LAND AT RHEE SPRING, CLOTHALL COMMON, BALDOCK, HERTFORDSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD EVALUATION

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Vincent and Gorbing Planning Associates
on behalf of
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Preface

Every effort has been made in the preparation of this document to provide as complete an assessment as possible, within the terms of the specification. 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.

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We would like to acknowledge the help of Alison Tinniswood of the County Archaeology Office and local metal detectorists Dave Mance and Clive Reader.

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Structure of this Report

Section 1 serves as an introduction to the site, describing its location, archaeological background and the aims of the project. The methodology and results of the trial trenching are discussed in section 2, while section 3 provides a synthesis of the results, and states their significance within the surrounding landscape. Section 4 is a bibliography and Appendix 1 contains summary information for all the trenches. Appendix 2 presents detailed information regarding the finds recovered during the evaluation.

Non-Technical Summary

In November 2004 Albion Archaeology undertook an archaeological field evaluation of Land at Rhee Spring, Clothall Common, Baldock, Hertfordshire for Vincent and Gorbing Planning Associates on behalf of Hertfordshire County Council (HCC). The aim was to assess the archaeological potential of the site following a consultation response from HCC's Planning Archaeologist to an application for a new children's home. The client decided to extend the area of investigation to include the whole of the Rhee Spring reserve school site.

The area of investigation (referred to hereafter as the study area) is located on the north-eastern outskirts of Baldock. It is c.1.6ha in extent and is centred at National Grid Reference (NGR) TL 256 343. It lies at approximately 67.92m above Ordnance Datum (AOD).

Consisting of unmanaged grassland with some young trees and shrubs, the study area was bordered by the Icknield Way to the north (the present A505) and a housing estate to the south and west. Open fields adjacent to the bypass lay to the east. The soils of the area are derived from middle chalk beds with some deposits of upper chalk.

The study area lies immediately west of land recently subject to extensive archaeological investigation during the construction of the Baldock bypass. The results of this work demonstrated the presence of Iron Age and Bronze Age cemeteries, a medieval leper hospital, Saxon burials and Roman settlement activity. Aerial photograph analysis has also indicated the presence of linear cropmarks within the study area.

However, no significant archaeological features were identified during the evaluation, suggesting that the archaeological potential of the study area is relatively low when compared to the surrounding landscape.

The evaluation has succeeded in determining the nature of previously identified cropmarks as being natural in origin. It has also revealed medieval or post-medieval activity associated with agriculture. The recovery of Roman and medieval artefacts indicates the potential for recovering stray finds of various classes and periods adjacent to the ancient Icknield Way.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Planning Background

Vincent and Gorbing Planning Associates (acting on behalf of the Children, Schools and Families Service, Hertfordshire County Council) have applied for outline planning permission to construct a new children's home on part of the reserve school site at Rhee Spring, Baldock.

The site lies within an area of archaeological significance (AAS) as designated in the local plan (AAS 30). As part of a consultation response, a brief (HCC 2004) for an archaeological field evaluation was issued by Hertfordshire County Council's Planning Archaeologist (HCC's PA). This set out in detail how the archaeological field evaluation should be done on the plot of land allocated for the new children's home.

Albion Archaeology was commissioned by Vincent and Gorbing Planning Associates to undertake the evaluation of both the site of the new children's home and the remainder of the reserve school site. HCC's PA advised that the field evaluation should comprise a 6% trial trench sample of the combined sites (hereafter referred to as the study area). A Project Design was produced (Albion Archaeology 2004) for the evaluation and approved by HCC's PA before work began.

This document represents a report on the results of the evaluation.

1.2 Site Location and Description

The study area is located on the north-east outskirts of Baldock. It is *c.*1.6ha in extent and is centred at National Grid Reference (NGR) TL 256 343. It lies at approximately 67.92m above Ordnance Datum (AOD).

At the time of the evaluation the study area was generally flat, unmanaged grassland with some young trees and shrubs. It was bordered by the Icknield Way to the north (the present A505) and a housing estate to the south and west. Open fields adjacent to the Baldock bypass lay to the east.

The soils of the area are derived from middle chalk beds with some deposits of upper chalk.

1.3 Archaeological Background

The historical and archaeological background to Baldock has been summarised in the extensive urban survey, undertaken by English Heritage and Hertfordshire County Council (HCC 2002).

The study area lies immediately west of land that was recently subject to extensive archaeological investigation during the construction of the Baldock bypass. The results of this work demonstrated the presence of Iron Age and Bronze Age cemeteries, a medieval leper hospital, Saxon burials and Roman settlement activity. Aerial photograph analysis has also indicated the presence of linear cropmarks within the study area (HCC 2002) (Albion Archaeology 2004b).

2. TRIAL TRENCH EXCAVATION

2.1 Introduction

The trial trenching took place between 1st and 9th November 2004. A total of eleven trenches were opened. Trenches were evenly distributed throughout the study area in order to assess its archaeological potential. Trench 7 was located specifically to ascertain the nature of a cropmark visible on aerial photographs. These trenches represented a total sample of 6% of the study area.

