

Land at Waterdell Lane St Ippolyts Hertfordshire

Archaeological Evaluation



for:
Persimmon Homes (South Midlands)

CA Project: MK1345
Site Code: SIP/WL'25

January 2026



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Prepared by:	Guilherme Sarmiento
Edited by:	Anna Wolf
Checked by:	Adrian Scruby
Approved for Issue by:	Richard Young (Head of Fieldwork)

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Cirencester Building 11 Cotswold Business Park Kemble Cirencester Gloucestershire GL7 6BQ t. 01285 771 022	Milton Keynes Unit 8, The IO Centre Fingle Drive, Stonebridge Milton Keynes Buckinghamshire MK13 0AT t. 01908 564 660	Andover Stanley House Walworth Road Andover Hampshire SP10 5LH t. 01264 347 630	Suffolk Unit 5, Plot 11 Maitland Road Lion Barn Industrial Estate Needham Market Suffolk IP6 8NZ t. 01449 900 120
e. enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk			

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SUMMARY

Project name:	Land at Waterdell Lane
Location:	St Ippolyts, Hertfordshire
NGR:	519287 226837
Type:	Evaluation
Date:	3 – 19 December 2025
Planning reference:	20/02412/FP
Location of archive:	To be deposited in the Archaeology Data Service (ADS)
Site code:	SIP/WL'25

In December 2025, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation of land at Waterdell Lane, St. Ippolyts, Hertfordshire. A total of 24 trenches were excavated across the 3.2ha site, comprising a 4% sample of the development area and following on from a preceding geophysical survey.

The evaluation recorded six features, two of possible geological origin and four considered more likely to be of archaeological origin although no dating evidence was recovered from any of the features. Correlation between the features identified in the trenches and the results of the preceding geophysical survey was poor, with no features identified to correspond with field/ paddock boundaries expected to be encountered in Trenches 13, 15 and 17, while none of the archaeological features that were encountered matched with a geophysical anomaly. With regard to the former, it may be that the paddock/ allotment boundaries were fenced without a corresponding ditch. Alternatively, subsequent ploughing of the site has removed any evidence for the boundaries as sub-surface features. With regard to the latter, this is most likely to be the result of the feature fills having insufficient magnetic contrast with the surrounding geology to be identified.

Pit 2402 in Trench 24 did not produce any dating evidence and may simply represent an isolated rubbish pit. Undated ditches 2003, 2303 and 2408 all ran broadly parallel to each other, on a northwest-southeast alignment, and may represent either the remains of ridge and furrow cultivation or spade-dug cultivation trenches. Possible ditch or geological features 1903 and 2405, in trenches 19 and 24 both ran broadly east-west across their respective trenches but given their uncertain origin and lack of any dating evidence or stratigraphic relationship with any other features then little can be said beyond noting that as with the ditches in trenches

20, 23 and 24 they were sealed by the subsoil and if of archaeological origin are likely to represent field system ditches. No evidence for any settlement remains were encountered and it is suggested that the development site has been undeveloped/ in agricultural use until the present day.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. In December 2025, Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation of land at Waterdell Lane, St Ippolyts, Hertfordshire (centred at NGR: 519287 226837, see Fig.1; hereafter 'the Site'). This evaluation was undertaken for Persimmon Homes (South Midlands).

1.2. North Hertfordshire District Council (NHDC) has granted planning permission for the erection of 52 dwellings including open space, landscaping, local area for play, and associated highway works (as amended by plans received 09/03/23 and 30/08/23) (planning ref: 20/02412/FP). Condition 24 of this planning permission requires the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with an approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI). The condition states:

A) No demolition/development shall take place/commence until an Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing. The scheme shall include an assessment of archaeological significance and research questions; and:

- 1. The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording*
- 2. The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording as required by the evaluation*
- 3. The programme for post investigation assessment*
- 4. Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording*
- 5. Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation*
- 6. Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation*
- 7. Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation.*

B) The demolition/development shall take place/commence in accordance with the programme of archaeological works set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition (A).

C) The development shall not be occupied/used until the site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition (A) and the provision made for analysis and publication where appropriate.

1.3. The scope of this evaluation was based upon comments provided by the then Historic Environment Advisor at Hertfordshire County Council (HEA; Simon Wood – now Andy Instone – Senior Historic Environment Advisor), set out in a WSI (CA 2025) submitted to and approved by the SHEA prior to the commencement of fieldwork.

1.4. The evaluation was also undertaken in line with the:

- *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England (Gurney 2003);*
- *Standard for archaeological field evaluation (ClfA 2023a);*
- *Universal guidance for archaeological field evaluation (ClfA 2023b);*
- *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) PPN 3: Archaeological Excavation (HE 2015a); and;*
- *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: The MoRPHE Project Managers' Guide (HE 2015b).*

The site

1.5. The development Site is approximately 3.2ha in extent and is located on the southern side of Waterdell Lane. The Site currently comprises agricultural land bounded to the north by residential properties, the B656 London Road to the east, remnant parkland to the south, and agricultural fields to the west. The Site is situated on a slight east-facing slope, from 86.9m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) at the western corner, to 77.2m aOD in the eastern corner.

1.6. The underlying bedrock geology of the Site is mapped as Zig Zag chalk formation, a sedimentary bedrock formed between 100.5 and 93.9 million years ago during the Cretaceous period, and Gault Formation mudstone deposits, formed between 100.5 and 93.9 million years ago during the Cretaceous period. The bedrock deposits are overlain by superficial glaciofluvial deposits of sand and gravel, while a band of glaciolacustrine deposits of clay and silt is mapped across the southern and eastern boundaries of the Site. These deposits were formed between 860 and 116 thousand years ago during the Quaternary period (BGS 2025).

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The Site has previously been the subject of an Archaeological Desk-based Assessment (CgMs 2020) and a geophysical survey (TigerGeo 2020). This baseline data has been updated by a search of the Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record (HHER), based on a 1km search radius centred on the Site. What follows is a summary of these sources.

Prehistoric and Roman

- 2.2. The earliest evidence for human activity in the area relates to the recovery of a flint handaxe dating to the Palaeolithic in Gosmore, c.390m north-west of the site (MHT386).
- 2.3. In addition, a collection of palaeolithic flint implements consisting of; two Acheulian handaxes, a twisted ovate handaxe, two handaxes, ten scrapers, five flint axes, and five flint implements, were recovered from 'Folly Pit', which was located at Jeeves' brickyard, The Folly, 1.33km north of the site (MHT279).
- 2.4. A possible Neolithic flint spearhead, held at Letchworth Museum, was encountered in Windmill Field, c.790m north of the site (MHT296).
- 2.5. In addition, two Neolithic or Bronze Age triangular flint arrowheads were encountered in Gosmore, c.390m north-west of the site (MHT389)
- 2.6. In 1926, three broken pieces of a late Bronze Age 'Ballintober' type sword were discovered in a gravel pit on the west side of London Road at Gosmore c.530m north of the site (MHT4866).
- 2.7. A mound at Gosmore House, c.590m north-west from the site, has previously been interpreted as a Late Bronze Age or Early Iron Age feature, although this has since been reinterpreted as a post-medieval prospect mound (MHT317). The prehistoric date of the mound was first suggested by the finding of a twisted bronze wire brooch and iron brooch pin within the same field (MHT394, MHT2294).
- 2.8. The findspot of an undated, but broadly prehistoric, flint end scraper is recorded at No.3 The Crescent, c.200m north of the site (MHT320).
- 2.9. Evidence of Roman roadways and settlement has been recorded between 1.2km and 3.6km to the east and west of the site, however, little evidence for similar activity is

available for the study area (Burleigh *et al*, 1990; Hunn, 2001; Went & Burleigh, 1992; Margary, 1955: 166; Roman Rural Settlement Project, accessed 15th November 2018).

- 2.10. The findspot of a Roman spearhead, now held at Letchworth Museum, is recorded roughly at Windmill Field, c.680m north of the site (MHT1422). Roman pottery sherds were encountered in Gosmore, c.430m north-west of the site (MHT396).
- 2.11. A copper alloy *nummus* of Constantine I (AD 324-330) was encountered c.270m south-east of the site (PAS:BH-704345) and a lead steelyard weight was encountered c.760m east (PAS:BH-3B9716; MHT19209).

