018.

Slot	Profile	Fill	Description	Notes
A	Shallow, moderately steep sides; flattish base. (0.90 x 0.64 x 0.18m)	L1021A	Firm mid greyish brown silty clay.	No finds.
B	Shallow, gently sloping sides; flattish base. (0.30 x 0.29 x 0.14m)	L1021B	Ditto	Cut by F1018. No finds.
C	Shallow, moderately steep sides; flattish base. (1.15 x 0.25+x 0.15m)	L1021C	Ditto	No finds.

Gully F1022 was linear in plan (2.55+ x 0.50 x 0.30m), orientated northwest-southeast. It had irregular sides and a narrow, concave base. Its fill, L1023, was a moderately compact mid brownish orange silty clay with moderately frequent chalk flecks and occasional small, sub-angular flint stones. No finds were present within the fill. F1022 was cut by Gully F1020.

Trench 6 (Fig. 2)

Sample Section 6A West end, north facing. 0.00= 95.24m		
0.00- 0.27m	L1000	As above, Tr. 1.
0.27- 0.62m	L1001	As above, Tr. 1.
0.62- 1.07m	L1038	As above, Tr. 1.
1.07m+	L1002	As above, Tr. 1.

Sample Section 6B East end, north facing. 0.00= 96.51m		
0.00- 0.37m	L1000	As above, Tr. 1.
0.37- 0.52m	L1001	As above, Tr. 1.
0.52m+	L1002	As above, Tr. 1.

Description: Trench 6 contained no archaeological finds or features.

Trench 7 (Fig. 2)

Sample Section 7A North end, east facing. 0.00= 94.97m		
0.00- 0.27m	L1000	As above, Tr. 1.
0.27- 0.62m	L1001	As above, Tr. 1.
0.62m+	L1002	As above, Tr. 1.

Sample Section 7B North end, east facing. 0.00= 95.23m		
0.00- 0.32m	L1000	As above, Tr. 1.
0.32- 0.41m	L1001	As above, Tr. 1.
0.41m+	L1002	As above, Tr. 1.

Description: Trench 7 contained no archaeological finds or features.

Trench 8 (Figs. 2 & 4)

Sample Section 8A West end, north facing. 0.00= 93.85m		
0.00- 0.28m	L1000	As above, Tr. 1.
0.28- 0.39m	L1001	As above, Tr. 1.
0.39m+	L1002	As above, Tr. 1.

Sample Section 8B East end, north facing. 0.00= 93.69m		
0.00- 0.33m	L1000	As above, Tr. 1.
0.33- 0.53m	L1001	As above, Tr. 1.
0.53m+	L1002	As above, Tr. 1.

Description: Trench 8 contained three ditches F1028, F1030 and F1032. F1032 contained an abraded sherd of late medieval (mid 13th – 15th century) pottery.

Ditch F1028 was linear in plan (1.90+ x 0.61 x 0.25m), orientated northeast-southwest. It had steep sides and a concave base. Its fill, L1029, was a firm

mid greyish brown clay silt with occasional chalk flecks, moderately frequent charcoal flecks and occasional small, sub-angular flint stones. Small, heavily abraded fragments of CBM were present in the fill.

Ditch F1030 was linear in plan (2.60+ x 0.64 x 0.29m), orientated north-south. It had steep sides and a concave base. Its fill, L1031, was a firm mid greyish brown silty clay with occasional chalk and charcoal flecks and occasional small, rounded flint stones. Small, heavily abraded CBM fragments were present in the fill.

Ditch F1032 was linear in plan (1.90+ x 1.20 x 0.47m), orientated north-south. It had steep sides and a concave base. Its fill, L1033, was a firm mid orange brown clay silt with occasional chalk flecks and occasional small, sub-angular flint stones. A sherd of abraded late medieval (mid 13th – 15th century) pottery (12g), animal bone (367g), Fe slag (114g), shell (4g) were recovered from the fill.

