

**Wildmoor Quarry
Bromsgrove, Worcestershire**

An Archaeological Evaluation (WSM 37318)



**July 2007
SLR Ref: 406-1351-00002**



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APPENDICES

Appendix A Project Design

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The document is a report on an archaeological evaluation undertaken by SLR Consulting on behalf of Jack Allen Holdings Ltd (hereafter the Client).

The evaluation was undertaken during the period 2nd– 11th July 2007 on agricultural land adjacent to Wildmoor Quarry, Worcestershire (centred on National Grid Reference SO 9486 7572).

The evaluation was implemented at the behest of Worcestershire County Council Planning Department, advised by their Historic Environment Planning Advisor (Mike Glyde), in order to inform consideration of a planning application to extend the quarry and establish a waste recovery and recycling centre. The Worcestershire Historic Environment Record event number for this evaluation is WSM 37318.

The programme of trial trenching was executed in line with an agreed project design, reproduced here as Appendix A. The methodology was modified during the works, in consultation with Mike Glyde, to accommodate the current landuse, in which three of the planned trenches were not excavated.

In summary, the evaluation identified no archaeological remains whatsoever.

2.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

SLR Consulting would like to thank Peter Coe of Sirius Consulting, Mark Jenkins of Wildmoor Waste Management, Lee Bates of Pleydell Smithyman Ltd, Mike Glyde of Worcestershire County Council, Paul Wale and David Green of National Grid, Adam Stanford of Aerial Cam, Geoff Marshall and Martin Thorburn of Gerry Martin and Associates, Richard and David Ince of Orchard Farm.

The SLR Consulting staff involved in this Project were:

- | | | |
|-------------------|----------------|------------------------------------|
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| • George Nash | Associate | Quality Assurance |
| • Tim Malim | Principal | Report Editing, Project Management |
| • Johann Chauveau | CAD Technician | Preparation of drawings |
| • Emma Evans | Administrator | Report formatting and production |

3.0 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The site is located in Belbroughton parish, north of Bromsgrove, near the village of Fairfield, west of Junction 4 of the M5. The site is irregular in form, roughly crescent-shaped to the west of the current Wildmoor Quarry, located at National Grid Reference SO 9486 7572. The site is bounded on its northern side by Sandy Lane (the A491) and to the west by Stourbridge Road (the B4091) and the outbuildings of Orchard Farm. The eastern boundary of the site is defined by the edge of Wildmoor Quarry. The current land use is grazed pastureland, under the control of the Ince family, tenant farmers located at Orchard Farm.

The study area slopes to the east and south from 179m AOD at Sandy Lane in the north and 182m on Stourbridge Road on the west, to 145m AOD around Swan Lane in the southeast, a fall of c.35m over less than 1km (7° – 11° incline). The site has an undulating surface and does not slope evenly across the area.

The underlying geology is Lower Keuper Sandstone in the higher part of the site and Bunter Sandstone in the north and southeast, with glacio-fluvial drift deposits, overlain by brown soils and podzols.

4.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

An environmental impact assessment was undertaken for a previous scheme for the area, which included a chapter on the archaeological potential of the site under consideration here (Wessex Archaeology 2005). The data collected for the ES and the current evaluation programme established only limited known archaeological evidence for the site. The watching brief undertaken during the installation of a gas pipeline in 1994 did not actually include inspection of the groundworks within the site (ie within fields with HER reference numbers “20900 – 20903” inclusive, see Hurst and Pearson 1995: 2-3). There are no listed buildings or scheduled ancient monuments on the site, although the Fairfield Court site close to the development area contains both listed and Scheduled elements. The site is not within a conservation area.

4.1 Prehistoric Period (10,000 BC – 43AD)

There is no evidence for prehistoric activity within the boundary of the site or its immediate vicinity. However, the general area has not been intensively investigated by archaeologists, and the absence of background information does not necessarily indicate an absence of archaeological remains. Elsewhere in the region, Mesolithic (c 8000 - 4000 BC) archaeological remains have been noted on south-facing slopes with similar sandy (well-drained) soils.

4.2 Romano-British Period (43 – 410 AD)

There is no evidence for Romano-British activity within the boundary of the site or its immediate vicinity. To the south of the study area, a Roman coin hoard and possible cemetery are recorded on the Worcestershire Historic Environment Record (Worcestershire Historic Environment Record reference WSM 20974). Further discussion of this entry at the county historic environment record offices established that this was an erroneous entry onto the system, in which a previous planning application for a new cemetery near Fairfield had been confused with a record of a Romano-British cemetery elsewhere. The nearest Romano-British remains is an unstratified fragment of Severn Valley ware recovered west of Fairfield village during pipeline installation in 1994 (HER reference 20904, Hurst and Pearson 1995: 7). Elsewhere in the county, it has been noted that medieval moated sites are often located close to Roman roads, which suggests that the routes close to Fairfield Court (and the site in question) may have earlier precursors, with associated road-side settlement.

4.3 Post-Roman and Anglo-Saxon Period (410 – 1066 AD)

There is no evidence for post-Roman or Anglo-Saxon archaeological remains within the boundary of the site.

To the west of the site, on the opposite side of the B4091 Stourbridge Road, is a moated medieval site of Fairfield Court. It is likely that the later, medieval building is located on an Anglo-Saxon manorial precursor. Fairfield itself (located to the south west of the area under investigation) is known to have been in existence during the Anglo-Saxon period, mentioned in a Saxon Charter of 817 AD by Coenwulf, King of Mercia,

"exempting Bishop Deneberht of Worcester's estates (including Forfeld) from all secular services except military services and the maintenance of bridges and strongholds". (http://www.belbroughton.com/fairfield_history.htm, accessed 25.07.07).

The village of Fairfield was established on the Bromsgrove – Stourbridge road, running immediately to the west of the site. This route is of some antiquity, and road-side settlements which have subsequently been abandoned may have been located adjacent to it. Swan Lane to the south of the development area is in a holloway, and is likely to date from at least the medieval period if not earlier.

The north western part of the site, adjacent to the Stourbridge Road is likely to fall within the estate associated with Fairfield Court: although there is no evidence for buildings associated with this estate, there is likely to have been field boundaries from this period within the area of interest.

4.4 Medieval Period (1066-1500)

There are no known medieval archaeological remains within the site.

Fairfield Manor was located within the parish of Belbroughton, which in turn was in the administrative unit known as the hundred of Halfshire ('Parishes: Belbroughton', *A History of the County of Worcester: volume 3* (1913), pp. 11-9. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.asp?compid=43080>. Date accessed: 25 July 2007).

The nearest medieval building was Fairfield Court, a moated site where courts were held to uphold the forest laws throughout the period (Scheduled Ancient Monument 30003; National Monuments Record Number SO 97 NW 3, also a Grade II* Listed building):

"The earthwork and buried remains of a rectangular moated site orientated north-south and measuring 110 metres by 70 metres. On the island of the moated site is a timber framed house called Fairfield Court, which is Listed Grade II*. The moat is deeply cut into the natural Keuper Marl and outcropping red sandstone in the sides of a sloping valley. Only three arms of the moat ditch are now fully visible, the fourth, on the north side, was partly infilled in modern times, concealing the original entrance to the island. The arms of the moat which are visible still hold water. The island enclosed by the moat is 90 metres by 50 metres and is terraced in three stages to counter the natural slope. Fairfield Court is reputedly the third house on the site, originating in the late 15th to early 16th century. It occupies half of the northernmost terrace. The remainder of this terrace and the two southern terraces are laid out as gardens, largely grassed. Records indicate that a chapel was situated to the south of the house. Fairfield Court is the successor of the Domesday manor of Forfeld which

was the home of Lady Godiva and Earl Leofric in the 11th century, held from the monks of Worcester; the site may thus have Anglo-Saxon origins. The house was associated with recusant activities after the Reformation; it is said that Father John Wall, one of the last Christian Martyrs, preached here in a chapel constructed in the roof of the house. Scheduled.”

