



**Trial trench evaluation at
Wistow Road, Kibworth Harcourt
Leicestershire
November 2014**

Accession No. X.A146.2014

Author: Samuel Egan

Illustrator: Amir Bassir

Report No 14/224



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OASIS REPORT FORM

| | | | |
|---------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|--|
| PROJECT DETAILS | | Oasis No. molanort1-195414 | |
| Project title | Trial trench evaluation at Wistow Road, Kibworth Harcourt, Leicestershire | | |
| Short description | An evaluation consisting of six 50m long trenches targeting various magnetic anomalies were excavated. The trenches revealed the remnants of ridge and furrow cultivation but no other archaeological features or finds were encountered. | | |
| Project type | Evaluation | | |
| Site Status | - | | |
| Previous work | Geophysical survey MOLA Northampton 2014 | | |
| Current land use | Arable land | | |
| Future work | Unknown | | |
| Monument type and period | None | | |
| Significant finds | None | | |
| PROJECT LOCATION | | | |
| County | Leicestershire | | |
| Site address | Wistow Road, Kibworth Harcourt | | |
| Post code | LE8 ORG | | |
| OS eastings and northings | SP 676 947 | | |
| Area (sq m/ha) | 2.5ha | | |
| Height aOD | 133m-135m | | |
| PROJECT CREATORS | | | |
| Organisation | MOLA Northampton | | |
| Project brief originator | Theresa Hawtin, Leicestershire County Council | | |
| Project Design originator | MOLA Northampton | | |
| Director/Supervisor | Sam Egan (MOLA) | | |
| Project Managers | Mark Holmes (MOLA) | | |
| Sponsor or funding body | Manor Oak Homes | | |
| PROJECT DATE | | | |
| Start date | 10 November 2014 | | |
| End date | 11 November 2014 | | |
| ARCHIVES | Location (Accession no.) | Contents | |
| Physical | MOLA Northampton store X.A146.2014 | Site records | |
| Paper | | Survey data, report, photographs | |
| Digital | | | |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY | Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (MOLA report) | | |
| Title | Trial trench evaluation at Wistow Road, Kibworth Harcourt, Leicestershire, November 2014 | | |
| Serial title & volume | 14/224 | | |
| Author(s) | Samuel Egan | | |
| Page numbers | 7 | | |
| Date | November 2014 | | |

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Trial trench evaluation of Land at Wistow Road, Kibworth Harcourt, Leicestershire November 2014

Abstract

MOLA was commissioned by Manor Oak Homes to undertake archaeological trial trench evaluation at Wistow Road, Kibworth Harcourt. The survey area lies in area of high archaeological potential with a Roman villa c200m south west. A geophysical survey by the Hallaton fieldwork group in 2009 mapped distinct traces of the villa and Iron Age ditches. A geophysical survey of the site indicated ridge and furrow cultivation, aligned north-south covering, the whole of site. The trial evaluation encountered furrows of the former field system but no other archaeological features or finds were present.

1 INTRODUCTION

MOLA was commissioned by Manor Oak Homes to undertake archaeological trial trench evaluation to inform a proposed planning application at Wistow Road, Kibworth Harcourt, Leicestershire (NGR SP 6768 9467; Fig 1). The works have been required in response to a forthcoming planning application for development of the land in line with *National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)* (DCLG 2012).

2 TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

The survey area consists of a single arable field situated on the north western edge of Kibworth Harcourt. It is some 2.5ha and is bounded on the east by the A6, on the south by Wistow road and by other arable fields on the east and north. The survey area lies on a shallow west facing slope between 130m-135m aOD.