Trench 9 (Fig. 2)

Sample Section 9A West end, north facing. 0.00= 91.98m		
0.00- 0.34m	L1000	As above, Tr. 1.
0.34- 0.53m	L1001	As above, Tr. 1.
0.53m+	L1002	As above, Tr. 1.

Sample Section 9B East end, north facing. 0.00= 92.26m		
0.00- 0.30m	L1000	As above, Tr. 1.
0.30- 0.52m	L1001	As above, Tr. 1.
0.52m+	L1002	As above, Tr. 1.

Description: Trench 9 contained no archaeological finds or features.

Trench 10 (Figs. 2 & 4)

Sample Section 10A North end, east facing. 0.00= 91.50m		
0.00- 0.27m	L1000	As above, Tr. 1.
0.27- 0.50m	L1001	As above, Tr. 1.
0.50m+	L1002	As above, Tr. 1.

Sample Section 10B South end, east facing. 0.00= 90.20m		
0.00- 0.32m	L1000	As above, Tr. 1.
0.32- 0.37m	L1001	As above, Tr. 1.
0.37m+	L1002	As above, Tr. 1.

Description: Trench 10 contained two ditches, F1024 and F1042. The latter contained abraded late medieval (mid 13th – 15th century) pottery.

Ditch F1024 was linear in plan (2.10+ x 1.04 x 0.42m), orientated northwest-southeast. It had steep sides and a concave base. The ditch contained three fills. The basal fill, L1025, was a loose mid brownish orange clay silt with occasional manganese flecks and occasional small, sub-rounded flints, occurring only against the northeast edge of the ditch. The second fill, L1026, was a firm mid greyish brown sandy clay silt with occasional chalk flecks and occasional small, sub-rounded flint. The upper fill, L1027, was a localised deposit of firm dark brownish grey clay silt with occasional chalk flecks and occasional small, sub-rounded flint stones. No finds were present in any of the ditch fills.

Ditch F1042 was linear in plan (3.80+ x 1.18 x 0.53m), orientated northwest-southeast. It had steep sides and a narrow, concave base. Its fill, L1043, was a compact light brownish yellow silty clay with moderately frequent chalk flecks, occasional charcoal flecks and occasional small, sub-rounded flint stones. Late medieval (mid 13th – 15th century) pottery (9g), animal bone (861g), post-medieval CBM, including peg tile (861g) struck flint (5g), Fe slag (146g) and shell (8g) were recovered from the fill.

Trench 11 (Fig. 2)

Sample Section 11A North end, east facing. 0.00= 90.36m		
0.00- 0.31m	L1000	As above, Tr. 1.
0.31- 0.40m	L1001	As above, Tr. 1.
0.40m+	L1002	As above, Tr. 1.

Sample Section 11B South end, east facing. 0.00= 89.01m		
0.00- 0.32m	L1000	As above, Tr. 1.
0.32- 0.38m	L1001	As above, Tr. 1.
0.38m+	L1002	As above, Tr. 1.

Description: Trench 11 contained no archaeological finds or features.

Trench 12 (Figs. 2 & 4)

Sample Section 12A West end, north facing. 0.00= 88.19m		
0.00- 0.19m	L1000	As above, Tr. 1.
0.19- 0.31m	L1001	As above, Tr. 1.
0.31m+	L1002	As above, Tr. 1.

Sample Section 12B East end, north facing. 0.00= 88.07m		
0.00- 0.32m	L1000	As above, Tr. 1.
0.32- 0.43m	L1001	As above, Tr. 1.
0.43m+	L1002	As above, Tr. 1.

Description: Trench 12 contained an undated pit (F1034) and undated ?ditch (F1036). It also contained a natural hollow (F1039).

Pit F1034 was sub-circular in plan (0.66 x 0.68 x 0.18m) with steep sides and a flattish base. Its fill, L1035, was a firm mid reddish brown clay silt with occasional charcoal flecks and occasional small, rounded flint stones. No finds were present within the fill.

