



Trial Trench Evaluation on land south of Northam Close Eye Green, Peterborough September 2014

Report No. 14/197

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Illustrator: Amir Bassir



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on land south of Northam Close
Eye Green, Peterborough
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Quality control and sign off:

Issue No.	Date approved:	Checked by:	Verified by:	Approved by:	Reason for Issue:
1	04/11/2014	P Chapman	E Muldowney	A Chapman	Draft for client review

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OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		OASIS No: mola-nort1-192880	
Project name	Archaeological trial trench evaluation on land south of Northam Close, Eye Green, Peterborough.		
Short description (250 words maximum)	MOLA was commissioned by Bletsoes, on behalf of Mrs J and Mr N Herbert, to carry out archaeological trial trenching on land south of Northam Close, Eye Green, Peterborough prior to proposed development of the site. Five trenches were excavated within the development area. A single shallow ditch is undated, but may have been part of a recent field boundary. Nothing further of archaeological interest was observed.		
Project type (eg DBA, evaluation etc)	Evaluation		
Site status (none, NT, SAM etc)	None		
Previous work (SMR numbers etc)	Geophysical survey (Fisher 2014)		
Current Land use	Pasture and sugar beet crop		
Future work (yes, no, unknown)	Unknown		
Monument type/ period	None		
Significant finds (artefact type and period)	None		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County	Cambridgeshire		
Site address (including postcode)	Land south of Northam Close, Eye Green, Peterborough		
Study area (sq.m or ha)	c 0.8ha		
OS Easting & Northing (use grid sq. letter code)	TF 229 038		
Height OD	c 8-9m		
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation	MOLA Northampton		
Project brief originator	Peterborough City Council Archaeological Advisor		
Project Design originator	MOLA		
Director/Supervisor	B Kidd		
Project Manager	E Muldowney		
Sponsor or funding body	Bletsoes		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date/End date	29/9/2014 – 1/10/2014		
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no.)	Content (eg pottery, animal bone etc)	
Physical	MOLA Northampton Offices: EGNC14	Pottery animal bone and other finds	
Paper	MOLA Northampton Offices: EGNC14	Site file	
Digital	MOLA Northampton Offices: EGNC14	Mapinfo plans, Word report	
BIBLIOGRAPHY			
Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (MOLA report)			
Title	Archaeological trial trench evaluation on land south of Northam Close, eye Green, Peterborough, September 2014		
Serial title & volume	14/197		
Author(s)	Ben Kidd		
Page numbers	11		
Date	04/11/2014		

Contents

- 1 INTRODUCTION
- 2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES
- 3 BACKGROUND
 - 3.1 Topography and geology
 - 3.2 Historical and archaeological background
- 4 EXCAVATION METHODOLOGY
- 5 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE
 - 5.1 General stratigraphy
 - 5.2 The archaeological features
- 6 THE FINDS
- 7 DISCUSSION

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Figures

Front cover: General site view looking south-east

Back cover: general site view looking east

Fig 1: Site location

Fig 2: Historic Environment Record (HER) data

Fig 3: Trench Locations

Fig 4: Ditch/furrow [304], looking west

Tables

Table 1: Historic Environment Record data for monuments close to Northam Close, Eye Green

APPENDIX: CONTEXT INVENTORY

**Archaeological trial trench evaluation
on land south of Northam Close
Eye Green, Peterborough
September 2014**

Abstract

MOLA was commissioned by Bletsoes, on behalf of Mrs J and Mr N Herbert to carry out archaeological trial trenching on land south of Northam Close, Eye Green, Peterborough prior to proposed development of the site. Five trenches were excavated within the development area. A single shallow ditch is undated, but may have been part of a recent field boundary. Nothing further of archaeological interest was observed.

1 INTRODUCTION

In September 2014, MOLA was commissioned by Bletsoes, on behalf of Mrs J and Mr N Herbert, to conduct an archaeological evaluation on land south of Northam Close, Eye Green, Peterborough (NGR TF 229 038) (Fig 1).

