

West Hoathly Brickworks Phase 2 (Part 14) Sharpthorne West Sussex

Archaeological Watching Brief



for
Ibstock Brick Limited

CA Project: 2151
CA Report: 2151_01

September 2019



West Hoathly Brickworks Phase 2 (Part 14) Sharpthorne West Sussex

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SUMMARY

Project Name:	West Hoathly Brickworks Phase 2 (Part 14)
Location:	Sharpthorne, West Sussex
NGR:	537630 132860
Type:	Watching Brief
Date:	13-16, 19-20 August 2019
Planning Reference:	HO/36/98
Location of Archive:	To be deposited with East Grinstead Museum
Site Code:	WHS 19

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology as part of the latest phase of works associated with the extension of the clay quarry at West Hoathly Brickworks, Sharpthorne, West Sussex. The work formed part of the Phase 2 (Part 14) Extraction and followed on from archaeological work undertaken during the Phase 2 Extraction (Parts 1–13).

Two charcoal rich pits of indeterminate function were identified. A field boundary noted on mapping was also identified. No features associated with medieval iron mining or clay extraction were identified.



1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In August 2019 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological watching brief for Istock Brick Ltd at West Hoathly Brickworks, Sharpthorne, West Sussex centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 537630 132860 (see Figure 1). The archaeological recording formed part of ongoing programme of archaeological works required to fulfil a condition attached to planning consent for an extension to the clay quarry attached to the brickworks (planning ref.: HO/36/98). The objective of this phase of the watching brief was to record all archaeological remains exposed during the stripping of an area, prior to its extraction at a later date.
- 1.2 The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a brief prepared by Mr John Mills, Archaeologist for West Sussex County Council Economic and Environmental Policy Service (WSCCEEPS) the archaeological advisors to the Local Planning Authority, and with a subsequent detailed *Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI)* produced by CA (2003) and approved by the LPA acting on the advice of Mr Mills. The fieldwork also followed *Standard and guidance: Archaeological watching brief* (ClfA 2014), the *Recommended Standard Conditions for Archaeological Fieldwork, Recording and Post-Excavation Work (Development Control), Version 2b* issued by WSCCEEPS and the *Management of Archaeological Projects 2* (English Heritage 1991), the *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE): Project Manager's Guide* (EH 2006).

The site

- 1.3 The current works comprise the Phase 2 (Part 14) extraction areas and follow on from the Phase 1 (CA 2001b) and Phase 2 (Parts 1–13) Extraction areas reported on previously (CA 2004a, 2004b, 2006, 2007a, 2007b, 2010, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018). Additionally a watching brief was carried out in 2011 by CA during ground reduction for clay extraction of the Phase 2, Part 6 area previously stripped; no further archaeological remains were encountered in this area. The site lies at approximately 140m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) and comprises part of the eastern area of Mare Pit Wood.
- 1.4 The underlying geology of the area is mapped as Wadhurst Clay Formation Mudstone and Ironstone overlying Ashdown Beds Sandstones (BGS 2018). A yellow

clay substrate overlaying interbedded ironstone deposits was exposed during the groundworks.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The general background to the archaeological works at the quarry has been outlined elsewhere (e.g. CAT 1999a) and it is not intended in this section, to fully repeat that information. The results of the previous programmes of archaeological recording (Phase 1 and Phase 2 (Parts 1 to 13); Figure 2) are summarised below.

Prehistoric

- 2.2 Three flint flakes and a scraper were identified during the Phase 1 Extraction (CAT 2001b), a flint fabricator and an unutilised flake were identified during the Phase 2 (Part 4) Extraction (CA 2007a) and sixteen fragments of flint blades, cores and debitage during the Phase 2 (Part 7) Extraction (CA 2012). All were unstratified and date to the Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age. A single flint flake of probable Early Neolithic or Mesolithic date was recovered from the topsoil during Phase 2 (Part 6) Extraction (CA 2010) and sixteen fragments of flint blades, cores and debitage were recovered from the subsoil during the Phase 3 (Part 7) Extraction broadly dated to the prehistoric period.