?Ditch F1036 was linear in plan (2.30+ x 0.80 x 0.17m), orientated northeast-southwest. It had shallow, gently sloping sides and a concave base. Its fill, L1037, was a firm mid yellowish brown silty clay with occasional chalk flecks and occasional small, sub-rounded flint stones. Small, heavily abraded fragments of CBM were present in the fill.

Hollow F1039 was an irregular depression in the natural formed by root action (2.00+ x 3.70 x 0.49m). It contained two fills. L1040 was a compact mid brownish yellow silty clay with moderately frequent chalk flecks and occasional small, sub-rounded chalk stones. Abraded late medieval (mid 13th – 15th century) pottery (3g), post-medieval CBM (7g), shell (4g) and a Cu alloy fragment (2g), an Fe fragment (3g) and coal (2g) were recovered from this layer. L1041 was a firm mid yellowish brown silty clay with very occasional chalk flecks. Fe slag (14g) was recovered from this fill.

7 CONFIDENCE RATING

7.1 It is not felt that any factors inhibited the recognition of archaeological features or finds during the evaluation.

8 DEPOSIT MODEL

8.1 Topsoil L1000 was a loose dark greyish brown clay silt with occasional small, sub-angular flints (0.19 – 0.37m thick). It overlay Subsoil L1001, a compact mid orange brown clay silt (0.13- 0.53m thick) with occasional chalk flecks and occasional small, sub-angular flints (0.13- 0.53m thick).

8.2 In the northwest corner of the site L1001 overlay L1038, a mid orange brown clay silt (0.18 - 0.55m thick). Two sherds of middle Bronze Age – early Iron Age pottery (5g) were recovered from L1038.

8.3 The natural comprised alternating bands of mid orange brown silt and mid brownish yellow clay and chalk at the north of the site, becoming more

consistently clayey at the south. It was encountered between 0.31- 1.26m below modern ground level.

9 DISCUSSION

9.1 The excavated features are tabulated:

Trench	Feature	Description	Spot Date
2	F1005	Pit	-
	F1015	Pit	-
4	F1003	?Ditch	-
5	F1007	Pit	Post-medieval
	F1009	Ditch	-
	F1011	Ditch	-
	F1013	Pit	Post-medieval
	F1018	Pit	-
	F1020	Gully	-
	F1022	Gully	-
8	F1028	Ditch	-
	F1030	Ditch	-
	F1032	Ditch	Post-medieval
10	F1024	Ditch	-
	F1042	Ditch	Post-medieval
12	F1034	Pit	-
	F1036	?Ditch	-
	F1039	Hollow	Post-medieval

9.2 Eighteen features were excavated during the evaluation. Only Ditches F1032 (Tr.8) and F1042 (Tr.10), Pits F1007 (Tr.5) and F1013 (Tr.5), and Hollow (F1039 Tr.12) were dated, and were post-medieval. Many of the other features contained small, heavily abraded fragments of CBM (not recoverable).

9.3 Ditches F1032 (Tr.8) and F1042 (Tr.10) had similar profiles. Both were approximately 1.2m wide and approximately 0.5m deep, with steep sides and a V-shaped profile. Their alignments were comparable (N/S & NW/SE), but given the distance involved it was difficult to determine whether they were actually lengths of the same ditch.

9.4 The features were present in the south and eastern sectors of the site, with only undated ?ditch F1003 (Tr.4) in the north-western sector. In Trench 5, along the eastern boundary of the site, was a small concentration of intercutting pits and ditches. A narrow gully, F1022, was cut by a curvilinear gully, F1020. The latter was cut by a large undated pit, F1018. Slightly to the north of this group of intercutting features were Ditches, F1009 and F1011.

9.5 The site had a low potential for prehistoric, Romano-British, Anglo-Saxon, post-medieval and early modern remains, and a moderate potential for finds and features dating to the medieval and modern periods. However relatively little recent archaeological work has taken place in the area and

therefore the identified archaeological potential of the site should be regarded with caution. A late Iron Age enclosure and a cemetery of 1st-3rd century AD date have been identified to the north of the site (HER 46184). In the event the evaluation revealed two post-medieval ditches (F1032 & F1042, possibly part of the same field boundary), two post-medieval pits (F1007 & F1013), and a small number of undated features. Two sherds of Bronze Age pottery were found in silt layer L1038, and abraded residual late medieval (mid 13th – 15th century) pottery was recovered.

