

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF AT PILLAR LODGE, REMENHAM PARK, REMENHAM, BERKSHIRE

(RECP14)

Work Undertaken For Spink Property Ltd

January 2015

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Quality Control Pillar Lodge, Remenham Park Place, Remenham, Berkshire (RECP 14)

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1. SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was carried out at Pillar Lodge, Remenham, Berkshire, as the development site lies within an area rich in archaeological remains ranging in date from the Palaeolithic to the present day.

Previous work in the vicinity has revealed archaeological remains dating from the Iron Age, Roman, medieval and postmedieval periods.

However, no finds or features from the current investigation could be attributed to these periods. Instead, the investigation revealed a single undated feature which may represent a trackway or boundary ditch and a subsoil deposit, probably associated with landscaping of the former golf course at the site.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Definition of a Watching Brief

An archaeological watching brief is defined as "a formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for nonarchaeological reasons. This will be within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater, where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits maybe disturbed or destroyed." (IfA 2008).

2.2 Planning Background

Archaeological Project Services was commissioned by Spink Property Ltd to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the construction of two lengths of road, a pond, a house and three soakaways at Pillar Lodge, Remenham Park Place, Remenham, Berkshire. The work was undertaken pursuant to condition VAR/2014/1144 in accordance with a 'Scheme of Works for Archaeological Monitoring' at the site (APS 2009) approved by the Archaeology Officer, Berkshire Archaeology. The watching brief was carried out between the 8th and 24th October 2014.

2.3 Topography and Geology

Remenham is located 12km northeast of Reading and 12km west of Maidenhead in the administrative district of Wokingham, Berkshire. The proposed redevelopment lies within Park Place Estate and is situated 2.2km southeast of Remenham village. The site lies largely in the parish of Remenham, extending south into neighbouring Wargrave (Figs 1 & 2).

Park Place Estate is located towards the southern end of the Chiltern Hills within a loop of the River Thames. Henley upon Thames lies at the base of Remenham Hill 1km west of the site and marks the county boundary between Berkshire and Oxfordshire. The highest part of the estate lies adjacent to Park Place at a height of c.105m OD. The land drops sharply from the west down towards the River Thames, which lies at c. 35m OD. This slope is dissected by east-west orientated dry valleys such as Happy Valley. The ground slopes more gently towards the east further into Berkshire.

The area of investigation contains part of the grounds of the former Aspect Park golf course as well as the now demolished Pillar Lodge and associated farmland. The current area of investigation is approximately centred at National Grid Reference SU 7870 8201.

Local soils are of the Frilsham Association, typically composed of argillic brown earths. These soils overlie solid geology of Cretaceous Upper Chalk (Hodge *et al* 1984).

2.4 Archaeological Setting

The development site lies within the Thames Valley, an area rich in well documented archaeological remains ranging in date from the Palaeolithic to the present day. Palaeolithic finds including hand-axes have been found at Harpsden, Remenham Hill and gravel quarries near Remenham village, all close to the development area (Wymer 1968, 202).

Mesolithic and Neolithic artefacts are known from the local area, including early Neolithic pottery and flints from a pit excavated in advance of a gas pipeline at Remenham (Holgate and Start 1985, 6). Numerous Bronze Age find spots in the area probably derive from the River Thames and may represent votive deposition. Furthermore, two Bronze Age barrows and a boundary ditch lie to the north of the development site.

Ritual deposition into the Thames appears to have continued well into the Iron Age, although the number of sites is reduced from that of the preceding period. Two occupation sites are known of this period, one in the river valley south of Henley-on-Thames and the second within the development area itself. This latter site was revealed during an evaluation of the Aspect Golf course east of Parkplace Farm (Oxford Archaeological Unit 1995), as was evidence of Early Roman occupation.

Remenham is mentioned in the Domesday Book c. 1086 as *Rameham*, derived from the Old English meaning settlement '*ham*' by the '*rima*' meaning bank; indicating its position by the River Thames (Ekwall 1989, 384). The King held Remenham from Queen Edith at the time of the Domesday survey when it contained a mill, 52 acres of meadow and woodland for fencing.

The manor of Remenham was granted to the Earls of Warwick in 1090 with whom it remained until the end of the 15^{th}

century when it once again became royal property. Remenham parish formerly lay within the Forest of Windsor and was kept largely as park and hunting grounds throughout the medieval period (APS 2004, 3).

Lord Archibald Hamilton built a villa at Park Place shortly after he acquired the estate in 1719.

