

Walcot Lane, Drakes Broughton: Results of an Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation



Produced for: Brett Stevenson, on behalf of Elan Homes Midlands Ltd

Prepared by: Kath Bentley and Carmen Dahlke

Report Number: 097/2018

TPA Project Code: WAL

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Approved by	Dr. Howard Jones, Regional Director
Signed	
Date	27/06/2018
Status	Evaluation Report

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Summary

- Between the 11th and 12th June 2018, Trent & Peak Archaeology, on behalf of Brett Stevenson and Elan Homes Ltd, were commissioned to undertake a trial trench evaluation on land at Walcot Meadows, Walcot Lane (SO 92946 48419), prior to residential redevelopment.
- Topsoil and a thin layer of upper subsoil were removed under archaeological supervision using a mechanical excavator with a toothless ditching bucket to achieve an adequate level of visibility of archaeological features.
- The archaeological mitigation works were requested by the County Archaeologist in his response to a consultation on an outline application for 32 dwellings (planning ref W/14/00273/OU), and comprised the excavation of 3 trenches measuring c.50m x 1.6m.
- No finds or features of archaeological significance were observed during the trial trenching, with the exception of a series of ceramic field drains which appeared to extend across the site. These drains may relate to the extended use of the land as an orchard, which was associated with the Church of St. Barnabas until c.1955 (Robson-Glyde 2014). The desk based assessment suggests that the PDA has remained on the periphery of historic development, which has had a more northerly focus.
- No evidence (either of occupation or cultivation) was observed during the evaluation to shed light on the medieval origins of settlement at Drakes Broughton.

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Acknowledgements

Thanks are extended to Brett Stephenson (Elan Homes Midlands Ltd) for commissioning the work. The project was managed by Tom Hooley (TPA) and undertaken in the field by Project Officer Kath Bentley and Project Supervisor Carmen Dahlke. Thanks are further extended to Aidan Smyth, Archaeology and Planning Adviser for Wychavon and Malvern Hills District Councils for his advice and guidance during this phase of mitigation.

All illustrations were compiled by Norma Oldfield.

1 Introduction

1.1 Project Background

- 1.1.1 Trent & Peak Archaeology were commissioned by Brett Stevenson, on behalf of Elan Homes Midlands Ltd to undertake a trial trench evaluation on land at Walcot Meadows, Walcot Lane, Drakes Broughton, Pershore, Worcestershire prior to development. This report concerns the results of this trial trench evaluation, centred on SO 92946 48419 (Figure 1).
- 1.1.2 The evaluation took place between the 11th and 12th June 2018, and involved the excavation monitoring and recording of 3 trial trenches all measuring c.50m x 1.6m.
- 1.1.3 Trial trenching followed an earlier phase of non-intrusive archaeological works comprising a desk based assessment (hereafter DBA), and a geophysical survey. The combined results were consistent with low archaeological potential (these are considered in more detail below, Section 2.2).
- 1.1.4 The evaluation described herein was conducted in line with the methodology set out in the approved Written Scheme of Investigation produced by Trent & Peak Archaeology (Owen 2018).

2 Site Background

2.1 Geology and Topography

- 2.1.1 The proposed development area (hereafter PDA) is centred on SO 92950 48404, approximately 208m south east of Drakes Broughton village hall, occupying an approximate area of 1.85 hectares which is currently used as sheep pasture. The field slopes gently to the south and west from 44-39m AOD. The site is bounded to the north by residential development, which forms the greater part of the village of Drakes Broughton, and to the south by roadways (B4084) and “ancient and replanted” woodland, with pasture, and agricultural farm land dominating the wider landscape.
- 2.1.2 The underlying bedrock geology of the site consists of Charmouth Mudstone Formation. Sedimentary Bedrock formed approximately 183 to 199 million years ago in the Jurassic Period. No superficial geological deposits are recorded for the site (British Geological Survey).
- 2.1.3 The overlying soils of the site consist of slightly acid loamy and clayey soils with impeded drainage (www.landis.org.uk/soilscapes).