Medieval

- 2.3 An evaluation prior to the Phase 1 Extraction identified several undated features including a stone-filled ditch, a posthole and a pit containing burnt material (CAT 1999b). The ditch was fully exposed during a subsequent programme of archaeological recording, along with a number of pits and postholes to its east (CAT 2001b). Medieval pottery, dateable to the 11th to 14th centuries, was recovered from these features. They also contained iron slag, burnt sandstone and fired clay likely to have derived from the walls of a charcoal-fired furnace, although no *in situ* furnace structures were identified (ibid.).
- 2.4 Within the Phase 2 Extraction area, visible earthworks within Mare Pit Wood were archaeologically surveyed (CAT 2000 and CAT 2001a) and an archaeological evaluation was undertaken within the northern part of the wood (CAT 2000). This work showed that the earthworks are likely to have been the remains of infilled iron

minepits and associated spoil heaps. These are presumed to be medieval on the basis of evidence obtained during the excavation of similar minepits within the quarry in the 1980s (Worssam and Swift 1987).

- 2.5 A large number of these pits were exposed during the Phase 2 (Parts 4 to 13) Extraction works, with the northernmost extent of the pits along and above the 140m contour (CA 2007a, 2007b, 2010, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018; Figure 3). A northwest/south-east aligned ditch which was tentatively dated to the medieval period due to the similarity in its fill to that of the medieval mine pits, was identified within the north-western part of the Phase 2 (Part 10) extraction area. Beyond the wood, the foundations of a timber building were present, along with several pits (CA 2007a). These features were associated with a small amount of medieval pottery and had been backfilled with iron-processing waste likely to have derived from iron furnaces. At least one iron-smelting furnace pit, apparently partially protected by a shelter or windbreak, was exposed within the Phase 2 (Part 5) extraction area (CA 2007b). Other slag-filled pits and postholes were present close to the furnace pit. A single hearth pit was revealed during Phase 2 (Part 6) extraction groundworks (CA 2010) and two further possible hearth pits were identified during Phase 2 (Part 7) extraction groundworks (CA 2012) all containing charcoal rich fills. It remains to be seen if these features represent an outlier of iron ore processing activity associated with the timber building or to as yet unexposed activity to the east.

Post-medieval

- 2.6 The evaluation and survey identified substantial post-medieval clay extraction (marl pits and associated trackways and drainage channels within Mare Pit Wood. These as well as additional marl pits, were exposed during the Phase 2 (Parts 1, 4, 8, 9 and 10) extraction (CA 2004a, CA 2007a, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018; Figure 3).
- 2.7 During Phase 2 (Part 6) extraction groundworks (CA 2010) a north-east/south-west aligned ditch thought to be a post-medieval/modern field boundary was revealed which extended into the Phase 2 (Part 7) extraction area and, along with a shallow parallel ditch only observed within the Phase 2 (Part 7) extraction area, formed a north-east/south-west aligned trackway thought to have been used in the transportation of extracted clay away from the marl pits (CA 2012). Additional

partially extant ditches were also revealed within the Phase 2 (Parts 8 and 9) extraction areas, again, most likely relating to post-medieval/modern field boundaries (CA 2013 and 2014).

2.8 A pit containing charcoal and iron smelting slag was also identified during the Phase 2 (Part 1) extraction. Although the pit remained undated, the slag was dated on typological grounds to the early post-medieval period (CA 2004a).

2.9 A dumping deposit along the edge of the marl pit to the south was observed. The deposit appeared to be extending eastward beyond the limit of excavation for Phase 2 (Part 6) (CA 2010; Fig. 3).