URL:http://www.pastscape.org/hob.aspx?hob_id=118492, accessed 25.07.07)

After the Norman Conquest, “Forfeld” was granted to Urse D’Abitot and then descended through marriages from the Beechams, Sudeleys and other interrelated families to the Earls of Dudley in the 1700’s. From the mid-nineteenth century onwards the land and properties in Fairfield were sold and occupied by tenants and sub-tenants until they are now mostly in private ownership (http://www.belbroughton.com/fairfield_history.htm, accessed 25.07.07).

**Figure 2 Fairfield Court (Taken from:
http://www.belbroughton.com/fairfield_history.htm, accessed 25.07.07)**



The proposed development site is probably located within the Fairfield Court estate, and is likely to contain field boundaries associated with its use during this period.

4.5 Post Medieval Period (1500-1800)

There are no known archaeological remains from the post-medieval period within the boundary of the site.

During this period the site is assumed to have been under cultivation. The current pattern of large fields bounded by mature hedgerows is consistent with post-medieval enclosure.

Beyond the site, to the south west, Fairfield contains a post-mediaeval building of interest: Fairfield House farm is a 17th Century timber-framed farmhouse of note (NMR Number: SO 97 NW 4, URL: http://www.pastscape.org/hob.aspx?hob_id=118497).

Figure 3 Fairfield House Farm (Taken from: http://www.belbroughton.com/fairfield_history.htm, accessed 25.07.07)

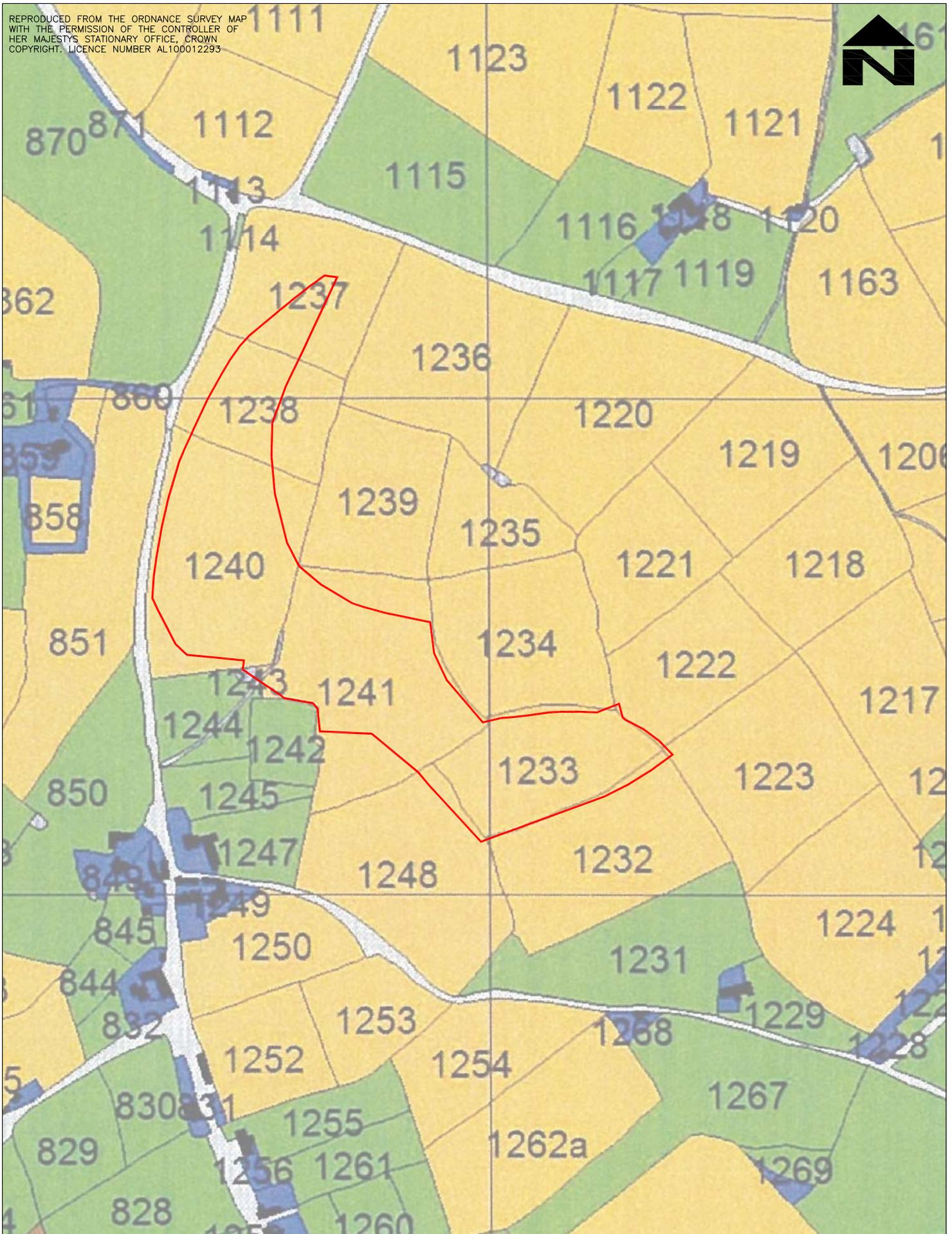


4.6 Industrial to Modern Periods (1800-2007).

There are no known archaeological remains dating to the Industrial or modern periods located within the site boundaries.

During this period the site was under cultivation, although localised and subsequent large-scale sand quarrying was undertaken immediately to the east of the site.

The Belbroughton tithe map and associated apportionment of 1838 was examined for evidence for archaeological remains. The data is reproduced in Figure 4 and Table 1 below. The fieldnames do not reveal earlier landuse or indicate potential archaeological remains. At this time the proposed development area was used for arable farming. The ploughing associated with this, and any subsequent pasture improvement can be expected to have at least partially truncated any archaeological remains at the site. This ploughing should also have resulted in the introduction of artefacts into the ploughsoil, making it easier to identify early activities at the site.



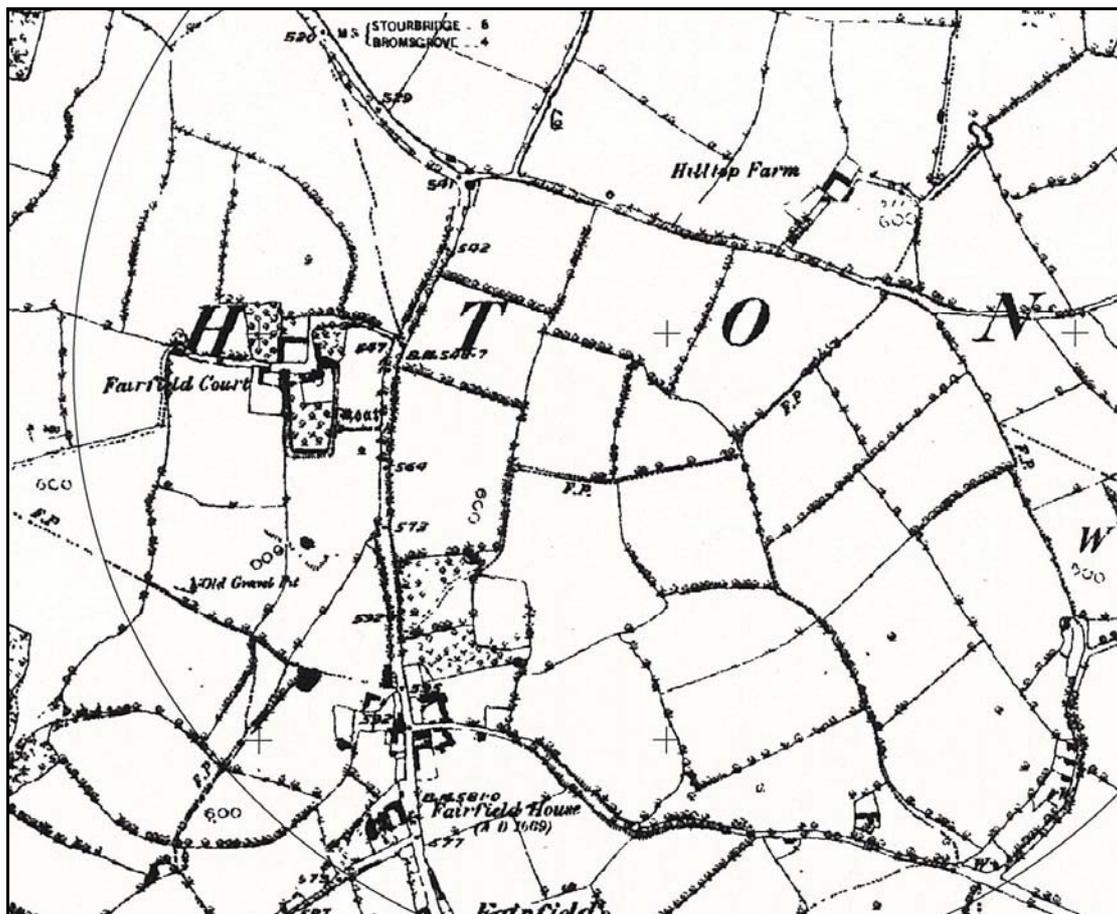
Revision 0 Jun 2007
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Site	WILDMOOR QUARRY		
Project			
Date	JULY 2007	Scale	1:5,000 @ A4
Drawing	1838 TITHE MAP		Figure 4