2.2 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 2.2.1 A desk based assessment was undertaken by Worcestershire Archaeology (Robson-Glyde 2014). This identified no designated or undesignated heritage assets within the PDA. The archaeological and historical background summary presented below is derived from this work, supplemented by a search of the WSHER Gateway. The latter provided no additional finds or sites to those already listed in the desk based assessment for the PDA, although the expanded search area (a 1km radius) listed additional material from the wider area (Section 2.3).
- 2.2.2 A geophysical survey of the PDA identified no significant archaeological features. Two anomalies were observed, both relating to post-medieval – modern agricultural activity; comparison with OS mapping and an aerial photograph dating to 1945 supporting identification as a building and a trackway (Stratascan 2014).
- 2.2.3 A scatter of stray finds reported by the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) indicate probable sporadic occupational activity from the Neolithic to the Medieval periods, including a Neolithic flint awl, a Bronze Age hand axe, an early-medieval strap-end and several Medieval coins and later post-Medieval tokens (Jetton’s) (Robson-Glyde 2014).

- 2.2.4 The exact location of the deserted medieval village of Brocturn is unknown, but place-name evidence strongly suggests that some form of settlement was in place by c.1066. The Domesday record of c.1086 records a 'very small' agricultural settlement with 24 inhabitants (J. J. Palmer 2018). Brocturn is defined as 'brook-farm'; with the addition of prefix "Drakes" belonging to a family name derivative recorded in the 13th century. Evidence of medieval ridge and furrow (WSM2618) to the south of the development area attests to open field cultivation consistent with dispersed agricultural settlement.
- 2.2.5 An assessment of land, and potential archaeological characteristics detailed by Mindykowski (2010) suggest a series of earthwork and cropmark features to the north of Drake's Broughton pertaining to probable medieval settlement activity. Locations of these features are unknown, but may represent a series of dispersed hamlets rather than nucleated settlement activity.
- 2.2.6 Map regression conducted as part of the DBA (Robson-Glyde 2014) shows the PDA to be in-use as a fruit bearing orchard belonging to the nearby Church of St. Barnabas until at least c.1955. It is unclear when the orchard was established, but it appears to have been much more densely vegetated in the later c.19th century, before being cleared in the later c.20th.

2.3 Historic Environment Record (HER) Trail

- 2.3.1 An additional data search was conducted by Trent & Peak Archaeology, in tandem with Worcester City and Worcestershire HER, to assess the degree of potential archaeology within a wider (1km) radius of the development area.
- 2.3.2 There are no scheduled ancient monuments, registered parks or gardens, or historic battlefields within a 1km radius of the development area. A summary of data recorded by the local Worcester City and Worcestershire HER is recorded below.

2.3.3 Prehistoric

- 2.3.4 An area of recorded Palaeolithic potential (WSM56947), located approximately 665m north east of the development area, within a gravel terrace. This yielded significant faunal and artefactual remains relating to Neanderthal and early Homo Sapien activity. These were recorded by a systematic environmental analysis by Worcester Archive and Archaeological Service. A similar gravel terrace exists on land at the development site. There is therefore moderate potential for similarly preserved palaeoenvironmental deposits on land at Walcot Meadow, however, trenches are unlikely to reach a depth at which these deposits would be disturbed.

2.3.5 Medieval

- 2.3.6 The HER records 13 observed incidences of preserved medieval ridge and furrow bounding the development area on all sides. These are recorded as: WSM57869, WSM02618, WSM02613, WSM02616, WSM70086, WSM02609, WSM57875, WSM57874, WSM57873, WSM02612, WSM02615, WSM02611, and WSM02614. No observation of ridge and furrow has been made within the development area; however it is possible that later landscaping and development has truncated these as superficial cropmarks. There appeared to be significant potential for further medieval ridge and furrow to be observed within the current phase of archaeological mitigation.
- 2.3.7 Scatter finds of two 13th and 15th century copper alloy Jetton and a heavily clipped silver coin are noted (WSM65612 & WSM63219) within a 1km radius. The site of Drakes Broughton has been suggested as a possible location for a medieval shrunken or deserted village (WSM32558), however, this is unconfirmed. The relative antiquity in place-name evidence (see above; 2.1.5) suggests that a settlement has been in place for some time, although this may have been dispersed in character.

2.3.8 Modern

- 2.3.9 Several 19th century agricultural buildings are recorded by the Worcestershire HER within a 1km radius of the development area. None hold grade listing status. A search of these

buildings and associated information is accessible via:

<http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway>.