10 DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE

10.1 Archive records, with an inventory, will be deposited with the finds from the site at Saffron Walden Museum. The archive will be quantified, ordered, indexed, cross-referenced and checked for internal consistency. In addition to the overall site summary, it will be necessary to produce a summary of the artefactual and ecofactual data.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

AS would like to thank Endurance Estates Strategic Land Ltd for commissioning and funding the evaluation (in particular Mr Ben Hooton for his assistance).

AS would like to thank Ms Jo Baulch and Mr Andrew Tongue of RPS Ecology for their advice and assistance on site.

AS is also grateful to Mr Richard Havis of Essex County Council Historic Environment Branch for his input and advice.

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APPENDIX 1 CONCORDANCE OF FINDS

TX23, Thaxted

Concordance of finds by feature

Feature	Context	TT	Description	Spot Date	Pottery	CBM (g)	A. Bone (g)	Other
	1000		Topsoil	17 – 18 C	(1) 6g	54		Shell - 8g
	1001		Subsoil				4	
1007	1008	5	Pit	Mid 13 – 15 C	(1) 8g	10		
1013	1014	5	Pit	Mid 13 – 15 C	(3) >1g	8		
1015	1017	2	Pit			10		
1032	1033	8	Ditch	Mid 13 – 15 C	(1) 12g		367	Flint - 628g Slag - 114g Shell - 4g
1034	1035	12	Pit					Fossilised Shell - 177g
	1038		Colluvial Layer at NW of Site	Mid BA – EIA	(2) 5g			
1039	1040	12	Hollow	Mid 13 – 15 C	(3) 3g	7		Cu Alloy - 2g Fe Frag - 3g Coal - 2g Shell - 4g Slag - 14g
1042	1043	10	Ditch	Mid 13 – 15 C		861	18	Slag - 146g Shell - 8g Fossilised Shell - 93g Str. Flint (3) - 5

APPENDIX 2 SPECIALIST REPORTS

The Flint

Andrew Peachey

Ditch F1032 (L1033) contained a single fragment (628g) of flint cobble. The cobble was c.60mm thick, with flat white cortex on the upper surface. The sides and base had been roughly shaped, possibly hewn or chiselled but not knapped, to form an approximately equilateral triangle (c.110mm long on each side). The purpose of this flint object remains a mystery as it exhibits no signs of wear or abrasion; it may have functioned as a pad on which to rest other objects such as hot pottery vessels, or may have been a standing weight.

The Pottery

Peter Thompson

The evaluation recovered 12 sherds weighing 38g. One or possibly two sherds are post-medieval from the Topsoil and Subsoil, the remainder are late medieval in date (mid 13th-15th centuries). These are all moderately to highly abraded and fragmented, and comprise oxidised sandy wares, sometimes with grey cores.

The Topsoil L1000 contained one abraded sherd (5g) of glazed post-medieval red earthenware (17th-18th centuries). Subsoil L1001 also contained an unglazed sherd (8g) of late medieval or early post-medieval red earthenware (15th-17th centuries).

Pit F1007 (L1008) yielded 3 tiny oxidised sherds, one weighing less than 1g contains coarse rounded quartz sand, the remaining two (4g) are Colchester-type wares.

Ditch F1032 (L1033) contained an oxidised rim sherd (10g) with patchy internal clear glaze. The fabric, containing moderate medium to coarse white quartz, bears some similarity to late medieval Colchester-type ware and would match a mid 13th-15th centuries date.

Hollow F1039 (L1040) contained a sherd of Colchester-type ware (1g) and 2 further oxidised sherds (1g) in finer fabric.

Ditch F1042 contained two small Colchester-type wares (2g) including one with white slip, and a flanged rim (6g) in a finer fabric which would again suit a late medieval date.