In 1752 the property was bought by General Henry Seymour Conway who made substantial alterations to the house during the 1750s. From 1760 through to the 1780s Conway enlarged the parkland and embellished the estate with various ornamental structures and buildings including a Neolithic Passage grave from Jersey (The Druidic Temple) which he had reconstituted within the estate grounds Combe). General (Temple Conway, former governor of Jersey, received this as a donation from the island's inhabitants upon his departure.

Lord Malmesbury purchased the property in 1797 and a sketch plan of this date shows a lane or drive ending in a U-shaped turning area at the north front of the house. The plan also shows a porch at the centre of the north front which by this stage was the principle entrance to the house.

The 1815 Estate Plan records, for the first time, a configuration of fields subdivided by hedgerows and linear plantations in the southeast area of the estate (known as Kenton's Farm). This was agricultural land which lay outside of the designed landscape of ornamental structures and buildings. A dense plantation of trees runs northeast to southwest alongside the northwestern side of this area, clearly delineating the perimeter of the Malmesbury's Estate and the boundary of the designed landscape.

The northeastern area of the estate (Aspect Park) is shown on a 1761 plan as agricultural common land divided by medieval field boundaries and the land remained in agricultural use until it was purchased by Lord Malmesbury (in 1797), as part of the extension to the east of the original Estate land (Anon 2005).

This area was not integrated into the estate until the introduction of two eastern carriage drives, one of which subdivided the area into northern and southern halves. From the late 19th century the northern half of this area became parkland, while the southern half remained in agricultural use. Much of the northern area formed the setting for the recent golf course and associated buildings.

The estate was sold to Spurling in 1816 who exchanged it in 1824 with his cousin, Ebenezer Fuller-Maitland.

The estate was sold again in 1867 to Charles Easton who made extensive alterations to the house (Page and Ditchfield 1923, 162), including the demolishment and replacement of the south part of the house, adding a new south-facing semi-circular bay, rising through all three stories, at the western corner of the south front. The alterations were completed by 1869. As part of the alterations, the rooms on the main floor were raised in height, the windows on the west front were all remodelled, a steeper roof with a mansard at the centre was added and the pediment at the centre of the west front was removed.

Charles Easton also constructed Temple Combe House, Temple Combe Farmhouse and Temple Combe Stable. Temple Combe was developed as a separate estate in the 19th century, with its own designed landscape. The structures are shown on the 1st edition 1883 OS Map.

Temple Combe House was demolished in the mid 20th century and replaced by a modern house built in 1964 on the same site. The majority of this separate estate now lies outside the development site and is owned separately, with the exception of the farmhouse and stables which are being refurbished and lie approximately 830m southeast of the main house.

The farmhouse is a two bay house with central stack facing southeast with the stable buildings to the rear. The small stable yard is entered through a high brick archway and its flanking ranges are of high quality brickwork with semi-circular windows set within relieving arches.

The estate passed to Mr. J. Noble prior to a fire in 1870 which partially destroyed the main house. As a result, Noble had the house extensively remodelled and reorganised by Thomas Cundy, architect to the Grosvenor estate in London and the third generation of the family to hold that position. The house was re-built of rendered brick in the French Renaissance style (English Heritage 1999).

During the early twentieth century, the mansion house was used by Middlesex County Council as a residential school, being taken over, in 1965, by Hillingdon Council, which maintained the school until its closure in 1988.

A recent watching brief at the laundry (Peachey 2009) revealed a sequence of layers of made up ground, two fragments of redeposited Roman and medieval tile, along with two sherds of 16th to 17th century pottery.

A watching brief on groundworks associated with the construction of a new access road (Failes 2010) approximately 85m downslope from the western façade of the mansion house revealed two shallow pits that were probably post-medieval in date, two circular features (probably pits), two dumped deposits of post-medieval or later date and a number of undated features and deposits.

A haulage road associated with development at the site was monitored

(Failes 2011) and passed through Aspect Park and Kenton's Farm, where an archaeological evaluation prior to redevelopment and extension of Park Place golf course in 2005 revealed remains of Middle Iron Age to 4th century AD date. Evidence for grain storage and associated settlement was recorded. A medieval gully and post-medieval trackway were also identified (Wood 2005).

The investigation along the route of the haulage road (Failes 2011) identified a group of mostly undated features to the north of the current investigation area. A these features cluster of occurred approximately 260m to the north of the current Pond Area and included two possible oval pits, an amorphous pit or possible post hole, a circular possible small pit or post hole and a large shallow Saxo-Norman to Early Medieval pit, with a post hole dug into its base. Somewhat closer to the site at 200m to the north, a probable 19th century pit and two amorphous natural hollows that contained abraded medieval tile were identified. The abraded tile within the natural features is suggestive of medieval manure scattering. A single sherd of probably residual Roman pottery was retrieved from a ditch terminus located approximately 96m northwest of the Pond Area.