- 2.3.10 A WWII crash site is recorded south of Drakes Broughton (WSM47199) centred at NGR SO 929 475. The records indicate a crash site of a “Vickers Wellington Mk III serial number Bk594 of 23 Operational Training Unit on the 2nd August 1943 at 17:05. The crash was attributed to engine failure following an aborted landing. The plane was forced to crash land injuring all aboard. One crew member succumbed to their injuries the following day”.

3 Aims and Objectives

- 3.1.1 The overall aim of the programme of archaeological works was to obtain sufficient information as to the archaeological significance and potential of the site to allow reasoned and informed recommendations to be made on the application for the development.
- 3.1.2 General objectives were
- To determine the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any archaeological remains within the development site
 - To assess the vulnerability/sensitivity of any exposed remains
 - To assess the impact of previous land use on the site
 - To assess the potential for the survival of environmental evidence
 - To inform a strategy to avoid or mitigate impacts of the proposed development on surviving archaeological remains
 - To produce a site archive for deposition with an appropriate museum, and to provide information for accession to the Worcestershire HER.

4 Methodology

Excavation Methodology

- 4.1.1 The trial trench evaluation comprised the excavation of 3 trenches measuring 50m x 1.6m in locations agreed with the Archaeology and Planning Adviser for Wychavon and Malvern District Councils.
- 4.1.2 All work was undertaken by suitably qualified and experienced archaeologists in accordance with accepted archaeological practice and the Standard & Guidance produced by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2014a).
- 4.1.3 Topsoil and subsoil was removed using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. All such mechanical excavation was undertaken under the supervision of T&PA staff. Mechanical excavation ceased at the first archaeologically significant horizon or when the absence of any such horizon was adequately demonstrated.
- 4.1.4 The trenches and any archaeological features were accurately located using GPS, Leica CS15/GS15 RTK Differential GNSS. The excavations were conducted in accordance with the CIfA *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Field Evaluation* (CIfA 2014a) and *Code of Conduct* (CIfA 2014b).

Recording

- 4.1.5 Trenches were hand cleaned and two representative sections of each trench were photographed, and drawn at 1:20. The position of each trench is located with reference to the OS grid (Figure 2).
- 4.1.6 Sections (Figures 3) show the same information, but levelling information is given in the form of a datum line with O.D/arbitrary value. The locations of all sections are shown on plan.
- 4.1.7 Digital images of each context were taken together with general views illustrating the principal features of the excavations.
- 4.1.8 Written records were maintained as laid down in the T&PA recording manual.

5 Results

5.1 Overview

- 5.1.1 Trial trenching on land at Walcot Meadows, Drakes Broughton, consisted of 3 trenches across an area of c.1.85 hectares. Machine excavation revealed a consistent depth of topsoil and subsoil across the site, with an average topsoil thickness of c.0.24-0.34m that gradually increased to the north-east. Subsoil was observed with a depth of c.0.1-0.14m across the development area. British Geological Survey (BGS 2018) indicates that this area of the PDA falls outside of the known sand and gravel terrace located to the west and south.
- 5.1.2 The natural substratum comprised a hard yellow brown sandy clay (0103, 0203, and 0303), which was overlain by a friable yellowish-brown silt clay subsoil (0102, 0202, 0302) and dark silt-clay topsoil (0101, 0201, 0301). These deposits were consistent across the site. The land is currently down to grass and is in use as sheep pasture.
- 5.1.3 Trenches were positioned so as to provide the broadest coverage of the PDA as possible.
- 5.1.4 All trenches were subject to standardised T&PA recording methods (T&PA 2015), and are detailed below in section 8.
- 5.2 **Trench 01 (50.5m x 1.6m).** Linear trench aligned north north-east by south south-west, situated within the north-western area of the site (Figures 02, 03).
 - 5.2.1 The natural substratum (0103) comprised a pale to mid-yellow brown sand clay with occasional angular mudstone inclusions. Trench 01 was cut into the substratum layer by 0.06m. Approximately 7 cuts for ceramic field drains were identified in plan within the base of the machine excavated trench, which intersected the features at an approximate right angle. These were aligned approximately north north-west by south south-east, with an average spacing of c.7.1m. Limited investigation revealed these to be horseshoe shaped. These were not recorded in any further detail. Natural substratum (0103) was overlain by an upper subsoil (0102) which was comprised of a friable mid-yellowish brown silt clay approximately 0.12m thick which was sealed by topsoil (0101). The topsoil layer was 0.22-0.36m thick and comprised a dark brown silt-clay. Excavation revealed no other finds, features or deposits of archaeological significance.
- 5.3 **Trench 02 (50.2m x 1.6m).** Linear trench aligned north-west by south-east, situated within the north-eastern area of the site (Figures 02, 03).
 - 5.3.1 The natural substratum (0203) was composed of pale to mid yellow-brown sand clay. The substrate was underlying subsoil layer (0202) of friable mid-yellowish brown silt clay 0.14m in thickness. Overlying subsoil (0202) was topsoil layer (0201) 0.32m in depth and composed of