Early medieval and medieval

- 2.12. The grave of a late 6th-early 7th century warrior was encountered at Pound Farm, c.550m north of the site. Associated finds include a 13" long scramsax, an iron shield boss, a belt buckle, and a knife (MHT1617).
- 2.13. A 7th century redware, pouch bottle urn, now held by the Hitchin Museum, was encountered at Vicar's Grove Gravel Pit in 1938, c.940m south of the site (MHT 398).
- 2.14. Very small settlements are recorded close to the site in the 1086 Domesday Survey, at Almshoe (3 households; c.1km south) and Charlton (2 households, 1 mill; c.1.6km north-west) and Dinsley (40 households & 2 mills; c.2.2km south) are also recorded.
- 2.15. St Ippolyts takes its name from the dedication of the 11th century church here to St Hippolytus, first mentioned as a settlement in 1283 (Mills, 2010:401). The church, located c.420m east of the site, was built in the late 11th century as a chapel attached to the neighbouring parent church at Hitchin and extended in the 14th and 15th centuries (MHT 4307).
- 2.16. The conjectured site of the Hitchin Half-Hundred Moot is suggested c.450m south-east from the study site, on Sperberry Hill. The name "Sperberry" stems from the Old English for "hill of speech" and was recorded in the 13th century as *speleburwe* (MHT12596).
- 2.17. An undated pit or gully was encountered during groundworks at St Ippolyts Junior School, c.460m east of the site, in addition to an assemblage of unstratified 10th-16th century pottery sherds, which may have been introduced with modern land forming material (MHT12756).

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- 2.18. The timber-framed farmhouse at Avenue Farm, c.440m north-west of the site, is believed to have late medieval origins, with 18th century additions (MHT15103).
- 2.19. A cut silver halfpenny of Henry III (AD 1250-1275) was encountered c.210m north-east of the site (PAS: BH-851446), and two medieval belt buckles were encountered c.240m north-east of the site (PAS: BH-EEA114; MHT20860-61) and c.300m east (PAS: BH-AD6397; MHT21257).

Post-medieval and modern

- 2.20. An archaeological Evaluation of a possible medieval house plot at Caleb's Cottage, Ippolyts, c.678m north-east of the site, by Letchworth Museum and North Herts Archaeological Society in 2020 revealed unstratified post-medieval finds. No evidence of structural remains or earlier occupation were encountered. The evaluation area was presumed to have always been a garden or vegetable plot. The later 19th century Ordnance Survey maps show a cottage on the south side of the road; the present house stands to the north-east (MHT698)
- 2.21. Several post-medieval coins and tokens have been recovered in fields to the east and south-east of the site by metal detecting activity (MHT19925-31, MHT9933, MHT19935, MHT19979-80, MHT19993, MHT20862).
- 2.22. By the mid-18th century, the site was situated within agricultural fields to the west of *Hippolytes*; St Ibbs is present to the south of the site, first named in the 1810 Ordnance Survey First Series.
- 2.23. St Ibbs was possibly built as a coaching inn in the 18th century, converted into a clergy house in 1786, c.230m south of the site (MHT15998; LB 1347427). The remnant parkland of the house borders the site to the south (MHT18304).
- 2.24. Local studies research has suggested that part of the site was in use as managed woodland into the 19th century (Rance, 1987), however, this view is not supported by cartographic evidence.
- 2.25. Ippolyts Common was Enclosed in 1811. The 816 Enclosure Map divides the study site between two owners: Rev. William Lax and Richard Oakley. The use of Rev. Lax's portion is suggested as allotments. Lax was a prominent mathematician and astronomer, who resided at St Ibbs and developed the parkland around the property, towards St Ippolyts (CgMs,2018:8).

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- 2.26. The Grade II Listed icehouse (MHT215; LB 1102540) situated at the eastern corner of the site, is first represented in the 1879-81 Ordnance Survey, adjacent to St Ibbs Lodge (LB 1175157) and is subject to a separate Heritage Statement (CgMs, 2018). An area of allotments is shown at the centre of the site, with a partially tree-lined boundary dividing the site into western and eastern parts.
- 2.27. This boundary is shown as a footpath by the end of the 19th century, in addition to other paths laid across the western part of the site.
- 2.28. By 1924, expansion from Gosmore saw the first dwellings established along the northern side of Waterdell Lane, the dwellings south of Waterdell Lane constructed by 1946. The site itself remained unchanged throughout much of the 20th century. By 1979, a further area of allotments had been established near to the western corner, although the site remained principally in use as agricultural land.
- 2.29. The later allotment had been incorporated into the agricultural land by 2012, and the earlier allotments plots at the centre of the site absorbed by 2018.

Undated

- 2.30. Geophysical survey undertaken at the site in September 2018 recorded an anomaly possibly suggestive of a small enclosure at the southern corner. It was also noted that this may be interpreted as a natural feature (Tiger Geo, 2020: 2).
- 2.31. An area c.590m south-east of the site has been identified as containing the cropmarks of four circular enclosures, between c.22m and c.26m in diameter. These features were identified by aerial photography and have not been investigated further. The absence of noticeable interior features or entrances suggests these to represent plough-reduced round barrows of probable Bronze Age date (EHT2516; MHT6118-6121).
- 2.32. Five ring ditches, contained within a large enclosure and possibly a trackway entering at the south. Were identified during geophysical survey between c.530m and 1.1km south-east of the site in 2015 (EHT1869, MHT31052).
- 2.33. The site of a mound of unknown date and purpose is recorded c.500m north-east of the site, previously known as 'Round Hill'. A house is now situated on the site, the construction of which in 1920 encountered undefined bones. No distinguishable feature was noted at this location in the 1881 Ordnance Survey (MHT6555).

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- 2.34. Geophysical survey and aerial photography at the site have not encountered evidence of similar buried features.

Geophysical survey

- 2.35. A geophysical survey of the Site undertaken in 2018 (TigerGeo 2020), recorded little of archaeological interest. Areas of ferrous debris, magnetically enhanced soils and probable infilled ditches were identified in two parts of the Site, corresponding with now-removed paddocks/ allotments shown on historic Ordnance Survey maps of the Site between 1879 and 1979 (TigerGeo 2020, interpretation 1, 2 & 5; CgMs 2020). A possible infilled ditch was identified in the southwest part of the northeast field (TigerGeo 2020, interpretation 3), while a part of a possible ditched enclosure was identified at the southwest edge of the southwest field (TigerGeo 2020, interpretation 4), although this area is outside the current redline boundary.

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1. The general objective of the evaluation was to provide further information on the likely archaeological resource within the Site, including its presence/absence, character, extent, date and state of preservation. This information will enable NHDC, as advised by the SHEA, to identify and assess the particular significance of any archaeological heritage assets within the Site, consider the impact of the proposed development upon that significance and, if appropriate, develop strategies to avoid or minimise conflict between heritage asset conservation and the development proposal. This process is in line with policies contained in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (MHCLG 2024).
- 3.2. A further objective of the project is to compile a stable, ordered, accessible project archive (see Section 5).
- 3.3. The specific objectives of the evaluation were to:
- Investigate anomalies identified by the geophysical survey and where these are shown to be of archaeological interest then, where possible, establish their extent, date, quality, character, condition and significance;
 - establish the presence or otherwise of activity on the Site dating to the Prehistoric and Roman periods;

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- establish the presence or otherwise of any Anglo-Saxon or medieval activity on Site;
 - establish the environmental context of any prehistoric, Roman, Anglo-Saxon, or medieval activity;
 - evaluate the likely impact of past land use and development.

3.4. Had significant archaeological remains been identified this report would have sought to place those discoveries in their local and regional context with regard to the current online *East of England Regional Research Framework* (RFN 2025) as well as previous versions of the research framework (Medlycott 2011). However, given the very limited results then the project will not contribute to any research themes or objectives.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1. The evaluation fieldwork comprised the excavation of 24 trenches, each measuring 30m long by 1.8m wide, in the locations shown on Figure 2. This represents a 4% sample of the Site area. The trenches were located to provide a representative sample of the Site including targeting magnetic anomalies identified by the geophysical survey.