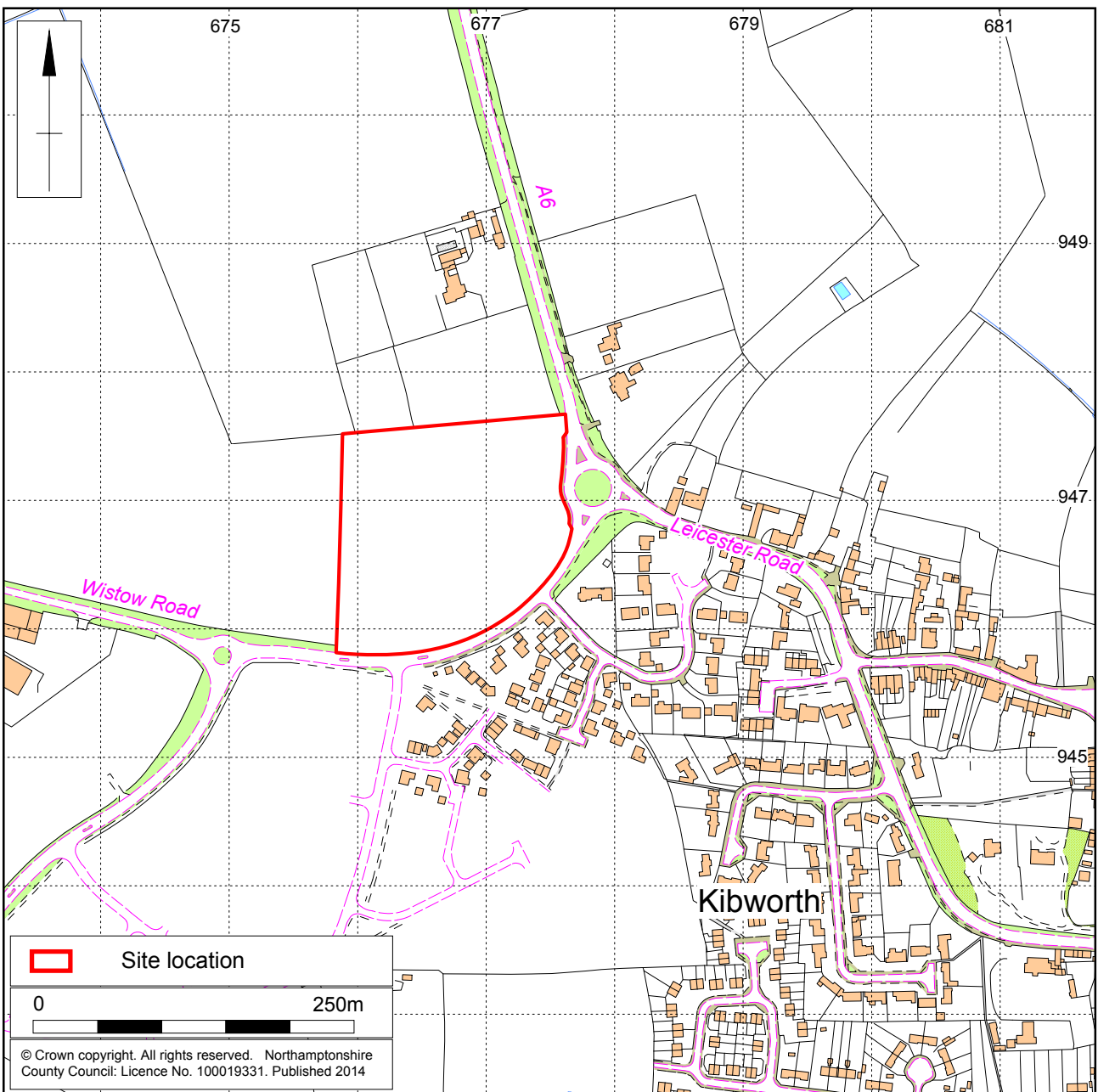
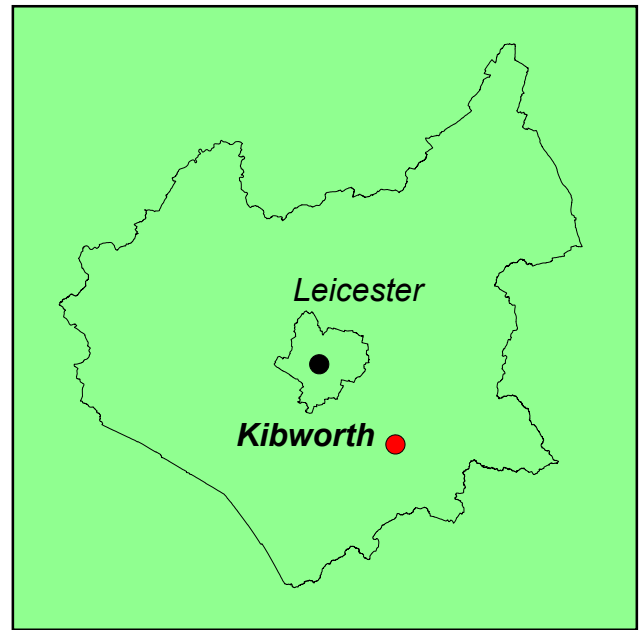
The recorded geology of the area is Charmouth mudstone overlain by boulder clay (BGS 2014)

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the work was to determine and understand the nature, function and character of the archaeological site in its cultural and environmental setting.

