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**LAND ADJACENT TO THE YEW TREE PUBLIC HOUSE,
HIGH STREET, WALKERN,
HERTFORDSHIRE**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND RECORDING

Authors: Zbigniew Pozorski MA Gary Brogan BSc	
NGR: TL 2895 2628	Report No: 3245
District: East Hertfordshire	Site Code: AS 1097
Approved: Claire Halpin	Project No: 1995
Signed:	Date: July 2009

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OASIS SUMMARY SHEET			
Project name	<i>Land adjacent to the Yew Tree Public House, Walkern, Hertfordshire. Archaeological Monitoring and Recording</i>		
<p><i>Between October 2008 and May 2009 Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) conducted archaeological monitoring and recording on land adjacent to the Yew Tree Public House, Walkern, Hertfordshire, (NGR TL 2895 2628) (Planning ref: 3/03/0442). The monitoring and recording was undertaken as part of a planning requirement prior to proposals to construct 20 residential dwellings, and it followed an archaeological evaluation of the site in 2007 (Williamson et al 2008). The monitoring and recording was conducted during the groundworks of individual plots (A-H), and the access road.</i></p> <p><i>Three archaeological features were revealed. The earliest was a large oval pit, F2003, located in Plot G and this dated to the mid to late 1st century AD. Given the lack of prehistoric remains within the area this late Iron Age to early Roman feature is therefore relatively significant. The two other features were large pits within Plot A. The earliest of these, F2015, was a possible cesspit and contained a sherd of modern pottery.</i></p>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	<i>October 2008 – May 2009</i>		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	<i>Y</i>	Future work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>
P. number	<i>1995</i>	Site code	<i>AS 1079</i>
Type of project	<i>Archaeological Monitoring and Recording</i>		
Site status	<i>Area of Archaeological Significance No 29</i>		
Current land use	<i>Grassland</i>		
Planned development	<i>Construction of residential dwellings</i>		
Main features (+dates)	<i>Late Iron Age pit; two modern pits</i>		
Significant finds (+dates)	<i>Late Iron Age pottery sherds</i>		
Project location			
County/ District/ Parish	<i>Hertfordshire</i>	<i>East Hertfordshire</i>	<i>Walkern</i>
SMR for area	<i>Hertfordshire HER</i>		
Post code (if known)	<i>SG2 7NX</i>		
Area of site	<i>0.51ha</i>		
NGR	<i>TL 28952 26280</i>		
Height AOD (min/max)	<i>87.41m/ 82.77m</i>		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	<i>Hertfordshire County Council Historic Environment Unit</i>		
Project supervisor/s (PO)	<i>Matt Adams, Zbigniew Pozorski, Michal Rozwadowski, Lisa Smith, Gareth Barlow</i>		
Funded by	<i>Cresthaven Developments Limited</i>		
Bibliography			
Full title	<i>Land adjacent to the Yew Tree Public House, Walkern, Hertfordshire. Archaeological Monitoring and Recording</i>		
Authors	<i>Pozorski Z., Rozwadowski M., Brogan G.</i>		
Report no.	<i>3245</i>		
Date (of report)	<i>July 2009</i>		

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SUMMARY

Between October 2008 and May 2009 Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) conducted archaeological monitoring and recording on land adjacent to the Yew Tree Public House, Walkern, Hertfordshire, (NGR TL 2895 2628) (Planning ref: 3/03/0442). The monitoring and recording was undertaken as part of a planning requirement prior to proposals to construct 20 residential dwellings, and it followed an archaeological evaluation of the site in 2007 (Williamson et al 2008). The monitoring and recording was conducted during the groundworks for individual plots (A-H) and the access road.

Three archaeological features were revealed. The earliest was a large oval pit, F2003, located in Plot G and this dated to the mid to late 1st century AD. Given the lack of prehistoric remains within the area this late Iron Age to early Roman feature is therefore relatively significant. The two other features were large pits within Plot A. The earliest of these, F2015, was a possible cesspit and contained a sherd of modern pottery.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Between October 2008 and May 2009, Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) conducted archaeological monitoring and recording on land adjacent to The Yew Tree Public House, Walkern, Hertfordshire (NGR TL 2895 2628, Figs. 1-2, DP 1-2). The monitoring and recording was commissioned by Cresthaven Developments Ltd. as a planning requirement for a proposed new residential development.

1.2 The archaeological monitoring and recording was conducted in accordance with a brief issued by Hertfordshire County Council Historic Environment Unit (HCC HEU, dated 31st January 2007), and a specification compiled by AS (dated 25th March 2008). The project followed the procedures outlined in the Institute of Field Archaeologists' (IFA) *Code of Conduct and Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (revised 2001), as well as the document *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*, East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 14 (Gurney 2003).

1.3 The area of the site was also subject to archaeological evaluation carried out by AS in 2007 (Williamson *et al* 2008).

1.4 The objectives of the project were:

- to ensure the archaeological excavation and monitoring of all aspects of the development programme likely to affect buried archaeological remains;

- to secure the adequate recording of any archaeological remains revealed by the development programme;
- to secure the full analysis and interpretation of the site archive and the appropriate publication of the project results, if required; and
- to secure the analysis, long-term conservation and storage of the project archive.

Planning policy context

1.5 The relevant planning policies which apply to the effect of this development quarry are Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 'Archaeology and Planning' (PPG16) (Department of the Environment).