Table 1: 1838 Tithe apportionment data

number	owner	tenant	Field name	Landuse
1237	Henry Wheeler Baker	Henry Wheeler Baker	Turnpike Piece	Arable
1238	Henry Wheeler Baker	Henry Wheeler Baker	Court Piece	Arable
1240	Henry Wheeler Baker	Henry Wheeler Baker	The Hill	Arable
1241	Henry Wheeler Baker	Henry Wheeler Baker	Bench Piece	Arable
1248	John Harris	John Phasey	The Hill	Arable
1233	John Harris	John Phasey	Lower Leasowe	Arable

Figure 5 Extract from 1888 1st Edition OS data, not to scale.



The 1889 1st Edition Ordnance Survey data for the site The nearest industrial manufacturing activity was a 19th century glassworks at Brook Road (south of Fairfield) which closed in 1925 (http://www.belbroughton.com/fairfield_history.htm).

The Defence of Britain database records a Home Guard Observation post within the study area (http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/catalogue/specColl/dob/ai_r.cfm? Accessed 06.08.07, ID number S0009693, at National Grid Reference SO 9482 7586). There were no signs of the position when inspected by the Defense of Britain team (14th January 1999), nor during the current fieldwork. The post is described as a sandbagged position.

The adjacent Orchard Farm farmhouse and outbuildings were all constructed after 1945, on land previously shown to be used for orchards on the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1882, and are not considered to be of architectural or archaeological interest.

The sand quarry has slowly encroached from the east of the site towards the boundary of the application area since 1945. This quarrying has been undertaken without and archaeological evaluation or mitigation works. No archaeological remains have been reported from these extensive works.

4.7 Previous archaeological Investigations

The site was crossed by two gas pipelines during the 1990's, constructed under the aegis of National Grid. The construction of the 1995 pipeline should have been accompanied by an archaeological watching brief. The report on the pipeline archaeological works allocated activity record numbers to the individual fields through which the pipeline passed, but identified no specific archaeological remains. It would appear from the report that a watching brief archaeologist was not present during the excavation of the pipeline through the area under consideration here. The farmers working the land at this time (David and Richard Ince) note that no archaeologists were present during the topsoil strip and groundworks associated with the installation of the pipelines (pers.comm 02.07.07). The width and depth of the working easement is not known, but can be expected to be at least 20m wide, and to have disturbed any archaeological remains within this corridor.

Desk-based research for the environmental statement undertaken in 2005 identified no additional features of interest within the site boundary (Wessex Archaeology 2005). An auger survey undertaken for the same Environmental Statement records "soil" depths of between 300 and 950mm. It is assumed that this refers to material identified lying over sterile glacial deposits, and were therefore the horizon within which archaeological remains were most likely to have been located if present at the site. The auger survey did not identify any archaeological remains.

Previous archaeological work in the area did not offer any useful insight into the potential for archaeological remains being present within the development area.

5.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES.

The aim of the archaeological evaluation was to generate useful information for the client and planning authority to inform consideration of the planning application to extend Wildmoor Quarry.

The specific objectives were to:

- excavate a sample of the application area by trial trenching
- properly record any archaeological remains identified during the fieldwork
- prepare a report on the findings.

6.0 METHODOLOGY

The methodology to be undertaken was defined in a “written scheme of investigation”, reproduced here as Appendix A. SLR Consulting is a Registered Archaeological Organisation with the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA), all of SLR’s archaeologists are all corporate members of the IFA and work to the highest professional standards. The evaluation was prepared and executed with reference to the IFA’s “Standards and Guidance for Field Evaluation” 2001.

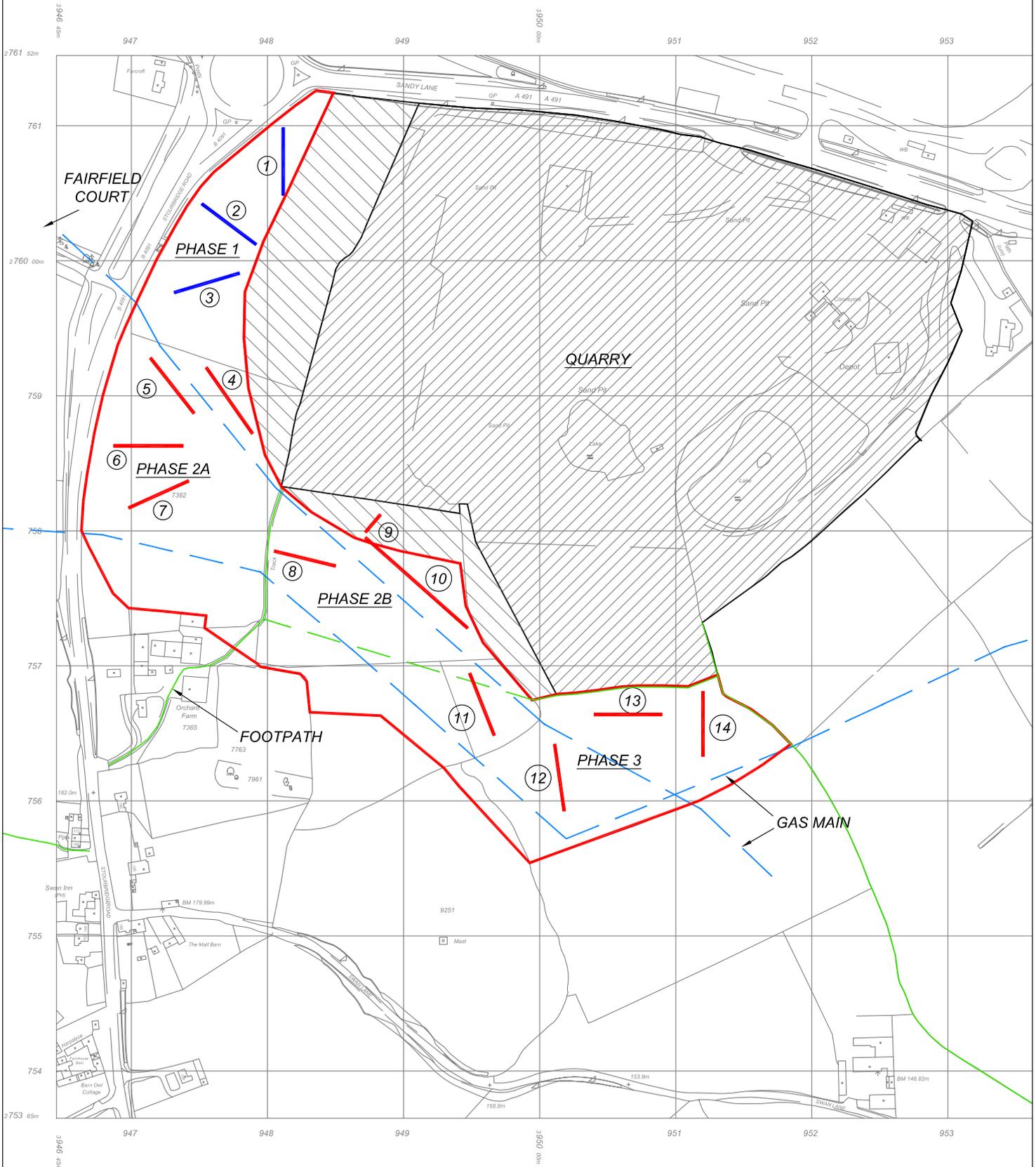
The execution of the works was kindly facilitated by Richard and David Ince, who currently farm the land under investigation. The evaluation was undertaken during the period 2nd– 11th July 2007, when the area was subject to exceptionally high levels of rainfall. Trenches 1-3 of the original scheme were located in a field of uncut grass, which proved too wet to cut. After discussion with the curatorial archaeologist (Mike Glyde) approval was given to abandon the excavation of the trenches in this field, which will be investigated during mitigation works should the scheme progress.