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 The objectives of the archaeological works were:

- to monitor groundworks, and to identify, investigate and record all significant buried archaeological deposits revealed on the site during the course of the development groundworks;
- at the conclusion of the project, to produce an integrated archive for the project work and a report setting out the results of the project and the archaeological conclusions that can be drawn from the recorded data.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 The 2019 fieldwork followed the methodology set out within the WSI and subsequent amendments (CA 2003 and 2006). An archaeologist was present during intrusive groundworks involving the stripping of an area within Phase 14. All groundwork was carried out using a mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless bucket.

4.2 Where archaeological deposits were encountered written, graphic and photographic records were compiled in accordance with CA Technical Manual 1: *Fieldwork Recording Manual*.

- 4.3 The archive and artefacts from the evaluation are currently held by CA at their offices in Andover. Subject to the agreement of the legal landowner the archive will be deposited with East Grinstead Museum. A summary of information from this project, set out within Appendix B, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

5. RESULTS (FIGURES 2-6)

- 5.1 The natural geological substrate 1401 consisting of yellow clay was revealed at an average depth of 0.32m below present ground level (bpgl). This was overlain by dark brown silt/clay topsoil 1400 averaging 0.32m in thickness.

- 5.2 Pit **1403** was sub circular in plan, and was 0.88m in length, 0.8m in width, and 0.50m in depth, with moderate concave sides and a flat base. It contained charcoal rich fill, **1404**. Although no dateable material was recovered from **1403** it has been provisionally dated to the medieval period on the basis of its similarity to medieval features investigated elsewhere nearby (Worssam and Swift 1987).

- 5.3 Pit **1405** was sub circular in plan, and was 1.70m in length, 1.5m in width, and 0.10m in depth, with moderate concave sides and a flat base. It contained charcoal rich fill, **1406**. Although no dateable material was recovered from **1403** it has been provisionally dated to the medieval period on the basis of its similarity to medieval features investigated elsewhere nearby (ibid).

6. DISCUSSION

- 6.1 Despite the archaeological potential of this area only the remains of two pits were observed during the groundworks.

- 6.2 Both of the pits were very shallow in nature, and charcoal rich, but of indeterminate function, but are likely associated with medieval mining within the wider site.

7. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Chris Ellis, and Pawel Jablonski who also wrote the report. The illustrations were prepared by Tom Brown. The archive has been compiled by Chris Ellis, and prepared for deposition by Zoe Emery. The project was managed for CA by Ray Kennedy.

8. REFERENCES

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Worssam, B. and Swift, G. 1987 'Minepits at West Hoathly Brickworks, Sharpthorne, Sussex', Wealdon Iron 7, 3–15 (Bulletin of the Wealden Iron Research Group)