1.6 PPG16 (1990) is the national Planning Policy Guidance Note which applies to archaeology. It states that there should always be a presumption in favour of preserving nationally important archaeological remains *in situ*. However, when there is no overriding case for preservation, developers are required to fund opportunities for the recording and, where necessary, the excavation of the site. This condition is widely applied by local authorities.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE (Fig. 1-2)

2.1 The village of Walkern lies c. 2km east of Stevenage. The proposed development area is adjacent to the north side of The Yew Tree Public House, with the eastern site boundary fronting the High Street (B1037). It lies within an Area of Archaeological Significance No 29, designated on the EHDC Local Plan. The medieval parish church and the River Beane lie to the east and Churchend Common lies behind Manor Farm to the west.

3 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY & SOIL

3.1 Walkern is located on a bed of plateau drift, beneath Hornbeam 2 soil, characterised as deep fine loamy clayey soils with slowly permeable subsoils and slight seasonal waterlogging, suitable for cereals and grassland rotation (SSEW 1983). The site lies at approximately 82m-87m AOD, on a moderate slope down to the east, within the valley of the river Beane.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 The site has been subject to an archaeological evaluation by AS (Williamson *et al* 2008, AS Report No 2962). This revealed remains of agricultural origin in all six trenches. These comprised mainly linear drainage gullies to take water off the slope. Two shallow field boundary ditches were also present and these contained post-medieval to early modern dating evidence.

4.2 There is little evidence for prehistoric settlement in Walkern. Metal-detector finds comprise Bronze Age tools (SMR 11537), including an axe head, located c. 400 m south-west of the site. The regional pattern of prehistoric settlement sees little exploitation of the heavier clay lands until the Bronze Age (Hunter 1999). However, the virtual absence of material remains in the vicinity has led to suggestions that agricultural activity did not begin in earnest until the mid 1st millennium BC (Going & Hunn 1999).

4.3 There appears to have been fairly intensive exploitation of the area during the Roman period, with remains at Stanbro Common, Walkern (SMR 9354), Robins Hall and Great Collens Wood confirming a pattern of farm-holdings along the Beane valley (Going & Hunn 1999). Excavations at Boxfield Farm further west revealed part of a Romano-British field system, a small 2nd century cremation, a coin hoard, a corn drier and a series of ponds (Going & Hunn 1999). There is further evidence of Roman activity at Walkern with a cinerary urn (SMR 1529), 4th century jar and coin of Domitian (SMR 1706); Roman pottery and building materials (SMR 11221) and a pennanular brooch (SMR 11384) to the south-west. Given the virtual absence of prehistoric activity in the area contrasting with the significant Roman presence, many of the undated cropmarks of linear ditches (SMR 2911) and enclosures (SMR 4499, 11223, 11697, 11698) may well date to this period.

4.4 Walkern [*Walchra*] (SMR 2656) is first mentioned in Domesday (1086) with a priest, suggesting that the church was in existence since Saxon times (Morris 1976). Walkern's wooden church was replaced by its flint and clunch descendant between 1042 and 1066 (SMR 2909) (Mawhinney 1994, 15). Other references to the village appear as *Waucre*, *Waukre*, *Walkern(e)* and *Walcren* in the 13th century, and as *Wawkorne* in the mid-16th century. The place-name probably derives from the Old English *wealc-ærn*, or a house for washing cloth, suggesting the presence of an early fulling mill on the river Beane (Gover *et al* 1970, 141).

4.5 The post-medieval history of Walkern sees the gradual expansion and development of the village. No. 98 High Street (SMR 10804), c. 150 m south from the site, is a Grade II listed building dating from the early 1700s, and an archaeological evaluation at land to the rear located former boundaries dating to the post-medieval period. A number of 17th century farmhouses are noted in the village, including Rooks Nest, Bridgefoot Farm and Manor Farm (earlier known as Walkern Place). Several cottages and the White Lion Inn are also dated to this period, suggesting a period of development in the 17th century, although the village is still rural in character. Later industrial activity is attested by the erection of a maltings (SMR 5401) and a brewery (SMR 5450) in c. 1870.

4.6 The Tithe map of 1839 clearly shows that the majority of the site was Glebe land under the control of the Rector (John Harding), and shows why the site has avoided development in the post-medieval period. The remainder of the site (orchard) was held by John Pearman, William Dearman and another, with a 2s tithe payable to the Rector. The enclosure map of 1849 confirms that the site remained part of an undeveloped field extending right up to the High Street. Later cartographic sources from the Ordnance Survey also confirm that the site remained an undeveloped field in agricultural use. The third edition Ordnance Survey map of 1923-1924 labels the area of the site as allotment gardens.

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 The archaeological monitoring comprised the observation of all groundworks in the western half of the site, inspection of subsoil and natural deposits for archaeological features, the examination of spoil heaps and the recording of soil profiles. Archaeological features and deposits were recorded using *pro-forma* recording sheets, drawn to scale and photographed as necessary. Excavated spoil was checked for finds and the trenches were scanned by metal detector.

5.2 An area slightly wider than each individual building plot (A-H) was reduced by the removal of topsoil. Then the foundation trenches for each building were cut and these were on average 0.70m wide and 1.20m deep.

6 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS

6.1 Representative sample sections were taken from foundation trenches and areas of ground reduction across the site.

6.1.1 Plot C, High Street frontage.

Sample Section 1.

<i>Sample Section 1</i> <i>Facing west</i> <i>0.00 = 86.98m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.25m	L2000	Topsoil. Dark blackish grey, soft clayey silt.
0.25 – 0.50m	L2001	Subsoil. Mid orange brown, moderately compact silty clay with moderate flint, gravel and pebbles.
0.50m+	L2002	Natural. Brownish dark yellow, loose sandy gravel with patches of mid greenish grey, compact clay.

6.1.2 Plot G, central-southern part of the site.

Sample Section 2 (DP 6)

<i>Sample Section 2</i> <i>Facing west</i> <i>0.00 = 85.88m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.20m	L2000	Topsoil. As above.
0.20 – 0.55m	L2001	Subsoil. As above.
0.55m+	L2002	Natural. As above.