The trench plan (Figure 1) was approved by HCC's PA prior to any trial trenching taking place.

2.2 Method Statement

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

- IFA's *Standard and Guidance for Field Evaluation*;
- ALGAO's *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 14, 2003)
- Albion Archaeology's *Procedures Manual for Archaeological Fieldwork and the Analysis of Fieldwork Records* (1996);
- IFA's *Code of Conduct*;
- English Heritage's *Management of Archaeological Projects* (1991).

The location of all trenches was marked out on the ground in advance of machine excavation using differential Global Positioning System (dGPS).

Topsoil and modern overburden were mechanically removed by a JCB excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. This was conducted under close archaeological supervision. Overburden was removed to the top of the archaeological deposits, or undisturbed geological deposits, whichever was encountered first. The spoil heaps were scanned for artefacts by eye and with a metal detector.

The bases and sections of all trenches were cleaned by hand. Natural deposits and any potential archaeological features were observed, cleaned, excavated by hand and recorded using Albion Archaeology's *pro forma* sheets. Features and trenches were drawn and photographed and recorded using a unique recording number sequence commencing at 100 for Trench 1, 200 for Trench 2 etc.

The trenches were inspected by a representative of the County Archaeology Office prior to being backfilled.

2.3 Results

All eleven trenches are discussed below; detailed technical information on each trench can be found in Appendix 1. Trenches 1, 2, 3, 4, 8 and 9 contained archaeological features; the remaining trenches did not contain any archaeological features.

2.3.1 Trench 1

Trench 1 was aligned north-west to south-east to the northern part of the study area (Figures 1 and 2).

Topsoil (100) consisted of a friable dark brown silty clay approximately 0.3m in depth overlaying natural chalk geology. A Roman coin (RA3), a medieval gold quarter noble (RA2) and a silver penny of Elizabeth I (RA1) were recovered from the topsoil within this trench (Appendix 2, Plates 5 and 6)

A possible quarry pit [102] sealed by topsoil (100) was identified in the south-eastern end of the trench. It measured at least 5m in length, 3m in width and 0.5m deep with near vertical sides and a relatively flat base. It contained post-medieval ceramic building material (CBM) and pottery sherds within its deposits (103) (104). A lead seal matrix (RA13) dated to the 12th – 13th century was also recovered from its fill (Appendix 2). It is likely that this feature may extend into Trench 8 [804].

Quarry pit [102] cut through natural chalk geology (101) which consisted of light white chalk lumps with patches of dark brown silt. Some north-south aligned plough scars were also evident in this deposit.

2.3.2 Trench 2

This trench was aligned west-north-west to east-north-east and located in the northern part of the study area next to the existing road (A505) (Figures 1 and 2).

Approximately 0.3m of topsoil (200) was observed throughout the trench. It sealed two north-north-west to south-south-east aligned ditches [203] and [205] which were located towards the western end of the trench. They had concave profiles and measured *c*.1.3m wide and *c*.0.4m deep. Finds from deposits (204) (206) consisted of fragments of post-medieval CBM as well as two residual Roman pot sherds (Appendix 2).

The ditches truncated a 0.3m thick layer of mid brown silty clay (201) which contained post-medieval CBM fragments (Appendix 2). It is likely that this layer represents a plough headland. It sealed natural chalk geology (202) which consisted of light white chalk lumps with patches of dark brown silt.

2.3.3 Trench 3

This trench was aligned north-south near the northern corner of the study area (Figures 1 and 2).

Approximately 0.3m of topsoil (300) was observed throughout the trench. It sealed a ditch [303] towards the southern end of the trench. The ditch was aligned north-

east to south-west and was 0.8m wide and 0.35m deep. It had an irregular profile and indistinct edges suggesting that it may be the remnants of a hedge line. Finds from deposit (304) consisted of a single piece of post-medieval CBM (Appendix 2).

Ditch/hedgeline [303] cut a 0.2m thick layer (301) of colluvial reddish brown silty clay subsoil. Headland material (305) similar to (201) in Trench 2 was identified to the north of the trench. Both layers were sealed by topsoil (300) and overlay natural chalk deposits (302).

2.3.4 Trench 4

This trench was aligned north-north-east to south-south-west and located in the centre of the study area (Figures 1 and 2).

Topsoil (400) consisted of a friable dark brown silty clay approximately 0.3m deep. It sealed a shallow pit, [403] which was partially revealed near the northeast end of the trench. It measured at least 1.1m in width and contained a brown silty-clay deposit (404). This deposit contained post-medieval CBM, fuel ash slag and clinker (Appendix 2).

Pit [403] cut through colluvial subsoil (401) consisting of a 0.08m layer of thick silty clay overlying natural chalk (402).