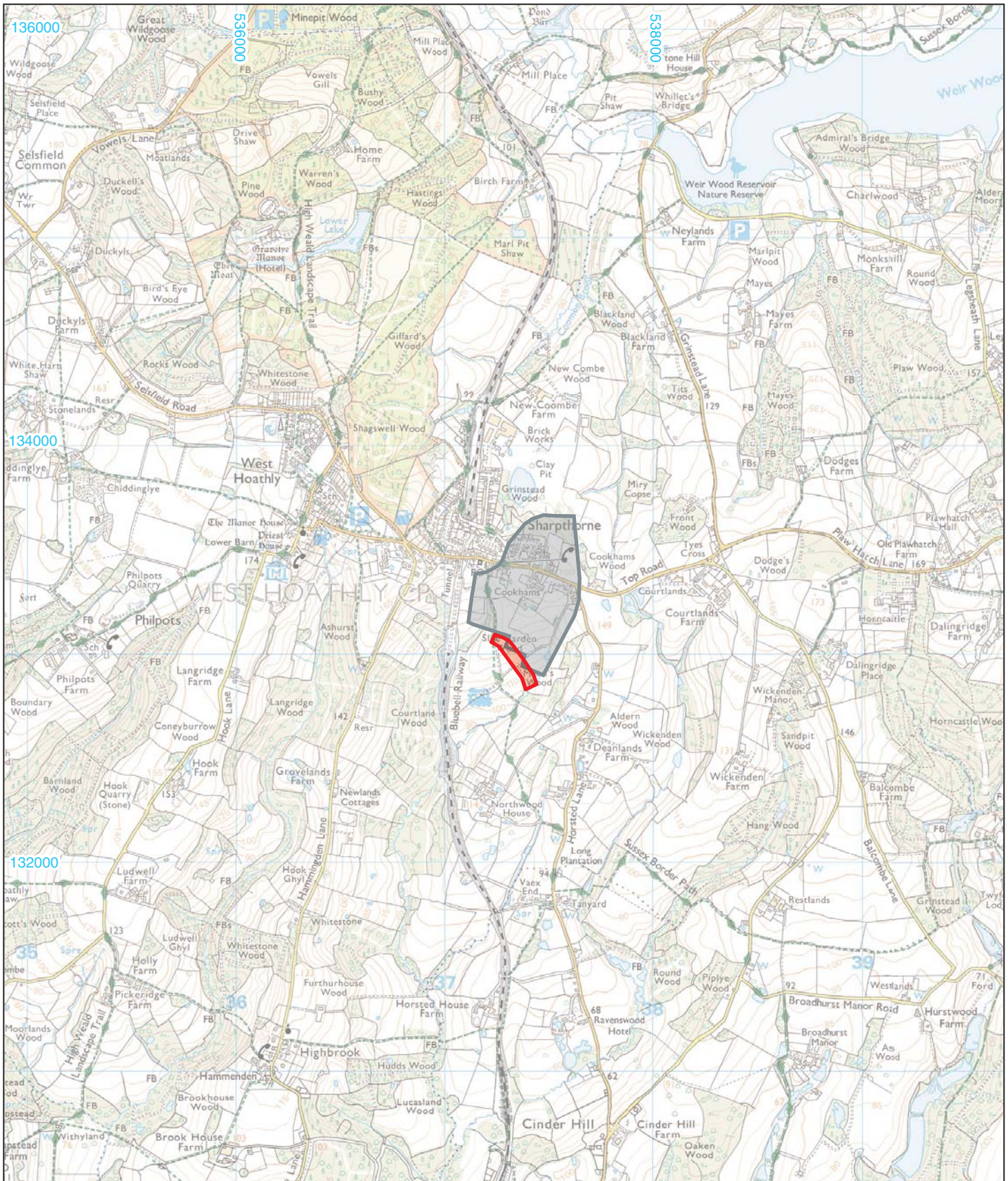
APPENDIX A: OASIS REPORT FORM

Trench No	Context	Type	Fill of	Context Interpretation	Context Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth/thickness (m)
14	1400	Layer		Topsoil	Dark Brown, Silty Clay,			0.32
14	1401	Layer		Natural	Natural geology - pale yellow clay with abundant pale blue/grey mottles.			0.32
14	1402	Layer		1401	Natural geology pale blue/grey clay with gravel lenses - geology degraded(?)			>0.3
14	1403	Cut		Pit	Oval, Sides moderate concave, Base flat irregular, Orientation NW - SE. Small, sharply pit cut 3.5 m southeast from larger pit 1405	0.88	0.8	0.05
14	1404	Fill	1403	Dump material - charcoal	Black, Silty Clay gritty, Soft malleable. Abundant charcoal throughout including fragments <5mm. No coarse components	0.88	0.8	0.05
14	1405	Cut		Pit	Sub-circular, Sides moderate, concave, Base - irregular, Orientation E - W	1.7	1.5	0.1
14	1406	Fill	1405	Dump - iron material	Black, gritty silty clay, soft malleable, abundant charcoal flecks	1.7	1.5	0.1

APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS	
Project Name	West Hoathly Brickworks Phase 2 (Part 14), Sharpthorne, West Sussex
Short description	An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology as part of the latest phase of works associated with the extension of the clay quarry at West Hoathly Brickworks, Sharpthorne, West Sussex. The work formed part of the Phase 2 (Part 14) Extraction and followed on from archaeological work undertaken during the Phase 2 Extraction (Parts 1–13). Two charcoal rich pits of indeterminate function were identified. A field boundary noted on mapping was also identified. No features associated with medieval iron mining or clay extraction were identified.
Project dates	13-16, 19-20 August 2019
Project type	Watching Brief
Previous work	Watching Brief (CA 2004a, 2004b, 2006, 2007a, 2007b, 2010, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018)
Future work	Unknown
PROJECT LOCATION	
Site Location	West Hoathly Brickworks, Sharpthorne, West Sussex
Study area (M ² /ha)	N/A
Site co-ordinates	537630 132860
PROJECT CREATORS	
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology
Project Brief originator	WSCCEEPS
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology
Project Manager	Ray Kennedy
Project Supervisor	Chris Ellis
MONUMENT TYPE	
None	
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	
None	
PROJECT ARCHIVES	
Intended final location of archive (museum/Accession no.)	Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone etc)
Physical	East Grinstead Museum
Paper	East Grinstead Museum
Digital	East Grinstead Museum
	Database, digital photos
BIBLIOGRAPHY	
CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2019 <i>West Hoathly Brickworks Phase 2 (14), Sharpthorne, West Sussex: Archaeological Watching Brief</i> . CA typescript report 2151_01	





- Previous works
- Site boundary (2019)