A large oval pit, F2003 (4.75+ x 3+ x 0.85m, Fig. 3, DP 7), was revealed in an area of ground reduction along the northern edge of Plot G. Its long axis was aligned north-north-east to south-south-west and as the feature did not reappear on the opposite side of the shallow strip for the access road, the possibility that it represented a ditch was dismissed. It had regular moderate sides and concave base and contained four fills:

- L2006 (0.15m thick) was a basal deposit located in part of the ditch closer to its terminus. It was dark blackish grey, firm clayey silt with charcoal, gravel and flint. This fill contained Late Iron Age to early Roman pottery sherds (342g), as well as fired clay (27g) and animal bone (1g).
- L2007 (0.25m thick) was the principal basal fill of the ditch, overlying L2006. It was mid brownish grey, firm silty clay with charcoal, gravel and flint. It contained no finds.
- L2004 (0.35m thick) overlaid L2007. It was mid bluish grey, firm silty clay with charcoal, flint and gravel. The fill contained late Iron Age to early Roman pottery fragments (1231g), as well as CBM (15g), fired clay (626g) and animal bone (42g).
- L2005 (0.35m thick) was a top fill of the ditch. It was mid brownish yellow, compact clay with charcoal and flint. It was recognized as redeposited natural material. No finds were present.

6.1.3 Plot F, central part of the site.

Sample Section 3 (DP 9).

<i>Sample Section 3</i> <i>Facing west</i> <i>0.00 = 85.99m AOD</i>		
0.00m+	L2002	Natural. As above.

Sample Section 4.

<i>Sample Section 4</i> <i>Facing west</i> <i>0.00 = 85.82m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.05m	L2008	Modern build up. Mid greyish brown, moderately compact clayey silt with moderate pebbles, flint and occasional CBM.
0.05 – 0.35m	L2000	Topsoil. As above.
0.35m+	L2002	Natural. As above.

Sample Section 5 (DP 10).

<i>Sample Section 5</i> <i>Facing west</i> <i>0.00 = 85.87m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.05m	L2000	Topsoil. As above.
0.05m+	L2002	Natural. As above.

6.1.4 Plot E, central part of the site.

Sample Section 6 (DP 12).

<i>Sample Section 6</i>		
<i>Facing west</i>		
<i>0.00 = 85.92m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.25m	L2000	Topsoil. As above.
0.25m+	L2002	Natural. As above.

6.1.5 Plot A, High Street frontage.

Two pits were revealed in the north-west corner of the foundation (DPs 7 and 8). Pit F2015 was cut by Pit F2011. The earliest of these, F2015, was the southernmost and largest at possibly 7m in diameter. Its depth exceeded the 1.20m of the foundation trench. The lowest visible fill was greenish grey gritty sandy clay, L2016, and this may represent cess material. This was capped by a layer of firm white chalk, L2017, that was 0.16m thick. Sealing this chalk was a 0.08m thick fill of mid reddish brown sandy clay, L2020. Over this was a tip of mid greenish grey sandy silt, L2018, that contained a sherd (1g) of late 19th to early 20th century pottery and a then a tip of mid greyish brown sandy silt, L2019.

The uppermost fill, L2019, of Pit F2015, was cut by Pit F2011. The latter had moderately sloping sides and a concave base, was 1m deep and possibly 3m in diameter. The basal fill was pale grey green clay, L2012, which was 0.18m thick. This was sealed by greenish grey clayey silt, L2013. Both pits were capped by 0.50m thick deposit of mid orange brown clayey silt L2014. F2015 L2018 contained modern pottery (1g) and animal bone (18g).

7 CONFIDENCE RATING

7.1 The investigation of the pits (F2011 and F2015) in the north-western corner of Plot A was restricted due to the narrowness and depth of the trench and the instability of the pit fills. Elsewhere it was not felt that any factors inhibited the recognition of archaeological features or finds during the archaeological monitoring and recording.

8 DEPOSIT MODEL

8.1 Topsoil, L2000, was dark blackish grey soft clayey silt (0.25m thick) and was located across the site. Below was subsoil, L2001, that consisted of mid orange brown moderately compact silty clay with moderate flint, gravel and pebbles (0.25m thick). This commonly sealed the natural drift geology, L2002, that was brownish yellow loose sandy gravel with patches of mid greenish grey clay, located on average 0.50m below existing ground level.

9 DISCUSSION

9.1 Three archaeological features were revealed during the monitoring and recording. The earliest of these, F2003, was a pit that contained late Iron Age to early Roman pottery (1573g). This was located within the northern part of Plot G and the northern half remains preserved below the shallow access road across the central part of the site. Although very limited in nature this evidence for late Iron Age / early Roman activity is relatively significant given the general lack of prehistoric remains that have been previously found in the area.

9.2 The remaining two features were pits (F2011, F2015) located in the north-west corner of Plot A. It is possible that these were post-medieval / modern cesspits, especially pit F2015 which had a fill, L2016, of green grey gritty sandy clay that was deliberately capped by a layer of chalk L2017.

10 DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE

10.1 Archive records, with an inventory, will be deposited with any donated finds from the site at Hertford 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

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AS also would like to thank staff at the Hertfordshire County Council Historic Environment Record, for their assistance, as well as the staff at the Hertford Record Office.

AS gratefully acknowledge the input and advice of Ms Alison Tinniswood of HCC Historic Environment Unit.