2.3.5 Trench 5

This trench was aligned north-west to south-east and located towards the middle of the study area (Figure 1).

Topsoil (500) was approximately 0.3m thick, overlying natural chalk with patches of silty clay (501).

This trench did not contain any archaeological features.

2.3.6 Trench 6

This trench was aligned north to south and located towards the middle of the study area (Figures 1 and 2).

Topsoil (600) was 0.3m thick and sealed 0.1m of colluvial subsoil (601). This overlay natural deposits which consisted of chalk with large patches of reddish brown silty clay (602).

This trench did not contain any archaeological features.

2.3.7 Trench 7

This trench was aligned north-west to south-east and located towards the middle of the study area specifically to ascertain the nature of a crop mark (Figures 1 and 2).

Topsoil (700) was approximately 0.3m thick, overlying 0.1m of colluvial subsoil (702). This overlay natural deposits which consisted of chalk with large patches of reddish brown silty clay (701).

This trench did not contain any archaeological features. However, a large geological anomaly accounts for the presence of the cropmark (See Figure 2, Plates 3 and 4)

2.3.8 Trench 8

This trench was aligned north-north-west to south-south-east and located near the south-east corner of the study area (Figures 1 and 2).

Recent building debris layers consisting of gravel and building rubble (802) and concrete hardstanding (801) were observed in the southern end of the trench overlying a 0.24m thick layer of topsoil (800). A 17th century trader's token (RA10) was recovered from the topsoil (Appendix 2, Plate 7).

Sealed by topsoil, a possible quarry pit [804] was identified in the northern end of Trench 8 measuring at least 5m across and 0.6m deep with near vertical sides and flat sloping base. Finds from its fill (805) consisted of post-medieval CBM fragments and two residual Roman pot sherds (Appendix 2).

Quarry pit [804] cut through natural deposits which consisted of chalk with large patches of reddish brown silty clay (803).

2.3.9 Trench 9

This trench was aligned west-south-west to east-north-east and located at the southern end of the site (Figures 1 and 2).

Recent building debris layers consisting of gravel and building rubble (900) were observed throughout the trench, overlying a 0.2m thick layer of topsoil (901).

Two modern wheel ruts [903] and [904] sealed by topsoil (901) were identified towards the western end of the trench. They consisted of north-west to south-east aligned areas of topsoil compacted into the underlying natural chalk geology (902).

2.3.10 Trench 10

This trench was aligned north-west to south-east and situated to the south-west of the study area (Figures 1 and 2).

Recent building debris layers consisting of gravel and building rubble (1000) and topsoil (1001) were observed in the southern end of the trench overlying a 0.2m thick layer of buried topsoil (1002).

A 0.15m thick layer of reddish brown silty clay colluvial subsoil (1003) was sealed by topsoil (1002). This overlay natural deposits which consisted of chalk with small patches of silty clay (1004). North to south aligned plough scars were observed in the natural chalk (1004).

2.3.11 Trench 11

This trench was aligned north-west to south-east and located towards the middle of the study area (Figure 1).

Topsoil (1100) was approximately 0.3m thick, overlying 0.13m of colluvial subsoil (1101). This overlay natural deposits which consisted of chalk with large patches of reddish brown silty clay (1102).

This trench did not contain any archaeological features.

3. SYNTHESIS

3.1 Significance of Results

The evaluation successfully demonstrated the presence of archaeological features within the study area. However, the density of features was low. Trenches 5, 6, 7 and 11 were blank. The remaining seven trenches produced a total of seven archaeological features: two large pits, a small pit, two ditches, a probable hedge-line and a layer of probable headland material (together with some modern levelling layers and wheel ruts). Apart from the modern features, the artefactual material indicated that all the excavated features date to the post-medieval period. However, the Roman and medieval artefacts recovered from the topsoil and residual material recovered from the excavated features confirm the presence of earlier activity within the vicinity (see Appendix 2).

The large features [102] and [804] identified within Trenches 1 and 8 have been interpreted as possible quarry pits due to their morphology. Their similarity and proximity suggest they may be part of the same feature. It is likely that chalk was being quarried to make lime to use as a soil improver. By the 19th century extensive quarrying and lime burning was occurring in the area for agricultural purposes (HCC 2002).

The layer [201] / [305] in Trenches 2 and 3 (interpreted as possible headland material) and plough scars identified in several trenches, indicate that the study area has been used as agricultural land. This is likely to have been during the medieval and post-medieval periods although there is the possibility that the layer is the result of earthworks associated with the nearby Icknield Way.

Adjacent ditches [203] and [205] (Plate 1) which post-date the headland material were possibly part of field boundaries aligned perpendicular to the A505. Of note is the possible hedge line [303] identified in Trench 3. This was not aligned in a similar pattern suggesting that it was part of a different field system. This however is difficult to ascertain within the confines of a trial trench.

