



**Archaeological trial trench evaluation
on land at Warwick Road, Littlethorpe
Leicestershire
March 2014**

Report No: 14/76

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OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		Oasis No. molanort1-176615	
Project title	An Archaeological trial trench evaluation on land at Warwick Road, Littlethorpe, Leicestershire		
Short description	Nine trenches were excavated across the development area at Warwick Road, Littlethorpe, Leicestershire. A possible post-medieval or medieval plough furrow was recorded in the trench at the southern end of the area. No other archaeological features or finds were recorded.		
Project type	Trial Trenching		
Site Status	None		
Previous work	None		
Current land use	Agricultural land		
Future work	Unknown		
Monument type and period	Agricultural features – medieval to post-medieval		
Significant finds	None		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County	Leicestershire		
Site address	Warwick Road, Littlethorpe, Leicestershire		
Post code	LE19 2JA		
OS co-ordinates	NGR SP 54560 96816		
Area (sq m/ha)	Approximately 1.2ha		
Height aOD	c 65m AOD		
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation	MOLA		
Project brief originator	Leicestershire County Council		
Project Design originator	MOLA		
Director/Supervisor	Jim Burke (MOLA)		
Project Managers	Mark Holmes and Anthony Maul (MOLA)		
Sponsor or funding body	Pegasus Planning Group LLP for Eastern Range		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date	19/03/2014		
End date	24/03/2014		
ARCHIVES		Location (Accession no.)	Contents
Physical	X.A38.2014		None
Paper			Site records (1 small archive box)
Digital			Client report PDF, digital photos
BIBLIOGRAPHY			
Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (MOLA report)			
Title	An Archaeological trial trench evaluation on land at Warwick Road, Littlethorpe, Leicestershire April 2014		
Serial title & volume	14/76		
Author(s)	Liz Muldowney		
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An archaeological trial trench evaluation on land at Warwick Road, Littlethorpe Leicestershire March 2014

ABSTRACT

Nine trenches were excavated across the development area at Warwick Road, Littlethorpe, Leicestershire. A possible post-medieval or medieval plough furrow was recorded in the trench at the southern end of the subject area. No other archaeological features or finds were recorded.

