

**FORMER ARGOS DIRECT DISTRIBUTION DEPOT  
1 BESSEMER ROAD  
WELWYN GARDEN CITY  
HERTFORDSHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH  
EVALUATION**

**Albion**  
archaeology



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EVALUATION**

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IPIF



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## **Preface**

*Every effort has been made in the preparation of this document to provide as complete a summary as possible within the terms of the method statement. All statements and opinions in this document are offered in good faith. Albion Archaeology cannot accept responsibility for errors of fact or opinion resulting from data supplied by a third party, or for any loss or other consequence arising from decisions or actions made upon the basis of facts or opinions expressed in this document.*

## **Acknowledgements**

*The project was commissioned by Goodrich Consulting LLP on behalf of IPIF and monitored by Andy Instone and Alison Tinniswood (Historic Environment Advisors for Hertfordshire County Council) on behalf of Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council.*

*The fieldwork was undertaken by Ian Turner and Kathy Pilkinton (Archaeological Supervisors). This report has been prepared by Ian Turner with contributions from Joan Lightning (CAD Technician) and Jackie Wells (Finds Officer).*

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<i>1.1</i>	<i>16/09/2015</i>	<i>Incorporating amendments from HEA</i>

## **Key Terms**

The following abbreviations are used throughout this report:

EAA	East Anglian Archaeology
HEA	Historic Environment Advisor for Hertfordshire County Council
HER	Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record
CIfA	Chartered Institute <i>for</i> Archaeologists
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation
PDA	Proposed Development Area



## **Non-Technical Summary**

*Planning applications N6/2014/2385/MA and N6/2014/2384/MA for the construction of industrial units on Plots 1 and 2 respectively on the former Argos Direct Distribution Depot site, 1 Bessemer Road, Welwyn Garden City, have been submitted to Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council. In addition, a planning application for a retail unit on Plot 3 is in preparation.*

*As the proposed development area lies in a landscape of archaeological interest, the Historic Environment Advisor for Hertfordshire County Council advised that an archaeological trial trench evaluation was necessary on Plots 1 and 2 in order to identify and investigate the site's archaeological potential and significance. The client requested that plot 3 also be included in the programme of archaeological investigation.*

*The trial trenching revealed no archaeological features, deposits or artefacts earlier than the modern period (19th century and later).*

*The modern-period features comprised: two ditches that contained coal; six pits that contained 19th- to 20th-century china and bottle glass; and numerous concrete foundations which were associated with either the recently demolished warehouses or the industrial structures that preceded the warehouses.*

*The results of the trial trenching indicate that the site has very limited archaeological potential and any future development of the site is unlikely to impact significant archaeological remains.*



## 1. INTRODUCTION

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### 1.1 *Planning Background*

Planning applications N6/2014/2385/MA and N6/2014/2384/MA for the construction of industrial units on Plots 1 and 2 respectively on the former Argos Direct Distribution Depot site, 1 Bessemer Road, Welwyn Garden City, have been submitted to Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council. In addition, a planning application for a retail unit on Plot 3 is in preparation (Figure 1).

As the proposed development area lies in a landscape of archaeological interest, the Historic Environment Advisor for Hertfordshire County Council (HEA) advised that an archaeological trial trench evaluation was necessary on Plots 1 and 2 in order to identify and investigate the site's archaeological potential and significance. To assist in the planning application for Plot 3, the client requested that this area also be included in any programme of archaeological investigation.

Albion Archaeology was commissioned to produce a Written Scheme of Investigation (Albion Archaeology 2015) detailing the methods and procedures to be employed to complete the archaeological evaluation and to undertake the fieldwork.

This document presents the results of the trial trenching and an assessment of the potential impact of development groundworks upon potential archaeological remains. These results will be used to determine any necessary strategy to mitigate the effects of further development upon any significant heritage assets identified at the site.

### 1.2 *Site Location and Description*

The development site lies within an industrial/manufacturing zone of the town to the east of its centre (Figure 1) and is centred on national grid reference TL24197/13142.

It is bounded to the south by Bridge Road, to the east by Bessemer Road, and to the west by the main-line railway linking Welwyn Garden City to London and towns to the north and north-east. Further industrial units lie to the north of the site.

The development site in total measures *c.* 2.78ha in area and is divided into three plots as follows:

Plot 1 - 7000m<sup>2</sup>  
Plot 2 - 5,400m<sup>2</sup>  
Plot 3 - 15,400m<sup>2</sup>

The site was formerly occupied by a large retail distribution warehouse which has now been demolished.

The ground height lies at around 84m OD and the geology of the area comprises chalk overlain by boulder clay and river terrace gravels.



### **1.3 Archaeological Background**

Welwyn Garden City lies on high ground between the rivers Lea to the south and Mimram to the north. It was the world's second Garden City founded in 1920.

To the north-west lies the old town of Welwyn which was an important Iron Age and Roman settlement located on the Roman Road from St Albans to Braughing and Colchester.

Prehistoric stone tools have been found in the Welwyn area but more evidence is available from the Bronze Age onwards, indicating that it was in this period that settlement became well established.