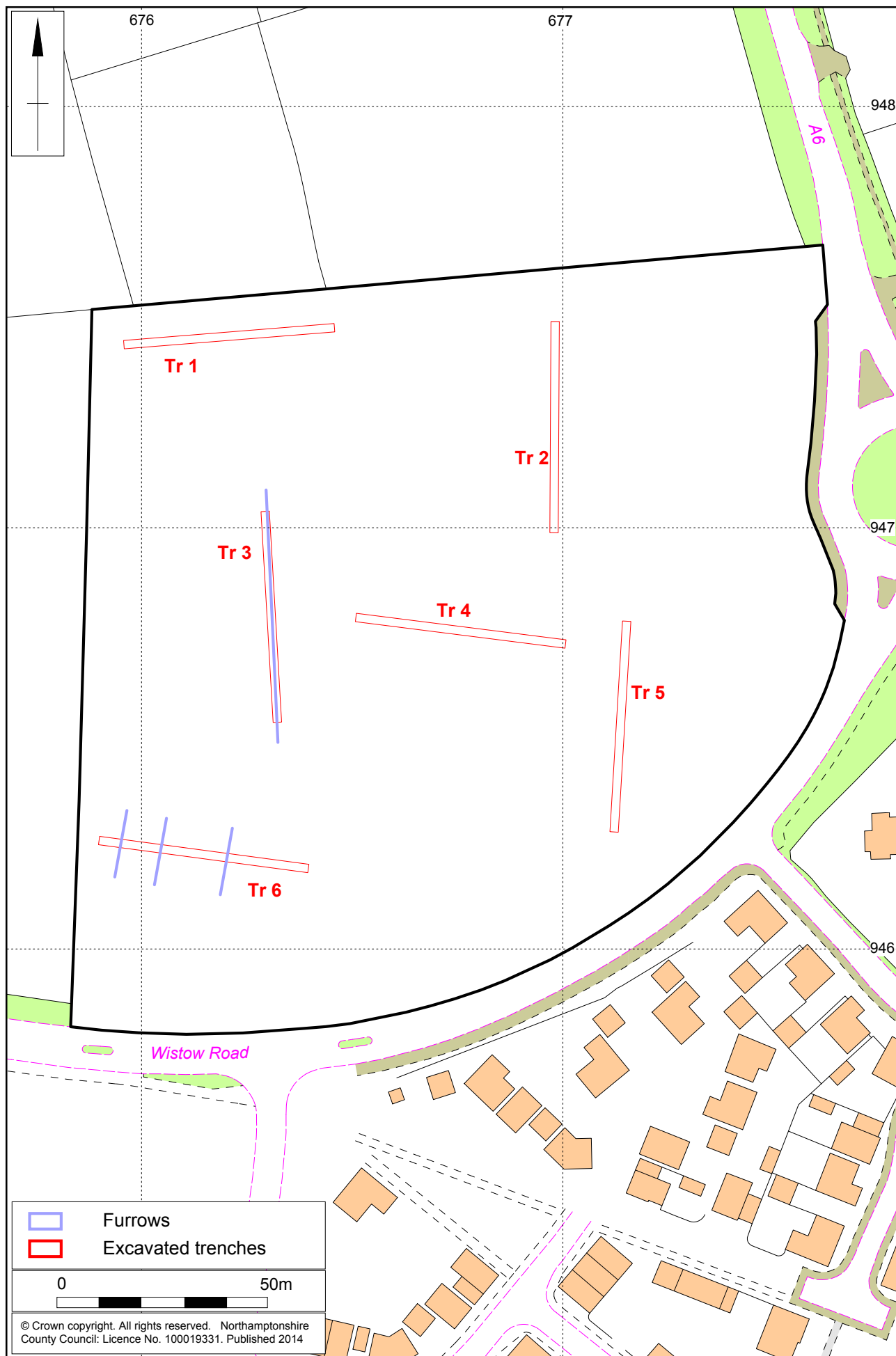
The aims of the investigation were to:

- Establish the date, nature and extent of the activity or occupation on the development site;
- Recover artefacts to assist in the development of type series within the region;
- Recover palaeo-environmental remains to determine past local environmental conditions.