1 INTRODUCTION

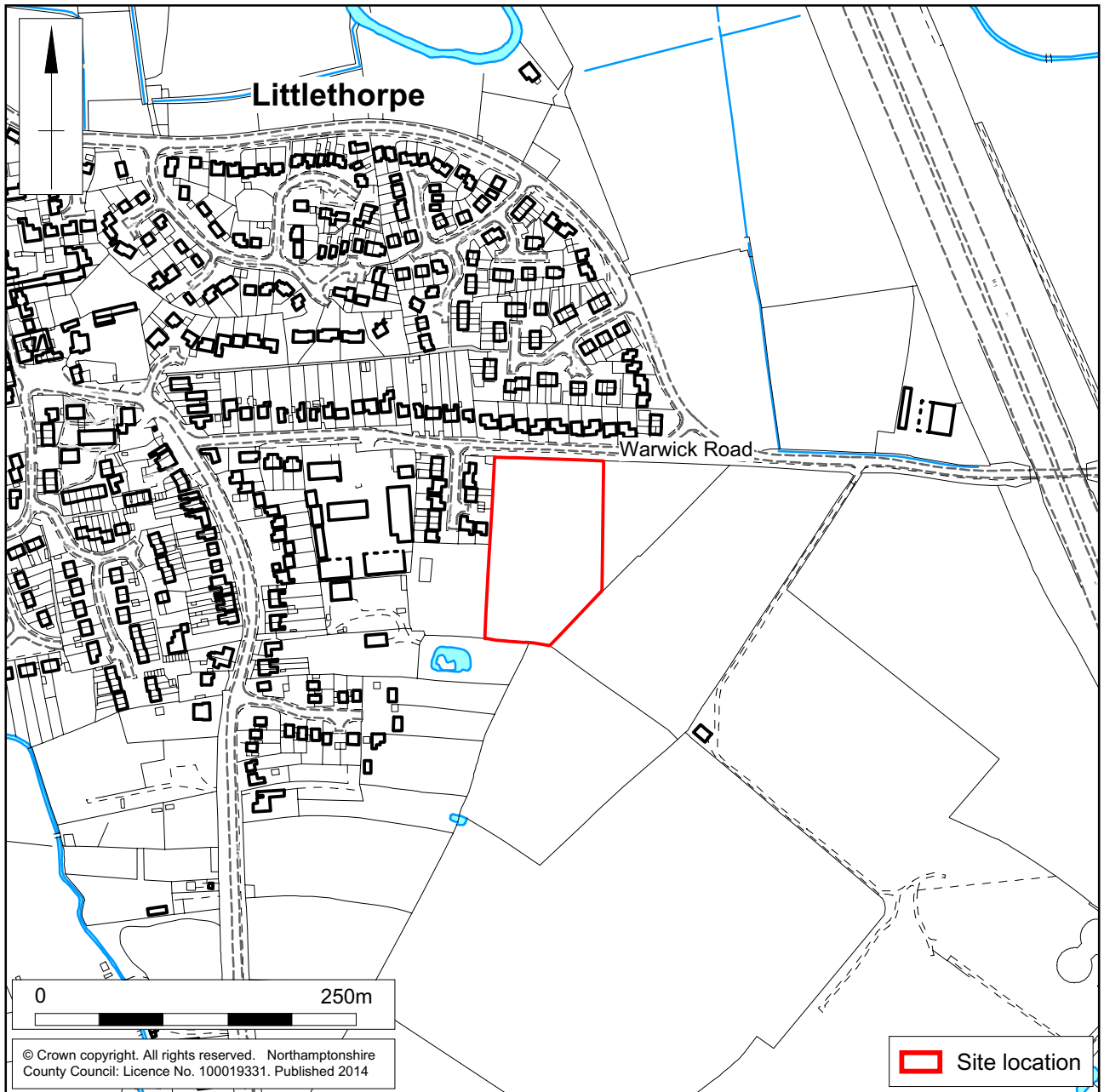
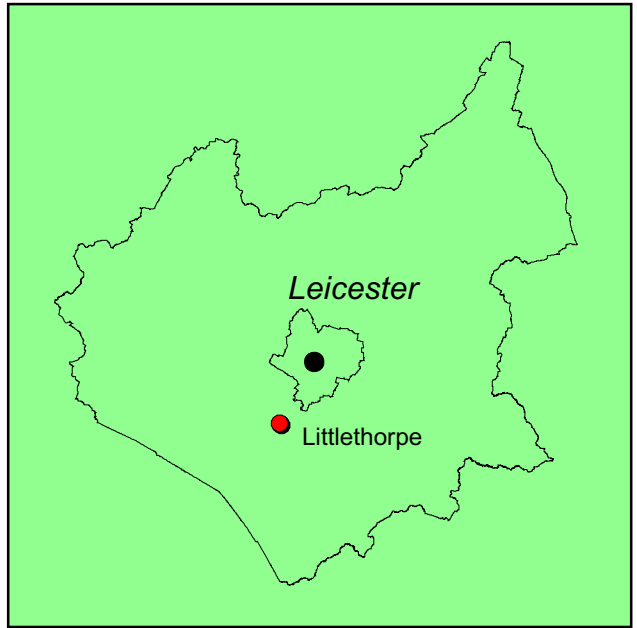
MOLA was commissioned by CgMs Consulting on behalf of Pegasus Planning Group Ltd for Eastern Range, to undertake an archaeological trial trench evaluation on a proposed development site on land at Warwick Road, Littlethorpe, Leicestershire (SP 54560 96816; Fig 1). The work was commissioned to assess the archaeological potential of a proposed development site. The trenching was designed to evaluate all available portions of the area subject to planning application.

All works were undertaken in accordance with *the National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012) and followed a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by MOLA (MOLA 2014a).

2 TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

The development area is within former agricultural land bounded to the north by Warwick Road, to the west partially by residential development and elsewhere by agricultural land (Fig 1).