Significant finds of late Iron Age and Roman date are located along the River Mimram, downstream towards Digswell, to the north of Welwyn Garden City, and along the route of the Roman road.

Late Iron Age and Roman finds in Hertfordshire are particularly abundant. In the Welwyn area, late Iron Age occupation begins in the 1st century BC with a number of scattered settlements, many of them known on the higher ground now occupied by the Garden City (Thompson 2002).

The Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record (HER) contains 30 general entries within a 1km-radius study area around the site. Seven Listed Buildings and four "events" (previous archaeological interventions) are also located within the study area. None located finds or features of archaeological significance.

There is some limited evidence in the HER to suggest the presence of archaeological remains dating to the Iron Age and Roman periods in the vicinity of the site. The paucity of evidence is likely to be as much a consequence of the small amount and limited scale of previous archaeological investigations carried out in the area as it is the actual absence of buried material.

Evidence from the wider landscape suggesting settlement during the Iron Age occurred on the high ground between the rivers Mimram and Lea, now occupied by Welwyn Garden City, supports the possibility of archaeological remains of this date in the area of the site.

Early edition Ordnance Survey maps show the PDA to be open farmland in the 19th century and the site of industrial premises, following the establishment of the Garden City, in the 1920s (Figure 4).





#### **1.4 Project Objectives**

The principal objective of the evaluation was to determine whether archaeological remains were present within the proposed development site and, if so, to establish their extent, condition, nature and significance.

The broader objective of the project was to add to the knowledge and understanding of the origins and nature of settlement in the area and to produce an archive report that fully describes the archaeological works.

Specific research objectives were to be formulated, if the remains uncovered during the trial trenching warranted a further stage of archaeological work. These research objectives would be determined by the nature of the archaeological remains present at the site and would be linked to the published research frameworks for the region (Medlycott 2011).



## 2. METHODOLOGY

The methodological approach to the project is summarised below and detailed in the written scheme of investigation (Albion Archaeology 2015).

### 2.1 Standards

Throughout the project the standards and requirements set out in the following documents were adhered to:

• Albion Archaeology	<i>Procedures Manual: Volume 1 Fieldwork</i> (2nd edn, 2001).
• EAA	<i>Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England</i> (Gurney 2003)
• Historic England	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) Project Managers' Guide</i> (2015)
	<i>Environmental Archaeology: A guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation, 2nd edition</i> (2011)
• ClfA	<i>By-Laws and Code of Conduct</i>
	<i>Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation</i> (2014)
	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i> (2014)

### 2.2 Trial Trenching

The trial trenching comprised the excavation of 14 trenches and took place between 29th June and 2nd July 2015. The trenches were 25m long, 1.80m wide. This equates to a 2.26% sample of the 2.78ha site. This relatively low sample was the initial stage of a trenching strategy which, should archaeological remains of interest be present, required up to 2.2% of additional trenching to be undertaken, as detailed in the WSI, section 3.2;

*Because of the potential for significant modern ground disturbance at the site, a representative number of the initial trenches will be excavated to sample the potential of the site. If disturbance likely to have a significant impact on potential archaeological remains is confirmed, then the investigations in the affected area or areas may be discontinued. Any discontinuation of trenching will occur only after consultation with, and agreement from, the HEA.*

*If archaeological remains of interest are found in the initial trenches, up to a further 2.2% of trenching will be excavated to confirm findings if required by the HEA. The amount and location of any additional trenching will be agreed with the client and HEA before they are excavated.*

In the event, no additional trenching was required as no significant archaeological remains were present in the trenches.



The trenches were opened by a mechanical excavator fitted with a flat-edged ditching bucket and operated by an experienced driver under the supervision of an archaeologist. Overburden was removed down to the top of the archaeological deposits or undisturbed geological deposits, whichever was encountered first.

Any potential archaeological features were noted, cleaned, excavated by hand and recorded using Albion Archaeology's *pro forma* sheets. Each trench was subsequently drawn and photographed as appropriate. Approval to backfill the trenches was given by the HEA prior to being carried out.

### **2.3 Archiving**

All records and materials produced will be archived to the standards outlined in Historic England's *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* and *EAA Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*.

Details of the project and its findings will be submitted to the OASIS database in accordance with the guidelines issued by English Heritage and the Archaeology Data Service (ref.: albionar1-205529).

Permission will be sought from the landowner for transfer of title of all finds to Mill Green Museum, Hatfield on completion of the project under accession number WEWHM: 2015.4.



### 3. TRENCHING RESULTS

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All significant deposits, features and artefacts found within the trial trenches are described below and shown on Figure 2. All deposits are recorded using a unique number sequence, commencing at 101 for Trench 1, 201 for Trench 2 etc. Context numbers in square brackets refer to the cuts [\*\*\*] and round brackets to fills or layers (\*\*\*). Detailed data on all trenches, features and deposits can be found in Appendix 1.

#### 3.1 *Overburden and Undisturbed Geological Strata*

The overburden was generally similar in character across the site.

At surface level, was a 0.20–0.40m-thick demolition layer of machine-processed, crushed concrete fragments associated with the recent demolition of the warehouses that occupied this site (100) – (1400).