The targeted cropmarks appear to be the result of a distinct area of silty chalk and silty clay in contrast to the surrounding solid chalk geology. Perhaps fluvial or glacial in origin, it was identified running through Trenches 6 and 7 (Plates 3 and 4).

The modern layers including the wheel ruts were located in the southern end of the study area. They are probably associated with the adjacent housing estate construction during the late 20th century.

3.2 Summary

The features identified during the evaluation suggest that the archaeological potential of the study area is relatively low when compared to its surrounding landscape.

The evaluation has established that a previously identified cropmark is of natural origin. It has also revealed medieval or post-medieval activity associated with agriculture. The recovery of Roman and medieval artefacts indicates the potential for recovering stray finds of various classes and periods adjacent to the ancient Icknield Way.

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5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Trench And Context Summaries

Trench: **1**

Max Dimensions: **Length: 50.00 m. Width: 1.60 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.28 m. Max: 0.28 m.**

OS Co-ordinates: **Ref. 1: TL2573734367 Ref. 2: TL2576634326**

Reason for trench: **General coverage. Was subsequently extended eastwards from southernmost end to reveal more of feature [102].**

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
100	Topsoil	Dark brown silty clay occasional small-medium stones	☑	☑
101	Natural	Chalk frequent small-large stones	☐	☐
102	**Quarry**	**Profile: near vertical base: flat dimensions: max breadth 3.2m, max depth 0.7m, max length 0.65m**	☑	☐
103	Backfill	Friable light grey brown clay silt occasional small ceramic building material, frequent fleck chalk, occasional flecks charcoal	☑	☑
104	Backfill	Friable dark grey brown clay silt frequent small ceramic building material, frequent flecks chalk, occasional flecks charcoal	☑	☑

Trench: **2**

Max Dimensions: **Length: 50.00 m. Width: 1.60 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.26 m. Max: 0.35 m.**

OS Co-ordinates: **Ref. 1: TL2573134368 Ref. 2: TL2568334352**

Reason for trench: **General coverage. Was subsequently extended to the south from the easternmost end to reveal extent of layer (201).**

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
200	Topsoil	Friable dark brown silty clay	☑	☑
201	Headland	Mid brown silty clay occasional small stones	☑	☑
202	Natural	Chalk	☐	☐
203	**Ditch**	**Linear N-S profile: concave base: uneven dimensions: max breadth 1.35m, max depth 0.35m, max length 0.5m**	☑	☐
204	Fill	Friable mid grey brown clay silt occasional small ceramic building material, occasional small stones	☑	☑
205	**Ditch**	**Linear N-S profile: concave base: uneven dimensions: max breadth 1.25m, max depth 0.4m, max length 0.5m**	☑	☐
206	Fill	Friable mid grey brown clay silt moderate small ceramic building material, occasional smal stones	☑	☑

Trench: **3**

Max Dimensions: **Length: 50.00 m. Width: 1.60 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.25 m. Max: 0.46 m.**

OS Co-ordinates: **Ref. 1: TL2567234345 Ref. 2: TL2568034296**

Reason for trench: **General coverage.**

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
300	Topsoil	Dark brown silty clay occasional small-medium stones	☑	☐
301	Colluvium	Mid red brown silty clay moderate small-medium stones	☑	☐
302	Natural	Chalk with patches of reddish brown silty clay	☐	☐
303	**Ditch**	**Linear NE-SW profile: concave base: uneven dimensions: max breadth 0.8m, max depth 0.35m, min length 2.3m**	☑	☐
304	Fill	Mid red brown silty clay moderate small-medium stones	☑	☑
305	Headland	Mid brown silty clay frequent small ceramic building material, occasional small stones	☑	☑

Trench: **4**

Max Dimensions: **Length: 50.00 m. Width: 1.60 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.25 m. Max: 0.28 m.**

OS Co-ordinates: **Ref. 1: TL2570834340 Ref. 2: TL2569634291**

Reason for trench: **General coverage.**

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
400	Topsoil	Friable dark brown silty clay	☑	☐
401	Colluvium	Red brown silty clay moderate small stones	☑	☐
402	Natural	Chalk with patches of reddish brown silty clay	☐	☐
403	**Pit**	**Circular profile: concave base: flat dimensions: min breadth 0.55m, max depth 0.15m, max length 1.1m**	☑	☐
404	Fill	Mid brown silty clay occasional flecks chalk, occasional small charcoal, occasional small stones	☑	☑

Trench: **5**

Max Dimensions: **Length: 50.00 m. Width: 1.60 m.** **Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.3 m. Max: 0.35 m.**

OS Co-ordinates: **Ref. 1: TL2570934346** **Ref. 2: TL2575234321**

Reason for trench: **General coverage.**

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
500	Topsoil	Friable dark brown silty clay	☑	☑
501	Natural	Chalk with patches of reddish brown silty clay	☐	☐

Trench: **6**

Max Dimensions: **Length: 50.00 m. Width: 1.60 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.32 m. Max: 0.5 m.**

OS Co-ordinates: **Ref. 1: TL2573034322 Ref. 2: TL2572334273**

Reason for trench: **General coverage and to target possible continuation of cropmark.**

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
600	Topsoil	Friable dark brown silty clay	☑	☑
601	Colluvium	Red brown silty clay moderate small-medium stones	☑	☐
602	Natural	Chalk with patches of reddish brown silty clay	☐	☐

Trench: 7

Max Dimensions: **Length:** 50.00 m. **Width:** 1.60 m. **Depth to Archaeology** **Min:** 0.28 m. **Max:** 0.4 m.