Scale 1:5000

Site Location Fig 1



Scale 1:1250

The excavated trenches Fig 2

4 HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

An archaeological background was collated in the Written Scheme of Investigation (Holmes 2014) and is as follows;

The survey area lies approximately 200m south-west of a Roman villa which was partly excavated in the 1960s, revealing many sherds of pottery, coins, a brooch and building materials. A magnetometer survey of the same site was conducted in 2009 by the Hallaton Fieldwork Group, and mapped clear traces of the villa and of Iron Age enclosure ditches (Leicestershire HER, MLE1767). A single Roman coin has been found within the present survey area (PAS ref number LEIC-C12055) but it is unclear whether this was a stray loss or indicative of more substantial Roman remains.

The historic core of Kibworth Harcourt village (MLE16877) extends almost to the south-eastern edge of the survey area, but there is no evidence for medieval or post-medieval development within the area itself. Notable historic features within the village include a possible castle mound (MLE1772) and the 13th-century parish church of St Wilfred (MLE10762).

A detailed magnetometer survey was undertaken at the proposed development site in September 2014 by MOLA. The survey identified no archaeological features other than medieval or early post-medieval ridge and furrow cultivation. A band of magnetic disturbance detected at the edge of the field was attributed to debris from modern roadworks (Walford and Meadows 2014).

5 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The programme of evaluation was carried out in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by MOLA (Holmes 2014). This required the excavation of six trenches, planned to investigate the potential impact of the proposed development on any archaeological remains within the development area.

The trenches were set out using differential GPS (Leica Viva) operating to an accuracy of +/- 0.05m. All trenches were excavated using a 14T 360 tracked machine, fitted with a 1.8m wide toothless ditching bucket, operated under constant archaeological supervision. All trenches were 50m long, trenches targeted various geophysical anomalies and ran both perpendicular and parallel to ridge and furrow cultivation.

The excavation and recording were carried out in accordance with MOLA guidelines and all records were created using MOLA pro-forma (MOLA 2014). Photographs were taken of all trenches and all relevant deposits on 35mm monochrome print film and high resolution digital images. Work was carried out in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (IfA 2008). The trenches were excavated to the top of the natural geological horizon. Levels in metres above Ordnance Datum were established for all trenches using GPS and for all excavated features using a dumpy level from temporary bench marks (TBMs) established using GPS.

All records and materials will be compiled in a structured archive in accordance with the guidelines of Appendix 3 in the English Heritage procedural document, *Management of Archaeological Projects 2* (EH 1991).

8 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

The natural geology across the site was compact, mid bluish grey silty clay with occasional sub-rounded chalk. Natural was found at depths between 0.29m- 0.49m. The Natural was overlain by subsoil a firm, mid orange brown silty clay with occasional small sub-angular flint, poorly sorted between 0.09m-0.28m thick. Topsoil was present across the site varying between 0.22m- 0.30m thick. The topsoil was firm, dark greyish brown with rare chalk flecks and poorly sorted.



Trench 4 post excavation, looking east Fig 3

The furrows of a former ridge and furrow cultivation system were located in two trenches; trenches 3 and 6. The ridge and furrow is aligned north-south and covers the whole field. No dateable material was located within the furrows which were removed to ensure no earlier features survived beneath them. The cultivation system is most probably of medieval origin. No other archaeological features or finds were encountered during the evaluation.

A modern disused electric service trench was located in the southern corner of trench 5, a modern metal pipe was discovered in trench 1, this corroborates with the strong bipolar response from the geophysical survey.



Sample section, Trench 1 looking north Fig 4

9 CONCLUSION

The trial trench evaluation confirmed the findings of the previous geophysical survey. The remnants of ridge and furrow cultivation were found but no substantive archaeological features or finds were present.