4.2. Trenches were set out on OS National Grid co-ordinates using Leica. Overburden was stripped from the trenches by a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless grading bucket. All machining was conducted under archaeological supervision to the top of the natural substrate, which was the level at which archaeological features were first encountered.

4.3. Archaeological features/deposits were investigated, planned and recorded in accordance with *CA Technical Manual 1: Fieldwork Recording Manual*. Records were maintained in accordance with *CA Technical Manual 1: Fieldwork Recording Manual*.

4.4. Deposits were assessed for their palaeoenvironmental potential and samples were taken in accordance with *CA Technical Manual 2: The Taking and Processing of Environmental and Other Samples from Archaeological Sites*.

5. RESULTS

- 5.1. This section provides an overview of the evaluation results. Detailed summaries of the recorded contexts are given in Appendix A. Details of the environmental samples (paleoenvironmental evidence) are given in Section 7 and Appendix C.
- 5.2. Of the 24 trenches that were excavated, only four contained confirmed or possible archaeological features: Trenches 19, 20, 23 and 24. All the other trenches were devoid of archaeology.
- 5.3. The uppermost deposit in all trenches comprised a friable dark brown grey silt clay topsoil. This sealed a mid orange brown sandy clay subsoil in Trenches 3, 5-9, 11, 15 and 17-23. A localised colluvial deposit was identified in the south-central part of the site, in Trenches 12, 13 and 16, comprising a red brown silt sand varying in thickness between 0.27m and 0.56m. No subsoil was present in these trenches. Underlying the subsoil/ colluvium or directly beneath the topsoil in trenches 1-2, 10 and 24, was the natural substrate, comprising an orange brown sandy clay. In Trench 14 a layer of possible made ground, consisting of an orange brown silt sand, was recorded between the topsoil and natural substrate. Photographs of the site prior to evaluation and a selection of blank trench photographs and representative sections are presented as figures 3 – 6.

Trench 19 (Fig. 7)

- 5.4. Sealed beneath topsoil 1900 and subsoil 1901 and cutting the natural substrate was possible ditch or geological feature 1903. Measuring a 0.53m wide by 0.10m deep and running east-west across the trench, the feature was initially interpreted as a ditch but did not correspond with any anomalies identified by the geophysical survey or features depicted on historic maps of the site. No dating evidence was recovered from the single fill of red-brown silty clay and a geological origin for the feature cannot be discounted.

Trench 20 (Fig. 8)

- 5.5. Running northwest-southeast across the east end of Trench 20 was ditch 2003, which sealed by subsoil 2001 and topsoil 2000. Measuring 0.63 m wide and 0.20 m deep, with a rounded profile, it contained a single undated fill of red brown sandy silt. As with ditch 1903 in Trench 19, ditch 2003 did not correspond with any anomalies identified by the geophysical survey or features depicted on historic maps of the site. A second northwest-southeast orientated feature was investigated toward the central part of the

trench, running parallel to ditch 2003. The feature was very shallow or heavily truncated and while it may represent the very basal remains of a cultivation furrow or similar feature it was thought most likely to be of geological origin or a possible wheel rut.

Trench 23 (Fig. 9)

- 5.6. Sealed beneath topsoil 2300 and subsoil 2301, Trench 23 contained a northwest-southeast aligned ditch, 2303, that measured 0.55m wide by 0.26m deep and contained an undated fill of red brown silty clay (2304) noted to be very similar in composition to ditch fill 2004 (ditch 2003) in Trench 20, to the south.

Trench 24 (Fig. 10)

- 5.7. Following removal of topsoil 2400 and subsoil 2401, two features were revealed, pit 2402 and ditch 2408. A third feature, 2405, appeared linear in plan, suggesting a ditch, but appeared more irregular in depth and plan when hand-investigated and again could not be conclusively discounted as a natural feature, either geological or part of a tree root system.
- 5.8. Ditch or possible geological feature 2405 ran broadly east-west across the north end of the trench, varying in depth and with an irregular plan and profile. Measuring 1.44m wide by up to 0.42m deep, it contained a lower fill of friable red to yellow clay sand, 2406, overlain by similar but largely stone-free clay sand 2407. Neither deposit produced any dating evidence.
- 5.9. Northwest-southeast aligned ditch 2408 was 1.56m wide by 0.43m deep and contained three fills, none of which produced any dating evidence. Basal, primary fill 2409 comprised a firm yellow-red clay, which was overlain by 2410, a friable red-yellow clay sand that was in turn sealed by 2411, a friable red-yellow clay.
- 5.10. Pit 2402 was 0.60 m wide and 0.28m deep and contained two fills, a lower fill of yellow grey silt clay, 2403, and an upper fill of red brown silt clay 2404, neither of which produced any dating evidence. A bulk environmental sample taken from fill 2404 contained only a little charcoal, a charred yew stone and parenchyma (burnt biological material).

6. THE BIOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

- 6.1. One bulk environmental sample was taken from trench 24, from pit 2402. The bulk sample (32 litres of soil) was processed to evaluate the preservation of palaeoenvironmental remains from the site and with the intention of recovering environmental evidence for any domestic or industrial activity in this area. The sample was processed by standard flotation procedures (CA Technical Manual No. 2).
- 6.2. Preliminary identifications of plant macrofossils are noted in Appendix B, Table 1, following nomenclature of Stace (2019).
- 6.3. The flot contained large quantities of rooty material, which may be indicative of post depositional movement within the deposits. The charcoal was all comminuted fragments.

Trench 24

- 6.4. Undated pit 2402, context 2404, (sample 1) was sampled and contained only a little charcoal, a charred yew stone (*Taxus baccata*) and parenchyma, burnt biological material.

Summary

- 6.5. There is very little remaining environmental evidence present in the sample and is not possible to use the material to suggest or confirm any date for this feature. There is no evidence for settlement or industrial activity. Large quantities of rooty material in the sample also suggest intrusive root action/ bioturbation, most likely as a result of recent agricultural cultivation of the Site.

Recommendations

- 6.6. No further work is recommended for this sample.

7. DISCUSSION

- 7.1. The evaluation recorded only six features, two of uncertain/ possible geological origin and four considered to be of archaeological interest although no dating evidence was recovered from any of the features. Correlation between the features identified in the trenches and the results of the preceding geophysical survey were poor, with no features identified to correspond with field/ paddock boundaries expected to be encountered in Trenches 13, 15 and 17, while none of the archaeological features that were encountered matched with a geophysical anomaly. With regard to the

former, it may be that the paddock/ allotment boundaries were fenced without a corresponding ditch. Alternatively, subsequent ploughing of the site has removed any evidence for the boundaries as sub-surface features. With regard to the later, this is most likely to be the result of the feature fills having insufficient magnetic contrast with the surrounding geology to be identified.

- 7.2. Pit 2402 in Trench 24 did not produce any dating evidence and may simply represent an isolated rubbish pit. Undated ditches 2003, 2303 and 2408 all ran broadly parallel to each other, on a northwest-southeast alignment, and may represent either the remains of ridge and furrow cultivation or spade-dug cultivation trenches/ beds. Possible ditch or geological features 1903 and 2405, in trenches 19 and 24, both ran broadly east-west across their respective trenches but given their uncertain origin and lack of any dating evidence or stratigraphic relationship with any other features then little can be said beyond noting that as with the ditches in trenches 20, 23 and 24 they were sealed by the subsoil and if of archaeological origin are likely to represent field system ditches. No evidence for any settlement remains were encountered and it is suggested that the development site has been undeveloped/ in agricultural use until the present day.

8. CA PROJECT TEAM

- 8.1. Fieldwork was undertaken by Guilherme Sarmiento, assisted by Ian Spiller, Sarah Heidrich and Jacopo Gelmi. This report was written by Guilherme Sarmiento. The biological evidence report was written by Carolyn Smith. The report illustrations were prepared by Ken Walsh. The project archive has been compiled and prepared for deposition by Clare Bond. The project was managed for CA by Adrian Scruby.