Beneath this, in many of the trenches, was a second demolition layer of moderate large brick fragments within light brown-grey silt or re-deposited light orange boulder clay (102), (407), (603), (704), (902), (1002), (1104), (1305).

Some of the trenches also contained levelling layers of re-deposited boulder clay with occasional large brick fragments (302), (308), (503), (604), (1003) (1103). These were generally below the second demolition layer, although occasionally above it (602).

Additional overburden layers encountered comprised: a layer of type 1 commercial levelling gravel (802) in Trench 8 and a buried tarmac surface (202) above a levelling layer of re-deposited boulder clay (203) in Trench 2.

A few of the trenches contained a surviving buried subsoil (204), (303), (606), (1304) above the geological strata.

The undisturbed geological deposit varied from light grey-orange clay to mid orange silty clay with frequent stones (101) – (1401).

Trench 5 was the only one where geological deposits were not exposed. The depth of demolition deposits exceeded 2.3m, at which point machine excavation was halted.

#### 3.2 *Other Features and Deposits*

No archaeological features, deposits or artefacts earlier the modern period (19th century onwards) were present in any of the trenches. The modern-period features comprised two ditches, six pits and numerous concrete foundations associated with either the recently demolished warehouses or the industrial structures that preceded the warehouses.

Concrete and brick foundations associated with the recently demolished warehouses were present in Trenches 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 11 and 13. Pipe trenches were present in Trenches 1, 3 and 4.



Two pits [608] and [1302] containing loose deposits of brick and concrete fragments associated with the recent demolition of the warehouses were identified in Trenches 6 and 13.

A buried concrete surface (1005) was identified in Trench 10 that predates the warehouse foundations.

A concrete wall (502) was visible at various points along the south-west side of Trench 5. It is probably associated with the recently demolished warehouses or the preceding 20th-century works buildings.

A darkly coloured industrial deposit (402), (605), (1004) and (1102), containing occasional large fragments of smelting slag and china fragments of 19th- to 20th-century date was identified in Trenches 4, 6, 10 and 11. In Trench 4 the deposit lay above the primary fill of pit [405] (see below) and in Trench 10 it was located above the concrete foundation (1005). In Trench 10 the deposit had been sealed below re-deposited boulder clay which had been used for levelling, prior to the construction of the recently demolished warehouses.

Four extensive pits [403], [405], [702] and [903] were present in Trenches 4, 7 and 9. They contained fragments of china and bottle glass of 19th- to 20th-century date.

Two minor ditches [105] and [1402], containing moderate amounts of coal and occasional fragments of 19th- to 20th-century brick and grey roof slate, were identified in Trenches 1 and 14.

Three features [205] investigated in Trench 2 were judged to be tree rooting boles. They were irregular in plan, had uneven bases and contained sterile deposits of mid grey-brown clay silt and no artefacts.



## 4. CONCLUSIONS

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No archaeological features, deposits or artefacts earlier than the modern period were found in the trenches.

The modern features comprised two ditches that contained coal fragments and six pits that contained modern china and bottle glass fragments. Numerous concrete foundations were present within the trenches which were associated with either the recently demolished warehouses or the industrial structures that preceded the warehouses.

The results of the trial trenching demonstrate that the site has little or no archaeological potential. Therefore, any future development of the site is unlikely to impact on significant archaeological remains.



## 5. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Medlycott, M., (ed.) 2011, *Research and Archaeology Revisited: a revised framework for the East of England*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 24.

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## **6. APPENDIX 1: TRENCH SUMMARIES**

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**Trench: 1**

**Max Dimensions: Length: 25.00 m. Width: 1.80 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.45 m. Max: 0.55 m.**

**Co-ordinates: OS Grid Ref.: 524257/213082**

**OS Grid Ref.: 524276/213066**

**Reason: Assessment of archaeological potential**

<b>Context:</b>	<b>Type:</b>	<b>Description:</b>	<b>Excavated:</b>	<b>Finds Present:</b>
100	Demolition layer	A spread of demolition machine processed, crushed concrete. 0.20m thick.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
101	Natural	Firm light grey orange clay With patches of light orange gravel and patches of light grey silt.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
102	Demolition layer	Friable light brown grey silt With moderate small concrete fragments and bricks and half bricks. A demolition layer c. 0.20m thick.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
103	Modern intrusion	Linear N-S dimensions: min breadth 0.9m Cut of pipe trench.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
104	Backfill	Loose yellow orange gravel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
105	Ditch	Linear ESE-WNW dimensions: min breadth 0.35m, min length 7.m	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
106	Fill	Friable dark grey black silty clay With occasional coal and small brick fragments.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



**Trench:** 2

**Max Dimensions:** Length: 25.00 m. Width: 1.80 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.65 m. Max: 0.85 m.