Topographically the site is fairly flat at approximately 65m above Ordnance Datum. The geological mapping for the area indicates that the site is located on Branscombe Mudstone Member – Mudstone with superficial deposits of Thrussington Member – Diamicton till (BGS 2014).



Scale 1:5000

Site Location Fig 1

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of the investigation was to confirm the presence or absence of buried archaeological remains within the application area and establish their extent character and date.

The specific objectives of the project were to provide further information on the following:

- Identify and investigate the presence/absence, character, extent, date, integrity, state of preservation and quality of any known, suspected and as yet unknown archaeological features/deposits which may be present on the site whilst avoiding unnecessary loss and/or fragmentation of the archaeological resource as stated in the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI);
- Provide sufficient information within the report to enable the formulation of a suitable mitigation strategy and appropriate management of the archaeological resource, likely to be affected by the proposed development.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

A desk-based assessment (DBA) undertaken by CgMs for the site describes the known designated and non-designated heritage assets in the vicinity of the development area and the following is derived from this document (Dawson 2013).

There are no heritage assets recorded within the site limits. Scatters of worked flint dating to the Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age periods have been found in the vicinity of the site. Cropmarks of Bronze Age ring ditches and other features have been noted, though none are within 450m of the site.

Cropmarks of Iron Age enclosures have been identified to the south-west and north-east of the site and a late Iron Age/early Roman quern has been found 75m to the east. Isolated sherds of Roman pottery have been found in the wider area

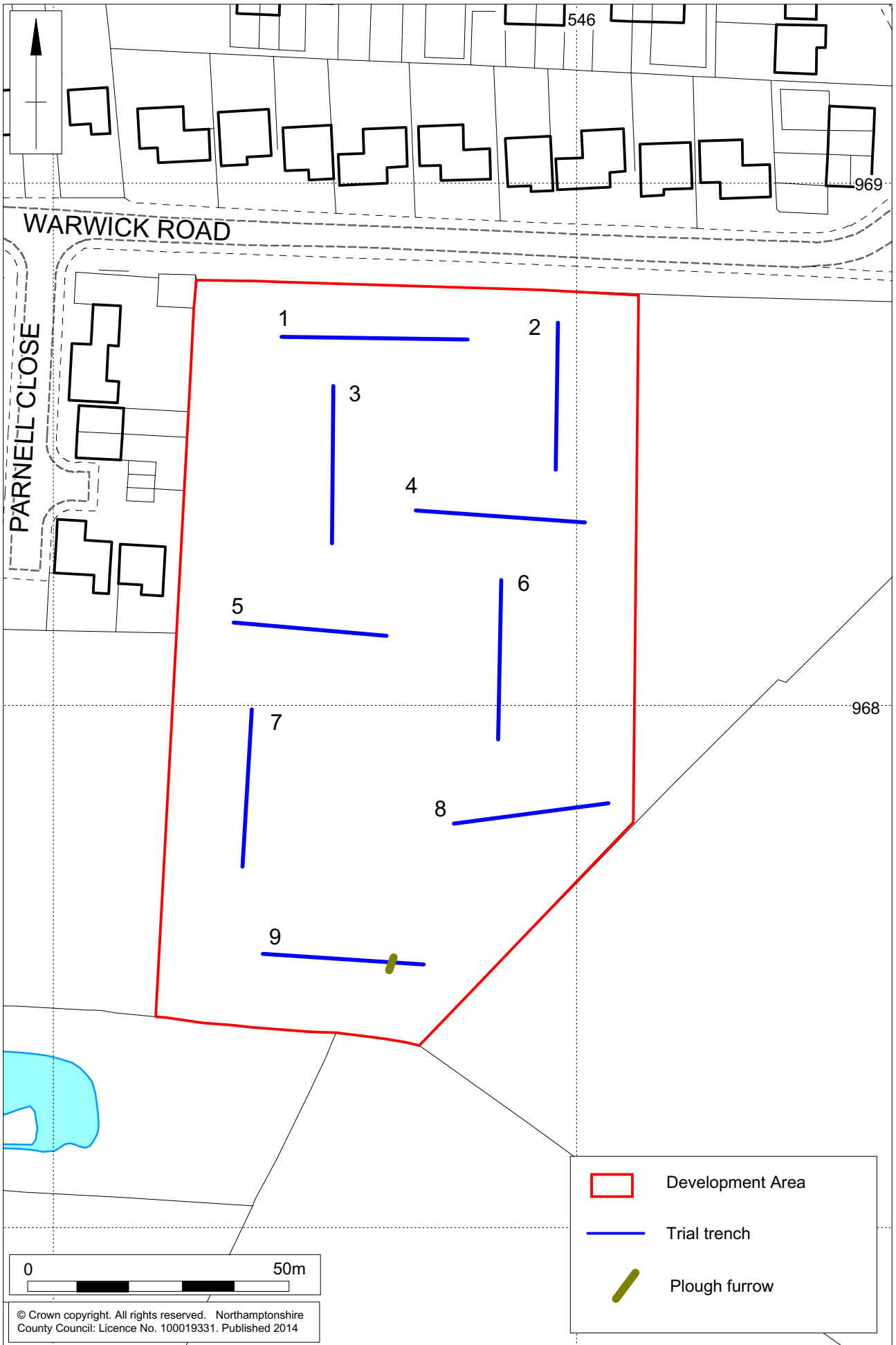
Littlethorpe is recorded in the Domesday Book as *Torp*. The Late Saxon, medieval and post-medieval settlement core is located some 100m to the north-west of the development area. The settlement was almost certainly surrounded by open fields during these periods and it is likely that the development area was part of this system