OS Co-ordinates: **Ref. 1:** TL2574834267 **Ref. 2:** TL2577134311

Reason for trench: **General coverage and to target cropmark.**

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
700	Topsoil	Dark brown silty clay occasional small stones	☑	☐
701	Natural	Chalk with patches of reddish brown silty clay	☐	☐
702	Colluvium	Mid red brown silty clay moderate small-medium stones	☑	☐

Trench: **8**

Max Dimensions: **Length: 50.00 m. Width: 1.60 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.35 m. Max: 0.5 m.**

OS Co-ordinates: **Ref. 1: TL2578234297 Ref. 2: TL2580434251**

Reason for trench: **General coverage**

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
800	Topsoil	Friable dark brown silty clay occasional flecks chalk, moderate small stones	☑	☑
801	External surface	Concrete layer	☑	☐
802	Make up layer	Moderate small-large ceramic building material, moderate small stones Mixture of modern rubbish dump, gravel and topsoil.	☑	☐
803	Natural	Chalk with patches of reddish brown silty clay	☐	☐
804	**Quarry**	**Profile: near vertical base: flat dimensions: min breadth 0.5m, max depth 0.6m, min length 1.25m**	☑	☐
805	Backfill	Firm mid grey brown silty clay moderate small ceramic building material, moderate flecks chalk, moderate small-medium stones	☑	☑

Trench: **9**

Max Dimensions: **Length: 50.00 m. Width: 1.60 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.4 m. Max: 0.4 m.**

OS Co-ordinates: **Ref. 1: TL2578334257 Ref. 2: TL2573634242**

Reason for trench: **General coverage.**

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
900	Make up layer	Dark brown sandy clay frequent small stones Modern makeup layer above topsoil includir a mixture of sandy clay and gravel.	☑	☐
901	Topsoil	Friable dark brown black silty clay	☑	☑
902	Natural	Chalk with patches of reddish brown silty clay	☐	☐
903	**Wheel ruts**	**Linear NW-SE profile: concave base: concave dimensions: max breadth 0.5m, max depth 0.18m, min length 2.m Wheel ruts, prob modern, filled by (901)**	☑	☐
904	**Wheel ruts**	**Linear NW-SE**	☐	☐

Trench: **10**

Max Dimensions: **Length:** **50.00 m.** **Width:** **1.60 m.** **Depth to Archaeology** **Min:** **0.4 m.** **Max:** **0.45 m.**

OS Co-ordinates: **Ref. 1:** **TL2571934236** **Ref. 2:** **TL2569034277**

Reason for trench: **General coverage.**

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
1000	Topsoil	Friable dark brown silty clay Topsoil turned over modern surface (1001)	☑	☐
1001	External surface	Modern surface consisting of a mixture of gravel and redeposited chalk	☑	☐
1002	Topsoil	Friable dark brown silty clay	☑	☐
1003	Colluvium	Mid red brown silty clay moderate small-medium stones	☑	☐
1004	Natural	Chalk with patches of reddish brown silty clay	☐	☐

Trench: 11
Max Dimensions: Length: 50.00 m. Width: 1.60 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.36 m. Max: 0.46 m.
OS Co-ordinates: Ref. 1: TL2574134254 Ref. 2: TL2569834279
Reason for trench: General coverage.

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
1100	Topsoil	Dark brown silty clay occasional small stones	☐	☑
1101	Colluvium	Mid red brown silty clay moderate small-medium stones	☑	☐
1102	Natural	Chalk with patches of reddish brown silty clay	☐	☐

Appendix 2 – Artefact Assemblages

5.1.1 Introduction

The evaluation produced an assemblage comprising pottery, ceramic roof tile and a number of non-ceramic artefacts. The material was scanned to ascertain the nature, condition and, where possible, date range of the artefact types present. No finds were recovered from Trenches 7 or 10.