9. REFERENCES

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APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench	Context No.	Type	Fill of	Interpretation	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth/thickness (m)	Spot-date
1	100	layer		Ploughsoil	Friable; Dark brown grey; silty clay; with 10% 10-20mm sub-angular stone inclusions.	30	1.8	0.28	
1	101	layer		Natural	Compact; light orange brown; silty clay; with 15% 10-20mm rounded stones including gravel inclusions	30	1.8		
2	200	layer		Ploughsoil	Friable; Dark brown grey; silty clay; with 10% 10-20mm sub-angular stone inclusions	30	1.8	0.45	
2	201	layer		Natural	Compact; light orange brown; silty clay; with 15% 10-20mm rounded stones including gravel inclusions	30	1.8		
3	300	layer		Ploughsoil	Friable; Dark brown grey; silty clay; with 10% 10-20mm sub-angular stone inclusions	30	1.8	0.2	
3	301	layer		Subsoil	Mid orange brown; silty clay; with flint; friable; with 5% 10-100mm subangular stones as inclusions	30	1.8	0.4	
3	302	layer		Natural	Friable; light orange brown; sandy clay; with 15% 10-20mm rounded stones including gravel inclusions	30	1.8		
4	400	layer		Ploughsoil	Friable; Dark brown grey; silty clay; with 10% 10-20mm sub-angular stone inclusions	30	1.8	0.28	
4	401	layer		Natural	Friable; light orange brown; sandy clay; with 15% 10-20mm rounded stones including gravel inclusions	30	1.8		
5	500	layer		Ploughsoil	Friable; Dark brown grey; silty clay; with 10% 10-20mm sub-angular stone inclusions	30	1.8	0.35	
5	501	layer		Subsoil	Mid orange brown; silty clay; with flint; friable; with 5% 10-100mm subangular stones as inclusions	30	1.8	0.4	
5	502	layer		Natural	Compact; light orange brown; silty clay; with 15% 10-20mm rounded stones including gravel inclusions.	30	1.8		
6	600	layer		Ploughsoil	Friable; Dark brown grey; silty clay; with 10% 10-20mm sub-angular stone inclusions	30	1.8	0.35	
6	601	layer		Subsoil	Mid orange brown; silty sand; with flint; friable; with 5% 10-100mm subangular stones as inclusions	30	1.8	0.3	
6	602	layer		Natural	Compact; light orange brown; silty clay; with 15% 10-20mm rounded stones including gravel inclusions	30	1.8		
7	700	layer		Ploughsoil	Friable; Dark brown grey; silty clay; with 10% 10-20mm sub-angular stone inclusions	30	1.8	0.3	
7	701	layer		Subsoil	Mid orange brown; silty clay; with flint; friable; with	30	1.8	0.45	

					5% 10-100mm subangular stones as inclusions				
7	702	layer		Natural	Compact; light orange brown; silty clay; with 15% 10-20mm rounded stones including flint and chalk inclusions	30	1.8		
8	800	layer		Ploughsoil	Friable; Dark brown grey; silty clay; with 10% 10-20mm sub-angular stone inclusions	30	1.8	0.41	
8	801	layer		Subsoil	Mid orange brown; silty clay; with flint; friable; with 5% 10-100mm subangular stones as inclusions	30	1.8	0.39	
8	802	layer		Natural	Compact; light orange brown; silty clay; with 15% 10-20mm rounded stones including gravel inclusions.	30	1.8		
9	900	layer		Ploughsoil	Friable; Dark brown grey; silty clay; with 10% 10-20mm sub-angular stone inclusions	30	1.8	0.3	
9	901	layer		Subsoil	Mid orange brown; silty clay; with flint; friable; with 5% 10-100mm subangular stones as inclusions	30	1.8	0.45	
9	902	layer		Natural	Compact; light orange brown; silty clay; with 15% 10-20mm rounded stones including gravel and flint inclusions	30	1.8		
10	1000	layer		Ploughsoil	Friable; Dark brown grey; silty clay; with 10% 10-20mm sub-angular stone inclusions	30	1.8	0.33	
10	1001	layer		Natural	Friable; light orange brown; sandy clay; with 15% 10-20mm rounded stones including gravel inclusions	30	1.8		
11	1100	layer		Ploughsoil	Friable; Dark brown grey; silty clay; with 10% 10-20mm sub-angular stone inclusions	30	1.8	0.3	
11	1101	layer		Subsoil	Friable; Dark brown grey; silty clay; with 10% 10-20mm sub-angular stone inclusions	30	1.8	0.4	
11	1102	layer		Natural	Compact; light orange brown; silty clay; with 15% 10-20mm rounded stones including gravel inclusions	30	1.8		
12	1200	layer		Ploughsoil	Friable, Dark brown grey, clay, with 10% 10-20mm sub-angular flint inclusions	30	1.8	0.3	
12	1201	layer		Colluvial Layer	Light reddish brown, silty sand, with flint; friable; with 1% 10-100mm subangular stones	30	1.8	0.4	
12	1202	layer		Natural	Compact; mid orange brown; sandy clay with 25% gravel inclusions	30	1.8		
13	1300	layer		Ploughsoil	Friable; mid grey brown; with 10% 10-20mm sub-angular flint inclusions	30	1.8	0.35	
13	1301	layer		Colluvial Layer	Friable; mid red brown; silty sand with 25% gravel inclusions	30	1.8	0.56	
13	1302	layer		Natural	Compact; mid orange brown; sandy clay; with 25% gravel inclusions	30	1.8	0.11	

14	1400	layer		Ploughsoil	Friable; dark grey brown; with 10% 10-20mm sub-angular flint inclusions	30	1.8	0.44	
14	1401	layer		Made Ground	Compact; mid orange brown; silty sand; with 5% 10-20mm sub-angular stone inclusions	30	1.8	0.39	
14	1402	layer		Natural	Compact; mid orange brown; sandy clay; with 25% gravel inclusions	30	1.8		
15	1500	layer		Ploughsoil	Friable; mid grey brown; with 15% 10-20mm sub-angular flint inclusions	30	1.8	0.36	
15	1501	layer		Subsoil	Friable; mid orange brown; silty sand with 25% gravel inclusions	30	1.8	0.32	
15	1502	layer		Natural	Compact; mid orange brown; sandy clay with 25% gravel inclusions	30	1.8		
16	1600	layer		Ploughsoil	Friable; mid grey brown; with 15% 10-20mm sub-angular flint	30	1.8	0.32	
16	1601	layer		Colluvial Layer	Friable; mid red brown; silty sand with 25% gravel	30	1.8	0.27	
16	1602	layer		Natural	Compact; mid orange brown; clay; with 25% gravel inclusions	30	1.8	0.07	
17	1700	layer		Ploughsoil	Friable; mid grey brown; with 15% 10-20mm sub-angular flint	30	1.8	0.3	
17	1701	layer		Subsoil	Friable; mid orange brown; silty sand with 25% gravel	30	1.8	0.25	
17	1702	layer		Natural	Compact; mid orange brown; sandy clay; with 25% gravel inclusions	30	1.8		
18	1800	layer		Ploughsoil	Friable; mid grey brown; with 15% 10-20mm sub-angular flint	30	1.8	0.34	
18	1801	layer		Subsoil	Friable; mid orange brown; with 25% gravel inclusions	30	1.8	0.12	
18	1802	layer		Natural	Compact; mid orange brown; sandy clay; with 25% gravel	30	1.8		
19	1900	layer		Ploughsoil	Friable; mid grey brown; with 15% 10-20mm sub-angular flint	30	1.8	0.3	
19	1901	layer		Subsoil	Friable; mid red brown; silty sand; with 25% gravel	30	1.8	0.23	
19	1902	layer		Natural	Compact; mid orange brown; sandy clay with 25% gravel	30	1.8		
19	1903	cut		Natural feature	E/W; linear; gentle concave South side, moderate concave North side; concave base	1	0.53	0.1	
19	1904	fill	1903	Other Fill	Firm; mid red brown; silty clay; 15% 10-30mm sub-angular flint inclusions	1	0.53	0.1	
20	2000	layer		Ploughsoil	Friable; mid grey brown; with 15% 10-20mm sub-angular flint	30	1.8	0.35	
20	2001	layer		Subsoil	Friable; mid red brown; silty sand; with 10% 10-20mm sub-angular flint	30	1.8	0.29	
20	2002	layer		Natural	Compact; mid orange brown; sandy clay; with 25% gravel inclusions	30	1.8		
20	2003	cut		Ditch	NW-SE; linear ditch; with concave sides and a gentle break of slope; concave base	5	0.63	0.2	