**Co-ordinates:** OS Grid Ref.: 524302/213111

OS Grid Ref.: 524292/213089

**Reason:** Assessment of archaeological potential

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
200	Demolition layer	A spread of demolition machine processed, crushed concrete. 0.30m thick.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
201	Natural	Firm light grey orange clay With patches of light orange gravel and patches of light grey silt.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
202	Tarmac	A buried modern surface. c. 0.15m thick.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
203	Make up layer	Firm mid brown orange sandy clay Re-deposited natural. c. 0.15m thick.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
204	Buried subsoil	Firm mid grey brown silty clay occasional small-medium stones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
205	Treethrow	Irregular sides: concave base: uneven General number for cut of three rooting boles.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
206	Fill	Friable mid grey brown clay silt occasional small-medium stones General number for fill of three rooting boles.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



**Trench: 3**

**Max Dimensions: Length: 25.00 m. Width: 1.80 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.7 m. Max: 1.25 m.**

**Co-ordinates: OS Grid Ref.: 524322/213132**

**OS Grid Ref.: 524298/213140**

**Reason: Assessment of archaeological potential**

<b>Context:</b>	<b>Type:</b>	<b>Description:</b>	<b>Excavated:</b>	<b>Finds Present:</b>
300	Demolition layer	A spread of demolition machine processed, crushed concrete. 0.30m thick.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
301	Natural	Firm light grey orange clay With patches of light orange gravel and patches of light grey silt.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
302	Make up layer	Firm light grey orange silty clay With occasional large modern brick inclusions. C. 0.85m thick.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
303	Buried subsoil	Firm mid brown grey clay silt occasional small-medium stones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
304	Modern intrusion	Linear NNE-SSW dimensions: min breadth 2.m Cut of a modern foundation and parallel pipe trench.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
305	Tarmac	A tarmac backfill to a modern pipe trench.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
306		Loose yellow orange gravel Additional backfill to a modern pipe trench.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
307	Backfill	Firm mid yellow orange clay With frequent large modern brick and concrete inclusions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
308	Make up layer	Loose dark brown black clay silt With patches of re-deposited natural and large modern brick and concrete inclusions. c. 1.10m thick.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



**Trench:** 4

**Max Dimensions:** Length: 25.00 m. Width: 1.80 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.45 m. Max: 1.25 m.

**Co-ordinates:** OS Grid Ref.: 524272/213141

OS Grid Ref.: 524267/213117

**Reason:** Assessment of archaeological potential

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
400	Demolition layer	A spread of demolition machine processed, crushed concrete. 0.26m thick.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
401	Natural	Firm light orange grey clay With patches of light orange gravel and patches of light orange silt.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
402	Dump material	Friable dark grey black sandy silt An industrial deposit with occasional large smelting slag and willow pattern china inclusions. 0.21m to 0.60m thick	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
403	Pit	dimensions: min breadth 5.2m Cut of a large pit containing modern artefacts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
404	Fill	Firm light yellow grey clay moderate flecks charcoal With occasional modern brick, tile and bottle glass fragments.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
405	Pit	dimensions: min breadth 4.7m Cut of a large pit containing modern artefacts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
406	Fill	Firm mid grey silty clay occasional small-medium stones With occasional modern period bottle glass and china fragments of 19th - 20th century date.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
407	Demolition layer	Friable mid brown grey silt With moderate small concrete fragments and bricks and half bricks. 0.14m to 0.28m thick.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



**Trench: 5**

**Max Dimensions: Length: 25.00 m. Width: 1.80 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 1.2 m. Max: 2.6 m.**

**Co-ordinates: OS Grid Ref.: 524200/213094**

**OS Grid Ref.: 524200/213098**

**Reason: Assessment of archaeological potential**

<b>Context:</b>	<b>Type:</b>	<b>Description:</b>	<b>Excavated:</b>	<b>Finds Present:</b>
500	Demolition layer	A spread of demolition machine processed, crushed concrete. 0.40m thick.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
502	Wall	A concrete wall identified at two points along the south-west side of Trench 5.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
503	Make up layer	A layer of loose machine processed, crushed concrete. 2m+ thick.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



**Trench: 6**

**Max Dimensions: Length: 25.00 m. Width: 1.80 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 1.7 m. Max: 1.7 m.**

**Co-ordinates: OS Grid Ref.: 524236/213129**

**OS Grid Ref.: 524212/213129**

**Reason: Assessment of archaeological potential**

<b>Context:</b>	<b>Type:</b>	<b>Description:</b>	<b>Excavated:</b>	<b>Finds Present:</b>
600	Demolition layer	A spread of demolition machine processed, crushed concrete. 0.40m thick.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
601	Natural	Firm light grey orange silty clay With patches of light orange gravel and patches of light grey silt.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
602	Make up layer	Friable light orange silty clay frequent small-medium stones C. 0.16m thick	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
603	Demolition layer	Friable mid grey sandy silt With frequent large modern brick fragments. C. 0.20m thick	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
604	Make up layer	Friable light orange silty gravel Re-deposited natural. c. 0.15m thick.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
605	Dump material	Friable dark grey black sandy silt An industrial deposit with occasional large smelting slag and willow pattern china inclusions. c. 0.65m thick.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
606	Buried subsoil	Firm mid grey clay occasional medium stones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
608	Modern intrusion	dimensions: min length 5.3m 'Cut' of a large pit containing large concrete blocks. Associated with the recent demolition of warehouses.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
607	Fill	Loose dark grey sandy silt Frequent large concrete blocks mixed with re-deposited layer (605). Recent demolition disturbance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