The Archaeological Advisor for Peterborough City Council (PCC) has advised that a programme of archaeological evaluation should be undertaken to determine the nature and extent of any archaeological remains within the Development Area (PCC 2013). The requirements were outlined in a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by MOLA (Chinnock 2014).

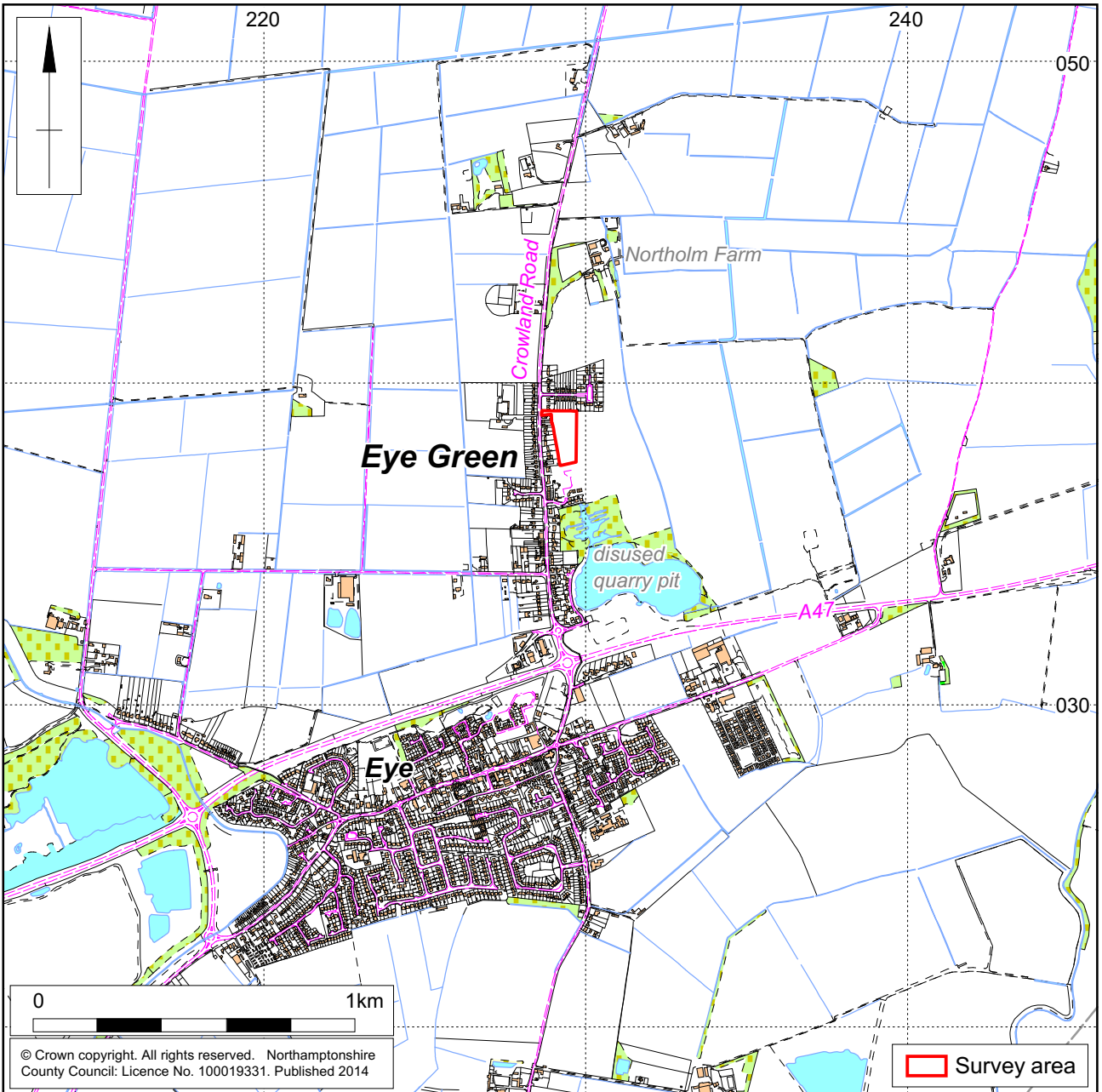
2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The evaluation of the site was designed to provide information that will allow for the effective targeting of further investigation of the site, if required, prior to or during the early phases of its development.