The trenches were opened using a 13-tonne 360° tracked excavator equipped with a toothless bucket: the turf and topsoil were kept separate to the subsoil. The excavation of the trenches was monitored by experienced archaeologists; the trenches were excavated to the upper surface of naturally deposited material, or to a maximum depth of 1.2m, whichever was encountered first. At least two sample sections were cleaned-up and recorded in each trench to illustrate the stratigraphy encountered. Sample areas at the base of the trench were hand-cleaned to ensure that cut features were not being missed. Variation in the naturally deposited material was investigated by hand excavation to check the interfaces and nature of the deposits. Additional sondages were excavated through the top of sterile material to confirm their identification and ensure that archaeological significant strata were not being obscured by overlying colluvium. The spoil heaps were scanned for residual artefacts. Samples of topsoil and subsoil were sieved through a 5mm mesh to recover any residual lithics present. The trenches were backfilled using the machine after being recorded, with topsoil and turf being replaced over the subsoil.

The curatorial archaeologist (Mike Glyde) was given an opportunity to inspect the trenches and review the recording during the fieldwork, but was unable to do so. Variation in the methodology was discussed with Mike Glyde during the work.

Figure 6 Opening of Trench 14 using machine excavator under archaeological supervision





	LIMIT OF CURRENT QUARRY
	AREA WITHIN EXISTING PLANNING CONSENT
	TRENCH EXCAVATED
	TRENCH NOT EXCAVATED

Revision 0 Jun 2007
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Site	WILDMOOR QUARRY		
Project			
Date	JULY 2007	Scale	1:4,000 @ A4
Drawing	Trenches Location Plan		Figure 7

7.0 RESULTS

The trial trenches were excavated in the locations shown in Figure 7. The phases indicated refer to the proposed sequence of land take for quarrying. A total of 11 trenches were excavated, each 2m wide covering a variety of topographic locations. The overall trenching length was 572.1 m, with an area of 1144.2m². A total of 37 individual contexts were recorded, largely comprising of sterile naturally deposited sands, subsoil/hillwash and topsoil in each trench. No archaeologically significant remains were identified. No lithics (Mesolithic or otherwise) were recovered from the sieving. Scanning of the spoilheaps recovered occasional post-medieval pottery and ceramic building material fragments, consistent with the manuring of fields from a farmyard during the past 200 years. Two modern cut features were noted: a modern field drain (contexts 036 and 037 in Trench 14) and a test pit for recent pipeline work (contexts 028 and 028 Trench 12).

7.1 Trenches 1 – 3.

Trenches 1 – 3 were not excavated, since they were in an area of wet uncut grass (see above).

7.2 Trench 4

Trench 4 location was adjusted to avoid damaging a hedgerow which is currently in use.

Trench 4 was 59.6m long, 2m wide, aligned approximately NNE – SSW. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.74m (at the SSW end).

The underlying naturally deposited material consisted of reddish orange sand (context 001) with lenses of yellow and light brown sand and occasional patches of pea-grit sized gravel.

The subsoil consisted of orangey brown clayey sand (context 002) containing moderate pebbles 10 – 70mm maximum dimension. The subsoil was 0.38 (SSW end) – 0.46m (NNE) deep.

The topsoil (Context 003) was dark greyish brown clayey silt with occasional pebbles 10 – 70mm maximum dimension.

The adjacent ground surface was between 176.58m AOD (NNE end) and 181.06m AOD (SSW end).

No archaeological deposits were identified in this trench.

Figure 8 detail of section at north west end of Trench 4 showing distinct horizons of topsoil and subsoil over natural sands.



Figure 9 General view to south east of Trench 4



7.3 Trench 5

Trench 5 was 52 m long, 2m wide, aligned approximately NNW – SSE. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.06m (NNW end).

The underlying naturally deposited material was reddish orange sand (Context 004) with lenses of yellow and light brown sand and occasional patches of clayey sand.

The subsoil consisted of orangey brown clayey sand (context 005) containing occasional pebbles 10-30mm maximum dimension. It was 0.48m (SSE end) – 0.56m (NNW end) thick.

The topsoil was dark greyish brown clayey silt (Context 006) with occasional pebbles 10 – 30mm maximum dimension. It was between 0.34 – 0.35m deep (SSE and NNW ends respectively).

The adjacent ground surface was between 170.67m AOD and 177.53m AOD (NNW and SSE ends respectively).

No archaeological deposits were identified in this trench.

Figure 10 general view to north west, Trench 5



Figure 11 detail of north east facing section, Trench 5



7.4 Trench 6

Trench 6 was 51m long, 2m wide, aligned approximately E – W. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.78m (E end).

The underlying naturally deposited material was reddish orange sand (Context 007) with lenses of yellow and light brown sand.

The subsoil consisted of orangey brown clayey sand (context 008) with pebbles 10-60mm maximum dimension.

The topsoil was dark greyish brown clayey silt (Context 009) with pebbles 10 – 40mm maximum dimension.

The adjacent ground surface was between 172.22m AOD and 177.62m AOD (W and E end respectively).

No archaeological deposits were identified in this trench.

Figure 12 general view to west of Trench 6



7.5 Trench 7

Trench 7 was 48.3 m long, 2m wide, aligned approximately NE – SW. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.99m (NE end).

The underlying naturally deposited material was reddish orange sand (Context 010).

The subsoil consisted of orangey brown clayey sand (context 011) with pebbles 10-50mm maximum dimension. It was 0.43 -0.69m thick.

The topsoil was dark greyish brown clayey silt (Context 012) with pebbles 10 – 40mm maximum dimension. It was 0.3 -0.39m thick.

The adjacent ground surface was between 175.49m AOD and 178.86m AOD (SW and NE ends respectively).

No archaeological deposits were identified in this trench.

Figure 13 general view to north east of Trench 7



Figure 14 detail of north west facing section, Trench 7



7.6 Trench 8

Trench 8 was 46.3m long, 2m wide, aligned approximately E – W. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.38m (E end).

The underlying naturally deposited material was reddish orange and yellowish brown sand (Context 013) with an outcrop of sandstone bedrock midway along the trench.

The subsoil consisted of orangey brown clayey sand (context 014) with pebbles 15-80mm maximum dimension. The subsoil was not continuous along the full length of the trench: it was 0.88m thick at the E end of the trench, and not present at the W end, where it had probably been truncated during works associated with the installation of the gas pipeline.

The topsoil consisted of mid to dark greyish brown clayey silt (context 015) with occasional pebbles 10 – 30mm maximum dimension. The topsoil contained patches of redeposited natural sand at the W end of the trench where there was no subsoil present: it is assumed that this mixing is a recent phenomenon related to the reinstatement of the topsoil after the installation of the gas pipeline.

The adjacent ground surface was between 176.55m AOD and 183.07m AOD (E and W ends respectively).

No archaeological deposits were identified in this trench.

Figure 15 detail of section Trench 8



Figure 16 General view to south east of Trench 8



7.7 Trench 9

Trench 9 was 17m long, 2m wide, aligned approximately E – W. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.8m (W end). This trench was located to identify any deposits running off the slope to the north east of trench 10. These two trenches were reconfigured to accommodate the topography, gas pipeline and current field boundaries.

The underlying naturally deposited material was orangey red sand (Context 016) with patches of gravel and pebbles; there were occasional areas of compact sand which were probably weathered bedrock.

The subsoil consisted of mid orangey brown sand (context 017) with occasional pebbles 6-50mm maximum dimension. It was 0.1 – 0.4m thick (W and E ends respectively).