**Trench: 7**

**Max Dimensions: Length: 25.00 m. Width: 1.80 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.27 m. Max: 0.35 m.**

**Co-ordinates: OS Grid Ref.: 524219/213178**

**OS Grid Ref.: 524239/213164**

**Reason: Assessment of archaeological potential**

<b>Context:</b>	<b>Type:</b>	<b>Description:</b>	<b>Excavated:</b>	<b>Finds Present:</b>
700	Demolition layer	A spread of demolition machine processed, crushed concrete. 0.20m thick.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
701	Natural	Firm light grey orange clay With patches of light orange gravel and patches of light grey silt.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
702	Pit	sides: concave base: uneven dimensions: min depth 0.18m, min length 15.4m Cut of a large shallow pit containing modern period artefacts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
703	Fill	Firm dark orange grey silty clay moderate small-medium stones With moderate fragments of modern bottleglass, brick, tile and coal.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
704	Demolition layer	Friable mid brown grey silt With moderate small concrete fragments and bricks and half bricks. A demolition layer c. 0.20m thick.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



**Trench: 8**

**Max Dimensions: Length: 25.00 m. Width: 1.80 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.32 m. Max: 0.35 m.**

**Co-ordinates: OS Grid Ref.: 524191/213180**

**OS Grid Ref.: 524166/213184**

**Reason: Assessment of archaeological potential**

<b>Context:</b>	<b>Type:</b>	<b>Description:</b>	<b>Excavated:</b>	<b>Finds Present:</b>
800	Demolition layer	A spread of demolition machine processed, crushed concrete. 0.17m thick.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
801	Natural	Firm light grey orange clay With patches of light orange gravel and patches of light grey silt.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
802	Make up layer	Light pink gravel - type 1 commercial levelling deposit. c. 0.18m thick.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>





**Trench: 9**

**Max Dimensions: Length: 25.00 m. Width: 1.80 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.4 m. Max: 0.45 m.**

**Co-ordinates: OS Grid Ref.: 524183/213161**

**OS Grid Ref.: 524159/213152**

**Reason: Assessment of archaeological potential**

<b>Context:</b>	<b>Type:</b>	<b>Description:</b>	<b>Excavated:</b>	<b>Finds Present:</b>
900	Demolition layer	A spread of demolition machine processed, crushed concrete. 0.30m thick.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
901	Natural	Firm light grey orange clay With patches of light orange gravel and patches of light grey silt.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
902	Demolition layer	Firm light grey orange clay With occasional large brick fragments. c. 0.15m thick.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
903	Pit	dimensions: min length 8.m Cut of a large pit containing modern artefacts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
904	Fill	Firm dark grey black silty clay With modern bottle glass, ceramic and tile inclusions of 19th / 20th century date.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



**Trench: 10**

**Max Dimensions: Length: 25.00 m. Width: 1.80 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.53 m. Max: 1.7 m.**

**Co-ordinates: OS Grid Ref.: 524151/213136**

**OS Grid Ref.: 524143/213113**

**Reason: Assessment of archaeological potential**

<b>Context:</b>	<b>Type:</b>	<b>Description:</b>	<b>Excavated:</b>	<b>Finds Present:</b>
1000	Demolition layer	A spread of demolition machine processed, crushed concrete. 0.30m thick.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1001	Natural	Firm light grey orange clay With patches of light orange gravel and patches of light grey silt.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1002	Demolition layer	Firm light grey orange clay With moderate small concrete fragments and bricks and half bricks. A demolition layer c. 0.30m thick.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1003	Make up layer	Firm mid orange silty clay frequent small-medium stones Re-deposited natural. Up to 1.20m thick.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1004	Dump material	Friable dark grey black sandy silt An industrial deposit with occasional large smelting slag and willow pattern china inclusions. 0.25m to 0.55m thick.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1005	External surface	A modern period concrete surface identified at base of sloping deposit (1004)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



**Trench:** 11

**Max Dimensions:** Length: 25.00 m. Width: 1.80 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.43 m. Max: 0.9 m.

**Co-ordinates:** OS Grid Ref.: 524112/213149

OS Grid Ref.: 524119/213125

**Reason:** Assessment of archaeological potential

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
1100	Demolition layer	A spread of demolition machine processed, crushed concrete. 0.28m thick.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1101	Natural	Firm mid orange silty clay With frequent small and medium stones and occasional patches of light grey silt.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1102	Dump material	Friable dark grey black sandy silt An industrial deposit with occasional smelting slag inclusions. Up to 0.17m thick.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1103	Make up layer	Firm dark orange silty clay frequent small-medium stones Re-deposited natural. Up to 0.23m thick.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1104	Demolition layer	Friable mid brown grey sandy silt With moderate small concrete fragments and bricks and half bricks. A demolition layer c. 0.20m thick.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



**Trench:** 12

**Max Dimensions:** Length: 25.00 m. Width: 1.80 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.25 m. Max: 0.33 m.