The following information was required to allow the development of a strategy for further investigation of the site:

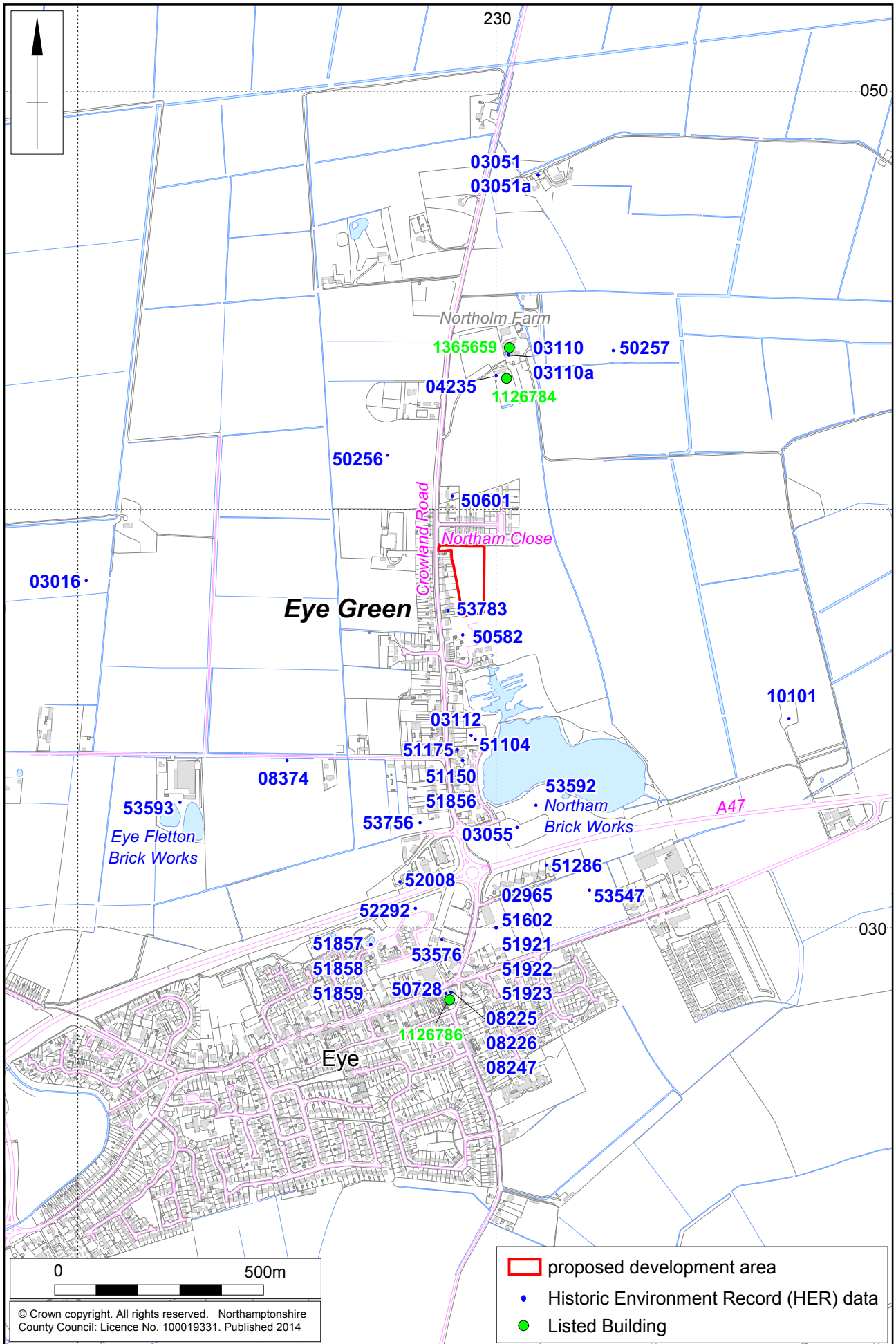
- *The location, extent, nature, and date of any archaeological features or deposits that may be present;*
- *The integrity and state of preservation of any archaeological features or deposits that may be present.*

The evaluation was carried following the guidelines suggested by the IfA's standards and guidance for archaeological field evaluation (IfA 2008), the MOLA Fieldwork Manual (2014) and the East of England regional framework (Medlycott 2011).