A programme of investigations relating to work on a second road (Failes forthcoming) revealed substantial Iron Age settlement and Roman remains 450m down slope to the south.

A watching brief on a tree lined avenue roughly 175m southeast of the Pond Area revealed two Iron Age pits, a 2nd century ditch and an undated metalled surface (Murray 2013).

A geophysical survey (Malone 2013) within the current investigation area adjacent to the former Pillar Lodge did not reveal any features of potential archaeological origin. However, strong bipolar anomalies, originating from services and infrastructure associated with the former building, dominated the plot. As such, the small visible areas that were undisturbed provided little opportunity for clear interpretation.

3. AIMS

The aim of the archaeological investigation was to ensure that any archaeological features exposed during the groundworks were recorded and, if present, their date, function and origin determined.

4. METHODS

Roads A and B (Fig 3) (Plates 1, 5 & 6) had overburden removed by mechanical excavator to a depth suitable for identification archaeological of any remains. If no remains were apparent excavation continued to the depth required for the construction of the road. The Pond Area (Figs 3 & 4) (Plates 2 & 8) was also reduced to the upper surface of the natural. where it could be investigated before further excavation, as were the three soakaways (Figs 3 & 5) (Plate 12). In addition to this, the area of the house plot was excavated to a suitable level (Fig 3) (Plate 4), however, it was only monitored initially as the ground was heavily disturbed by modern deposits relating to the construction of Pillar Lodge and its garden. Three areas to the north, west and south of the pond had topsoil removed before being built up again with spoil from the pond area to form mounds in the landscape (Fig 3) (Plate 3). These were intermittently monitored.

In the road, pond and soakaway areas, the topsoil was removed and natural exposed and scraped to a clean surface in order to reveal any archaeological remains. Selected deposits were excavated further to retrieve artefactual material and to determine their function. Each deposit was allocated a unique reference number (context number) with an individual written description. A list of all contexts and their descriptions appears as Appendix 1. A photographic record was compiled and sections were drawn at a scale of 1:10 and 1:20. Recording was undertaken according to standard Archaeological Project Services' practice.

Following excavation the records were also checked and a stratigraphic matrix produced. Phasing was assigned based on the nature of the deposits and recognisable relationships between them and supplemented by artefact dating.

5. **RESULTS**

Following post-excavation analysis three phases were identified;

Phase 1	Natural deposits
Phase 2	Undated deposits
Phase 3	Recent deposits

Archaeological contexts are listed below and described. The numbers in brackets are the context numbers assigned in the field.

Phase 1 Natural deposits

Roads A & B

The natural deposit in both sections of road consisted of firm dark brownish red sandy clay (003) with frequent small to large flint fragments, frequent chalk fragments and frequent patches of chalk with flints on the southern end of Road A (Figs 3 & 6, Sections 1-4) (Plates 1, 5-7).

Pond Area

The pond area was stripped to naturally deposited, firm dark brownish red sandy clay (201) (Figs 4 & 6, Section 5) (Plates 2, 8 & 9), 0.30m thick, containing frequent chalk fragments, frequent flint cobbles and occasional patches of chalk with flints.

An exploratory sondage was dug by machine in order to ensure that the excavation was to the correct level. A hard deposit of white chalk with flints (202) was revealed beneath natural layer (201) (Figs 4 & 6, Section 6) (Plate 10).

Soakaways

The natural deposit (301) in the area of the three soakaways was very similar to that of the roads and pond, comprising firm, mid greyish reddish brown sandy clay, with frequent flint cobbles and frequent chalk fragments (Figs 5 & 6, Section 8) (Plates 12 & 13).

Phase 2 Undated deposits

Pond Area

Linear feature [206] and its possible recut [204] were cut through natural deposit (202) and oriented on a roughly northwest to southeast alignment (Figs 4 & 6, Section 7) (Plate 11).

Cut [206] measured at least 1.30m wide by at least 0.46m deep, with a moderately steep fairly straight side. It was filled with firm mid reddish greyish brown clayey sand (205), containing frequent chalk fragments and frequent flint cobbles.

Possible recut [204] measured at least 1.70m wide by at least 0.45m deep with a moderately steep, slightly concave side. The fill of [204] consisted of firm to friable, slightly red, mid greyish brown silty sand (203), containing frequent chalk flecks, frequent flint cobbles/fragments and occasional fragments of ceramic building material (CBM).