Trench	Feature	Feature Type	Context	Spotdate *	Pottery *Sherd/g*	CBM *Frag/g*	Other Finds
1	100	Topsoil	100	17th century			Silver penny RA1 Gold quarter noble RA2 Copper alloy coin AE4 RA3 Lead sheet fragment RA6
	102	Quarry pit	103	Post-medieval		6:45	Animal bone (3g)
	102	Quarry pit	104	Post-medieval	4:27	25:509	Lead seal matrix RA13 Lava quern(?) fragment RA14 Window glass fragment (1g), oyster shell (41g), mortar (11g)
2	200	Topsoil	200	Late medieval			Copper alloy ring RA5 Iron hinge RA8 Copper alloy buckle plate RA15
	201	Headland	201	Post-medieval		5:67	Clay pipe (2g), iron nail
	203	Ditch	204	Post-medieval		3:18	
	205	Ditch	206	Post-medieval	3:9	6:102	Coal (2g)
3	303	Ditch	304	Post-medieval		1:9	
	305	Headland	305	Post-medieval		1:65	
4	403	Pit	404	Post-medieval		2:35	Fuel ash (75g), clinker (1g)
5	500	Topsoil	500	Modern			Iron buckle RA16 Copper alloy fastener RA17 Iron object RA18 Iron hinge RA19
6	600	Topsoil	600	Post-medieval		1:41	Copper alloy strap mount RA7
8	800	Overburden	800	Mid - 17th century			Lead disc fragment RA9 Copper alloy token RA10 Lead roofing fragment RA11 Lead musket ball RA12
	804	Quarry pit	805	Post-medieval	5:35	11:197	Clay pipe (6g), clinker (1g)
9	901	Topsoil	901	Post-medieval	1:3	5:13	Iron nail
11	1100	Topsoil	1100	Post-medieval	1:2		Copper alloy key RA4 Iron vessel RA20
				Total	**14:76**	**66:1101**	**-**

***** Spotdates are based on the latest date of all artefacts from the context
CBM – ceramic building material **RA** – registered artefact

Table 1: Artefact Summary

5.1.2 Pottery

Fourteen pottery sherds, weighing 76g were recovered. These were examined by context and quantified using minimum sherd count and weight. Sherds are

generally small (average weight 5g) and exhibit variable degrees of abrasion. Eight fabric types were identified using common names and type codes in accordance with the Bedfordshire Ceramic Type Series, held by Albion Archaeology. Fabrics are listed below (Table 2) in chronological order.

Fabric Type	Common name	Context/Sherd No.
Roman		
R06C	Fine greyware	(805):2
R07B	Sandy blackware	(206):1
R13	Shell	(206):1, (901):1
Medieval		
C09	Brill/Boarstall type (fine)	(104):1
C17	Hedingham type	(1100):1
Post-medieval		
P01	Fine glazed red earthenware	(104):2, (805):3
P25	Frechen stoneware	(104):1
UNID	Unidentified ware	(206):1

Table 2: Pottery fabric types and contexts

The earliest pottery identified is datable to the Roman period and comprises five highly abraded sherds in shell and reduced sand tempered fabrics (types R13 and R06C / R07B respectively). Four sherds are residual within post-medieval ditch [205] and quarry pit [804], and an unstratified sherd derived from topsoil (901). A triangular rim bowl is the only diagnostic form. An unidentified sand tempered sherd associated with those from ditch [205] may also be of Roman date, although its fragmentary nature precludes positive identification.

An undiagnostic glazed sherd of Brill/Boarstall ware (type C09) derived from post-medieval quarry pit [102], and an abraded sherd of Hedingham ware (type C17) from topsoil (1100). The former is a regional import from Buckinghamshire and the latter from Essex. Both are datable to the late 13th-15th centuries.

Post-medieval pottery comprises five sherds of 17th-18th century fine glazed earthenware (type P01) and a sherd of German stoneware (probably Frechen; type P25) of mid 16th-mid 17th century date. Quarry pits [102] and [804] each yielded three sherds.

5.1.3 Ceramic Building Material

Sixty-five fragments of post-medieval flat roof tile, weighing 1055g were recovered, the majority deriving from quarry pit [102]. Fragments are fairly small (average fragment weight 16g) and moderately abraded.

A highly abraded sand tempered fragment of Roman roof tile (46g), in the form of a partial *tegula* flange, was residual within post-medieval ditch [205].

5.1.4 Other Artefacts

Although 87.5% of the non-ceramic artefacts derived from topsoil and subsoil deposits, many of these are of intrinsic interest and are briefly discussed below.

The only stratified artefacts were recovered from quarry pit [102]. The fragmentary remains of imported lava stone (RA14) in all probability originally formed part of a quern. Lava stone was imported from the Niedermendig area of Germany during the Roman period, and again in the Saxon to medieval periods. The absence of any surviving diagnostic features precludes dating of this fragment. The degraded and weathered state of the small piece of window glass suggests it is pot ash, as opposed to soda, glass. This indicates a date spanning the medieval to early post-medieval periods. The thickness of the piece, 2mm, suggests it may date to the 16th-17th century, when green window glass of 2mm or less in thickness became more widely available for use in domestic buildings (Oakley 1979, 296).