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Websites

BGS 2014 <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex/> British Geological Survey

APPENDIX: CONTEXT INVENTORY

| Trench No | Length, width & alignment | NGR | Surface height (aOD) | Depth & height of natural (aOD) |
|-----------|---------------------------|--|----------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 | 50m x 1.8m, W-E | 467596.761 294744.183 | W end- 132.73m | 0.56m deep 132.17m aOD |
| Context | Context type | Description | Dimensions | Artefacts/ Samples |
| 101 | Topsoil | Firm, dark greyish/ brown, silty clay with rare chalk flecks | 0.29m thick | - |
| 102 | Subsoil | Firm, Mid orange/ brown, silty clay with occasional small sub-angular flint. | 0.27m thick | - |
| 103 | Natural | Compact, mid bluish/ grey silty clay with occasional sub-rounded chalk. | - | - |

| Trench No | Length, width & alignment | NGR | Surface height (aOD) | Depth & height of natural (aOD) |
|-----------|---------------------------|--|----------------------|---------------------------------|
| 2 | 50m x 1.8m, N-S | 467698.935 294749.589 | N end- 134.92 | 0.52m deep 134.40m aOD |
| Context | Context type | Description | Dimensions | Artefacts/ Samples |
| 201 | Topsoil | Firm, dark greyish/ brown, silty clay with rare chalk flecks | 0.25m thick | - |
| 202 | Subsoil | Firm, Mid orange/ brown, silty clay with occasional small sub-angular flint. | 0.27m thick | - |
| 203 | Natural | Compact, mid bluish/ grey silty clay with occasional sub-rounded chalk. | - | - |

| Trench No | Length, width & alignment | NGR | Surface height (aOD) | Depth & height of natural (aOD) |
|-----------|---------------------------|--|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| 3 | 50m x 1.8m, NNW-SSE | 467629.733 294704.343 | NNW end- 133.34m | 0.46m deep 132.88m aOD |
| Context | Context type | Description | Dimensions | Artefacts/ Samples |
| 301 | Topsoil | Firm, dark greyish/ brown, silty clay with rare chalk flecks | 0.29m thick | - |
| 302 | Subsoil | Firm, Mid orange/ brown, silty clay with occasional small sub-angular flint. | 0.17m thick | - |
| 303 | Natural | Compact, mid bluish/ grey silty clay with occasional sub-rounded chalk. | - | - |
| 304 | Furrow | Firm, Mid orange/brown silty clay. | 0.90m wide 0.07m deep | - |

| Trench No | Length, width & alignment | NGR | Surface height (aOD) | Depth & height of natural (aOD) |
|------------------|--------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|--|
| 4 | 50m x 1.8m, W-E | 467651.237 294679.314 | W end- 133.59m | 0.45m deep 133.14m aOD |
| Context | Context type | Description | Dimensions | Artefacts/ Samples |
| 401 | Topsoil | Firm, dark greyish/ brown, silty clay with rare chalk flecks | 0.27m thick | - |
| 402 | Subsoil | Firm, Mid orange/ brown, silty clay with occasional small sub-angular flint. | 0.18m thick | - |
| 403 | Natural | Compact, mid bluish grey silty clay with occasional sub-rounded chalk. | - | |

| Trench No | Length, width & alignment | NGR | Surface height (aOD) | Depth & height of natural (aOD) |
|------------------|--------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|--|
| 5 | 50m x 1.8m, N-S | 467715.868 294677.978 | N end- 134.43m | 0.45m deep 133.98m aOD |
| Context | Context type | Description | Dimensions | Artefacts/ Samples |
| 501 | Topsoil | Firm, dark greyish/ brown, silty clay with rare chalk flecks | 0.26m | - |
| 502 | Subsoil | Firm, Mid orange/ brown, silty clay with occasional small sub-angular flint. | 0.19m | - |
| 503 | Natural | Compact, mid bluish/ grey silty clay with occasional sub-rounded chalk. | - | |

| Trench No | Length, width & alignment | NGR | Surface height (aOD) | Depth & height of natural (aOD) |
|------------------|--------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|--|
| 6 | 50m x 1.8m, WNW-ESE | 467590.680 294626.242 | WNW end- 132.07m | 0.42m deep 131.75m aOD |
| Context | Context type | Description | Dimensions | Artefacts/ Samples |
| 601 | Topsoil | Firm, dark greyish/ brown, silty clay with rare chalk flecks | 0.32m | - |
| 602 | Subsoil | Firm, Mid orange/ brown, silty clay with occasional small sub-angular flint. | 0.10m | - |
| 603 | Natural | Compact, mid bluish/ grey silty clay with occasional sub-rounded chalk. | - | |
| 604 | Furrows | Firm, Mid orange/brown silty clay. | 0.82m wide 0.04m deep | |



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