The topsoil was 0.3m thick and consisted of mid to dark greyish brown clayey silt with occasional pebbles 10-50mm maximum dimension (context 018).

The adjacent ground surface was between 176.72m AOD and 178.46m AOD (W and E ends respectively).

No archaeological deposits were identified in this trench.

Figure 17 general view to north east, Trench 9



Figure 18 detail of section Trench 9



7.8 Trench 10

Trench 10 was 100.5 m long, 2m wide, aligned approximately NW – SE. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.2m (SE end). It was reconfigured with Trench 9 to accommodate the topography, gas pipeline and current field boundaries.

The underlying naturally deposited material was reddish orange sand with no inclusions (context 019)

The subsoil consisted of mid orangey brown clayey silt with occasional pebbles 10 – 50mm maximum dimension (Context 020). The subsoil was 0.34 – 0.83m thick)NW and SE ends respectively.

The topsoil was 0.36m deep, mid to dark greyish brown clayey silt (Context 021) with occasional pebbles 10-50mm maximum dimension.

The adjacent ground surface was between 163.98m AOD and 175.94m AOD (SE and NW ends respectively).

No archaeological deposits were identified in this trench.

Figure 19 general view to south east of Trench 10, Trench 12 in background



Figure 20 detail of section Trench 10 showing topsoil over subsoil over natural sand



7.9 Trench 11

Trench 11 was 49.4m long, 2m wide, aligned approximately N – S. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.2m.

The underlying naturally deposited material was reddish orange sand (context 022) with lenses of yellow and orange-brown sand towards the lower, downslope southern end. A deposit of sterile clayey sand was noted at the southern end of the trench, containing gravel inclusions: this may be the fill of a palaeochannel. David Ince noted that this area becomes very wet after heavy rainfall.

The subsoil consisted of yellow sand interspersed with orange sand- this is clearly sequential deposits of hillwash in which material is eroded from above. There is no clear distinction between “natural” and “subsoil” in this trench. Attempts to excavate below 1.2m were unsuccessful, since the trench edges collapsed in. There was no indication of former cultivation horizons within the bands of material observed in section.

The topsoil (context 024) consisted of dark greyish brown sandy silt, containing rare fragments of brick and tile.

The adjacent ground surface was between 159.47m AOD and 163.85m AOD.

No archaeological deposits were identified in this trench.

Figure 21 general view of Trench 11 to north



7.10 Trench 12

Trench 12 was 50m long, 2m wide, aligned approximately N – S. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.37m.

The underlying naturally deposited material was orangey red sand (context 025).

The subsoil consisted of mid brown clayey silt 0.31-0.39m thick (context 026).

A linear cut feature (context 029) was observed in both section and plan crossing the trench 16m from the northern limit of the trench. This feature was partially sectioned and recorded. The fill (context 028) was orangey red sand with patches of grey silt. This is interpreted as a

mix of redeposited natural sand mixed with topsoil. The distinct variation suggests that this deposit is relatively recent in origin, since it has not become homogenised through bioturbation. The cut was not fully excavated, but was investigated to a depth of 1.14m beyond which it continued. It was 1.61m wide and over 2m long east – west. The sides were steep and straight. No finds were recovered from the fill. This feature is interpreted as a modern test pit excavated in the area ahead of the installation of the gas pipeline (Richard and David Ince pers.comm 04.07.07).

The topsoil was dark greyish brown clayey silt 0.36m deep, which sealed the fill (028) of the linear cut (029).

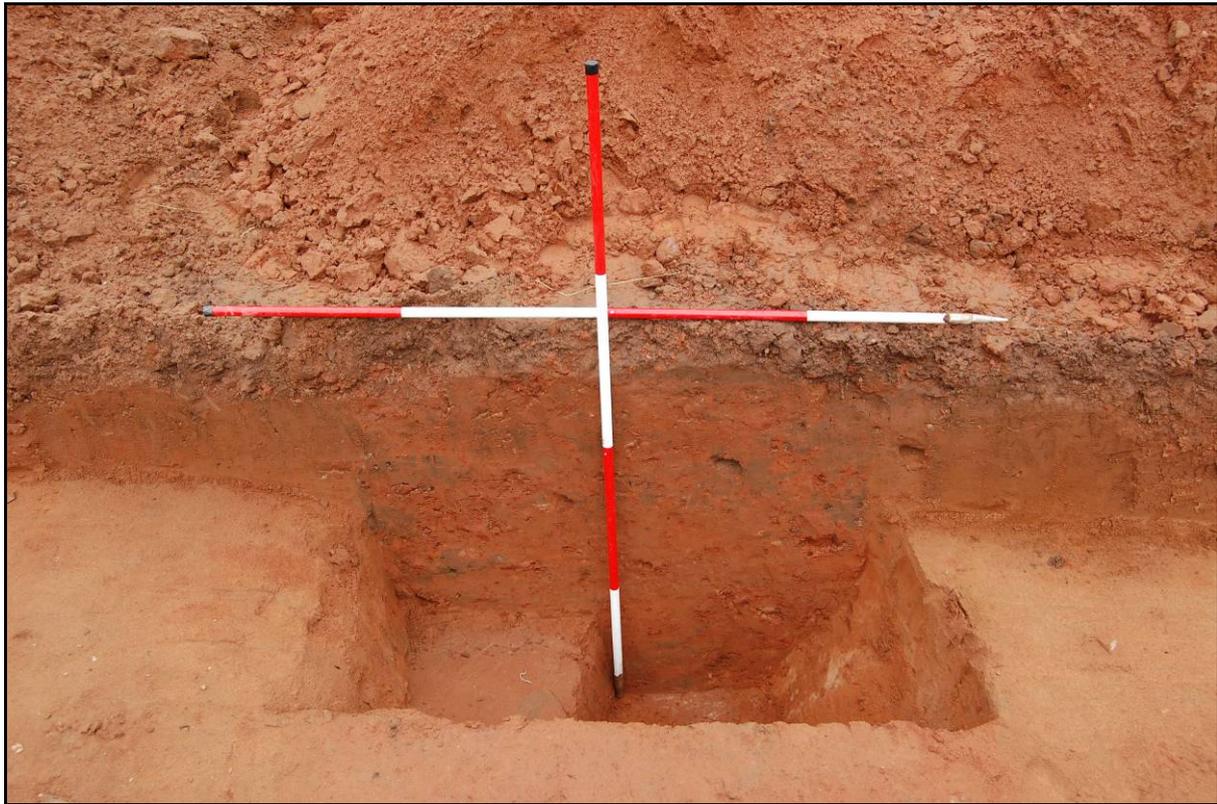
The adjacent ground surface was between 160.85m AOD and 162.22m AOD.

No significant archaeological deposits were identified in this trench.

Figure 22 General view to south of Trench 12



Figure 23 east-facing section through modern feature 028/029, Trench 12



7.11 Trench 13

Trench 13 was 50m long, 2m wide, aligned approximately E – W. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.1m.

The underlying naturally deposited material was red sand (context 030) with occasional patches of mixed gravel and pebbles (up to maximum dimension of 80mm).

The subsoil consisted of yellow silty sand (context 031) which was not continuous down the length of the trench. The subsoil was not present at the western limit of the trench, and was 0.4m thick at the lower, western end of the trench. This suggests that the subsoil is being formed as a colluvial deposit.

The topsoil was dark greyish brown sandy silt (context 032) with occasional small pebbles less than 60mm maximum dimension.

The adjacent ground surface was between 156.66m AOD and 158.55m AOD (at the eastern and western ends respectively).

No archaeological deposits were identified in this trench.

Figure 24 Working shot of recording in Trench 13, view to west.



Figure 25 Detail of section of sondage into natural sand, west end of Trench 13



7.12 Trench 14

Trench 14 was 48 m long, 2m wide, aligned approximately N – S. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.05m (at the northern end).

The underlying naturally deposited material was orangey red sand (context 033) containing increasing proportion of gravel towards the northern end of the trench.

The subsoil consisted of pale orangey brown sandy silt (context 034) with frequent pebbles less than 80mm maximum dimension.