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Historic cartographic sources

(All held by HALS, Hertford)

1839	Tithe Map	DSA4/109/1 & 2
1842	Enclosure Map/Award	QS/E/68
1898	Ordnance Survey Herts	Sheets XIII.9 & 10 (25")

APPENDIX 1 CONCORDANCE OF FINDS

Feature	Context	Description	Spot Date	Pottery	CBM (g)	A. Bone (g)	Other
2000		Topsoil			92		
2001		Subsoil	Modern	(4), 42g	9		Glass Bottle Neck (1), 3g Fe Nail Fragments (3), 146g
2003	2004	Pit Fill	Mid - Late 1st C AD	(89), 1175g	15	40	Fe Lump (1), 19g Daub (102), 626g
	2006		Mid - Late 1st C AD	(32), 224g		1	Mortar (1), 62g Daub (23), 288g
2011	2013	Pit Fill			864		Glass (1) 3g
2015	2018	Pit Fill	Late 19th / Early 20th	(1) 1g		18	

APPENDIX 2 CONCORDANCE OF SAMPLES

Sample	Size (l)	Feature	Context	Description	Spot Date	Flot (ml)	Residue (l)	Pot (g)	Other
1	40	2003	2004	Pit Fill	Mid - Late 1st C AD	10	12	(24), 56g	Burnt flint (6), 218g Burnt Bone (2), <1g Burnt Stone (1), 56g
2	40	2003	2006	Pit Fill	Mid - Late 1st C AD	5	2	(6), 118g	Slag (1), 7g Burnt Flint (1), 5g Daub (4), 100g

APPENDIX 3 SPECIALISTS REPORTS

The Late Iron Age and Roman Pottery

Andrew Peachey

Trial trench excavations recovered a total of 136 sherds (1569g) of transitional late Iron Age to early Romano-British pottery, probably of mid to late 1st century AD date. The pottery was entirely present in Ditch F2003 and is in a slightly abraded but highly fragmented condition.

Methodology

The pottery was quantified by sherd count and weight, with fabrics examined at x20 magnification (and described below). All data is presented in the report.

Fabric Descriptions

- SOB GT Southern British ('Belgic') grog-tempered ware (Tomber and Dore 1998, 214). Sherds in this assemblage predominantly black or red-brown ('muddy') in colour with few oxidised sherds. Temper is limited to common coarse black grog, sparse coarse red grog and sparse medium quartz grits. May be hand or wheel made. Comparable to fabrics recorded at Baldock (Rigby 1986, 260: Fabric 2) and Skeleton Green (Partridge 1981, 249: Fabric A).
- UNS OX1 Fine oxidised ware. The fabric is orange red with self-slipped slightly paler surfaces (5-7.5YR 6/6). Inclusions comprise common fine quartz (<0.1mm, occasionally larger). The fabric is wheel made with a medium hardness (but may appear softer due to thin-walled manufacture) and a powdery feel. Comparable to fabrics recorded at Baldock (Rigby 1986, 262: Fabric 7) and Skeleton Green (Partridge 1981, 349: Fabric D) that were produced within the region, probably from early kilns at Hadham or St.Albans.
- UNS OX2 Sandy oxidised ware. The fabric is oxidised orange red (2.5-5YR 5/8) throughout. Inclusions comprise common medium-coarse sand and sparse iron rich grains (0.1-0.5mm). Comparable to fabrics recorded at Baldock (Rigby 1986, 264: Fabric 13) and presumably produced at the same kilns as UNS OX1.
- BSW Black-surfaced/Romanizing grey wares. Black and grey mottled surfaces and a mid-dark grey core. Inclusions comprise common medium sand and sparse grog and organic material (both 0.25-3mm). This fabric represents an early Roman continuation of the grog-tempered 'Belgic' pottery tradition. Similar to fabrics recorded at Baldock (Rigby 1986, 263-4: Fabrics 10 and 14).

Commentary

The pottery contained in Ditch F2003 was present in two fills: L2004 and L2006 (Table 1). The bulk of the pottery in both fills is comprised of SOB GT, with sparse sherds of early Roman fabrics (BSW, UNS OX1 and 2) also present suggesting a post-conquest date in the mid to late 1st century AD.

Fabric	F2003 (L2004)		F2003 (L2006)	
	SC	W	SC	W
SOB GT	96	1225	30	256
UNS OX1	2	5	0	0
UNS OX2	0	0	6	16
BSW	0	0	2	67
<i>Total</i>	<i>98</i>	<i>1230</i>	<i>38</i>	<i>339</i>

Table 1: The pottery contained in Ditch F2003 quantified by fabric group, sherd count (SC) and weight (W, in grams)

The SOB GT sherds in L2004 are entirely handmade except for two un-diagnostic, wheel made body sherds from the plain cordon of a vessel. The handmade sherds clearly represent fragments from a substantial number of vessels, although diagnostic sherds are very limited. The handmade rim sherds include fragments from a necked jar or bowl with a narrow pointed cordon (Thompson 1982: type B2-4/D2-4) comparable to a vessel recorded at Foxholes farm, Hertford (Partridge 1989, 180: vessel 23), as well as small fragments of two further unidentifiable necked jars or bowls with bead rims. The handmade SOB GT also included body sherds from storage jar with combed wavy decoration on the shoulder and a high proportion of body sherds from jars or bowls with combed or crudely rilled decoration, both common elements in assemblages of this date from Baldock (Rigby 1986) and Foxholes Farm, Hertford (Partridge 1989, 198: vessel 178). The UNS OX1 sherds in L2004 comprise un-diagnostic body sherds; however these are very thin-walled suggesting they belonged to a beaker or possibly a flagon.