dark brown silt-clay with wild long grass. Excavation revealed no finds, features or deposits of archaeological significance.

- 5.4 **Trench 03 (52m x 1.6m).** Linear trench aligned north-east by south-west, situated within the south-western area of the site (Figures 02, 03).
- 5.4.1 Trench 03 was cut c.0.04m into the natural substratum (0303), which comprised a pale to mid-yellow-brown sand clay with occasional angular mudstone inclusions. Approximately 7 cuts for ceramic field drains were identified in plan within the base of the machine excavated trench, which intersected the features at an oblique angle. These were identified along the same north north-west by south south-east alignment, with an average spacing of c.7.1m that continued north into Trench 01. Limited investigation revealed these to be similarly horseshoe shaped, and were not recorded in any further detail. These were sealed by a layer of upper subsoil, (0302) comprised of a friable mid-yellowish brown silt clay measuring c.0.05-0.12m in thickness. This in turn was overlain by a layer of topsoil (0103), measuring c. 0.18-0.26m in thickness, which consisted of a friable, dark-brown silt-clay. Excavation revealed no other finds, features or deposits of archaeological significance.

6 Discussion

- 6.1 No finds, features or deposits of archaeological significance were observed during the trial trench evaluation of land at Walcot Meadows, Walcot Lane, Drakes Broughton in Worcestershire. Three trenches were machine excavated, each measuring approximately 1.6m x 50m. This comprised a 2% sample of the PDA, the latter comprising 1.85 ha.
- 6.2 No evidence of previous activity was observed, with the exception of a series of horseshoe shaped ceramic field drains following a north north-west by south south-east alignment that appeared to extend across the site, also identified by the geophysical survey (Bartlett-Clark 2017). These drains may relate to the extended use of the land as an orchard, which was associated with the Church of St. Barnabas until c.1955 (Robson-Glyde 2014). The desk based assessment suggests that the PDA has remained on the periphery of historic development, which has had a more northerly focus.
- 6.3 No evidence (either of occupation or cultivation) was observed during the evaluation to shed light on the medieval origins of settlement at Drakes Broughton.