A geophysical survey undertaken in 2010 on fields immediately south of the application area located former ridge and furrow cultivation and a single undated ditch (Walker and Butler 2010).

5 METHODOLOGY

The trenches were excavated using a JCB wheeled excavator initially, due to adverse ground conditions this machine was replaced by a tracked 360^o excavator, both were fitted with a 1.8m-wide toothless ditching bucket.

Trenches were positioned using Leica System 1200 Global Positioning System (GPS) survey equipment using SMARTNET real-time corrections, operating to a 3D tolerance of $\pm 0.05\text{m}$. Trenches 1, 2 and 9 were moved from their planned positions because of standing water and the new locations recorded (Fig 2). All trenches were excavated under constant archaeological supervision to reveal archaeological remains or, where these were absent, undisturbed natural horizons. The topsoil and subsoil were stacked separately at the side of the excavated trenches.



Scale 1:1000

Trench plan Fig 2

The excavation and recording were carried out in accordance with MOLA guidelines, following the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (IfA 2008). All stages of the project were undertaken in accordance with English Heritage, *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (MoRPHE) (EH 2006).

Each trench was hand cleaned sufficiently to enhance the definition of features, unless it was certain that there were no archaeological remains present.

All archaeological deposits and artefacts identified during the course of evaluation were recorded following standard MOLA procedures (MOLA 2014b). Levels were related to the Ordnance Datum.

The excavated area and spoil heaps were scanned by metal detector. Photographs were taken of all trenches and any relevant deposits on 35mm monochrome print film, high resolution digital images were also taken.

6 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

Trench 1 was 35m by 1.8m, Trenches 2 to 9 were 30m by 1.8m. No archaeological features were recorded in Trenches 1 to 8; a furrow was recorded towards the eastern end of Trench 9 (Figs 2 and 3). It was aligned south-west to north-east, matching the alignment of furrows observed in the geophysical survey carried out in the field immediately to the south (Walker and Butler 2010).

Topsoil sealed the undisturbed superficial geological horizon in all trenches except at the northern end of Trench 3 where subsoil was observed and in Trench 9 where the interface between topsoil and the superficial deposits had been disturbed by wheel ruts or deep ploughing. No finds were recovered during the evaluation.



Furrow in Trench 9, looking south

Fig 3

7 CONCLUSION

The evaluation indicates that there are no archaeological remains within the investigated area with the exception of a single furrow relating to the medieval or post-medieval agricultural use of the land. Other furrows are likely to have been present but were probably removed during modern ploughing.