The Ceramic Building Materials

Andrew Peachey

The evaluation recovered a total of 24 fragments (932g) of post-medieval peg tile. The peg tile is 12-14mm thick with a sanded base, and was

manufactured an oxidised orange (throughout) fabric tempered with common, medium sand. This type of tile may have been produced between the 16th and 18th centuries, possibly into the 19th century. Ditch F1042 (L1043) contained 18 fragments (861g) of peg tile, while further small fragments and crumbs were contained in Pit F1013 (L1014), Hollow F1039 (L1040) and Topsoil L1000.

The Animal Bone

Julia E. M. Cussans

A small number of animal bones were recovered from three features; Subsoil L1001, Ditch F1032 and Ditch F1042. A total of 14 bone fragments were noted, preservation was rated as ok to good and the bones showed low levels of abrasion; fresh breaks were fairly common in some cases. The only identified species was cattle including a single incisor and a horncore with a small portion of skull attached to it. The horncore was almost complete but broken into several pieces and appeared to be of the longhorn type. This bone was found in L1033 (Ditch F1032) along with several pieces of large mammal (cattle or horse sized) skull fragments which were thought likely to belong to the same animal. One of these was a fragment of probable occipital with a cut mark. The only other bone fragments recovered were vertebrae fragments, one a large mammal thoracic vertebrae dorsal process and two indeterminate medium mammal (sheep or pig sized) vertebrae fragments.

The Shell

Dr Julia E. M. Cussans

Remains of shellfish were recovered from four features: Topsoil L1000, Ditch F1032, Hollow F1039 and Ditch F1042. The shells were generally well preserved although one appeared water worn. All identified remains belonged to native oyster (*Ostrea edulis*) and comprised two upper valves and two fragments. Both of the complete valves were of a small size and one showed evidence of being opened in the form of a small notch missing from the ventral edge of the shell (F1000). Two further shell fragments were noted, both from F1039, one was a fossilised shell fragment which was too small to be identified and the other was a small shell fragment possibly from an oyster.

The Environmental Samples

Dr John Summers

Introduction

Six bulk soil samples were taken for environmental archaeological assessment. The samples ranged from 10 to 20 litres and were taken from pit and ditch fills. This report presents the results from the assessment of the bulk sample light fractions

Methodology

The bulk samples were processed using a Siraf type flotation tank at the Archaeological Solutions Ltd offices, Bury St. Edmunds. The light fractions were washed onto a 250µm mesh, whilst the heavy fractions were retained in a 500µm mesh. Once dry, the light fractions were scanned under a low power stereomicroscope (x10 – x30 magnification) and recorded using a semi-quantitative scale (X = present; XX = common; XXX = abundant).

Results and discussion

None of the bulk samples contained any remains of archaeological interest. The only materials recorded were common modern roots, along with a small number of burrowing molluscs (*Cecilioides acicula*), modern seeds and cereal culm. The samples exhibit no potential for further archaeobotanical investigation and imply that any further excavation at the site is unlikely to produce an analytically viable assemblage of archaeological plant remains.

PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



1

Trench 5, post excavation. Looking north.



2

Trench 5 Sample Section 5B. Looking west.



3

Trench 5 Pit F1018 and Gullies F1020 & F1022. Looking north.



4

Trench 8, post excavation. Looking southwest.



5

Trench 8 Sample Section 8A. Looking southeast.



6

Trench 8 Ditch F1028. Looking south.



7

Trench 10, post excavation. Looking north.



8

Trench 10 Sample Section 10A. Looking west.



9

Trench 10 Ditch Terminus F1024. Looking southeast.



10

Trench 12, post excavation. Looking east.