7 Bibliography

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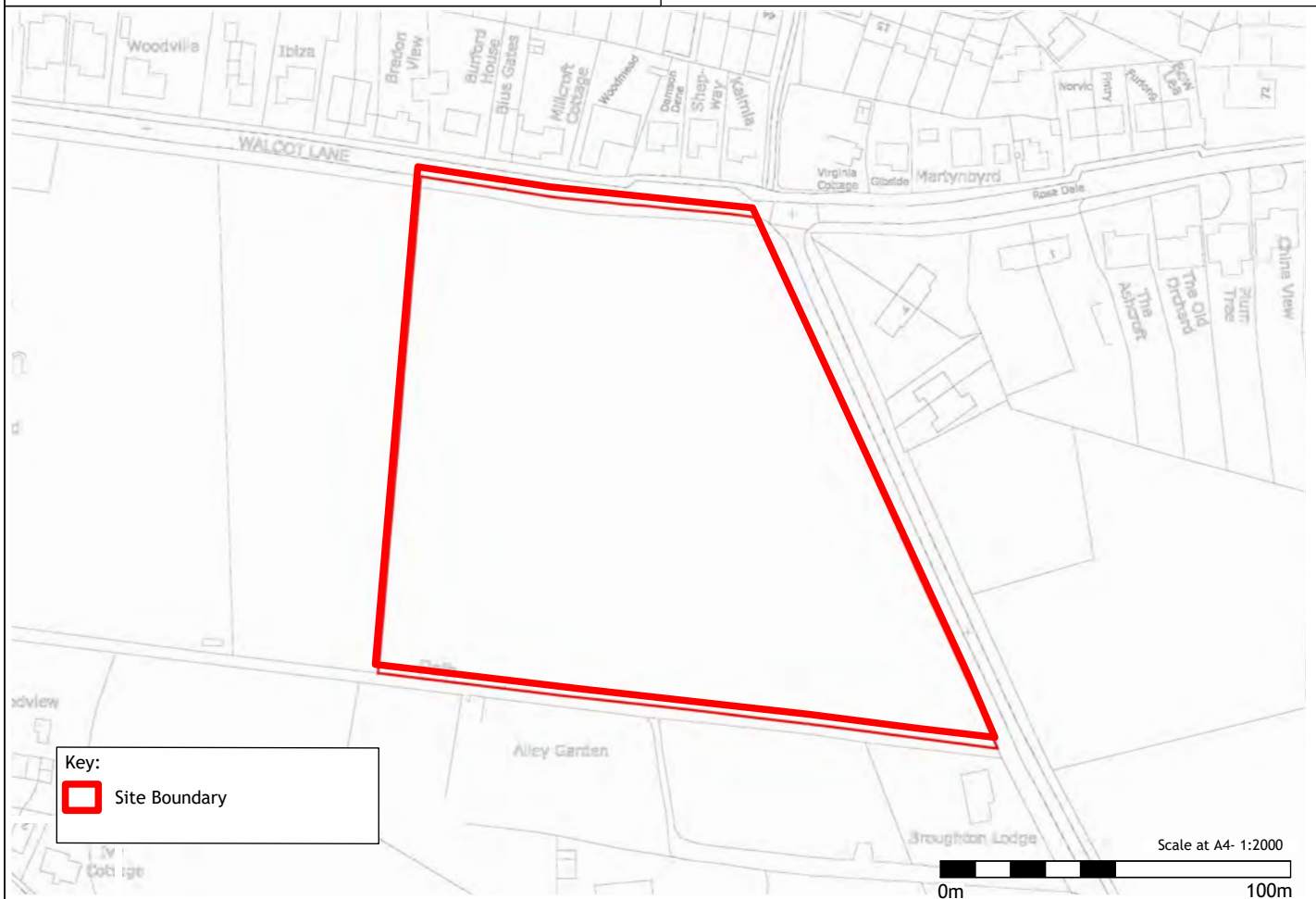
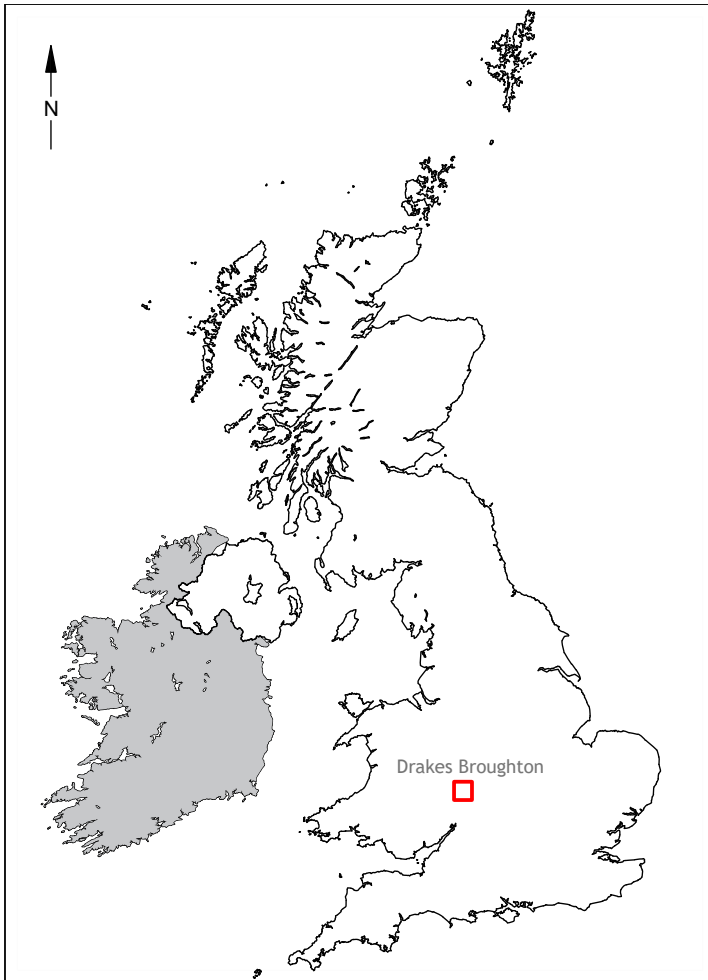
8 Trench logs