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MOLA 2014b *Archaeological Fieldwork Manual*, MOLA Northampton

Walker, C, and Butler, A, 2010 *Archaeological geophysical survey on land at Warwick Road, Littlethorpe, Leicestershire*, Northamptonshire Archaeology report, **10/55**

WEBSITES

www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex/home.html (accessed 4 April 2014)

MOLA

4 April 2014

APPENDIX: CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench No	Length, width & alignment		Surface height	Depth & height of natural
1	35m x1.8m E-W		64.9 aOD	0.32m deep 64.58 aOD
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
101	Topsoil	Dark brown firm silty clay with rare small stone inclusions	0.32m thick	-
102	Natural	Mid brown silty clay with frequent small stone inclusions	-	-



Trench 1, looking east

Fig 4

Trench No	Length, width & alignment		Surface height	Depth & height of natural
2	30m x1.8m N-S		64.73 aOD	0.33m deep 64.40 aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
201	Topsoil	Dark brown firm silty clay with rare small stone inclusions	0.33m thick	-
202	Natural	Mid brown silty clay with frequent small to medium stone inclusions	-	-



Trench 2, looking north

Fig 5

Trench No	Length, width & alignment		Surface height	Depth & height of natural
3	30m x1.8m N-S		65.19 aOD	0.37m deep 64.82 aOD
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
301	Topsoil	Dark brown firm silty clay with rare small stone inclusions	0.22m thick	-
302	Subsoil	Mid brown silty clay	0.15m thick	
303	Natural	Mid orange-brown silty clay moderate small stone inclusions	-	-



Trench 3, looking north

Fig 6

Trench No	Length, width & alignment		Surface height	Depth & height of natural
4	30m x1.8m WNW-ESE		64.88 aOD	0.30m deep 64.58 aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
401	Topsoil	Dark brown firm silty clay with rare small stone inclusions	0.30m thick	-
402	Natural	Mid brown silty clay with occasional small to medium stone inclusions	-	-



Trench 4, looking east-south-east

Fig 7

Trench No	Length, width & alignment		Surface height	Depth & height of natural
5	30m x1.8m WNW-ESE		64.88 aOD	0.38m deep 64.50 aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
501	Topsoil	Dark brown firm silty clay with rare small stone inclusions	0.38m thick	-
502	Natural	Mid orange-yellow sandy clay with moderate small stone inclusions	-	-



Trench 5, looking east-south-east

Fig 8

Trench No	Length, width & alignment		Surface height	Depth & height of natural
6	30m x1.8m N-S		64.73 aOD	0.30m deep 64.43 aOD
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
601	Topsoil	Dark brown firm silty clay with rare small stone inclusions	0.30m thick	-
602	Natural	Mid brown silty clay with occasional small stone inclusions	-	-



Trench 6, looking south

Fig 9

Trench No	Length, width & alignment		Surface height	Depth & height of natural
7	30m x1.8m N-S		64.97 aOD	0.27m deep 64.70 aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
701	Topsoil	Dark brown firm silty clay with rare small stone inclusions	0.27m thick	-
702	Natural	Mid orange-yellow sandy clay with moderate small stone inclusions	-	-



Trench 7, looking north

Fig 10

Trench No	Length, width & alignment		Surface height	Depth & height of natural
8	30m x1.8m WSW-ENE		64.70 aOD	0.30m deep 64.40 aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
801	Topsoil	Dark brown firm silty clay with rare small stone inclusions	0.30m thick	-
802	Natural	Mid brown silty clay with frequent small to medium stone inclusions	-	-



Trench 8, looking east-north-east

Fig 11

Trench No	Length, width & alignment		Surface height	Depth & height of natural
9	30m x1.8m WNW-ESE		64.90 aOD	0.28m deep 64.62 aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
901	Topsoil	Dark brown firm silty clay with rare small stone inclusions	0.16m thick	-
902	Layer	Mixed topsoil and natural interface above natural geological horizon	0.12m thick	
902	Natural	Light yellow sandy clay with occasional small stone inclusions	-	-



Trench 9, looking east-south-east

Fig 12



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