20	2004	layer	2003	Fill	Mid reddish brown; friable; sandy silt; with 10% 10-30mm rounded stones as inclusions. No finds	1	0.63	0.2	
21	2100	layer		Ploughsoil	Friable; mid grey brown; clay; with 15% 10-20mm sub-angular flint inclusions	30	1.8	0.31	
21	2101	layer		Subsoil	Friable; mid orange brown; silty clay; with 25% gravel inclusions	30	1.8	0.24	
21	2102	layer		Natural	Compact; mid orange brown; sandy clay with 25% gravel	30	1.8		
22	2200	layer		Ploughsoil	Friable; Dark grey brown; Silty Clay; with 15% 10-20mm sub-angular flint	30	1.8	0.39	
22	2201	layer		Subsoil	Friable; mid orange brown; sandy clay with 25% gravel	30	1.8	0.3	
22	2202	layer		Natural	Compact; mid red brown; clay; with 15% 20-50mm sub-angular flint	30	1.8		
23	2300	layer		Ploughsoil	Friable; Dark grey brown; Silty clay; with 10% 10-20mm sub-angular flint	30	1.8	0.37	
23	2301	layer		Subsoil	Friable; mid orange brown; sandy clay; with 25% gravel	30	1.8	0.13	
23	2302	layer		Natural	Compact; light orange brown; clay; with 5% gravel inclusions	30	1.8		
23	2303	cut		Ditch	NW/SE; linear; steep concave sides; concave base	1	0.55	0.26	
23	2304	fill	2303	Fill	Firm; mid red brown; silty clay; 15% 20-50mm sub-angular flint inclusions	1	0.55	0.26	
24	2400	layer		Ploughsoil	Friable; Dark grey brown; Silty clay; with 25% 10-20mm sub-angular flint	30	1.8	0.46	
24	2401	layer		Natural	Compact; light orange brown; clay; with 5% gravel	30	1.8		
24	2402	cut		Pit	Oval; one side concave, one side irregular convex; irregular flat base	0.6	0.6	0.28	
24	2403	fill	2402	Fill	Light yellowish grey; silty clay; firm; frequent charcoal flecks and small stones 10-50mm	0.6	0.4	0.05	
24	2404	fill	2402	Fill	Mid grey-brown; silty clay; friable; occasional small to medium stones 10-100mm and charcoal flecks	0.6	0.7	0.23	
24	2405	cut		Ditch	E-W; irregular; moderate slightly stepped north side and straight south side; concave base	1	1.44	0.42	
24	2406	fill	2405	Fill	Friable; mid red yellow; clay sand; 3% sub rounded stones 10-60mm	1	1.44	0.21	
24	2407	fill	2405	Fill	Friable; mid red yellow; clay sand; 1% sub rounded stones	1	1.18	0.23	
24	2408	cut		Ditch	E-W; linear; moderate strait sides; concave base	1	1.56	0.43	
24	2409	fill	2408	Fill	Firm; red yellow; clay; 1% sub rounded stones 10-30mm	1	0.29	0.2	
24	2410	fill	2408	Fill	Friable; mid red yellow; clay sand; 1% sub rounded stones 10-30mm	1	1.27	0.28	
24	2411	fill	2408	Fill	Friable; mid red yellow; clay; 2% sub rounded stones 10-40mm	1	0.99	0.26	

APPENDIX B: THE PALAEOENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

Table 1 Assessment table of the palaeoenvironmental remains

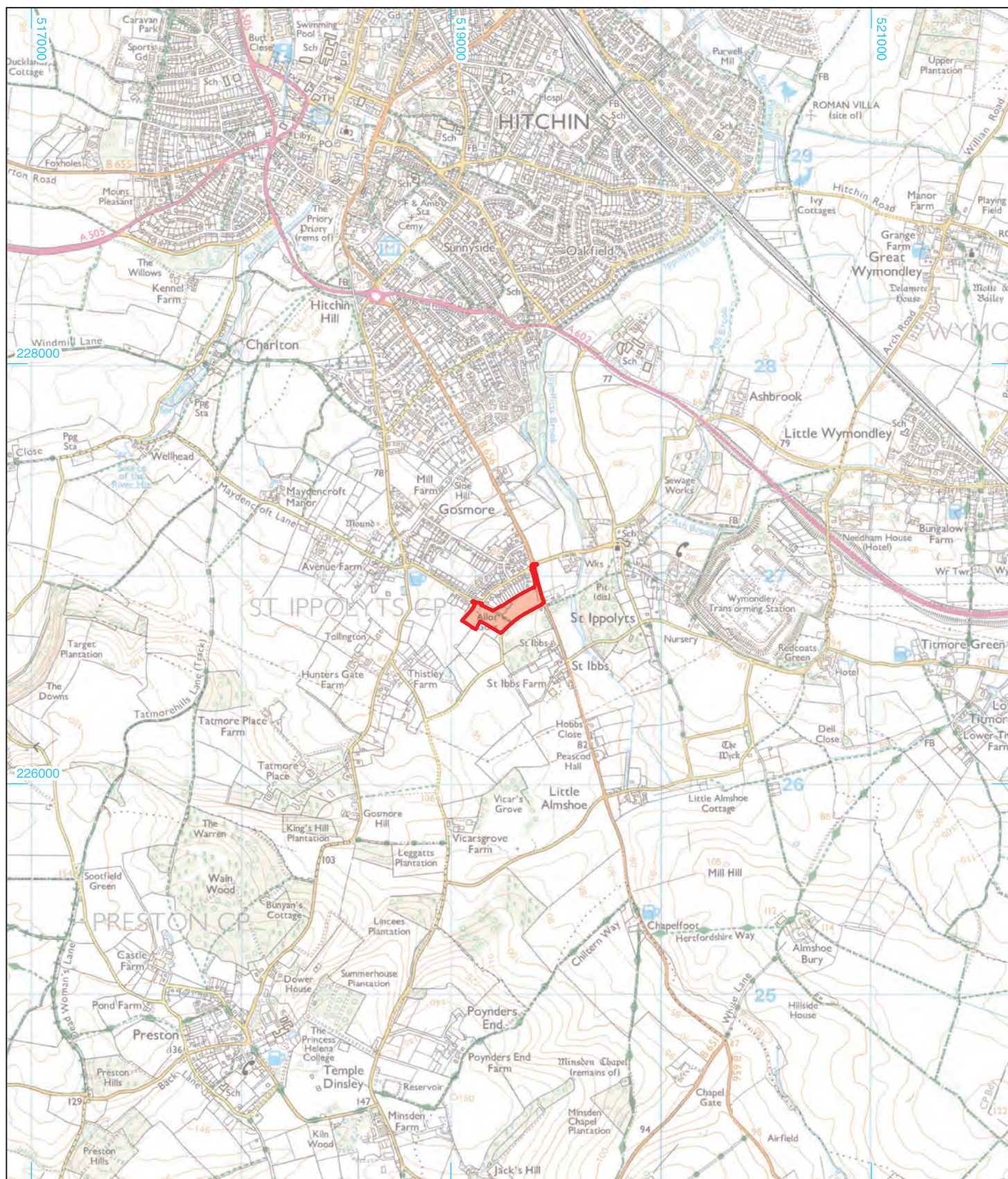
Feature	Context	Sample	Processed vol (L)	Flot size (ml)	Roots %	Grain	Chaff	Cereal Notes	Charred Other	Charred Other Notes	Charcoal > 4/2mm	Other
Trench 24 – undated – pit												
2404	2404	3	32	20	99	-	-	-	*	<i>Taxus baccata</i> , parenchyma	*/**	-

Key * = 1–4 items; ** = 5–19 items; *** = 20–49 items; **** = 50–99 items; ***** = >100 items