The lead seal matrix, RA13, is dated to the late 12th to 13th century. The obverse surface has a fleur-de-lis set within circle, with the legend, containing both Lombardic lettering and one reversed Roman N, S' HVGO LON. This is thought to represent 'Seal of Hugo of London'. Rigold (1977, 324) notes that these seals must have belonged to people near the bottom of the seal-using class and illustrates seal matrices for a cook and a miller.

Evidence for Roman, late medieval and post-medieval activity was recovered from topsoil deposits. Finds of Roman date were limited to a coin of Constantine II, dating to AD 337-340. The small copper alloy casket key, RA4 (1100), with its lozenge-shaped bow, is dated to the 14th century, while the gold quarter noble, RA2 (100) has been tentatively identified as Edward III, possibly transitional treaty issue of AD 1361. Items spanning the medieval to post-medieval periods include an iron harness buckle with sheath roller, RA16 (500), a copper alloy buckle plate RA15 (200) and a copper alloy strap mount, RA7 (600), with integral spikes for attaching to a belt or harness.

The post-medieval period is represented by a silver penny of Elizabeth I, possibly fourth issue dating to between AD 1578-1582 (RA1) and a trader's token (RA10). The latter is a farthing token of William Rennet of Baldock, and is dated to 1656. The reverse face of the token depicts a rider on horseback, holding a staff and wearing a hat. Although the issuer's trade is uncertain, it is possible that the token represents that of a post master.