The topsoil was a very dark greyish brown sandy silt with occasional pebbles less than 50mm maximum dimension. The topsoil was 0.3 – 0.5m deep.

A single linear cut feature was identified running obliquely across the southern end of the trench. This was a stone aggregate-filled cut approx 300mm wide (cut 037, fill 036). This was identified as a modern field drain post-dating the installation of the gas pipeline (Richard Ince pers.com 03.07.07).

Figure 26 detail of west-facing section, north end of Trench 14 showing topsoil and subsoil over natural sand.



The adjacent ground surface was between 154.68m AOD and 156.63m AOD (northern and southern ends of trench respectively).

No significant archaeological deposits were identified in this trench.

Figure 27 detail of southern end of Trench 14, field drain 036/037 in foreground, view to north.



8.0 DISCUSSION

There was no evidence for the presence of archaeological remains in any of the trenches excavated. By extension, this would tend to suggest that the development area does not contain any archaeological remains upon which the proposed quarry extension could have a negative impact. However, it is important to consider the area being investigated, the sample evaluated, the area not examined and the potential for unknown archaeological deposits to be encountered outside of the evaluation trenches.

The total area of trial trenching excavated was 1144.2m². The total development area being evaluated was 6.75 ha (= 67,500m²). The working easement of the gas pipelines within the proposed development area is equal to 22,489m² (based on a 10m strip either side of the pipeline) The area under consideration can therefore be reduced to 67,500 – 22,489 = 45,011m². A 4% sample of 45,011m² is 1800m².

The area investigated during the evaluation was 1144.2m² constituting a sample of 2.5% of 45,011m². The three unexcavated trenches (Trenches 1-3) were in the area of highest potential, and it was the working assumption of the evaluation team that these trenches would be excavated at double width if additional trenching was not deemed useful elsewhere (i.e. 4m wide, 50m long). This would have provided an additional 600m² of trenching, constituting the complete 4% sample. The rationale underpinning this strategy was that Trenches 1 - 3 were closest to the nearest known archaeological site (the moated manor at Fairfield Court).

As described above, the evaluation did not include Trenches 1-3, since access was not possible in the circumstances of the fieldwork, and this decision was reached after consultation with the curatorial archaeologist (Mike Glyde). During these negotiations Mike Glyde indicated that a limited watching brief condition was likely to be his recommendation to the planning authority as appropriate mitigation of the impact of the development on any unknown archaeological remains in the area. This is likely to be a requirement during the topsoil strip ahead of the commencement of the quarrying. This is a precautionary measure, since all the available evidence suggests that there are no archaeological remains across the rest of the site.

The evaluation has effectively demonstrated an absence of archaeological remains across the southern and central part of the proposed development area. The most northerly area, adjacent to the B4091, closest to Fairfield Court, is likely to be subject of a watching brief during future groundworks.

9.0 CONCLUSION

SLR Consulting successfully executed a programme of archaeological evaluation fieldwork on behalf of Jack Allen Holdings Limited. This report is the formal presentation of the results.

The evaluation identified no archaeological remains. The individual trenches were fully and properly recorded. There were no residual artefacts indicative of archaeological deposits in the vicinity of the trial trenches.

There are no archaeological reasons to limit development activities in the areas evaluated.

Restricted access to the area of greatest potential at the northern portion of the area has led to the development of an outline mitigation strategy for a watching brief on any groundworks

in this area. This is a precautionary measure rather than one linked to positive evidence of archaeological remains requiring mitigation.

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11.0 CLOSURE

This report has been prepared by SLR Consulting Limited with all reasonable skill, care and diligence, and taking account of the manpower and resources devoted to it by agreement with the client. Information reported herein is based on the interpretation of data collected and has been accepted in good faith as being accurate and valid.

This report is for the exclusive use of Jack Allen Holdings Ltd; no warranties or guarantees are expressed or should be inferred by any third parties. This report may not be relied upon by other parties without written consent from SLR.

SLR disclaims any responsibility to the client and others in respect of any matters outside the agreed scope of the work.

Figure 28 general view to west across southern part of study area.



Appendix A: Project Design

**Wildmoor Quarry
Bromsgrove, Worcestershire**

**Written Scheme of Investigation for a programme of archaeological works
Jack Allen Holdings Ltd**



**June 2007
SLR Ref: 406-1351-00002**



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Planning background

Wildmoor Quarry has been in existence for c.60 years over which period it has extended to cover an area of approximately 9ha on the south side of Sandy Lane; under its current permission it can continue to be worked until 2042. An application has been made to extend the quarry to take in 6.76ha of agricultural land on the western and southern sides of the existing quarry, including all land up to Stourbridge Road and Orchard Farm, and to create a Sustainable Resource Recovery and Recycling Park. As part of the original planning application an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) was undertaken in 2005-6 for an extension of 12ha, which included an Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment (DBA). In January 2007 Worcestershire County Council's Historic Environment Planning Advisor wrote to the Senior Planner and issued a brief for further information to be provided by physical investigation, (an archaeological evaluation) so as to assist in determining the application. This advice to the Planner came at the same time as the whole ES was under review in connection with revisions to the scheme which resulted in an amended application with a reduced area.

1.2 Location and natural background

The site is located in Belbroughton parish north of Bromsgrove and the village of Fairfield, immediately west of junction 4 off the M5, and south of the A491 (Sandy Lane) (SO94867572). Topographically the land slopes to the east and south from 179mAOD at Sandy Lane in the north and 182m on Stourbridge Road on the west, to 145m AOD around Swan Lane in the southeast, a fall of c.35m over less than 1km (7° – 11° incline). The underlying geology is Lower Keuper Sandstone in the higher part of the site and Bunter Sandstone in the north and southeast, with glacio-fluvial drift deposits, overlain by brown soils and podzols. The landuse is presently that of grazed pastureland, but formerly was orchard.

1.3 Archaeological potential

The application area lies to the east of a medieval moated site at Fairfield Court, which is designated as a scheduled monument and also contains a post-medieval listed building. This was an ancient estate centre, the origins of which probably date back to Anglo-Saxon times. The application area lies within 200m of this designated site and the historic landscape associated with the estate would have included the quarry and proposed extension. Historic routeways ran to north and south of the application area, along Sandy Lane (Stourbridge – Bromsgrove) and Swan Lane; historic mapping also shows three footpaths meeting within the application area. Within 500m to the south of the application area a Roman coin hoard and possible cemetery is listed on the Worcestershire Historic Environment Record. The presence of Mesolithic sites on south-facing sandy hills in the region which are similar in character to the application area, raises a possibility that remains from this epoch might exist on site. The archaeological potential has been described as low – moderate by the deskbased assessment (DBA) undertaken as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). This statement was caveated by admission that there is a general paucity of previous archaeological investigation on which a reliable prediction can be based.

Although present landuse is pasture, past landuse included an orchard, and presumably an episode of ploughing after the orchard was grubbed out. It is assumed that a disturbed zone at least plough-depth (c.300mm deep) will exist beneath the current grass surface. Soil movement such as colluvial deposits might exist on site, in the lower southeastern part of the

application area, if the soil had been exposed through cultivation at some period in the past; if present such deposits could have protected earlier archaeological remains under a deep overburden, and this scenario would probably be the best chance of finding any potential in-situ Mesolithic material. The EIA agriculture section, however, contains a report on an auger survey and a test pit, and this demonstrates that top- and sub-soils range from 450mm – 950mm. The depth varies over the area, without a consistent pattern emerging.

1.4 Previous investigation

Previous investigation of the application area and its general surroundings has occurred in connection with archaeological monitoring of a gas pipeline in 1995 that ran through the application area, effectively bisecting it. The report from this work records two fields as historic features of the landscape, but no artefacts within the application area, although pottery and other finds were found from the pipeline outside the application area. The archaeological monitoring that occurred during the construction of the pipeline amounted to 600m of linear trenching within the original application area, but this useful cross-section through deposits on site did not reveal any remains within it. A desk-based assessment including a field visit was undertaken by Wessex Archaeology in July 2005, although the detail of Worcestershire's HER included within this document is cursory, and landscape analysis is restricted to a map regression exercise.

2.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of the programme of works is to identify whether specific areas of below-ground archaeological potential can be defined so that a design solution or appropriate archaeological response can be planned in advance of development, and any mitigation measures implemented so that the archaeological resource is preserved.