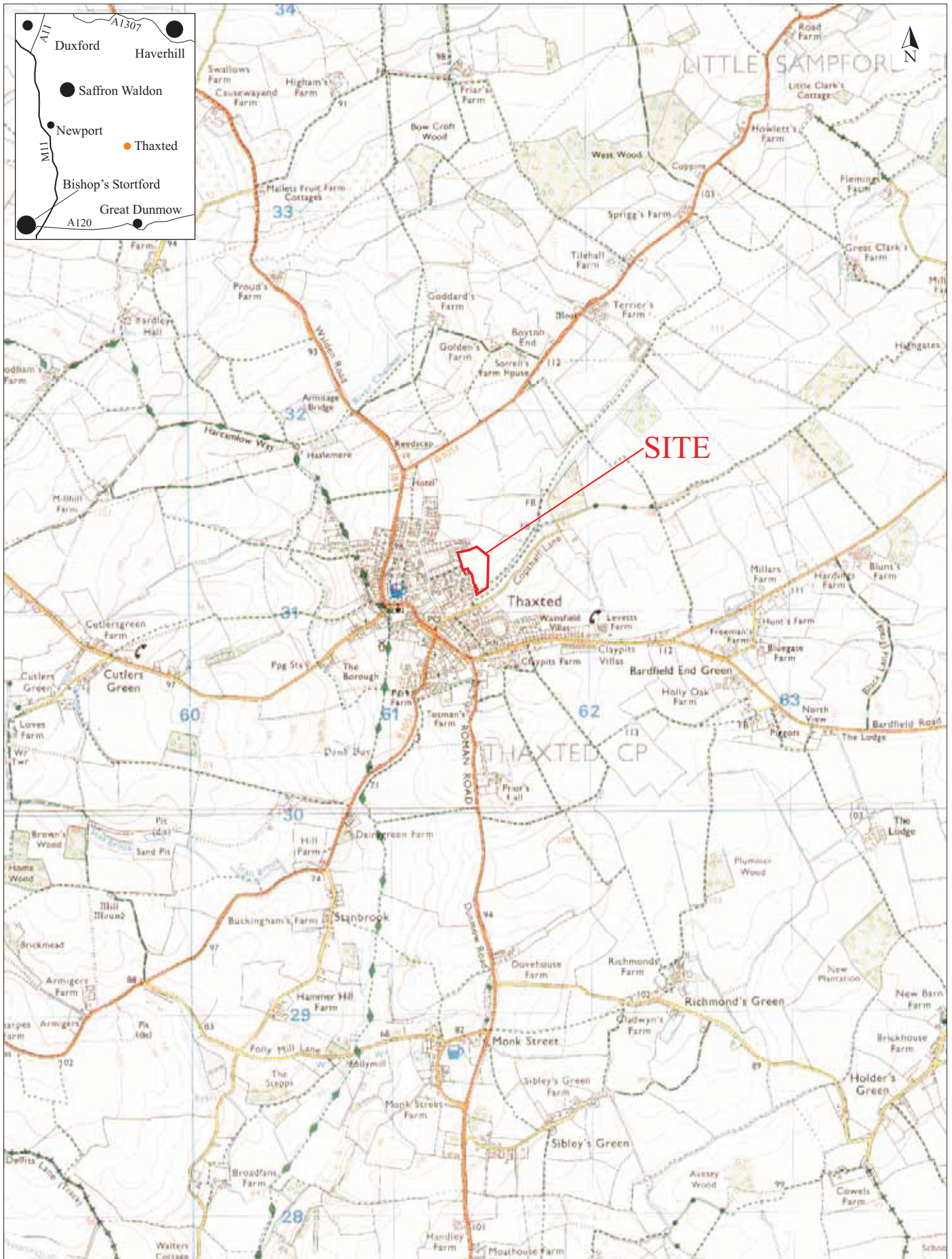
11

Trench 12 Sample Section 12A. Looking south.