0 1km

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Ordnance Survey 0100031673



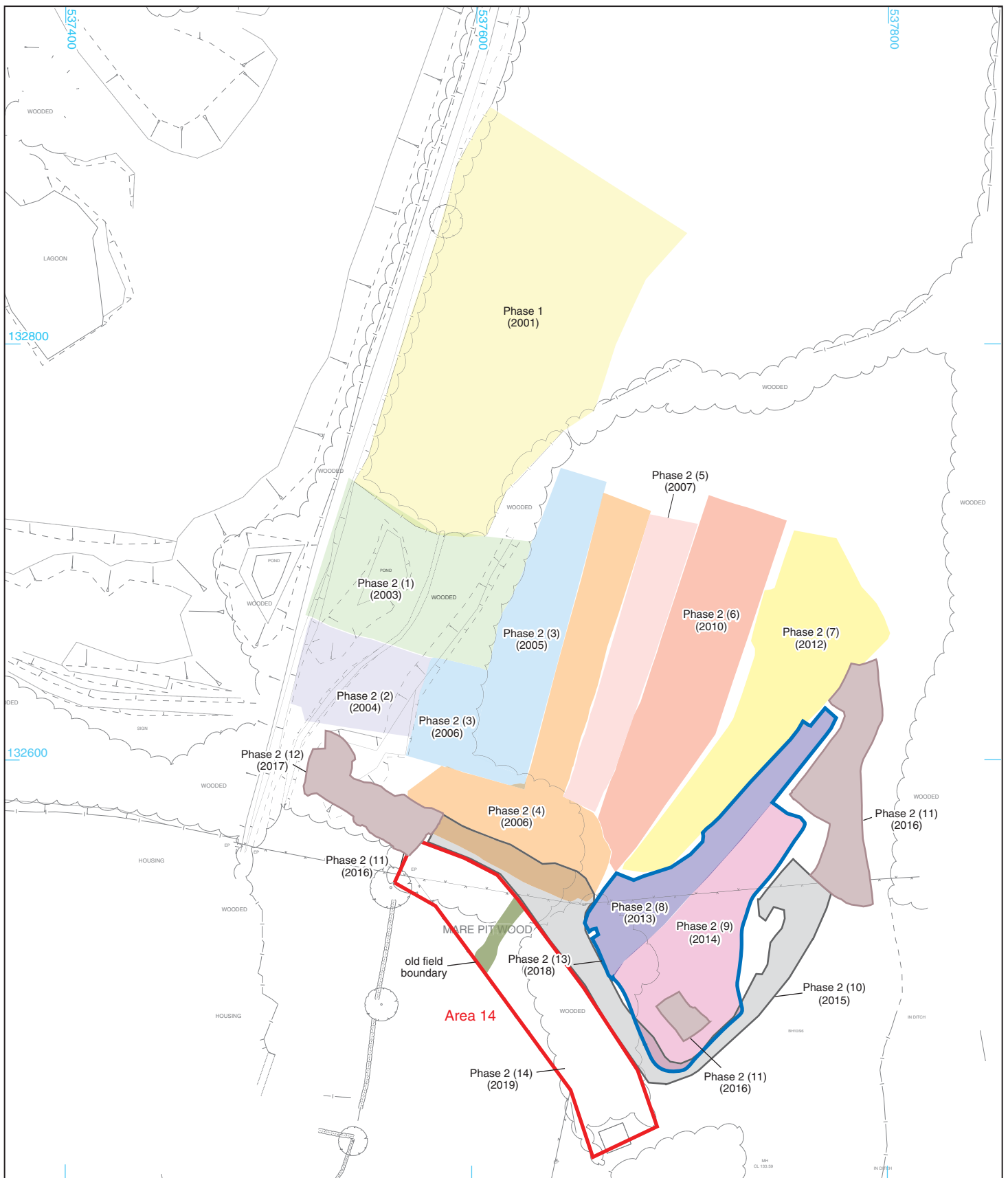
**Cotswold
Archaeology**

Andover 01264 347630
Cirencester 01285 771022
Exeter 01392 826185
Milton Keynes 01908 564660
www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk
enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk

PROJECT TITLE
West Hoathly Brickworks, Phase 2
(Part 14), Sharpthorne, West Sussex