The SOB GT sherds in L2006 include a single wheel made sherd while the remainder are hand made. These hand made sherds include a two small fragments from the bead rim of an unidentified necked jar or bowl, as well as a high proportion of combed or crudely rilled body sherds comparable to those recorded in L2004. The BSW includes the rim and base from a necked bowl with a narrow cordon at the base of the neck (Thompson 1982: type E3-1), a type which is common in assemblages from the region. The UNS OX2 is limited to un-diagnostic body sherds.

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The Modern Pottery

Peter Thompson

The programme of monitoring and recording recovered five early modern to modern sherds weighing 49g. From subsoil L2001 was two abraded factory made white earthenwares weighing 18g, one slightly abraded sherd of English stoneware (24g) and a tiny abraded porcelain handle/loop from a decorative ornament (2g)

One sherd (5g) of factory made white earthenware with blue decoration of late 19th-early 20th century date was recovered from fill, L2018, of pit L2015.

The Fired Clay and CBM

Andrew Peachey

Trial trench excavations recovered a total of 130 fragments (1029g) of fired clay and 3 fragments (971g) of CBM.

The fired clay was entirely contained in Ditch F2003 with L2004 containing 103 fragments (641g) and L2006 containing 27 fragments (388g). The fragments occur in a variety of pale oxidised and very pale grey tones, in fabrics tempered with varying quantities of coarse quartz, grog, flint or organic matter. The fabrics have been fired or baked but not to a high temperature, therefore are relatively soft and have become very highly fragmented and abraded. The variations in firing conditions and temper suggest at least four objects may be represented. The presence of occasional roughly flat surfaces and right angled edges suggest these fragments may have been part of loom or thatch weights such as those recorded at Baldock (Foster 1986, 168) and Foxholes Farm, Hertford (Partridge 1989, 152) as well as other late Iron Age/early Roman sites in the region.

Two fragments (92g) of post-medieval peg tile were recovered from the topsoil (L2000), while a single fragment (879g) of modern brick was contained in L2013.

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Animal Bone

James Morris

In total five animal bone elements were recovered from the site, from the fills of Pit F2003 (see Table 2). The faunal material was highly fragmented and poorly preserved. Four of the elements were recovered from fill L2004. These consisted of two cow (*Bos taurus*) loose lower molars and a small fragment of cow distal radius. It

was also possible to reconstruct a fragmented sheep/goat (*Ovis/Capra*) mandible, which has a Grant (1982) mandible wear stage of 35, which places the animal at three to four years old (Hambleton 1999, 64). A sheep/goat mandible was also recovered from fill L2006 but only the first molar was present.

Feature	Context	Species	Element	Comments
2003	2004	Cow	Loose lower first molar	50% surviving, roots missing. In wear, Grant wear stage g.
		Cow	Loose lower molar	Highly fragmented, in 7 fragments. Possible M1 or M2.
		Sheep/goat	Mandible	Left, consisting of the tooth row. In 9 fragments and also highly eroded. P4, M2 and M3 are present, with Grant wear stages, h, g and e respectively.
		Cow	Radius	Fragment of the medial distal epiphysis, fully fused.
2003	2006	Sheep/Goat	Mandible	Tooth row area. In three fragments, with a loose first molar present, in two fragments. All highly eroded.

Table 2. Summary of faunal remains from the site.

The size of the faunal assemblage combined with the high level of fragmentation and erosion indicates bone preservation is poor. Any further archaeological work on the site would produce a limited faunal assemblage of similar composition.

Grant, A. 1982. 'The use of tooth wear as a guide to the age of domestic ungulates' in Wilson, B., C. Grigson & S. Payne (eds.) *Ageing and Sexing Animal Bones from Archaeological Sites*. BAR British Series 109, Oxford, 91-108

Hambleton, E. 1999 *Animal Husbandry Regimes in Iron Age Britain*. BAR British Series 282, Oxford

Charred plant remains

Alexandra Livarda

Introduction

Samples were taken for the recovery of charred plant remains that can contribute to the investigation of issues related to diet, economy, the physical and the social environment of the past. The sampled material is dated to the late Iron Age to early Roman period, more specifically the mid- to late 1st century AD.

Sampling and processing methods

A pit fill was sampled for charred plant remains according to a judgement-based sampling strategy. Two separate samples were taken, which were then wet-sieved by staff at Archaeological Solutions and submitted for the present assessment. The light, floatable fraction was collected in a mesh with 0.5mm aperture, while a 1mm

mesh was used to retain the heavy fraction (residue). All samples were air-dried and the flots were packed in self-seal polythene bags. The residues were sorted for all finds by staff at Archaeological Solutions.

The two flots were scanned in their entirety using a stereoscope with magnifications ranging from x7 to x45. The plant remains were separated from the flots and recorded by category (cereal grain, chaff and other seeds). Their identification was based on morphological criteria with the aid of modern reference material and seed identification manuals (e.g. Cappers *et al.* 2006). Plant names follow Stace (1997). The abundance of the archaeobotanical material was estimated (+ = scarce <10; ++ = moderate 10-50; +++ = frequent >50) based on the minimum number of characteristic plant parts. Charcoal fragments were also noted, estimating their abundance, but these were not removed from the flots.

Results

The plant remains recovered include carbonised cereal grains, cereal chaff and wild seeds in similar amounts in both samples. Preservation was overall poor, particularly for Sample 1, inhibiting the identification of wheat (*Triticum* sp.) to species level in most instances. Most of the cereal grains were identified as barley (*Hordeum vulgare*), a resilient cereal that can grow well even on poor soils. A small number, however, of wheat grains was also present, including spelt wheat (*Triticum spelta*). The presence of glume wheat in the site is further indicated by a couple of carbonised glume bases found in Sample 1, which were nevertheless poorly preserved to be securely attributed to a species. Spelt is also one of the hardiest wheat types, while the glumes that enclose its seeds provide extra protection against adverse climatic conditions and pests when stored without processing for their removal (Jones *et al.* 1986).