The objectives of the archaeological programme are to fulfil the obligations expected of development as set out in Worcestershire County and Bromsgrove District planning policies: Worcestershire's Structure Plan CTC16-18 (2001), Bromsgrove Local Plan (2004), and by national guidance under PPG16 (1990). Furthermore best practice will be followed according to English Heritage's MAP2 and the Institute of Field Archaeologists Guidance and Standards documentation to ensure the value of any results from this programme of work are assessed and published as appropriate.

3.0 PROGRAMME OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORKS

3.1 Strategy

A staged approach will be adopted to clarify the extent and significance of any surviving archaeology, and to provide the planning authority and the client with information for mitigation planning, budgetary and programming purposes.

Grass cover precludes field-walking as a viable technique, and previous land-use would suggest any material such as lithics found in higher levels will have been disturbed through tree roots and agricultural activity.

Geophysical prospection could prove to be a useful technique with a geological background of sandstone and sandy-loam soils, but intrusive investigation through the use of trenching is

more likely to be informative in the first instance, and allows the depositional sequence to be established.

The first stage of investigation, therefore, will consist of trial trenching, through use of both linear and test area excavations if appropriate. In the absence of clearly defined historic landscape features to target it is proposed to adopt a random spread of trenches to provide an appropriate level of coverage of the application area, so that deposit modelling can be undertaken (Fig.1). A number of Rights of Way used to cross the area and the auger survey has identified a wetter area of subsoil; both these aspects will be investigated as part of the trenching scheme.

Generally accepted practice in England is for a sample of between 2 - 5% of the development area to be evaluated by trial trenching, in order to establish the character and extent, date and condition of survival of archaeological remains. The application area covers approximately 6.75ha and therefore 4% is c.2700sqm (1350 linear metres at 2m width). Previous investigation under modern archaeological standards has been undertaken during the Fairfield – Frankley Green gas pipeline scheme, consisting of c.250m of linear trenching in the reduced area of the amended application immediately north and east of Orchard Farm. The residual amount of trenching required for a 4% sample is therefore 1100m.

It is proposed that this evaluation should follow an iterative approach as recommended by MAP2 and PPG16, so that an initial group of trenches are cut to provide a first impression across the site, and at key locations. The first phase of investigation will target the northern part of the field, the area that will comprise the first landtake of the quarry extension. From the results of this exercise it can then be decided whether the methodology needs revising, the locations need revising, or whether in fact all the proposed trenching is indeed necessary to adequately characterize the below ground deposits across the site. A contingency area of 100sqm will be kept in reserve to be deployed if a particular trench reveals potential evidence that needs further exposure in order to understand its significance and extent. Constraints to fieldwork may influence the exact location of trenches; these potentially include the presence of two gas pipelines crossing the area, farming regime and the presence of sand-martins nesting in the face of the existing quarry.

Prior to start of evaluation a Worcestershire Archaeological Service HER fieldwork reference number will be obtained.

Subsequent stages within the archaeological programme may be necessary based upon the results of the first stage evaluation. These further stages might include geophysical prospecting, additional trenching or other site investigation, such as area excavation and/or monitoring of groundworks. The type and scale of any such works would be determined by the results of the initial evaluation and will be defined by a mitigation strategy as a supplement to the present WSI. Analysis, reporting and dissemination of the results of this programme of works will also be detailed as part of the mitigation design. The following methodological sections therefore detail the first stage evaluation.

3.2 Methodology for archaeological evaluation

A review of the Historic Environment Record and other background material, such as relevant developer-funded reports, especially the 1995 Fairfield - Frankley Green gas pipeline, will be undertaken as a preliminary phase during stage 1. This exercise is designed to provide an appropriate level of context and understanding for the evaluation, and supplements the partial exercise undertaken by Wessex Archaeology presented in the Environmental Impact Assessment.

Trial trenches will be excavated using a mechanical excavator to remove the overburden to the top of archaeological remains or undisturbed natural deposits, whichever is the higher. A toothless ditching bucket c.2m width will be used to carefully scrape away overburden under the direction of an archaeologist. A selection of trenches will be wider than a single bucket width, so that an improved window sample is obtained for features such as prehistoric post-holes and beam slots from early medieval timber-frame buildings which are difficult to find within the limitations of standard archaeological evaluation trenches. Trench dimensions will generally be 50m in length and 2m – 4m in width. Areas with deeper soils (Fig.2) that might have protected prehistoric archaeology will be sample sieved for lithics and other remains.

An archaeologist will supervise the machine excavation of the trial trenches and will hand clean and record the stratigraphic sequence within them. Machine excavation will continue to the top of archaeological features, natural subsoil, or to a safe working depth (c.1.5m), whichever is encountered first. Within the wider trenches if deep deposits are encountered a stepped section will be used to excavate safely to a depth greater than 1.5m. A total station theodolite will be used to accurately locate the position of the trial trenches.

Health and safety considerations may affect the execution of these trial trenches, and practical consideration has to be given to issues of access, previous disturbance such as services, and logistical constraints.

The trial trenches will be recorded by text and drawings through use of a proforma sheets including a context recording system, plus suitably scaled plans and sections (at 1:20 and 1:10 as appropriate). Photographs will be taken in digital and 35 mm monochrome and colour transparency format. Photographic scales will be included as appropriate.

Artefacts and palaeoenvironmental samples will be collected, labelled and stored following standard archaeological practice as outlined in UKIC (United Kingdom Institute for Conservation) guidelines and will accord with relevant Institute of Field Archaeologists *Guidelines on Finds Work*. Palaeoenvironmental samples will be collected from suitable features and fills (such as waterlogged or burnt deposits). Samples will be collected in 10 litre airtight buckets; specialist advice and assessment will be provided by PRS of Durham, and general standards will follow English Heritage's *Centre for Archaeology Guidelines on Environmental Archaeology 2002*.

3.3 Human remains

In the event that human remains are encountered during site works these will be left undisturbed until the coroner has been alerted and Worcestershire CC's Historic Environment Planning Advisor has been informed. If these remains are ancient and excavation is deemed necessary then a Home Office Licence will be applied for from the DCA. The remains will then be archaeologically excavated and recorded according to the guidance for best practice for treatment of human remains as issued by English Heritage 2005, and storage, analysis and reburial will be undertaken as appropriate.

3.4 Treasure

Any items of gold or silver or associated artefacts defined as Treasure by The Treasure Act, 1996, will be reported and recorded in accordance with the requirements of this legislation. A coroner's inquest will determine the status of treasure and ownership.

3.5 Monitoring

Worcestershire's Historic Environment Planning Advisor will be invited to monitor the evaluation programme and to discuss the results with SLR so that the implications for detailed design and mitigation can be resolved at an early date.

3.6 Reinstatement

Reinstatement of the trial trenches will be by backfilling with the arisings. If required by the client and lease-holder, however, a higher specification of reinstatement can be undertaken.

3.7 Assessment and reporting of results

Immediately upon completion of the site work an assessment of the site archive will be undertaken to include all written, drawn, and photographic records, artefacts and ecofacts/samples.

Artefacts will be assessed to provide dating, social, economic, and technological information. Special or unusual features would be highlighted and reference made to other material recovered from the immediate environs of the evaluation site. Reference will be made to Worcestershire's ceramic on-line data-base for a type fabric series and physical examination of the original type series reference collection will be undertaken as necessary.

The requirements for artefact conservation will be assessed and discussed with a specialist conservator.

The suitability of deposits identified for palaeoenvironmental analysis will be assessed and with the agreement of the Planning Archaeologist samples requiring analysis would be forwarded to a specialist sub-contractor.

A site matrix will be prepared to include all contexts identified during the sample excavation.