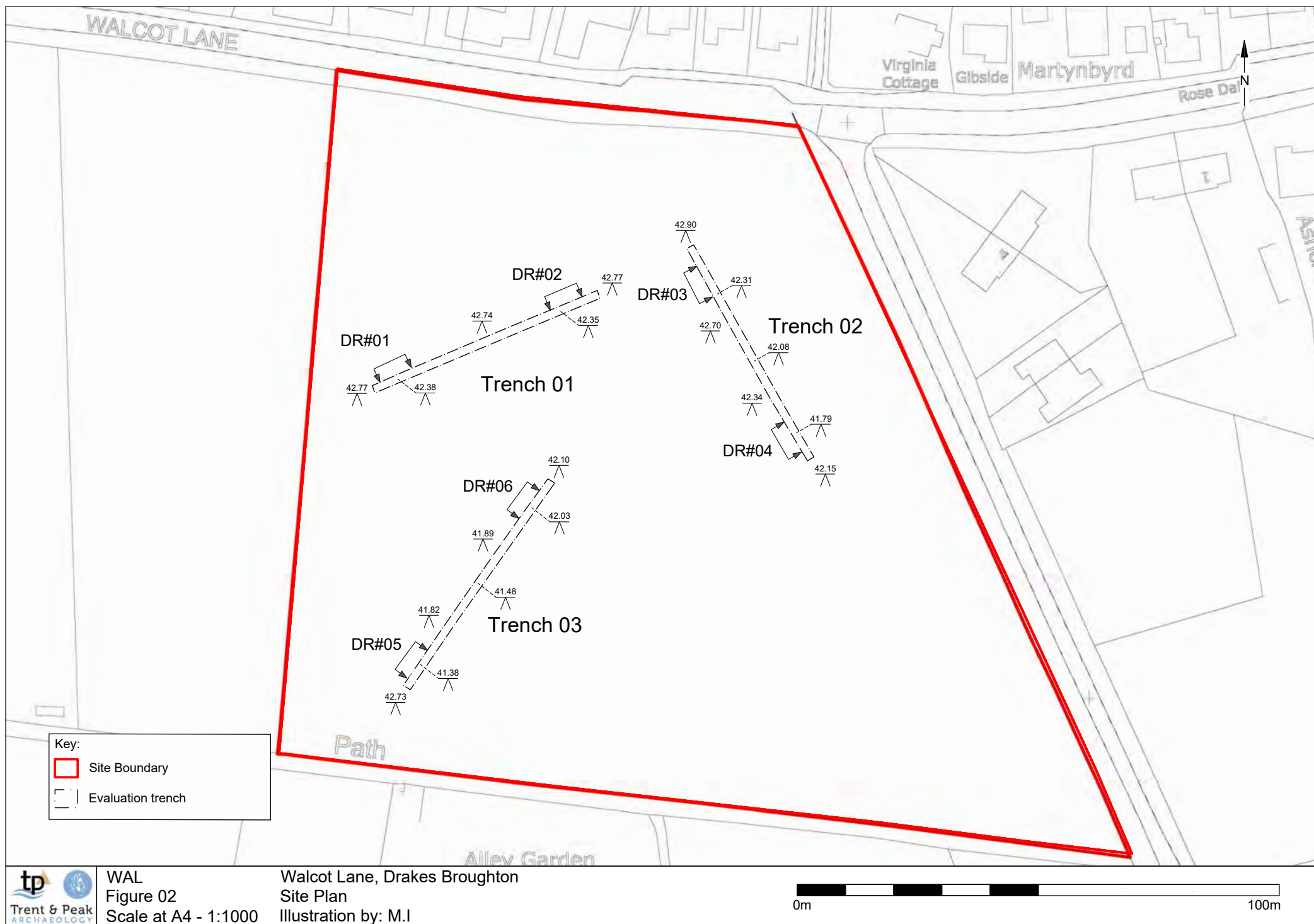
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Context	Type	Description			Thickness
(0101)	Layer	Topsoil Friable dark brown silty clay			0.24m
(0102)	Layer	Subsoil Friable yellowish brown silty clay			0.12m
(0103)	Layer	Natural Hard light yellowish brown sandy clay			-