APPENDIX C: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS	
Project name	Land at Waterdell Lane, St Ippolyts, Hertfordshire
Site code	SIP/WL'25
Short description	In December 2025, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation of land at Waterdell Lane, St. Ippolyts, Hertfordshire. A total of 24 trenches were excavated across the 3.2ha site, comprising a 4% sample of the development area and following on from a preceding geophysical survey. The evaluation recorded six features, two of possible geological origin and four considered more likely to be of archaeological origin although no dating evidence was recovered from any of the features. Correlation between the features identified in the trenches and the results of the preceding geophysical survey were poor, with no features identified to correspond with field/ paddock boundaries expected to be encountered in Trenches 13, 15 and 17, while none of the archaeological features that were encountered matched with a geophysical anomaly. With regard to the later, this is most likely to be the result of the feature fills having insufficient magnetic contrast with the surrounding geology to be identified. With regard to the former, it may be that the paddock/ allotment boundaries were fenced without a corresponding ditch. Alternatively, subsequent ploughing of the site has removed any evidence for the boundaries as sub-surface features. Pit 2402 in Trench 24 did not produce any dating evidence and may simply represent an isolated rubbish pit. Undated ditches 2003, 2303 and 2408 all ran broadly parallel to each other, on a northwest-southeast alignment, and may represent either the remains of ridge and furrow cultivation or spade-dug cultivation trenches. Possible ditch or geological features 1903 and 2405, in trenches 19 and 24 both ran broadly east-west across their respective trenches but given their uncertain origin and lack of any dating evidence or stratigraphic relationship with any other features then little can be said beyond noting that, as with the ditches in trenches 20, 23 and 24, they were sealed by the subsoil and if of archaeological origin are likely to represent field system ditches. No evidence for any settlement remains were encountered and it is suggested that the development site has been undeveloped/ in agricultural use until the present day.
Project dates	3 – 19 December 2025
Project type	Field evaluation
Planning reference number	20/02412/FP
Development type	Residential development
Previous work	Geophysical survey (TigerGeo 2020) Desk-Based Assessment (CgMs 2020)
Future work	No
Methodology	The evaluation fieldwork comprised the excavation of 24 trenches, each measuring 30m long by 1.8m wide, in the locations shown on Figure 2 of the WSI. This represents a 4% sample of the Site area. The trenches were located to provide a representative sample of the Site including targeting magnetic anomalies identified by the preceding geophysical survey.
PROJECT LOCATION	
Site location	Land off Waterdell Lane, St Ippolyts, Hertfordshire
Study area (m ² /ha)	3.2ha
Site co-ordinates	519287 226837
PROJECT CREATORS	
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology
Project Manager	Adrian Scruby

Project Leader	Guilherme Sarmento	
Funder	Persimmon Homes (South Midlands)	
SCIENTIFIC DATING UNDERTAKEN	No	
ENVIRONMENTAL SAMPLING	Yes – bulk samples	
MONUMENT TYPE	Ditch, pit	
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	None	
RESEARCH FRAMEWORKS	No	
PROJECT ARCHIVES	Intended final location of archive (museum/Accession no.)	Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone etc)
Physical	North Hertfordshire Museum (SIP/WL'25)	Residue/ flots
Paper	North Hertfordshire Museum (SIP/WL'25)	Report, drawings
Digital	Archaeology Data Service	Report, survey, digital photos
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
Cotswold Archaeology 2026 <i>Land off Waterdell Lane, St Ippolyts, Hertfordshire: Archaeological Evaluation</i> CA typescript report CR1345_1		



 Site boundary

0 1:25,000 1km

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Ordnance Survey 0100031673



Andover 01264 347630
Cirencester 01285 771022
Milton Keynes 01908 564660
Suffolk 01449 900120
w www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk
e enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk

PROJECT TITLE

Land at Waterdell Lane, St Ippolyts,
Hertfordshire

FIGURE TITLE

Site location plan

DRAWN BY KL
CHECKED BY HK
APPROVED BY AS
PROJECT NO. MK1345
DATE 19/01/2026
SCALE @A4 1:25,000

FIGURE NO.

1



- Site boundary
- Evaluation trench
- Archaeological feature
- Modern
- Natural
- Location of former icehouse



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Andover 01264 347630
Cirencester 01285 771022
Milton Keynes 01908 564660
Suffolk 01449 900120
w www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk
e enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk

PROJECT TITLE
Land at Waterdell Lane, St Ippolyts,
Hertfordshire

FIGURE TITLE
Trench Plan showing archaeological
features

DRAWN BY	KL	PROJECT NO.	MK1345	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	HK	DATE	21/01/2026	2
APPROVED BY	AS	SCALE@A3	1:1250	



Site, looking south-west



Site, looking north-west



Site, looking east



Trench 1, looking north-west, (1m scales)



Trench 2, looking north (1m scales)



Trench 6, looking south-east (1m scales)



Trench 9, looking south-east, (1m scales)



Trench 13, looking north-west (1m scales)



Trench 16, looking north-east (1m scales)



Trench 20, looking east, (1m scales)



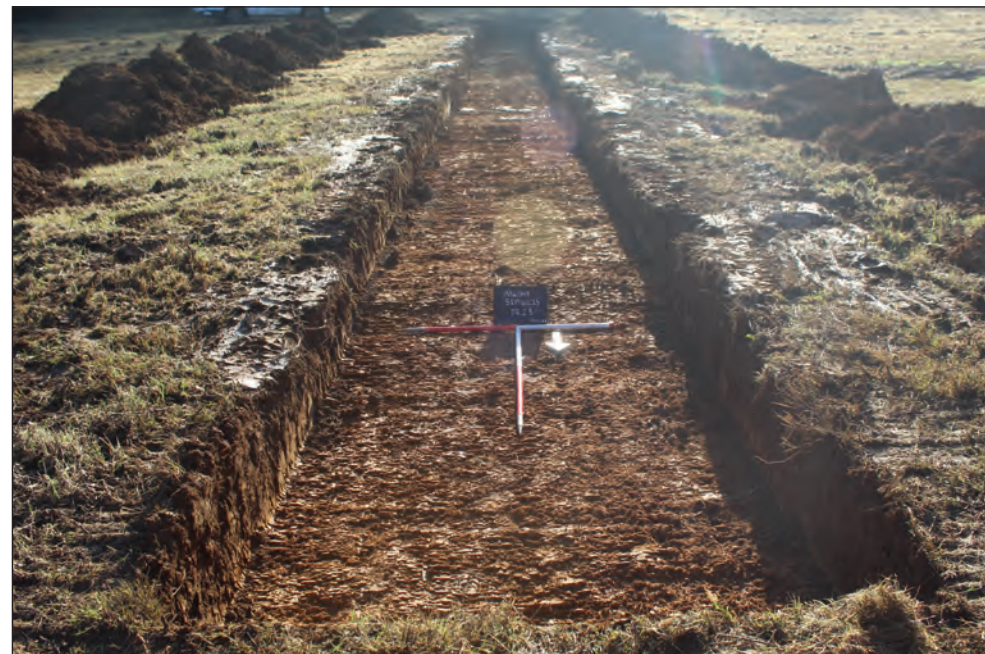
Trench 21, looking east, (1m scales)



Trench 4, looking north-east, (1m scales)



Trench 4, representative section, looking north-west, (1m scale)



Trench 23, looking south (1m scales)