The few wild species present include grasses (Poaceae), seeds of the daisy family (Asteraceae), and also docks (*Rumex* sp.) and poppy (*Papaver* sp.) that are commonly associated with waste or arable ground and can be weeds of cultivation.

Small charcoal pieces or flecks are present in Sample 1, while Sample 2 has a moderate amount of charcoal fragments. Some more charcoal fragments were present in the residue.

The two samples have a similar consistency. They may represent discarded food waste, mixed with some food processing waste, such as weeds disposed of after hand-cleaning of the crop and glume bases removed after parching and pounding of the wheat.

Potential for further analysis

The range of the species is typical of the early Roman period in Britain. The presence of moderate numbers of food plants can only hint at the diet and husbandry practices at the site. The few wild species remains and the overall poor preservation of the

assemblage do not hold the potential to significantly contribute further to the understanding of these processes.

A summary of the results by sample can be found in Table 3.

Sample	Size (l)	Feature	Context	Description	Flot (ml)	Cgr	Cf	Se	Cha	Comments
1	40	2003	2004	Ditch Fill	10	++	+	++	FL	Barley, wheat, a glume base and wild plants incl. docks and grasses.
2	40	2003	2006	Ditch Fill	5	++		+	++	Barley, spelt wheat and wild plants incl. docks and poppy.

Bibliography

Cappers, R.T.J., Bekker, R.M. and Jans, J.E.A. 2006. Digital Seed Atlas of the Netherlands. Zuurstukken, Barkhus Publishing and Groningen University Library.

Jones, G., Wardle, K., Halstead, P. & Wardle, D. 1986. Crop storage at Assiros. *Scientific American*, 254 (3): 96-103.

Stace, C. 1997. *New Flora of the British Isles*. Cambridge University Press.

Table 1: Assessment of flots for archaeobotanical material. Cgr = cereal grain, Cf = chaff, Se = seed, Cha = charcoal, FL = flecks, + = scarce, ++ = moderate, +++ = frequent

APPENDIX 4 HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD SUMMARY SHEET

Site name and address:	Land adjacent to the Yew Tree Public House, Walkern
County: Hertfordshire	District: East Herts
Village/Town: Walkern	Parish: Walkern
Planning application reference:	3/03/0442
Client name/address/tel:	Cresthaven Developments
Nature of application:	Residential development
Present land use:	Land associated with Public House
Size of application area: 0.51ha	Size of area investigated:
NGR (8 figures):	TL 2895 2628
Site Code:	AS1097
Site director/Organisation:	Archaeological Solutions Ltd
Type of work:	Archaeological monitoring and recording
Date of work:	8 th October 2008- 12 th May 2009
Location of finds/Curating museum:	Hertford Museum
Related SMR No's:	Periods represented: Late Iron Age – early Roman; modern
Relevant previous summaries/reports: -	Williamson I., Greene, R., Schofield, T., Unger, S. & Woolhouse T., 2008, <i>Land adjacent to the Yew Tree Public House, Walkern, Hertfordshire: An Archaeological Evaluation</i> , AS Report No 2962
Summary of fieldwork results:	Project description: <i>In October 2008 and May 2009, Archaeological Solutions (AS) conducted a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording on land adjacent to the Yew Tree Public House, Walkern, Hertfordshire, (NGR TL 2895 2628) (Planning ref: 3/03/0442). Three archaeological features were revealed. The earliest was a large oval pit, F2003, located in Plot G and this dated to the mid to late 1st century AD. Given the lack of prehistoric remains within the area this late Iron Age to early Roman feature is therefore relatively significant. The two other features were large pits within Plot A. The earliest of these, F2015, was a possible cesspit and contained a sherd of modern pottery.</i>
Author of summary: Newton, A. A. S.	Date of Summary: July 2009

PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



DP 1. High Street, Walkern. Looking from NW. January 2009.



DP 2. Yew Tree Public House, High Street, Walkern.



DP 3. General view of the site, plot G on foreground. Looking from NW. January 2009.



DP 4. General view of the site, plots E and F on foreground. Looking from SW. January 2009.



DP 5. Plots B and C. Looking from N. October 2008.



DP 6. Sample section 2, plot G. Looking from N.



DP 7. Ditch F2003, plot G. Looking from NW.



DP 8. Plot F. Looking from N. December 2008.



DP 9. Sample section 3, plot F. Looking from W.



DP 10. Sample section 5, plot F. Looking from N.



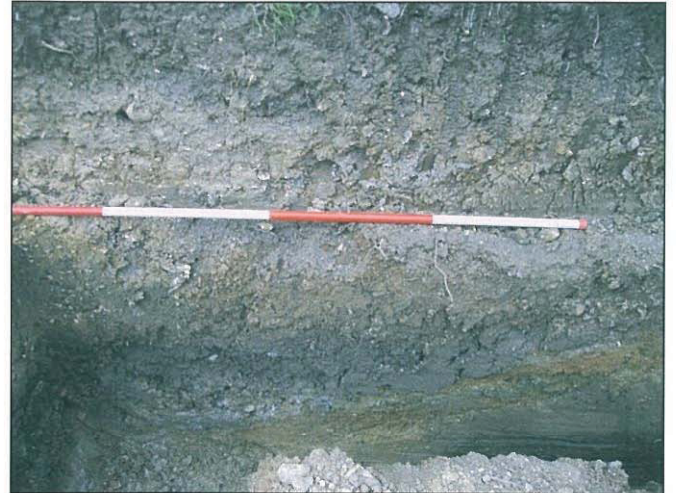
DP 11. Plot E. Looking from SW. January 2009.