Trench 02					
Trench Dimensions (LxW)	50.2 x 1.60m	Trench Alignment	NW-SE	Trench Depth	0.56
Context	Type	Description			Thickness
(0201)	Layer	Topsoil Friable dark brown silty clay			0.32m
(0202)	Layer	Subsoil Friable yellowish brown silty clay			0.14m
(0203)	Layer	Natural Hard light yellowish brown sandy clay			-

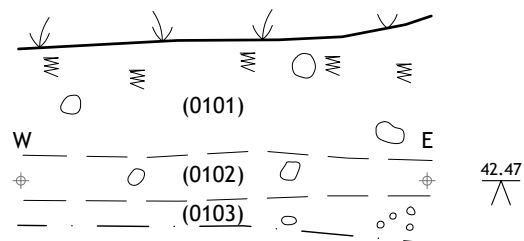
Trench 03					
Trench Dimensions (LxW)	52 x 1.60m	Trench Alignment	NE-SW	Trench Depth	0.38m
Context	Type	Description			Thickness
(0301)	Layer	Topsoil Friable dark brown silty clay			0.24m
(0302)	Layer	Subsoil Friable yellowish brown silty clay			0.10m
(0303)	Layer	Natural Hard light yellowish brown sandy clay			-

9 Figures

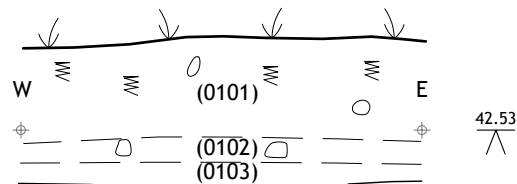




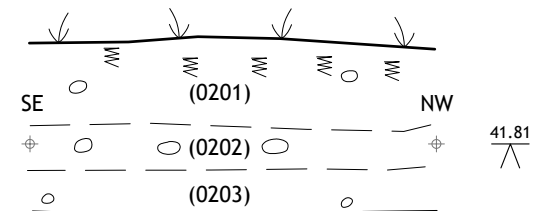
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South Facing Representative Section Of Trench 01



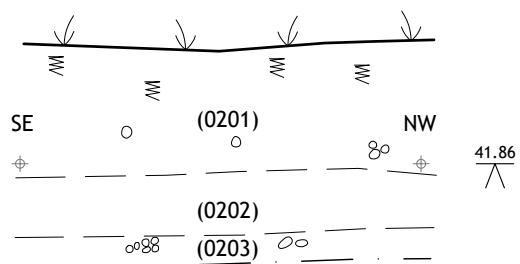
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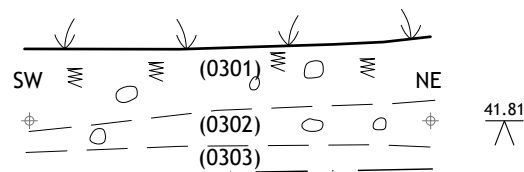
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North East Facing Representative Section Of Trench 02



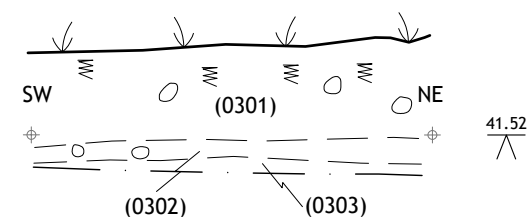
DR#04
North East Facing Representative Section Of Trench 02



DR#05
South East Facing Representative Section Of Trench 03



DR#06
South East Facing Representative Section Of Trench 03



10 Plates



Plate 1: Trench 1 overview looking east. Scale 1m x 1m.



Plate 2: Trench 01 representative southeast facing section, looking northwest. Scale 1m.