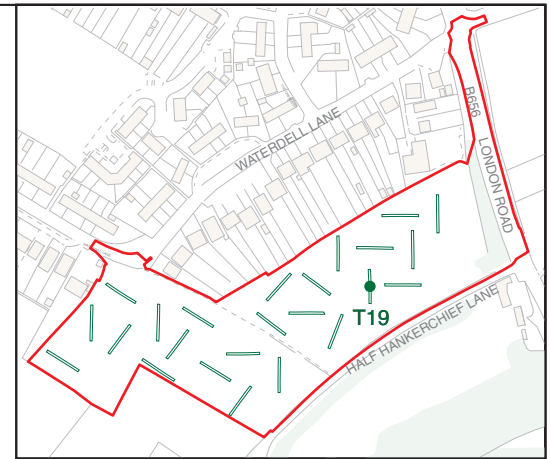
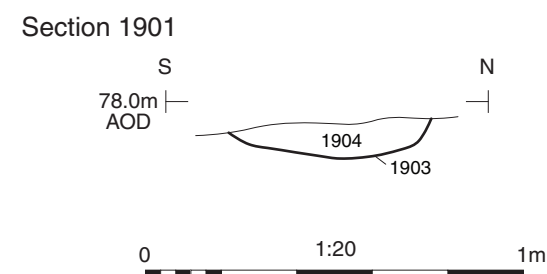
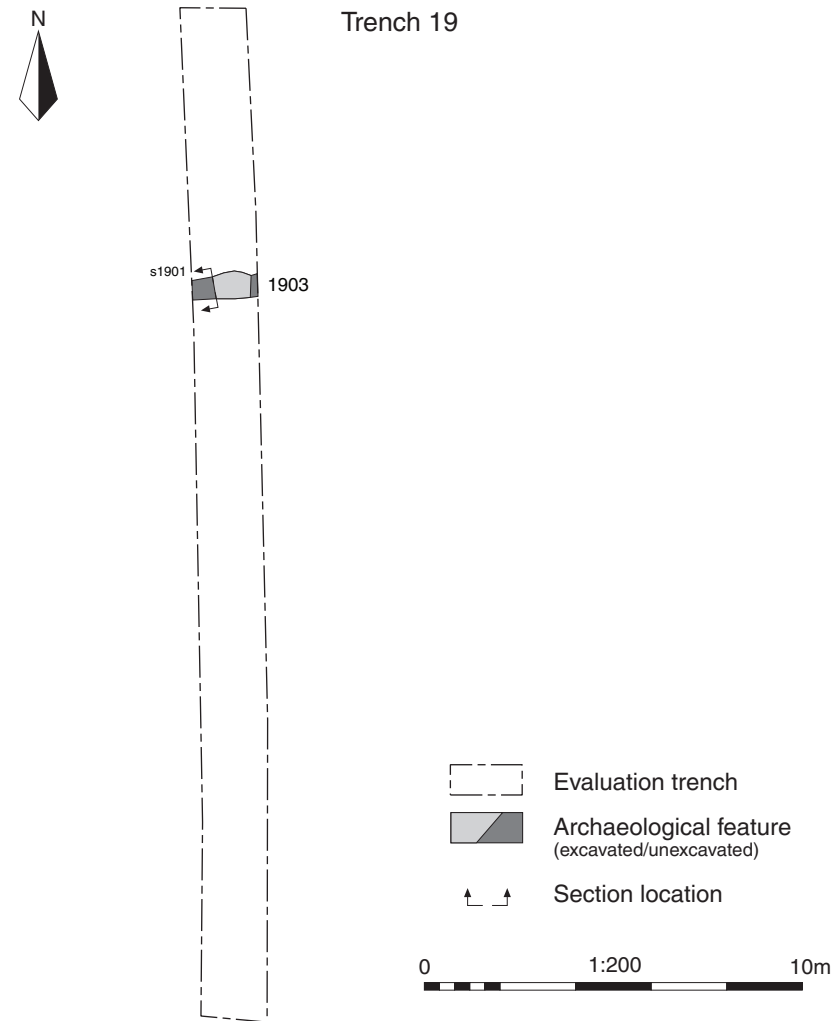
Trench 23, representative section, looking east (1m scale)



Trench 19, looking south (1m scales)



Possible ditch 1903, looking west (1m scale)

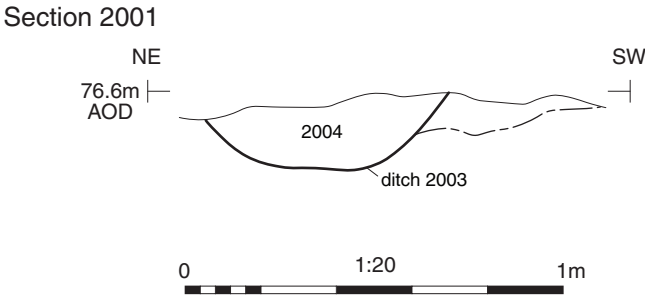
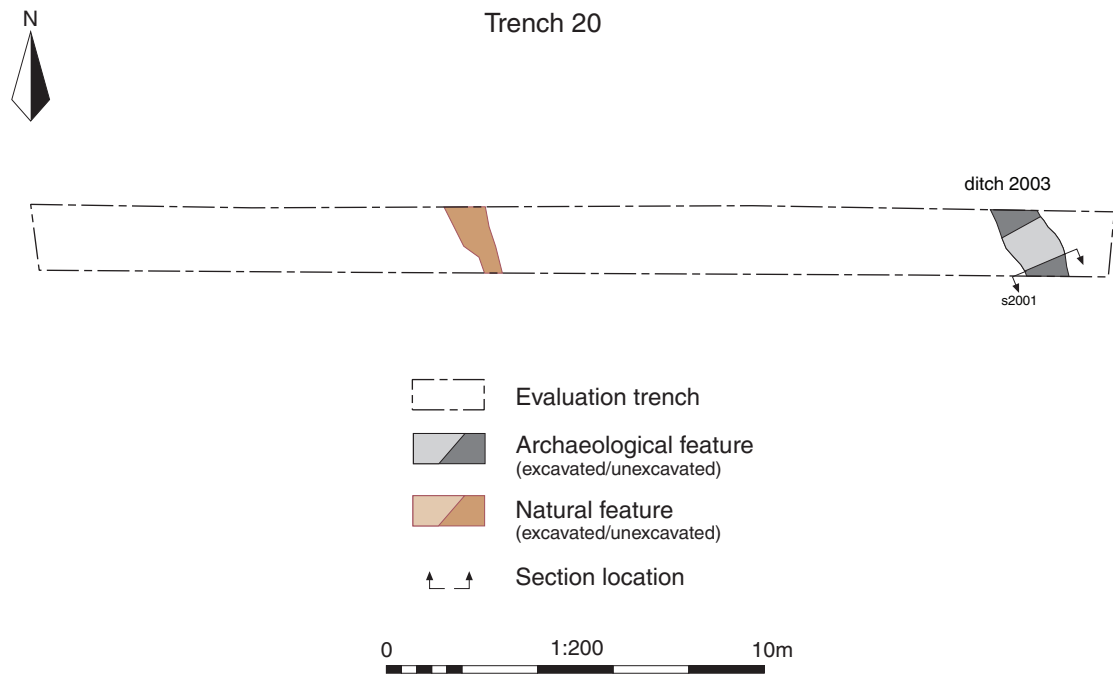
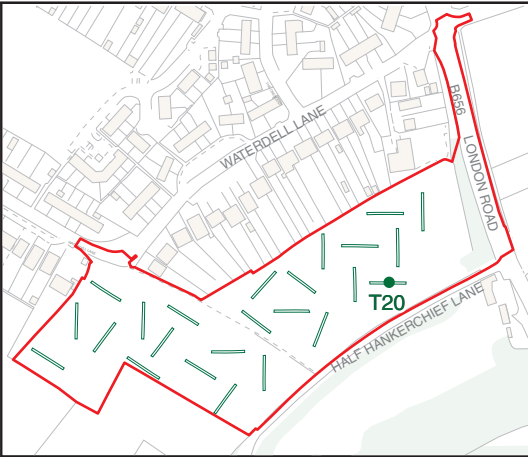


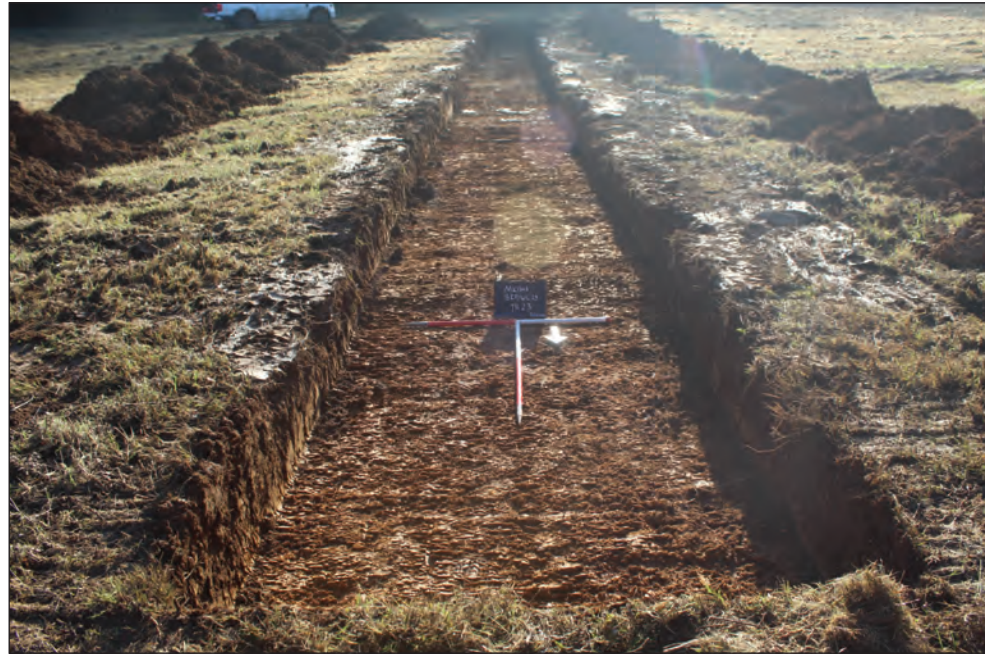


Trench 20, looking west (1m scales)