DP 12. Sample section 6, plot E. Looking from E.



DP 13. Foundation trenches in Plot A, May 2009. Looking north-west.



DP 14. Sample Section 7, Plot A. Looking north.

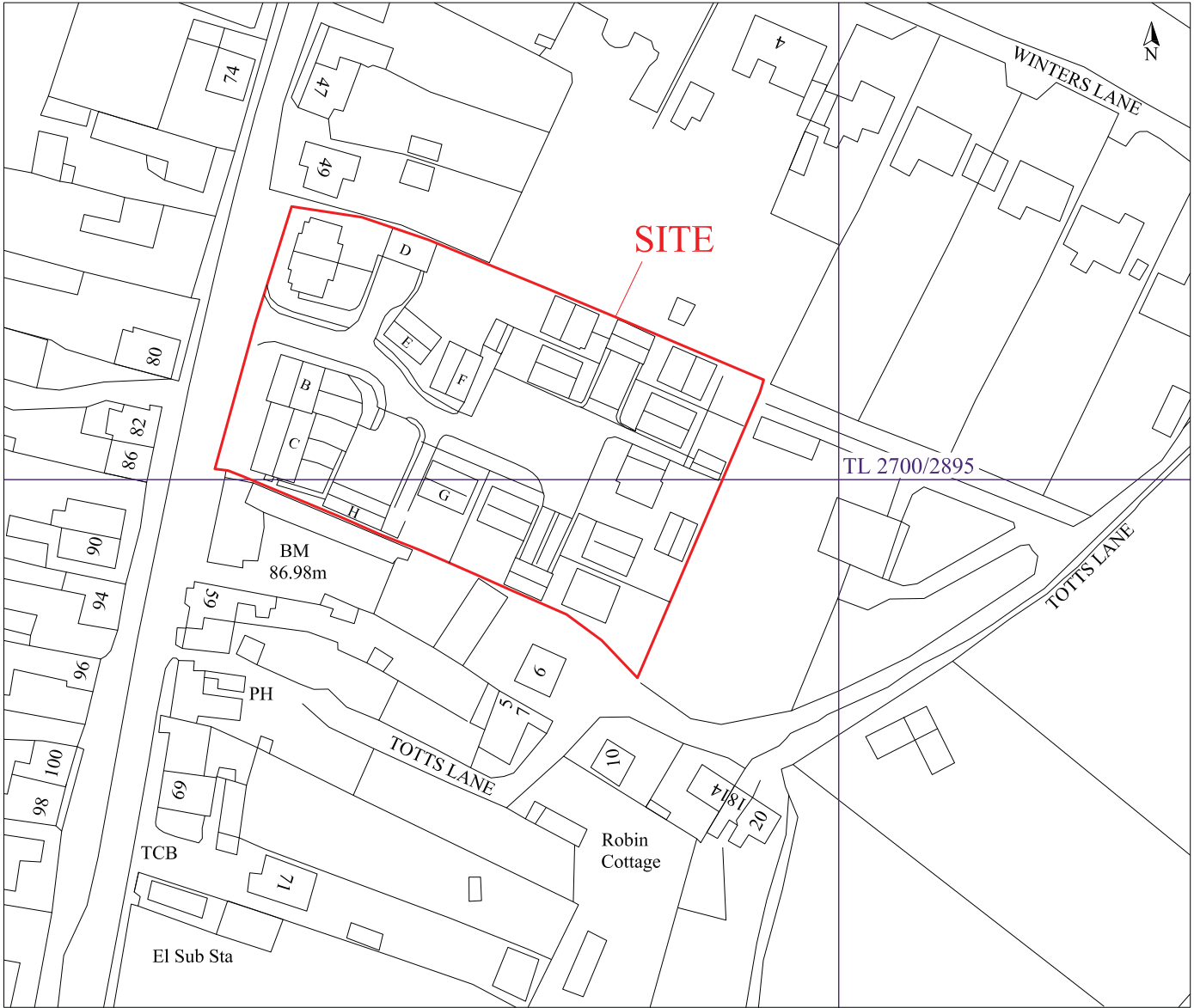


DP 15. Sample Section 8, Plot A. Looking west.