Although this feature has possibly been recut and widened it was difficult to identify a cut separating the two fills and as such, it remains possible that this is a single large feature with two distinct fills.

Phase 3 Recent deposits

Roads A & B

In Sections 3 & 4 (Fig 9, Plate 7) at the middle to southern end of Road A, a subsoil was identified overlying the natural. This subsoil consisted of friable mid reddish brown sandy clay to clayey sand, up to 0.22m thick, containing frequent small to large flint fragments.

Overlying the subsoil, and directly overlying the natural in the middle to northern part of Road A and along Road B, was a topsoil layer, up to 0.47m thick, consisting of friable slightly greyish brown silty sand (001), containing moderate small to mid size flint fragments.

Pond Area

Natural deposit (201) was overlain by topsoil deposit (200) which comprised up to 0.40m thick, friable, slightly greyish brown silty sand, containing moderate small to mid size flint fragments (Fig 6, Section 5) (Plate 9).

Soakaways

In the area of the three soakaways, natural deposit (301) was overlain by a 0.32m thick topsoil deposit comprising friable slightly greyish brown silty sand (300), with moderate small to mid size flint fragments (Figs 5 & 6, Section 8) (Plate 13).

6. **DISCUSSION**

The natural deposit across the site consisted of brownish red to reddish brown sandy clays with flint nodules overlying chalk with flints which represents the underlying solid geology at the site.

In the Pond Area, a possibly recut ditch or trackway was recorded oriented on a northwest to southeast alignment. This feature contained two fills, though it was difficult to ascertain whether it was recut due to the diffuse interface between the two deposits. If it was a single cut, its width would have measured c. 3m, which is quite wide for a ditch that probably does not have a depth much greater than 0.46m, suggesting it may represent a trackway. If it is recut, this raises the possibility that it may have been widened for some purpose. or possibly be a boundary ditch that has moved roughly a metre from its original position. The ditch fill of [204] contained fragments of CBM however no dateable finds were retrieved from the fill. A previous evaluation trench in this area (Fig 3) identified an undated deposit. As this trench was located partly over the possible trackway it is probable that this refers to its fill.

In the mid to southern area of Road A, a subsoil deposit lay between the natural and modern topsoil. As this was in the area of the former Aspect Park golf course, it is probable that this represents a former topsoil deposit which has been buried beneath newer topsoil brought in to landscape the park.

No features or finds were identified in the areas where topsoil was removed for Mound Areas A-C (Plate 3) or Soakaways A-C (Plate 12).

The area of the house plot (Plate 4) was photographed but remains unrecorded as the ground was clearly disturbed by modern deposits.

7. CONCLUSION

An archaeological watching brief was carried out at Pillar Lodge, Remenham, Berkshire, as previous work in the vicinity revealed archaeological remains dating from the Iron Age, Roman, medieval and post-medieval periods.

However, no finds or features from the current investigation could be attributed to

these periods. A single undated feature was recorded during the investigation which may represent a trackway or boundary ditch. A subsoil deposit, probably associated with landscaping of the former golf course at the site, was also identified.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services wishes to acknowledge the assistance of John Bateman of Spink Property Ltd for commissioning the fieldwork and analysis, as well as for his cooperation and assistance throughout the process. Gary Taylor and Denise Drury edited this report.

9. PERSONNEL

Project Coordinator: Denise Drury Site Supervisors: Andrew Failes Photographic reproduction: Andrew Failes Illustration: Andrew Failes Post-excavation analysis: Andrew Failes

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11. ABBREVIATIONS

- APS Archaeological Project Services
- CBM Ceramic Building Material
- If A Institute of Field Archaeologists