1:20,000

Site Location Fig 1



1:12,500 (A4)

Historic Environment Record (HER) data Fig 2

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 Topography and geology

The area is c 1.2 hectares and lies on land south of Northam Close. The current land use is arable and the area is bounded to the north by housing fronting onto Northam Close, further housing to the west and south and arable fields to the east (Fig 1).

The site is reasonably flat and is approximately 8-9m above Ordnance datum (aOD). The underlying geology has been mapped by the British Geological Society as comprising Oxford clay (www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex).

3.2 Historical and archaeological background

The development area lies within an area of archaeological interest, however, none of the entries in the Peterborough City Historic Environment Record (HER) relate directly to the development area. The HER information is summarised below and shown in Figure 2; the details are included in Table 1.

Evidence for Bronze Age and Iron Age occupation has been recorded approximately 1km to the south of the site at Bath Road. A Bronze Age pit with pottery and a loom weight (51857) was on the same site as an Iron Age roundhouse and enclosure (51858). It is likely that a further enclosure and roundhouse with pits and ditches (52292) located to the north-east of this form part of the same settlement.

Partial remains of another Iron Age settlement, comprising pits, postholes and ditches (51150) were found during evaluation approximately 350m to the south of the development area.

Approximately 300m to the south of the survey area, a 19th-century antiquarian record describes an Anglo-Saxon inhumation and cremation burials found during gravel extraction (03055, 03112). It is not known how many burials were uncovered, but finds included iron spear heads, a knife, an ivory purse ring, a sleeve clasp and a globular pot decorated with swastika motifs. It is believed the burials date to the mid-6th century. Excavations in 1991 attempted to relocate these burials, but found the area had been heavily truncated by quarrying and no archaeological remains were recorded.

In the medieval period most of the land around Eye was owned by the abbeys of Peterborough and Thorney (Simmonds 2014). The extensive medieval manor of Northolme (03110a) lies just to the north of the development area and included a grange, chapel and ponds, which survive as earthworks (4235). Nearby evidence of medieval ridge and furrow cultivation exists off Thorney Road (51602 and 53547) on the same gravel ridge as Eye.

Geophysical survey carried out by MOLA Northampton in June 2014 identified two possible ditches and a pit of unknown date (Fisher 2014).

Table 1: Historic Environment Record data for monuments close to Northam Close, Eye

Historic Environment Record (Preferred reference)	Description
03055	Anglo-Saxon burial ground
03110a	Northolme Medieval manor
03112	Anglo-Saxon burial ground
4235	Medieval Manor earthworks
51150	Iron Age settlement
51602	Medieval ridge and furrow cultivation
51857	Bronze Age pit with pottery and Loom weight
51858	Iron Age roundhouse and enclosure
52292	Iron Age enclosure, pits and ditches
53547	Medieval ridge and furrow cultivation

4 EXCAVATION METHODOLOGY

Five trenches were excavated using a JCB mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.6m-wide toothless ditching bucket (Fig 3). The topsoil and subsoil were removed under archaeological direction to reveal natural substrate. The topsoil and subsoil were stacked separately at the side of the excavated area. All procedures complied with MOLA Health and Safety provisions and MOLA Health and Safety at Work Guidelines.

The excavated area was cleaned sufficiently to define any features. The excavated area and spoil heaps were scanned with a metal detector to ensure maximum finds retrieval.

All archaeological deposits encountered during the course of the excavation were fully recorded, following standard MOLA procedures (MOLA 2014). All deposits were given a separate context number. They were described on *pro-forma* context sheets to include details of the context, its relationships and interpretation. No artefacts were recovered.

The location of the trenches were surveyed and related to the Ordnance Survey National Grid using Leica Viva dGPS survey equipment using SMARTNET real-time corrections, operating to a 3D tolerance of $\pm 0.05\text{m}$. A full photographic record comprising both 35mm black and white negatives and digital images was maintained. The field data from the evaluation has been compiled into a site archive with appropriate cross-referencing.