**Co-ordinates:** OS Grid Ref.: 524148/213182

OS Grid Ref.: 524129/213165

**Reason:** Assessment of archaeological potential

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
1200	Demolition layer	A spread of demolition machine processed, crushed concrete. 0.30m thick.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1201	Natural	Firm mid orange silty clay With frequent small and medium stones and occasional patches of light grey silt.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



**Trench:** 13

**Max Dimensions:** Length: 25.00 m. Width: 1.80 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.5 m. Max: 0.52 m.

**Co-ordinates:** OS Grid Ref.: 524089/213171

OS Grid Ref.: 524079/213148

**Reason:** Assessment of archaeological potential

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
1300	Demolition layer	A spread of demolition machine processed, crushed concrete. 0.20m thick.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1301	Natural	Firm mid orange silty clay With frequent small and medium stones and occasional patches of light grey silt.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1302	Pit	dimensions: min breadth 4.4m Cut of a large pit containing modern brick fragments.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1303	Fill	Firm light orange grey silty clay moderate medium-large stones Re-deposited natural with moderate bricks and brick halves. Pit fill - almost indistinguishable from demolition layer (1305).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1304	Buried subsoil	Firm mid grey brown silty clay moderate small-medium stones With occasional medium brick and tile fragments. c. 0.12m thick.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1305	Demolition layer	Firm light grey orange silty clay With moderate small concrete fragments, bricks and half bricks. A demolition layer c. 0.16m to 0.30m thick.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



**Trench:** 14

**Max Dimensions:** Length: 25.00 m. Width: 1.80 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.2 m. Max: 0.23 m.

**Co-ordinates:** OS Grid Ref.: 524092/213214

OS Grid Ref.: 524112/213199

**Reason:** Assessment of archaeological potential

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
1400	Demolition layer	A spread of demolition machine processed, crushed concrete. 0.23m thick.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1401	Natural	Firm mid orange silty clay With frequent small and medium stones and occasional patches of light grey silt.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1402	Ditch	Linear ESE-WNW dimensions: min breadth 0.6m, min length 6.5m Ditch containing modern period artefacts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1403	Fill	Firm mid brown grey silty clay frequent small-medium stones With 19th / 20th century inclusions - moderate coal fragments and occasional fragments of grey roof slate.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



## 7. APPENDIX 2: HER SUMMARY SHEET

Site name and address: Former Argos Direct distribution Depot, 1 Bessemer Road, Welwyn Garden City		
County: Hertfordshire	District: Welwyn Hatfield	
Village/Town: Welwyn Garden City	Parish: N/A	
Planning application reference: N6/2014/2385/MA and N6/2014/2384/MA		
HER Enquiry reference: N/A		
Client name, address, and tel. no.: Industrial Property Investment Fund, Legal & General Property, One Coleman Street, London, EC2R 5AA. 020 3124 2751		
Nature of application: Development of retail units		
Present land use: N/A		
Size of application area: c. 2.78ha	Size of area investigated: 630m <sup>2</sup>	
NGR (to 8 figures): TL 2419 1314		
Site code (if applicable): BR2610		
Site director/Organization: Drew Shotliff / Albion Archaeology		
Type of work: Archaeological trial trench evaluation		
Date of work:	Start: 29/06/2015	Finish: 02/07/2015
Location of finds & site archive/Curating museum: Mill Green Museum, Hatfield		
Related HER Nos: MHT5276	Periods represented: Modern.	
Relevant previous summaries/reports: None		
<p>Summary of fieldwork results:</p> <p><i>The trial trenching revealed no archaeological features, deposits or artefacts earlier than the modern period (19th century onwards).</i></p> <p><i>The modern-period features comprised two ditches that contained coal, six pits that contained china and bottle glass and numerous concrete foundations which were associated with either the recently demolished warehouses or the industrial structures that preceded the warehouses.</i></p>		
Author of summary: R. Wardill	Date of summary: 16/07/2015	



## 8. APPENDIX 3: OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM

### OASIS ID: albionar1-205529

#### Project details

Project name	Land off Bridge Road, Welwyn Garden City
Short description of the project	Planning applications for the construction of industrial units on Plots 1 and 2 respectively on the former Argos Direct Distribution Depot site have been submitted to Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council. In addition, a planning application for a retail unit on Plot 3 is in preparation. The Historic Environment Advisor for Hertfordshire County Council advised that an archaeological trial trench evaluation was necessary on Plots 1 and 2 in order to identify and investigate the site's archaeological potential and significance. The client requested that plot 3 also be included in the programme of archaeological investigation. The trial trenching revealed no archaeological features, deposits or artefacts earlier than modern date (19th century and later). The modern-period features comprised two ditches that contained coal, six pits that contained china and bottle glass of 19th- to 20th-century date and numerous concrete foundations which were associated with either the recently demolished warehouses or the industrial structures that preceded the warehouses. The results of the trial trenching indicate that the site has very limited archaeological potential and that any future development of the site is unlikely to impact significant archaeological remains.
Project dates	Start: 29-06-2015 End: 02-07-2015
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	BR2610 - Contracting Unit No. WEWHM : 2015.4 - Museum accession ID N6/2014/2385/MA - Planning Application No. N6/2014/2384/MA - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Monument type	DITCHES Modern PITS Modern FOUNDATIONS Modern
Significant Finds	POTTERY Modern
Methods & techniques	"Sample Trenches"
Development type	Urban commercial (e.g. offices, shops, banks, etc.)
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF
Position in the planning process	Between deposition of an application and determination