Plate 3: Trench 2 overview looking southeast. Scale 1m x 1m.



Plate 4: Trench 02 representative northeast facing section, looking southwest. Scale 1m.



Plate 5: Trench 3 overview looking northeast. Scale 1m x 1m.



Plate 6: Trench 03 representative southeast facing section, looking northwest. Scale 1m.

Appendix 1: Index of Archive and Arrangements for Deposition

<i>Field Records</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Number</i>
Trench record sheets	Register of context numbers and descriptions	3
Context sheets	Record of features and deposits	9
Photo record sheet	Record of photographs taken	1
Digital photographs	All views	89
Site drawings	Plans or sections of site	3
<i>Documents</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Number</i>
Written scheme of investigation	Statement of the aims, objectives and methodology for the project.	1
Health & Safety	Safe working statement & risk assessment	1
Report to client	Report of findings of the watching brief.	1
<i>Find</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Number</i>
Artefact	Nil	Nil
Ecofact	Nil	Nil

The site archive is currently held at the offices of Trent & Peak Archaeology, Unit 1, Holly Lane, Chilwell, Nottingham, NG9 4AB.

Appendix 2: OASIS Data Collection Form

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

[List of Projects](#) | [Manage Projects](#) | [Search Projects](#) | [New project](#) | [Change your details](#) | [HER coverage](#) | [Change country](#) | [Log out](#)

[Printable version](#)

OASIS ID: trentpea1-320302

Project details

Project name	WALCOT LANE, DRAKES BROUGHTON, PERSHORE
Short description of the project	Between the 11th and 12th June 2018, Trent and Peak Archaeology, on behalf of Brett Stevenson and Elan Homes Ltd, were commissioned to undertake a trial trench evaluation on land at Walcot Meadows, Walcot Lane (SO 92946 48419), prior to residential redevelopment. Topsoil and a relatively thin layer of upper subsoil were removed under archaeological supervision using a mechanical excavator with a toothless ditching bucket to achieve an adequate level of visibility of archaeological features. The archaeological mitigation works were requested by the County Archaeologist in his response to a consultation on an outline application for 32 dwellings (planning ref W/14/00273/OU), and comprised the excavation of 3 trenches measuring c.50m x 1.6m. No archaeological finds, features, or deposits were observed during this trial trench investigation. The trial trench evaluation supports the notion that the proposed development area has seen less development than land to the north and west, and maintains a more rural character. The presence of a possible shrunken medieval village within the locality could not be confirmed by this limited excavation, although place-name and ridge and furrow cropmark evidence would suggest the presence of a small village with an agricultural focus may be situated further to the north.
Project dates	Start: 11-06-2018 End: 12-06-2018
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	WAL - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Grassland Heathland 2 - Undisturbed Grassland
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	"Targeted Trenches"
Development type	Rural residential
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country	England
Site location	WORCESTERSHIRE WYCHAVON DRAKES BROUGHTON AND WADBOROUGH WALCOT LANE, DRAKES BROUGHTON

Postcode	WR10 2AJ
Study area	1.85 Hectares
Site coordinates	SO 92946 48419 52.13361808053 -2.103069323659 52 08 01 N 002 06 11 W Point
Lat/Long Datum	Unknown
Height OD / Depth	Min: 39m Max: 44m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Trent and Peak Archaeology
Project brief originator	Trent and Peak Archaeology
Project design originator	Victoria Owen
Project director/manager	Tom Hooley
Project supervisor	Kath Bentley
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Trent and Peak Archaeology
Digital Contents	"none"
Digital Media available	"Database","Spreadsheets","Survey","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Trent and Peak Archaeology
Paper Contents	"none"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Correspondence","Drawing","Matrices","Notebook - Excavation',' Research',' General Notes","Photograph","Plan","Report","Section","Survey","Unpublished Text"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Walcot Lane, Drakes Broughton: Results of an Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Bentley, K., Dahlke, C., Owen, V.
Other bibliographic details	report number: 097/2018
Date	2018
Issuer or publisher	Trent and Peak Archaeology
Place of issue or publication	Trent and Peak Archaeology
Description	Grey literature, PDF
Entered by	Owen, V. (vowen@yorkat.co.uk)

Entered on

20 June 2018

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