FIGURE TITLE
Site location plan

DRAWN BY	TB	PROJECT NO.	2151	FIGURE NO.	1
CHECKED BY	DJB	DATE	26.09.18		
APPROVED BY	RK	SCALE	@A4 1:25,000		



- Phase 2 (14)
- Old field boundary



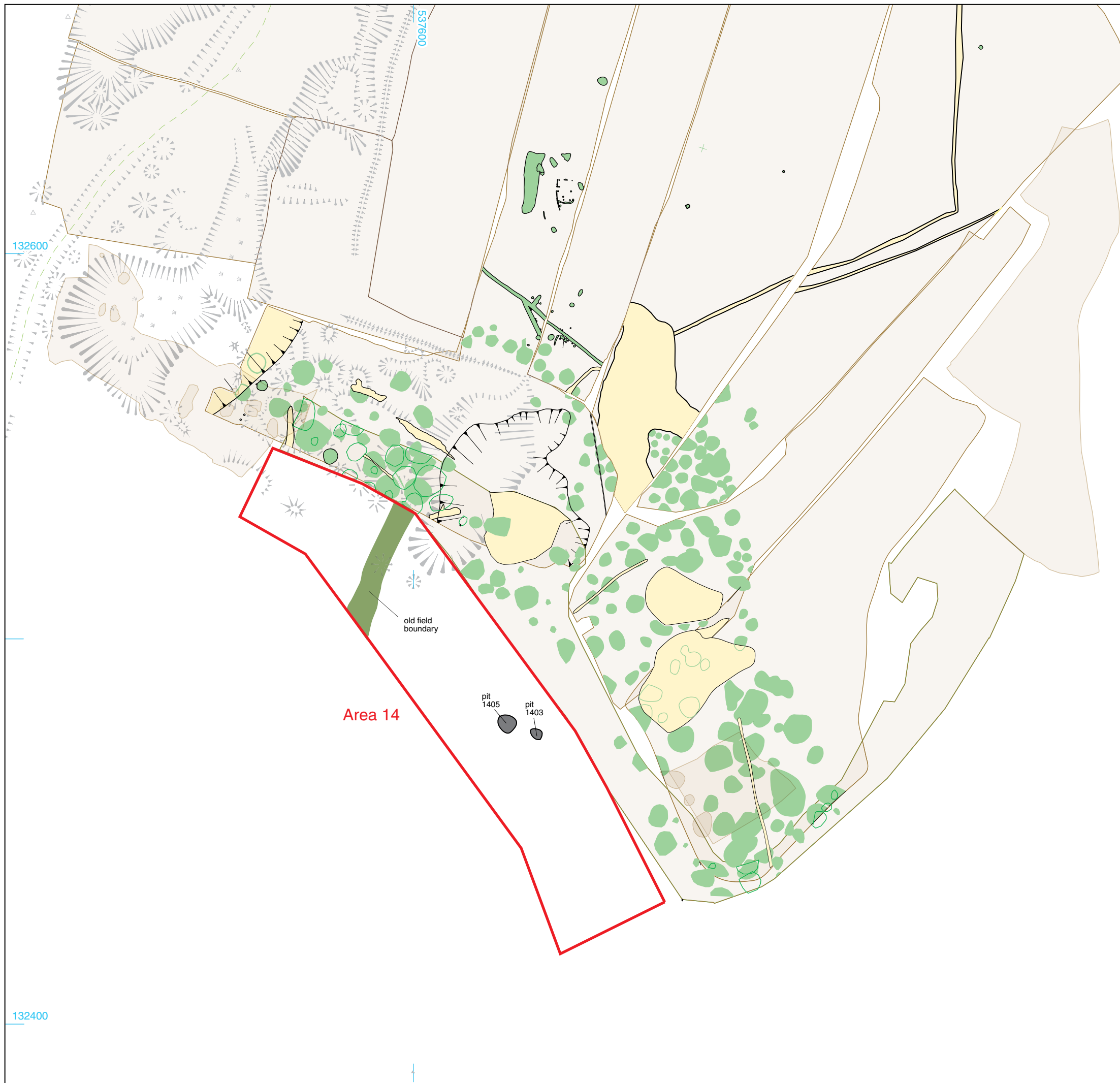
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 Exeter 01392 826185
 Milton Keynes 01908 564660
www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk
enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk

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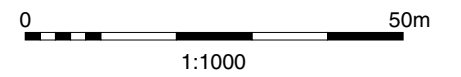
FIGURE TITLE
 Location of groundworks

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APPROVED BY	RK	SCALE	@A4 1:2,500	2





- Phase 2 (14)
- Previous phase
- Archaeological feature
- Old field boundary
- Tree-throw
- Medieval feature
- Medieval minepit
- Post-medieval
- ✳ Earthwork survey (CA 2000; 2001a)



Andover 01264 347630
 Cirencester 01285 771022
 Exeter 01392 826185
 Milton Keynes 01908 564660
www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk
enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk

PROJECT TITLE
 West Hoathly Brickworks, Phase 2
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FIGURE TITLE
 Site plan showing archaeological
 features

<small>DRAWN BY</small> AO/CP	<small>PROJECT NO.</small> 2151	<small>FIGURE NO.</small>	
<small>CHECKED BY</small> DJB	<small>DATE</small> 26/09/2017		
<small>APPROVED BY</small> RK	<small>SCALE@A4</small> 1:1,000		3

132400



Plan shot of 1403 and 1405, looking south-east (1m scale)



[Andover 01264 347630](tel:01264347630)
[Cirencester 01285 771022](tel:01285771022)
[Exeter 01392 573970](tel:01392573970)
[Milton Keynes 01908 564660](tel:01908564660)
[Suffolk 01449 900120](tel:01449900120)
www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk
enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk

PROJECT TITLE

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(Part 14), Sharpthorne, West Sussex

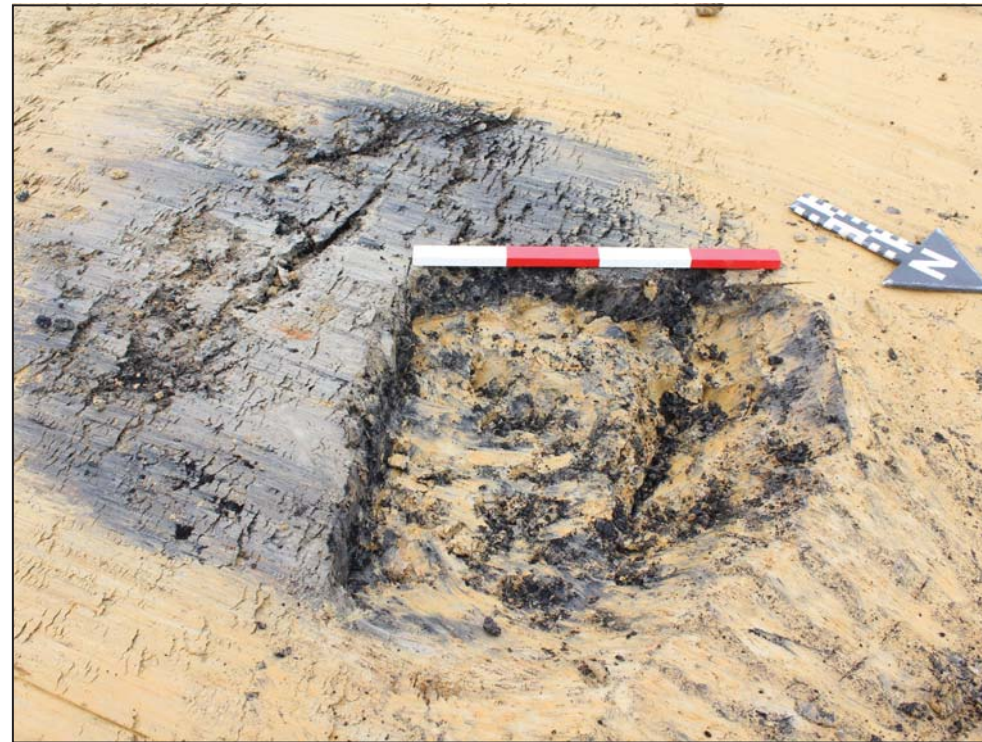
FIGURE TITLE

Photograph

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Close up of 1403, looking south-east (1m scale)



Close up of 1302, looking south-west (0.4m scale)



Close up of 1405, looking west (0.3m scale)



Working shot



Working shot



Working shot



Working shot


Cotswold Archaeology
 Andover 01264 347630
 Cirencester 01285 771022
 Exeter 01392 573970
 Milton Keynes 01908 564660
 Suffolk 01449 900120
www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk
enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk

PROJECT TITLE
**West Hoathly Brickworks, Phase 2
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FIGURE TITLE
Photographs

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Andover Office

Stanley House
Walworth Road
Andover
Hampshire
SP10 5LH

t: 01264 347630

Cirencester Office

Building 11
Kemble Enterprise Park
Cirencester
Gloucestershire
GL7 6BQ

t: 01285 771022

Exeter Office

Unit 1, Clyst Units
Cofton Road
Marsh Barton
Exeter
EX2 8QW

t: 01392 573970

Milton Keynes Office

Unit 8 - The IO Centre
Fingle Drive, Stonebridge
Milton Keynes
Buckinghamshire
MK13 0AT

t: 01908 564660

Suffolk Office

Unit 5, Plot 11, Maitland Road
Lion Barn Industrial Estate
Needham Market
Suffolk
IP6 8NZ

t: 01449 900120

e: enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk