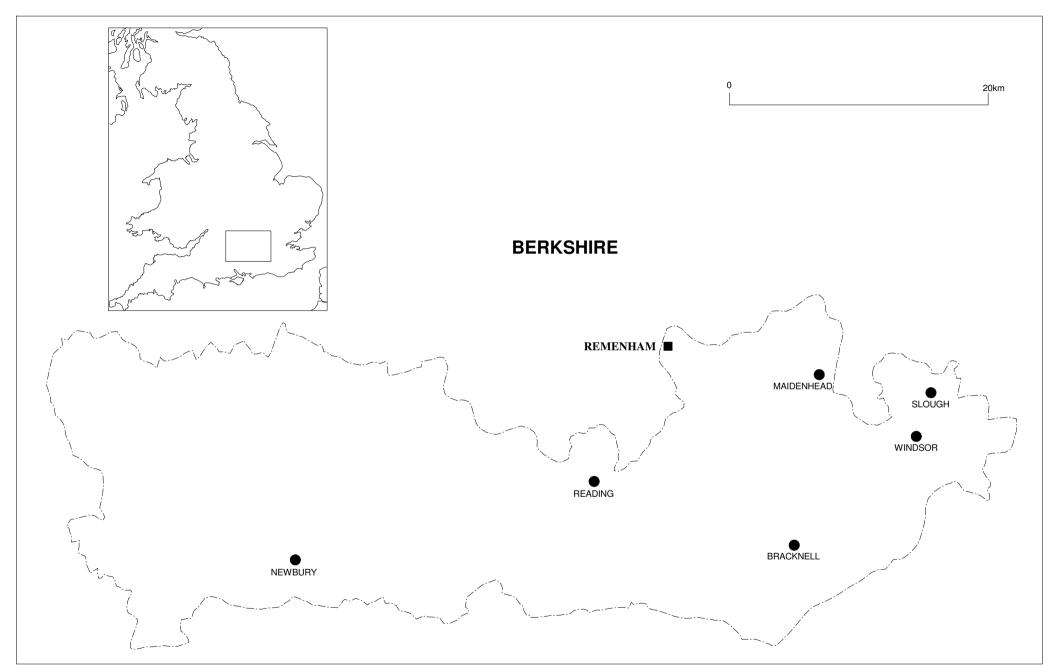


Figure 1 - General location plan

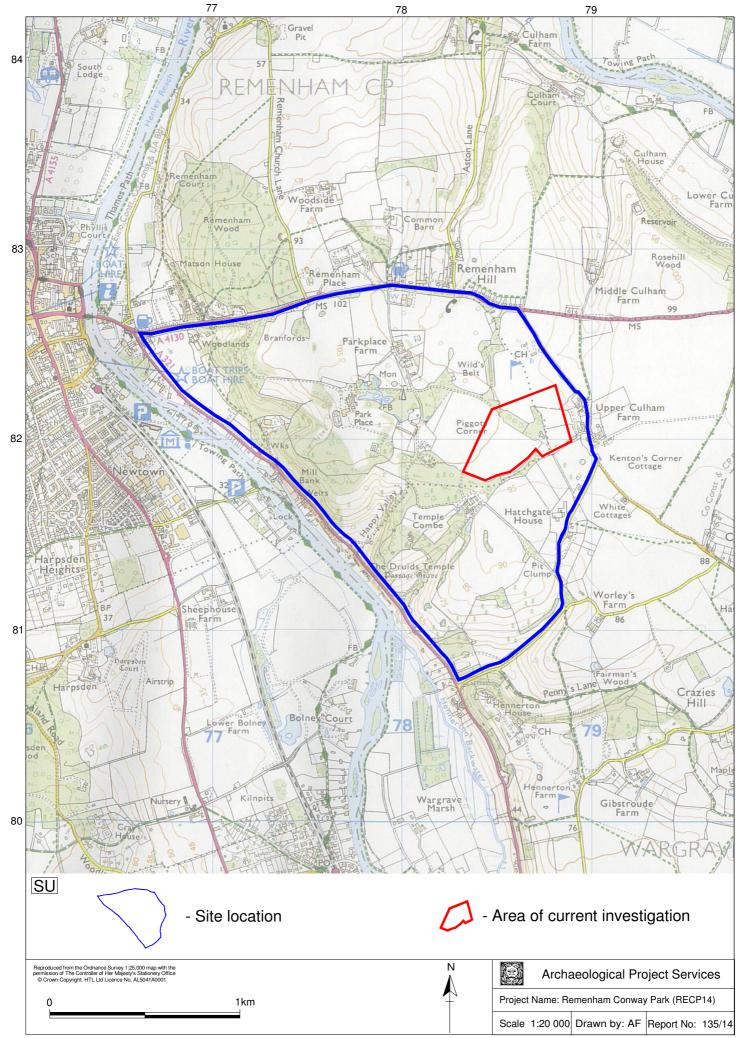
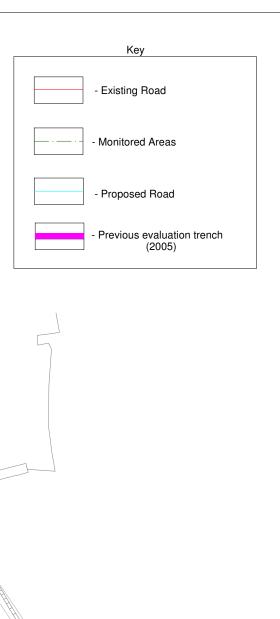


Figure 2 - Site location



Figure 3 - Monitored areas and section locations for Roads A and B



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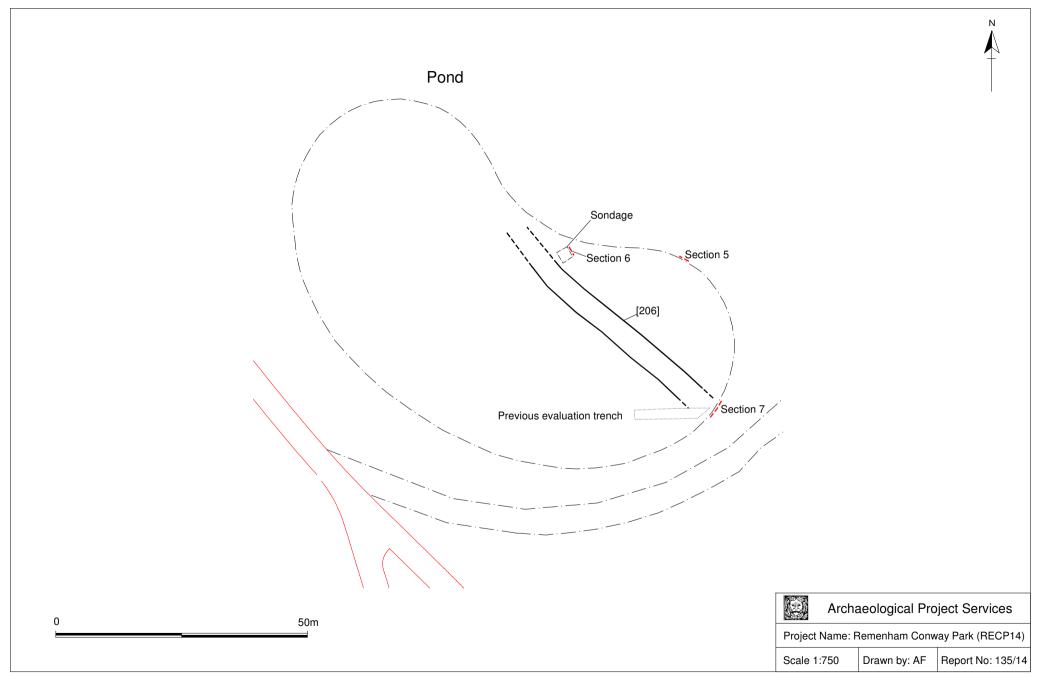


Figure 4 - Pond Area

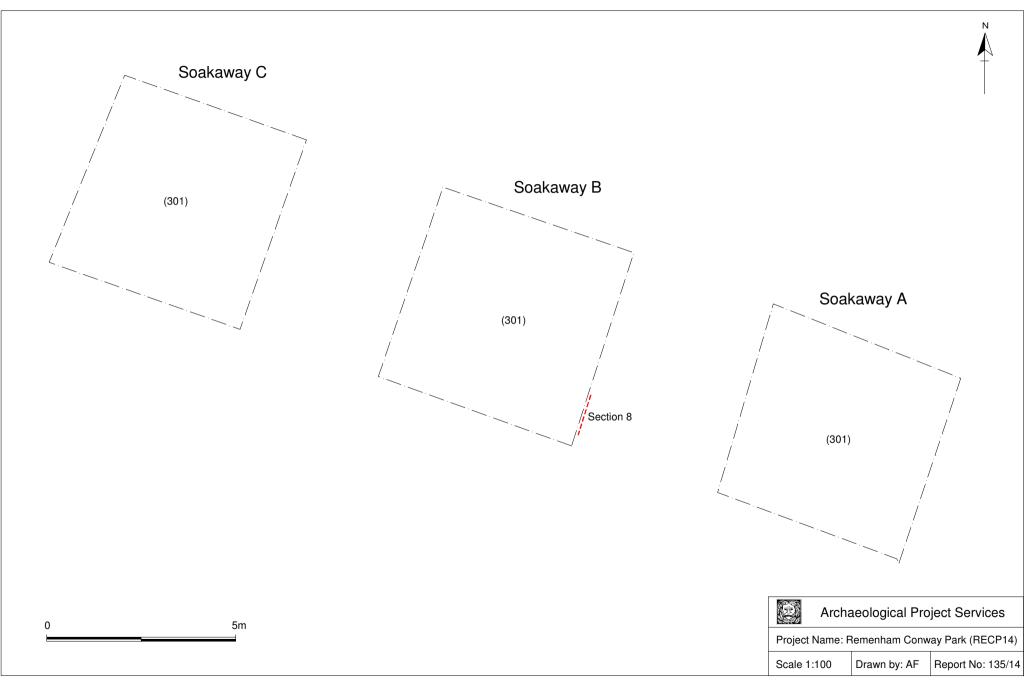


Figure 5 - Soakaway Areas A-C

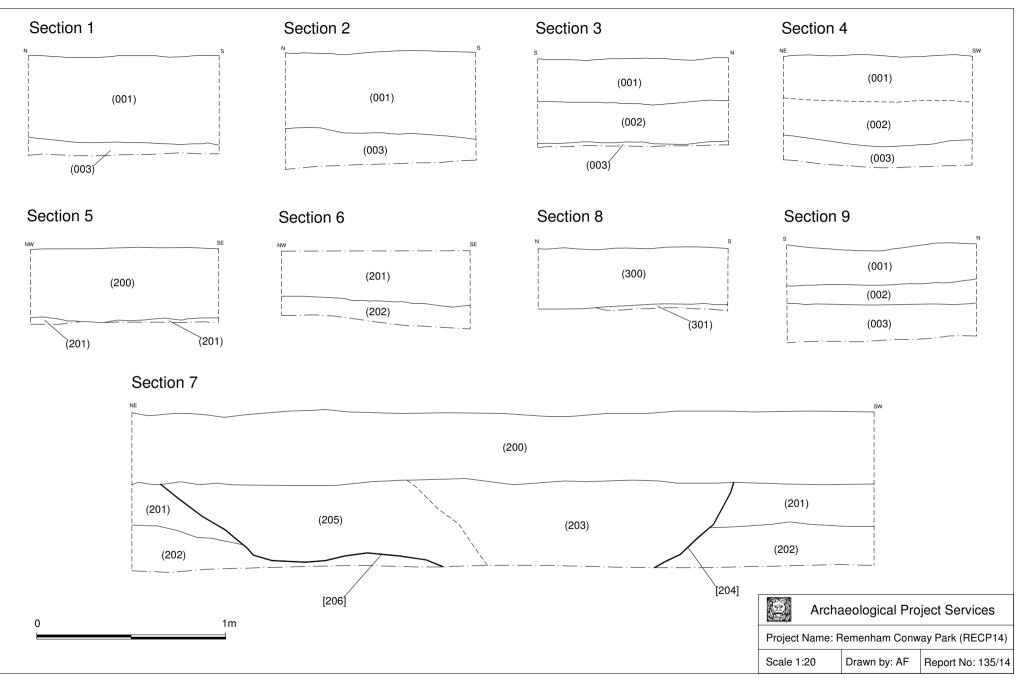


Figure 6 - Section 1-9



Plate 1 - Working shot of northern end of Road A, looking northwest



Plate 2 – Working shot of Pond Area, looking northwest



Plate 3 – Working shot of Mound Area A, looking north



Plate 4 – Working shot of house footprint being stripped, looking southeast



Plate 5 – Stripping of main section of Road A, looking south



Plate 6 – Stripping northern section of Road B, looking north



Plate 7 – Section 3: Representative section of Road A



Plate 8 – Pond Area fully stripped, looking northwest



Plate 9 – Section 5: Representative section of Pond Area



Plate 10 – Section 6: Pond Area sondage



Plate 11 – Section 7: Feature [204]/[206]



Plate 12 – Soakaway B in plan



Plate 13 – Section 8: Representative section, Soakaway B

APPENDIX 1

Context Summary

No.	Area	Description	Interpretation
001	Road A & B	Friable slightly greyish brown silty sand, up to 0.47m thick, containing moderate small to mid size flint fragments	Topsoil
002	Road A	Friable mid reddish brown sandy clay to clayey sand, 0.22m thick, containing frequent small to large flint fragments	Subsoil
003	Road A & B	Firm dark brownish red sandy clay with frequent small to large flint fragments, frequent chalk fragments and frequent patches of chalk with flints in southern area of the road	Natural deposit
200	Pond	Friable slightly greyish brown silty sand, up to 0.40m thick, containing moderate small to mid size flint fragments	Topsoil
201	Pond	Firm dark brownish red sandy clay, 0.30m thick, containing frequent chalk fragments, frequent flint cobbles and occasional patches of chalk with flints	Natural deposit
202	Pond	Firm to hard, white to light greyish brown chalk with flints with some patches of light brown clay within the chalk	Natural deposit
203	Pond	Firm to friable, slightly red, mid greyish brown silty sand, at least 0.46m thick, containing frequent chalk flecks, frequent flint cobbles/fragments and occasional fragments of CBM	Fill of [204]
204	Pond	Linear cut oriented on northwest- southeast alignment, at least 1.70m wide x at least 0.45m deep with a moderately steep slightly concave side	Possible ditch or trackway
205	Pond	Firm mid reddish greyish brown clayey sand, at least 0.46m thick, containing frequent chalk fragments and frequent flint cobbles	Fill of [206]
206	Pond	Linear cut oriented on northwest- southeast alignment, at least 1.30m wide x at least 0.46m deep with a moderately steep fairly straight side	Possible ditch or trackway
300	Soak away	Friable slightly greyish brown silty sand, up to 0.32m thick, containing moderate small to mid size flint fragments	Topsoil
301	Soak away	Firm mid greyish reddish brown sandy clay with frequent flint cobbles and frequent chalk fragments	Natural deposit

Appendix 2

GLOSSARY

Anglo-Saxon	Pertaining to the period when Britain was occupied by peoples from northern Germany, Denmark and adjacent areas. The period dates from approximately AD 450-1066.	
Bronze Age	A period characterised by the introduction of bronze into the country for tools, between 2250 and 800 BC.	
Context	An archaeological context represents a distinct archaeological event or process. For example, the action of digging a pit creates a context (the cut) as does the process of its subsequent backfill (the fill). Each context encountered during an archaeological investigation is allocated a unique number by the archaeologist and a record sheet detailing the description and interpretation of the context (the context sheet) is created and placed in the site archive. Context numbers are identified within the report text by brackets, e.g. [004].	
Cut	A cut refers to the physical action of digging a posthole, pit, ditch, foundation trench, etc. Once the fills of these features are removed during an archaeological investigation the original 'cut' is therefore exposed and subsequently recorded.	
Domesday Survey	A survey of property ownership in England compiled on the instruction of William I for taxation purposes in 1086 AD.	
Fill	Once a feature has been dug it begins to silt up (either slowly or rapidly) or it can be back-filled manually. The soil(s) that become contained by the 'cut' are referred to as its fill(s).	
Geophysical Survey	Essentially non-invasive methods of examining below the ground surface by measuring deviations in the physical properties and characteristics of the earth. Techniques include magnetometry and resistivity survey.	
Iron Age	A period characterised by the introduction of Iron into the country for tools, between 800 BC and AD 50.	
Layer	A layer is a term used to describe an accumulation of soil or other material that is not contained within a cut.	
Medieval	The Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1066-1500.	
Mesolithic	The 'Middle Stone Age' period, part of the prehistoric era, dating from approximately 11000 - 4500 BC.	
Natural	Undisturbed deposit(s) of soil or rock which have accumulated without the influence of human activity	
Neolithic	The 'New Stone Age' period, part of the prehistoric era, dating from approximately 4500 - 2250 BC.	
Palaeolithic	The 'Old Stone Age' period, part of the prehistoric era, dating from approximately 500000 - 11000 BC in Britain.	
Post hole	The hole cut to take a timber post, usually in an upright position. The hole may have been dug larger than the post and contain soil or stones to support the post. Alternatively, the posthole may have been formed through the	

	process of driving the post into the ground.
Post-medieval	The period following the Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1500-1800.
Prehistoric	The period of human history prior to the introduction of writing. In Britain the prehistoric period lasts from the first evidence of human occupation about 500,000 BC, until the Roman invasion in the middle of the 1st century AD.
Romano-British	Pertaining to the period dating from AD 43-410 when the Romans occupied Britain.
Saxon	Pertaining to the period dating from AD 410-1066 when England was largely settled by tribes from northern Germany

Appendix 3

THE ARCHIVE

The archive consists of:

- 12 Context records
- 2 Photographic record sheet
- 1 Section record sheet
- 13 Daily record sheet
- 3 Sheets of scale drawings

All primary records are currently kept at:

Archaeological Project Services The Old School Cameron Street Heckington Sleaford Lincolnshire NG34 9RW

The ultimate destination of the project archive is:

No museum

Accession Number:

Archaeological Project Services Site Code:

RECP14

The discussion and comments provided in this report are based on the archaeology revealed during the site investigations. Other archaeological finds and features may exist on the development site but away from the areas exposed during the course of this fieldwork. *Archaeological Project Services* cannot confirm that those areas unexposed are free from archaeology nor that any archaeology present there is of a similar character to that revealed during the current investigation.

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