



Archaeological evaluation of land at Peterborough Showground Peterborough December 2014

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OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		Oasis No. molanor1-200500	
Project title	Archaeological evaluation of land at Peterborough Showground, Peterborough		
Short description	MOLA Northampton was commissioned by CgMs Consulting to carry out an evaluation on land at Peterborough Showground, Peterborough. Twelve trenches were excavated; three medieval ditches were identified as well as a number of post-medieval furrows of the former field system.		
Project type	Trial trench evaluation		
Site Status			
Previous work	Geophysical survey (MOLA 2014)		
Current land use	pasture		
Future work	Unknown		
Monument type and period	Ditch; pit Furrow – post-medieval		
Significant finds	Medieval pottery		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County	Peterborough Unitary Authority		
Site address	Land east of Peterborough showground		
Post code	PE26XE		
OS co-ordinates	NGR TL 513 295		
Area (sq m/ha)	c 6 ha		
Height aOD	c 20m aOD		
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation	MOLA Northampton		
Project brief originator	Rebecca Casa-Hatton, Peterborough City Council		
Project Design originator	MOLA Northampton		
Director/Supervisor	Gemma Hewitt (MOLA)		
Project Managers	Adam Yates (MOLA), Myk Flitcroft (CgMs)		
Sponsor or funding body	CgMs Consulting Ltd		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date	December 2014		
End date	December 2014		
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no.)	Contents	
Physical	MOLA Northampton	Pottery	
Paper	store	Site records	
Digital	PBshow14	Survey data, report, photographs	
BIBLIOGRAPHY	Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (MOLA report)		
Title	Archaeological evaluation of land at Peterborough Showground, Peterborough		
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Contents

1	INTRODUCTION
2	TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY
3	AIMS AND OBJECTIVES
4	HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND
5	EVALUATION METHODOLOGY
6	THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE
6.1	TRENCH 10
6.2	Trench 1-9, 11 and 12
7	THE FINDS
7.1	The pottery by Paul Blinkhorn
7.2	Animal bone by Adam Reid
8	CONCLUSION
	BIBLIOGRAPHY
	APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT INVENTORY

Tables

Table 1: Pottery occurrence by number and weight (in g) of sherds per context by fabric type

Figures

Front cover: The site at Peterborough Showground

Fig 1: Site location

Fig 2: The excavated trenches

Fig 3: Trench 10, ditches [1005] [1007], looking south-east

Fig 4: Trench 10, ditch [1011] and pit [1009], looking south-west

Fig 5: Trench 10, Sections and trench plans

Fig 6: Trench 11, looking north-east

Fig 7:

Fig 8: Furrows in trenches 6, 9 and 11 plan

Archaeological evaluation of land at Peterborough Showground, Peterborough December 2014

Abstract

MOLA Northampton was commissioned by CgMs Consulting to carry out an evaluation on land at Peterborough Showground, Peterborough. Twelve trenches were excavated; three medieval ditches were identified as well as a number of post-medieval furrows of the former field-system.

1 INTRODUCTION

MOLA Northampton was commissioned by CgMs Consulting on behalf of Milton Estates and East of England Agricultural Society to carry out archaeological trial trenching on land east of Peterborough Showground (NGR TL 513 295; Fig 1). The work was carried out prior to the submission of a planning application for development of the land and followed a geophysical survey (Meadows 2015).

All works were undertaken in accordance with *the National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012) and followed an archaeological specification prepared by CgMs Consulting (Flitcroft, 2014).

2 TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

The proposed development area comprises c6ha of arable and pasture land. The site comprises two fields; the larger western field is bounded by palisade fencing to the south-east, the A1 to the west, the A605 to the north and by hedges to the north and west. The smaller eastern field is located along the northern edge of a concrete access track. This area was once used as a pitch and putt course.

Topographically the site lies on a gentle west-facing slope going from 28m aOD to the east down to 20 aOD to the west, towards the A1 the underlying geology is mapped as Oxford Clay and strata of the Kellaways Formation (BGS 2014).



Scale 1:10,000

Site Location Fig 1

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The main aim of the investigation was to determine if archaeological remains were present within the application area.

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

- The location, extent, nature, and date of any archaeological features or deposits that may be present at the proposed development site;
- The integrity and state of preservation of any archaeological features or deposits that may be present at the proposed development site.
- To produce a site archive for the deposition with Peterborough Museum and to provide information for accession to the Peterborough HER.

The project addressed the research aims and made reference to the following documents as appropriate:

- *Research and archaeology: a framework for the eastern counties: 1.resource assessment* (Glazebrook 1997)
- *Research and archaeology: a framework for the eastern counties : 2.resource assessment* (Brown and Glazebrook 2000)
- *Research and archaeology revisited: a revised framework for the east of England.* (Medlycott, ed , 2011)- East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper, 24

The national research program outlined in English Heritage's '*Strategic framework for historic environment activities and programmes in English heritage (shape)*' first published in 2008 will also be taken in to account.