#### Project location

Country	England
Site location	HERTFORDSHIRE WELWYN HATFIELD WELWYN GARDEN CITY Land off Bridge Road, Welwyn Garden City
Study area	2.78 Hectares
Site coordinates	TL 24197 13142 Point

#### Project creators

Name of Organisation	Albion Archaeology
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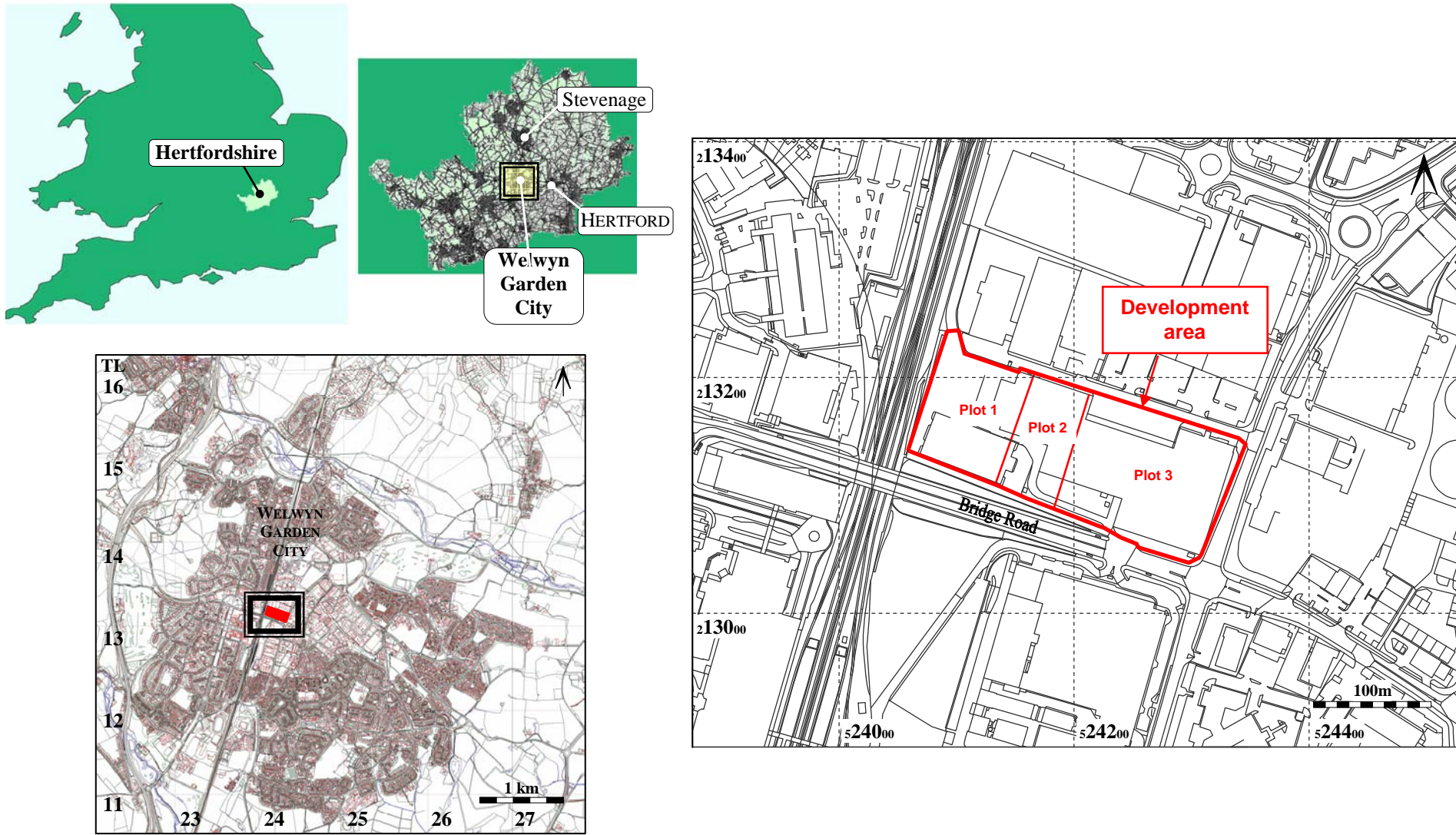
Project design originator	Albion Archaeology
Project director/manager	Robert Wardill
Project supervisor	Ian Turner

#### Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Mill Green Museum
Physical Archive ID	WEWHM : 2015.4
Physical Contents	"Ceramics"
Physical Archive notes	To be donated to museum after consultation with them and the landowner
Paper Archive recipient	Mill Green Museum
Paper Archive ID	WEWHM : 2015.4
Paper Contents	"Ceramics", "Other"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Correspondence", "Drawing", "Miscellaneous Material", "Photograph", "Report"