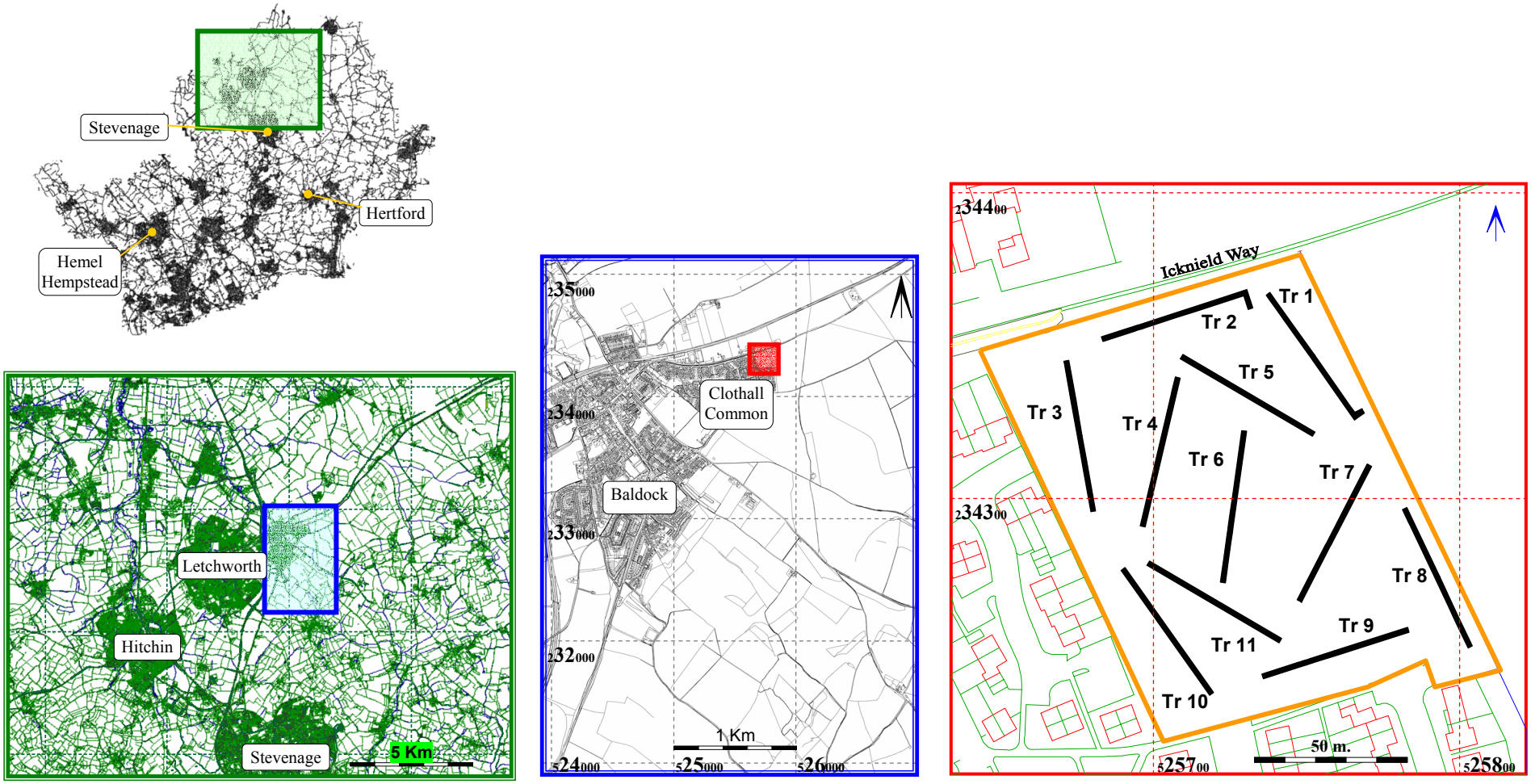

Figure 1: Location of Study Area

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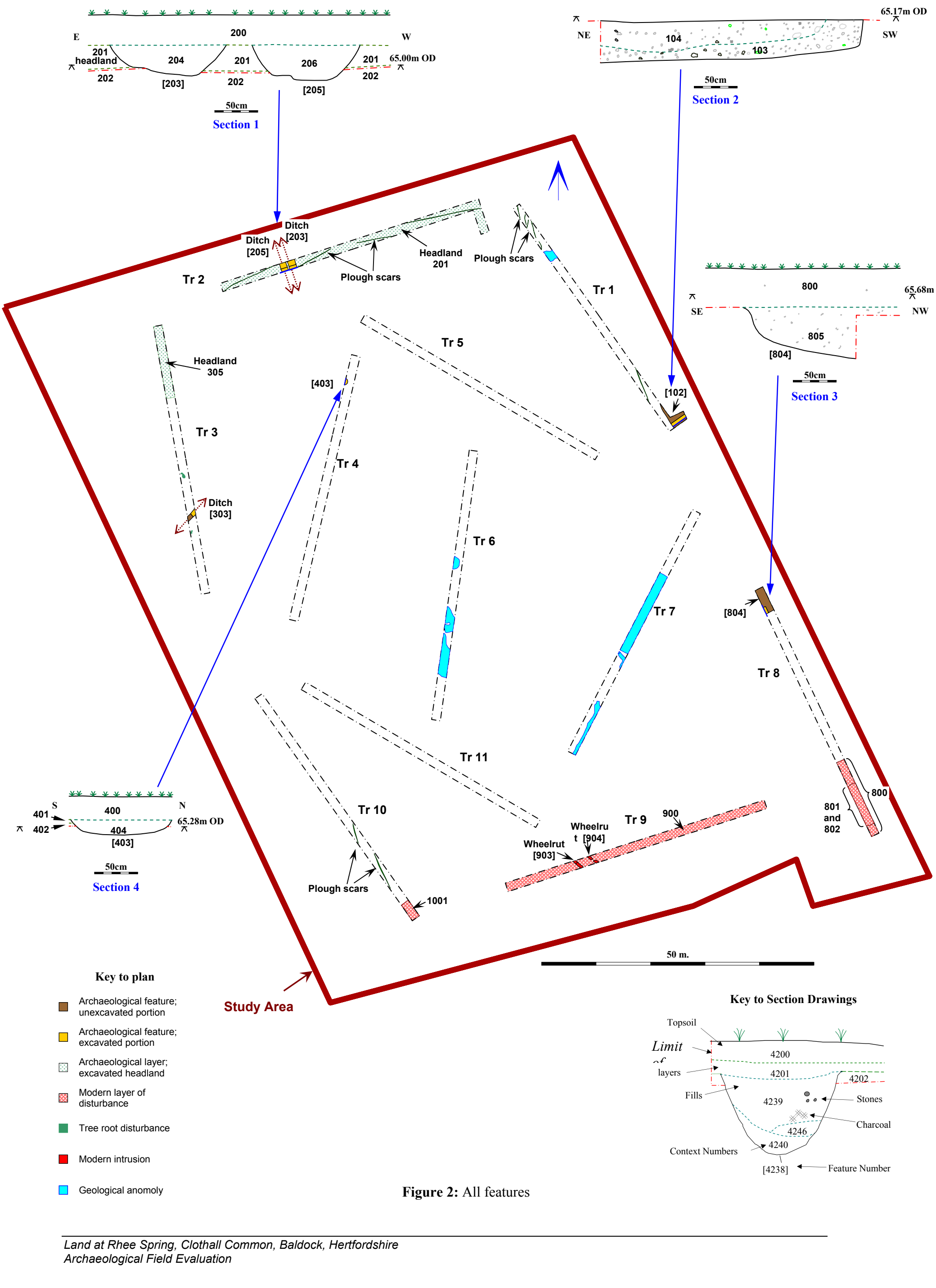

Figure 2: All features

Plate 1: Ditch [205], Trench 2

Plate 2: Pit [102], Trench 1

Plate 3: Section of geological feature, Trench 7

Plate 4: General shot of geological feature, Trench 7

Plate 5: RA2 gold quarter noble of Edward III. obverse and reverse

Plate 6: RA1 Silver penny of Elizabeth I
RA3 copper alloy coin of Constantine II AD 337-340
RA4 medieval copper alloy casket key
Scale 5cm

Plate 7: RA10 17th century traders token from Baldock

Plate 8: RA13 12th 13th century lead seal matrix