A report will be produced on completion of the fieldwork. This report will be sent in draft form to the client and to Worcestershire's Historic Environment Planning Advisor to allow comment and review to take place prior to formal submission. The report will be structured along the following lines:

A non-technical summary

An introduction with development details, planning requirements, location, geological background and description of the evaluation area

A brief summary of the archaeological/historical background of the area and previous investigation, indicating past and present land use, accompanied by relevant maps, plans and photographs as necessary to help in understanding the context of any archaeological remains discovered by the evaluation

A statement of the project aims and objectives

A description of the strategy and methodology employed, and any constraints

A description of archaeological discoveries, including any archaeologically significant features/artefacts or potential features/deposits identified within the site, and general stratigraphic development

A description of the finds and palaeoenvironmental samples collected including an exposition of the methodologies employed, a statement on the presence or absence of material and an assessment of preservation. An interpretation of the finds including reference to any unusual or important features of the assemblage will also be included. Specialist reports will be included of all important groups of finds, materials and samples

Plans and section drawings at appropriate scales, and photographic plates

Other maps, plans, drawings and photographs as appropriate

A discussion of the location, nature, extent, date, quality, condition and significance of any archaeological deposits/features uncovered, together with a discussion of their relationship with known archaeology in the vicinity

An interpretation of the results with a statement of the significance of any identified archaeological features/sites on a local, regional and national scale

An identification of any research implications arising from the work

A bibliography of sources consulted and a supplementary bibliography of any sources identified, but not available for consultation.

3.8 Archive

Worcestershire County Museum will be notified of the intention to deposit the project archive and any acceptance details discussed. If allocated a code by the museum this will be attached to all significant documents and packaging.

The project archive will consist of all original records, artefacts, ecofacts/samples and all documentation that relates to the archaeological works. Copies of the project design and any relevant correspondence will be included. Although all artefacts belong to the landowner a deed of transfer to the museum will be negotiated.

The archive will be prepared according to the Management of Archaeological Projects, English Heritage, Second Edition, (1991) so the records will be fully ordered and indexed. The archive will comply with the United Kingdom Institute for Conservation (Archaeology Section) Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long-Term Storage (1990) the Society of Museum Archaeologists Towards An Accessible Archive (1995) and to the reasonable requirements of Worcestershire County Museum.

A synopsis of the project will be submitted to CBA West Midlands.

4.0 HEALTH AND SAFETY

SLR operates in accordance with the health and safety procedures as set out in:-

- the *Health and Safety at Work Act 1974* and related legislation.
- the *Health and Safety Manual* of the Standing Conference of Archaeology Unit Managers (2002)
- the Council for British Archaeology Handbook no. 6, *Safety in Archaeological Fieldwork* (1989)
- the *Construction Design and Management Regulation* (1994)
- and the *SLR Health and Safety Handbook*.

Generic Risk Assessments exist for the principal types of archaeological work, although project specific risk assessments will also be produced prior to the commencement of the project.

Personal protective clothing and equipment will be used as necessary.

It will be the responsibility of the client to supply information on below-ground services. In addition a CAT scanning device will be used before and whilst trenching is in progress. It is not envisaged that security fencing will be necessary as the land is on private property and the trenches will not be deep.

5.0 RESOURCES AND PROGRAMMING

5.1 Staffing

The project will be managed by Tim Malim, a Principal with SLR Consulting, and will be directed on site by Dr. Andy Towle. It is envisaged that a small team of archaeologists will be needed to execute the site works quickly and expediently.

Artefact assessment will be undertaken by a team of self-employed specialists if in-house skills are not available. The likely areas requiring specialist input are:

Palaeoenvironmental assessment: John Carrott, Palaeoecology Research Services, Durham

Lithics: Dr George Nash (SLR)

Ceramics: Dr Alan Vince

5.2 Plant

Plant hire and welfare facilities will be sourced locally; the client has a preferred supplier.

5.3 Programme

The provisional plan is for a first phase of evaluation to consist of 200 linear metres of trial trenching within the northern part of the application area. The works will take approximately a week to complete.

A second phase of evaluation will follow consisting of 300 linear metres of trenching within the western part of the application area, the Phase 2A landtake.

A third phase of evaluation will include the Phase 2b and Phase 3 landtake, in the southern and eastern parts of the application area.

Contingency areas of trenching will be allocated based upon the results from the initial trenching exercises, following discussion with Worcestershire's HE Planning Advisor. The programme has to be flexible, however, because of the presence of two gas pipelines and the requirements of current farming needs, heavily dependent on weather conditions. The availability of fields is dependent on grass cutting and movement of stock.

Report preparation will include processing and assessment of any samples and artefacts collected during the trial trenching, and a duration of 1 month from completion of site works is estimated as an appropriate period in which the report can be undertaken.

6.0 COPYRIGHT

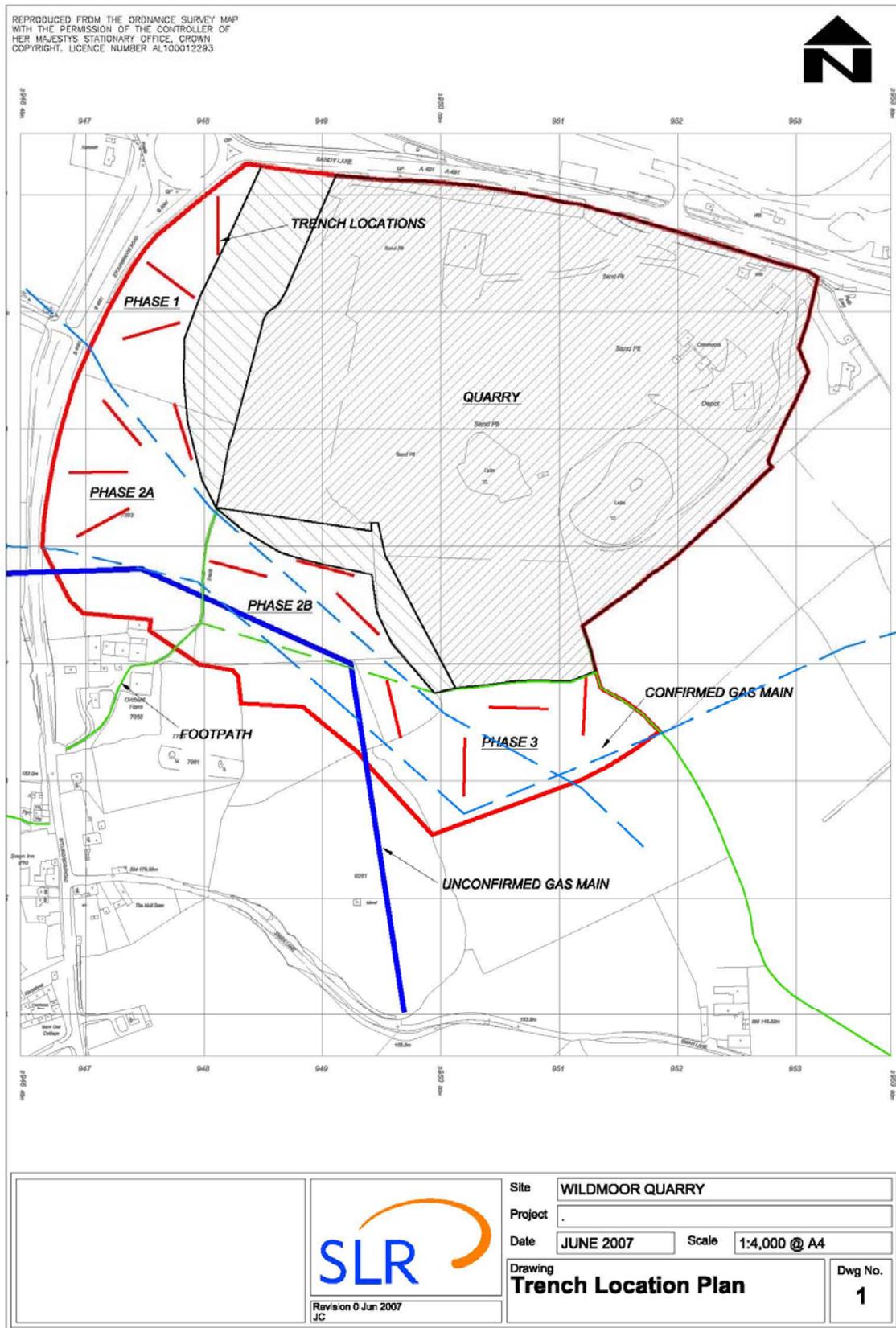
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7.0 CLOSURE

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