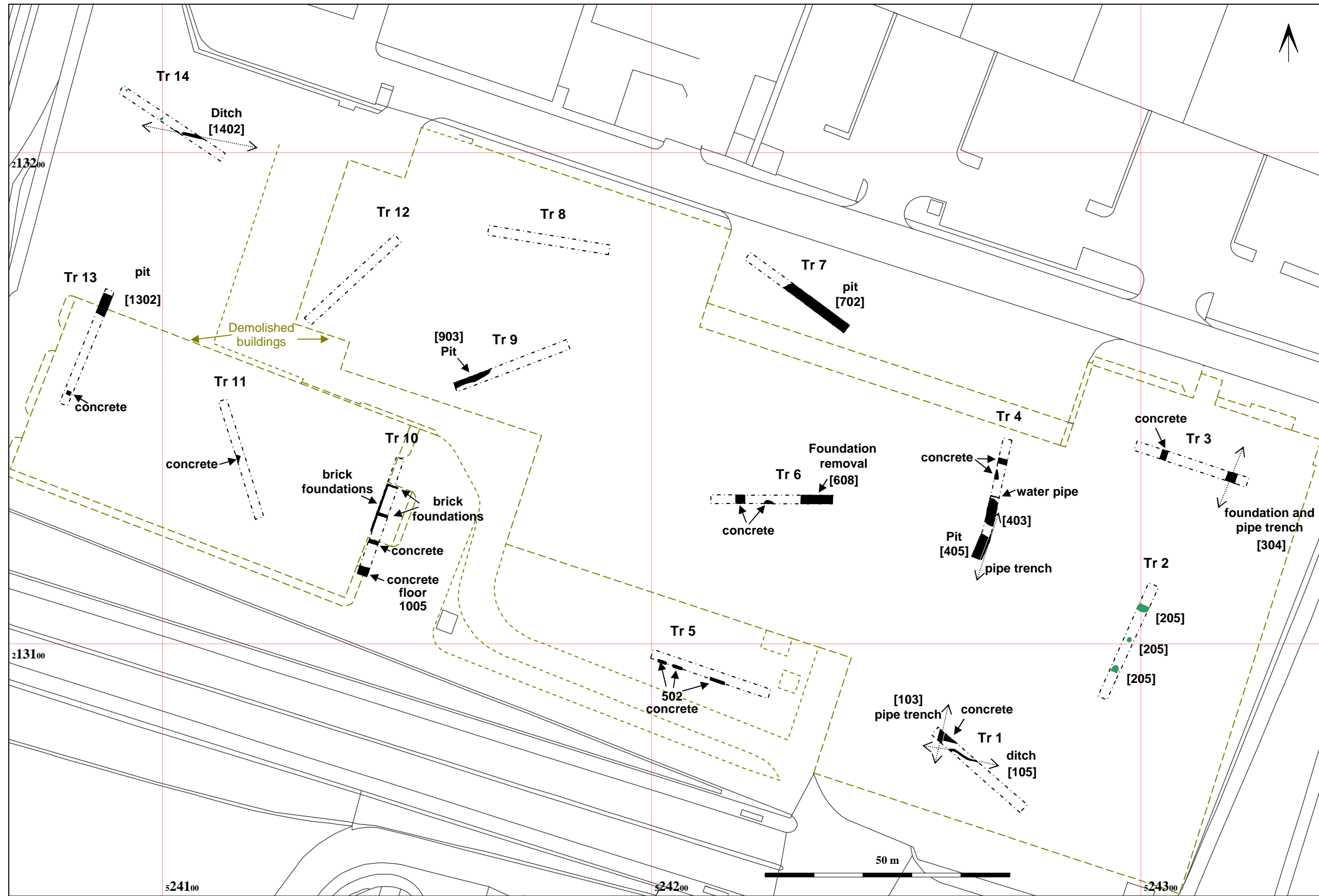
#### Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Former Argos Direct Distribution Depot, 1 Bessemer Road, Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire: Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation
Author(s)/Editor(s)	'Turner, I' 'Wardill, R'
Other bibliographic details	2015/96
Date	2015
Issuer or publisher	Albion Archaeology
Place of issue or publication	Bedford
Entered by	Helen Parslow (hl.parslow@albion-arch.com)
Entered on	16 July 2015



**Figure 1: Site location**

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**Figure 2: Trenching results**

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**Figure 3: Trench photographs**



Trench 1 facing south-east



Trench 2 facing south-west



Trench 3 facing east



Trench 4 facing north-east



Trench 5 facing west



Trench 6 facing east



Trench 7 facing south-east



Trench 8 facing west



Trench 9 facing south-west



Trench 10 facing north



Trench 11 facing south-east



Trench 12 facing south-west



Trench 13 facing north



Trench 14 facing north-west

**Figure 4:** Historic maps and photographs



1884 Ordnance Survey Map



1948 Ordnance Survey Map





Aerial view of the application site occupied by  
Dawney & Sons 1928 (*LDA Chartered Architects*)



Dawney & Sons factory interior and railway siding  
1928 (*LDA Chartered Architects*)



Dawnay & Sons factory interior 1928  
(LDA Chartered Architects)



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