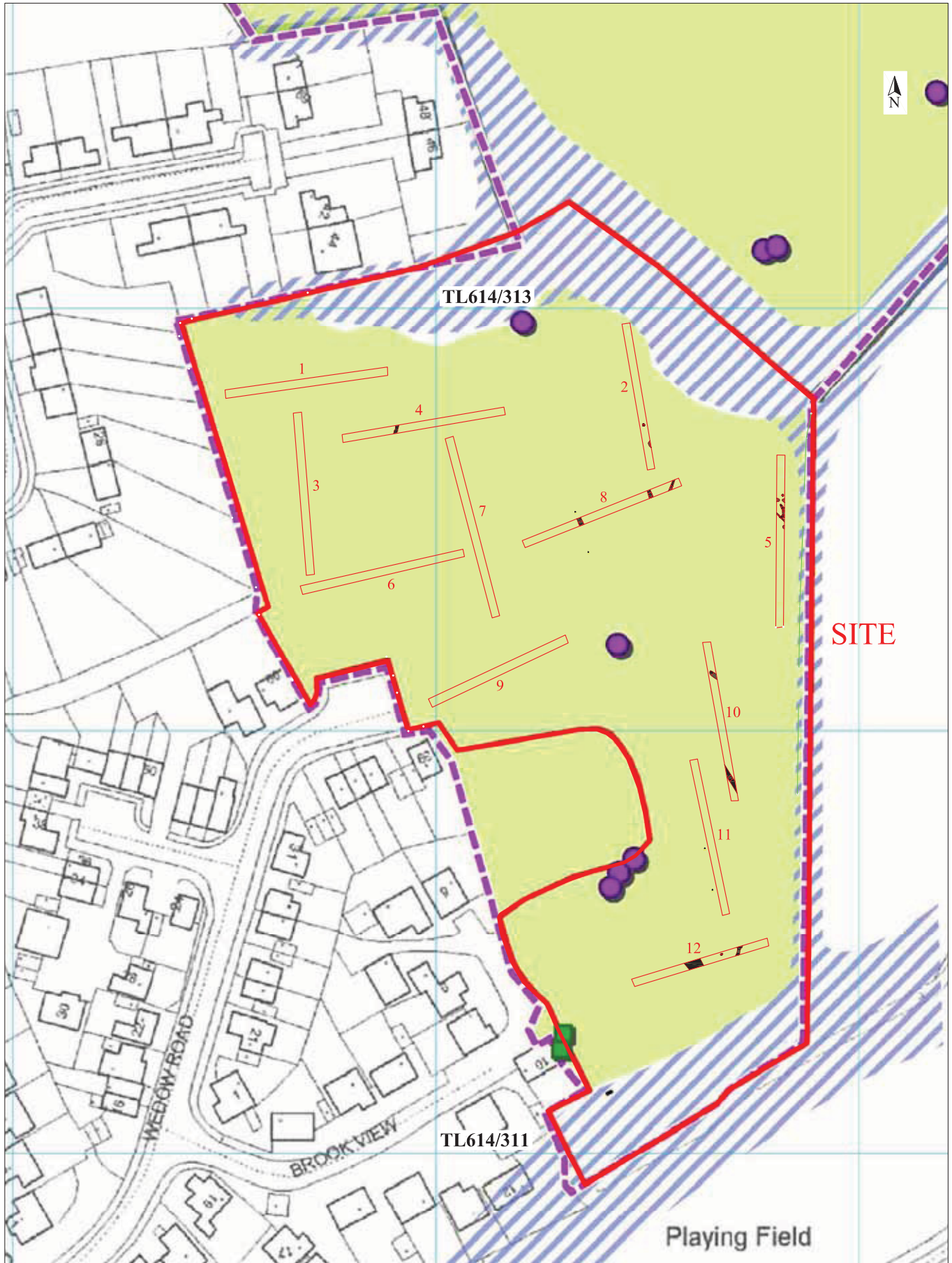
12

Trench 12 Hollow F1039. Looking southeast.



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Fig. 1 Site location plan
 Scale 1:25,000 at A4



- Survey boundary
- Reptile habitat in site
- Suitable bat foraging and commuting habitat
- Plants of conservation interest
- Common Calamint
- Orchid

0 50m

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Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan
 Scale 1:1250 at A4



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Fig. 5 Proposed development plan
Scale 1:1250 at A4