Ditch 2003, looking south-east (1m scale)





Trench 23, looking south (1m scales)



Ditch 2303, looking south-east (1m scale)



Trench 23

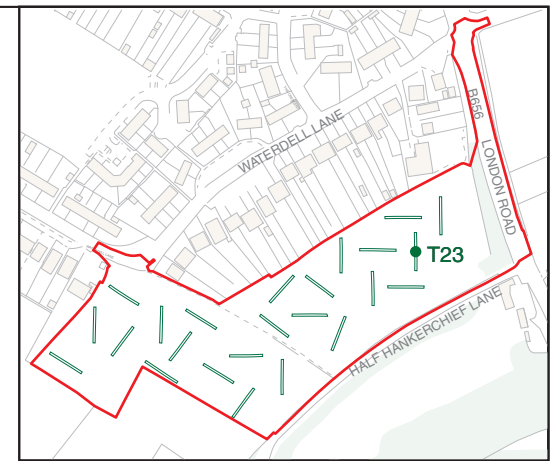
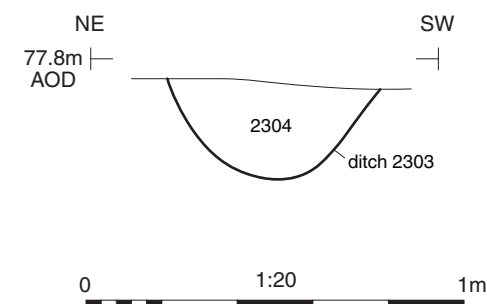
ditch 2303

e2301

-  Evaluation trench
-  Archaeological feature (excavated/unexcavated)
-  Section location

0 1:200 10m

Section 2301





Trench 24, looking north (1m scales)



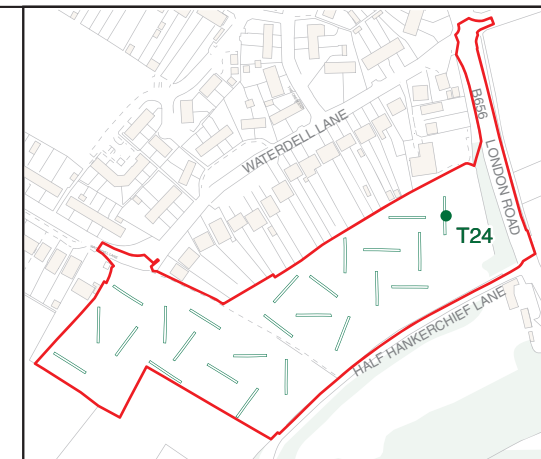
Ditch 2408, looking east, (1m scale)



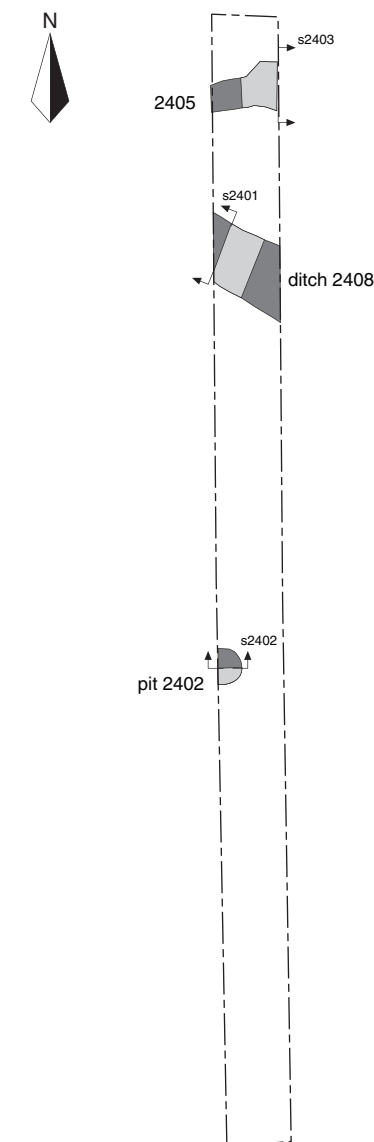
Pit 2402, looking north, (0.5m scale)



Possible ditch 2405, looking east, (1m scale)

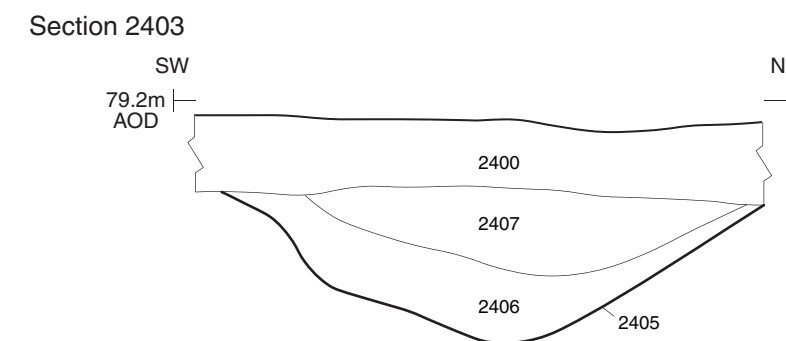
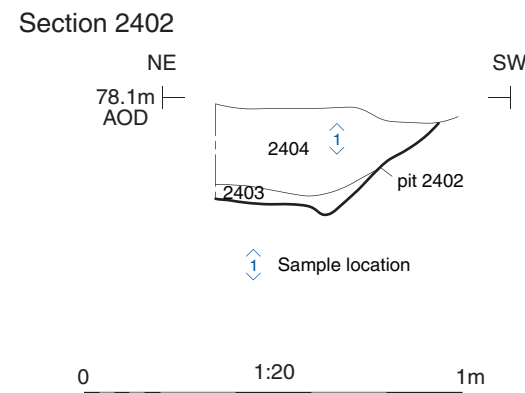
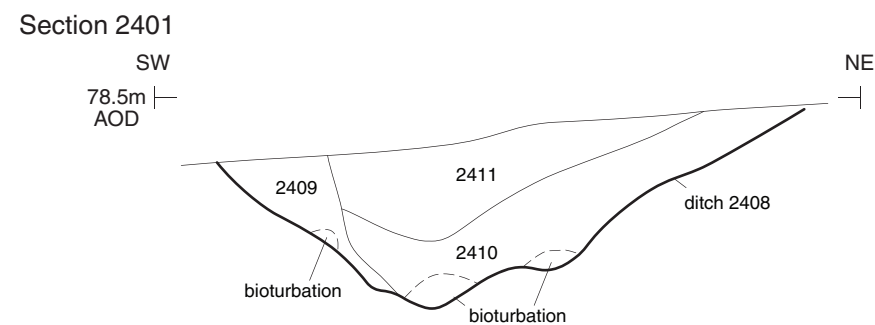


Trench 24



- Evaluation trench
- Archaeological feature (excavated/unexcavated)
- Section location

0 1:200 10m



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

PROJECT TITLE
 Land at Waterdell Lane, St Ippolyts, Hertfordshire

FIGURE TITLE
 Trench 24: plan, sections and photographs

DRAWN BY KL	PROJECT NO. MK1345	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY HK	DATE 19/01/2026	10
PM AS	SCALE A3 1:20 & 1:200	

Andover Office

Stanley House
Walworth Road
Andover
Hampshire
SP10 5LH

t: 01264 347630

Cirencester Office

Building 11
Cotswold Business Park
Cirencester
Gloucestershire
GL7 6BQ

t: 01285 771022

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