The evaluation conformed to the Institute for Archaeologists *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (revised Oct 2008). All stages of the project were undertaken in accordance with English Heritage, *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (MoRPHE) (EH 2006). The evaluation was carried out in accordance with Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by MOLA (Chinnock 2014).

All trenches were backfilled with their up-cast, lightly compacted by the mechanical excavator.

5 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

5.1 General stratigraphy

The natural substrate was similar across the site, in all trenches the natural comprised firm orange-brown sandy clay with rare patches of chalk and frequent patches of sand and gravels and occurred approximately 0.30m below the present ground surface. There was no subsoil present on site.

The topsoil also remained the same across the site and was approximately 0.30m thick and comprised friable mid brown sandy clay with moderate to frequent small gravels.

The anomalies seen in the geophysical survey were not observed in the evaluation. No features or artefacts were in Trenches 1,2,4 and 5.

A full list of deposits by trench can be found in the Context Inventory (Appendix 1).



Scale 1: 1000

Trench locations Fig 3

5.2 The archaeological features

In trench 3, there was a single shallow ditch [304], aligned east-west, 0.80m wide and 0.10m deep, with a shallow, broad U-shaped profile and irregular base (Fig 3 and 4). No dating evidence was recovered. This may have been a heavily truncated field boundary, set at right angles to the modern road, although it did not continue into Trench 4 to the east.

An L-shaped anomaly to the north-east did not appear in Trench 2.



Ditch [304], looking west Fig 4

6 THE FINDS

No finds of archaeological interest were recovered.

7 DISCUSSION

Trial trench evaluation on land south of Northam Close in Eye Green has shown that of the possible archaeological anomalies identified by geophysical survey (Fisher 2014), only a single linear ditch was located, and this was shallow and produced no dating evidence. It may have been a remnant of a recent field boundary set at right angles to the modern road.

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WEBSITES

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MOLA
4 November 2014

APPENDIX: CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench No.	Length, width & alignment		Surface height, NW end (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
1	E-W 1.6m x 30m		5.48m	0.30-32m 5.07m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/ Samples</i>
101	Topsoil	Mid brown sandy silt with frequent gravel	0.30-32m thick	-
102	Natural	Orange sandy clay with patches of chalk	-	-

Trench No.	Length, width & alignment		Surface height, NW end (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
2	NE-SW 1.6m x 30m		5.76m	0.32m 5.40m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/ Samples</i>
201	Topsoil	Friable Mid brown sandy silt with frequent gravels	0.30-32m thick	-
202	Natural	Firm orange sandy clay with frequent gravels changing to friable yellow-orange sand with frequent gravels to SW	-	-

Trench No.	Length, width & alignment		Surface height, NW end (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
3	N-S 1.6 x 30m		5.28m	0.33m 4.98m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/ Samples</i>
301	Topsoil	Friable mid brown sandy silt with moderate gravels	0.30-32m thick	-
302	Natural	Firm orange-yellow clay with frequent gravels and occasional patches of chalk	-	-
303	Fill of [304]	Friable Mid grey-brown sandy silt with frequent small stone inclusions	0.10m depth, 0.80m width, 1.6m+ length	-
304	Cut of ditch	Linear shallow U-shaped feature	0.10m depth, 0.80m width, 1.6m+ length	-

Trench No.	Length, width & alignment		Surface height, NW end (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
4	N-S 1.6 x 30m		5.60m	0.32m 5.23m
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
401	Topsoil	Friable mid brown sandy silt with frequent small gravel inclusions	0.32m thick	-
402	Natural	Firm orange-brown sandy clay with frequent gravel inclusions	-	-

Trench No.	Length, width & alignment		Surface height, NW end (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
5	E-W 1.6 x 30m		5.79m	0.60m 5.39m
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
501	Topsoil	Friable mid brown sandy silt with frequent gravel inclusions	0.32m thick	-
502	natural	Firm orange-brown sandy clay with frequent gravel inclusions	-	-



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