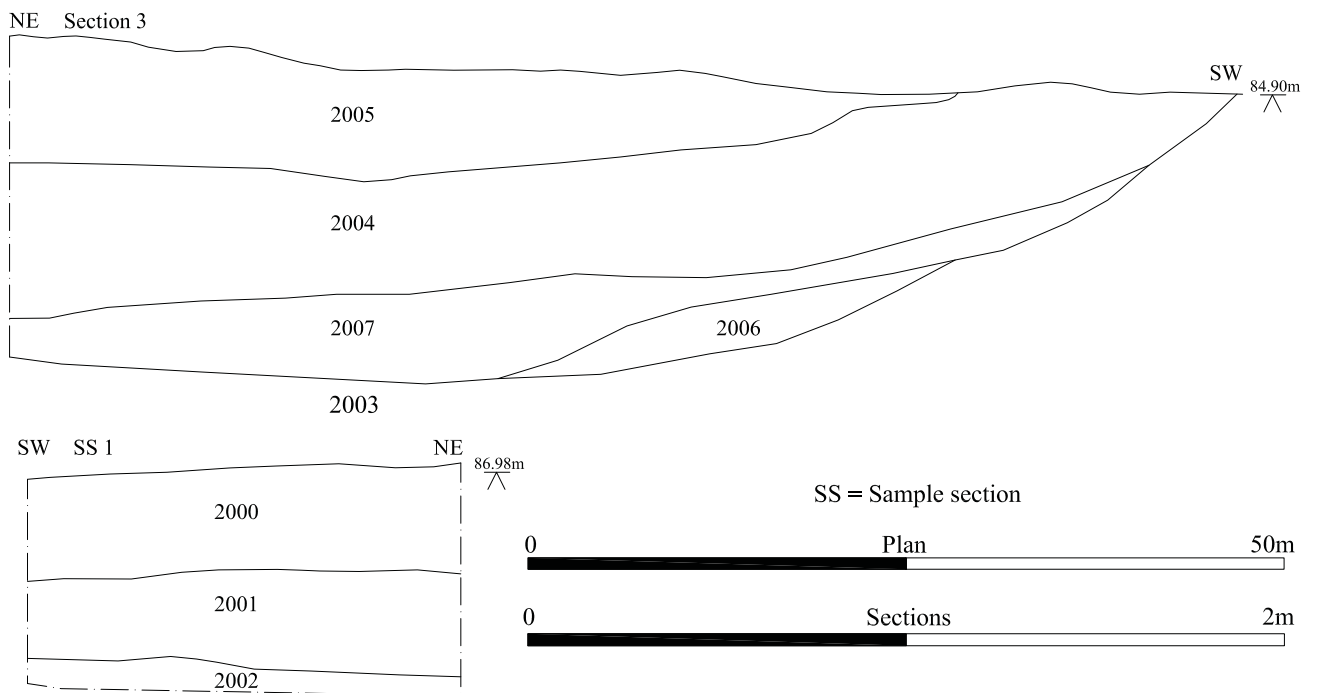
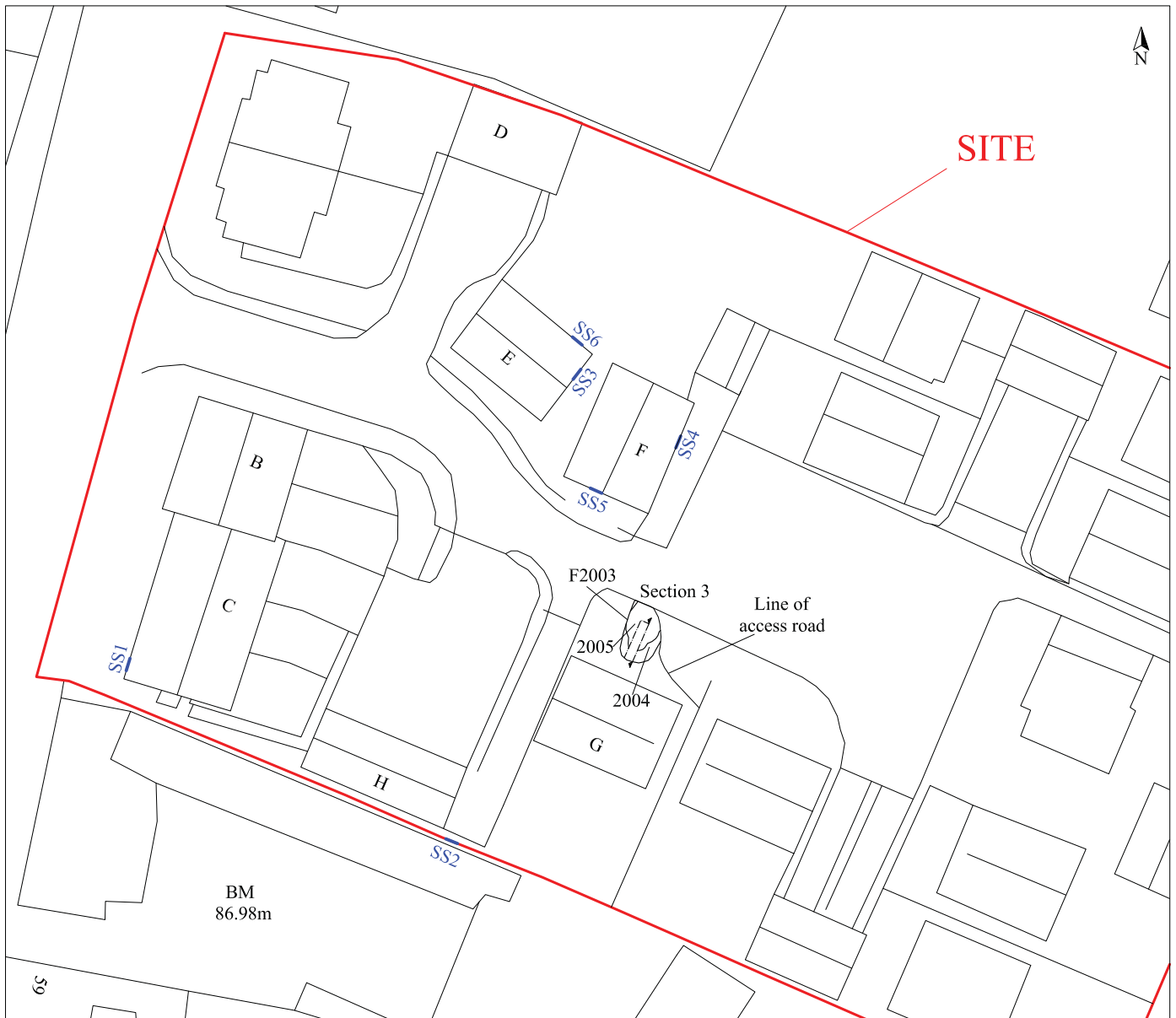


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Fig. 1 Site location
 Scale 1 : 25,000



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



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Fig. 3 Area of watching brief & sections
 Scale: 1:500 & 1:20 at A4