4 HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

A desk-based assessment was undertaken by CgMs Consulting (Flitcroft 2011) and the following is taken from that report.

Prehistoric

Mesolithic flints were found at Chesterton and metal work, dating from the Bronze Age was recovered from the River Nene which is north of the site. To the north east of the site an excavation at Minerva Business Park recovered quantities of Neolithic and Bronze Age worked flints and evidence of Iron Age rural settlements have been identified (Mackay 2002). Possibly early prehistoric monuments have been identified close to the River Nene in aerial photography of the area.

Roman

The survey area shares one boundary with that of the modern day A1 which runs along Ermine street Roman road, which runs through the Roman town of *Durobrivae*. During the construction of the A605 flyover in 1976, Roman building remains and pottery were discovered near the north-west boundary of the site in a watching brief (CHERO2109), later work in 1998, to the west of the A605 recovered more Roman pottery (CHERO1881 and CHERCB 14731).

Evaluations to the north-east of the site have discovered evidence of medieval ridge and furrow agriculture (Bray 1998) and a single undated pit and gully (Malone 2012).

Saxon

The village of Alwalton is recorded from the 10th century, Saxon pottery has been recorded in the north end of the village. A Saxon cemetery dating to the 6th century was identified at the Minerva business park (Mackay 2002).

Medieval

Medieval ridge and furrow cultivation is recorded at the site (PHER9824) this was confirmed by geophysical survey by MOLA (Meadows 2015) which also recorded a few linear anomalies within the south-west corner (Fig 2). Ridge and furrow cultivation has also been noted in other areas of Alwalton, including the excavation at Minerva Business Park and aerial surveys from the parish.

Post-medieval and modern

To the north of the site are two grade 2 listed buildings. Numbers 5 and 7 Oundle Road have 17th century origins. (English Heritage Building ID: 50287).

The site is shown on the 1809 Alwalton enclosure map (Flitcroft, 2011, fig 11). the western side of site is one field, while the eastern side of the was shown with a group of enclosures.

Previous archaeological work

The geophysical survey undertaken in November 2014 revealed a number of linear anomalies in the south-west corner which may be of archaeological origin, as well as a series of parallel west-south-west to east-north-east aligned linear anomalies. These are the remains of a ridge and furrow cultivation system (Meadows 2015).

5 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

A programme of evaluation was carried out in accordance with discussion with the Peterborough City Council Archaeologist. Twelve trial trenches, 50m long by 2m wide, were excavated within the available area, positioned to target geophysical anomalies and areas of magnetic disturbance and confirm, or otherwise, the negative results in other parts of the site (Fig 2). All 12 trenches were set out using differential GPS (Leica Viva) operating to an accuracy of +/- 0.05m.

All trenches were excavated using a tracked excavator, fitted with a 2m wide toothless ditching bucket, operated under constant archaeological supervision. 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 or the upper archaeological levels, whichever was the highest.

Levels in metres above Ordnance Datum were established for all trenches and excavated features using a dumpy level from temporary bench marks (TBMs) established using GPS.

Artefacts were recovered from individual contexts and stored and packed according to type. 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).



Scale 1:2,500

Excavated trenches Fig 2

6 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

Archaeological features were recorded in one of the 12 excavated trenches (Trench 10). All trenches, apart from Trench 10, showed evidence of ridge and furrow cultivation. The natural horizon across the majority of the site comprised Oxford Clay and Kellaways formation (BGS 2014).

Unless otherwise stated all recorded features cut the natural horizon and were sealed by subsoil. This soil horizon varied in hue and comprised firm sandy clay between 0.20m and 0.30m thick. The subsoil was sealed by generally friable mid greyish-brown sandy silt topsoil approximately 0.25m thick. Full context information is included in appendix 1.

6.1 Trench 10

This trench, 30m long by 2m wide and 0.6m deep, was shortened as asbestos was uncovered. It was located towards the north-east corner of the development area and aligned north-west to south-east. There were three ditches and a pit.

A linear ditch [1005] towards the north end of the trench was aligned north-east by south-west. It had a wide U-shaped profile with eroded edges, 0.59m wide and 0.45m deep, with one steep eroded side on the south-east and a flat base (Figs 3 and 5, Section 1). The fill (1004) was friable dark grey-brown silty clay; two sherds of medieval pottery were recovered dating the ditch to the mid-12th century. The northern edge of the ditch had been truncated by ditch [1007].

A linear ditch [1007] at the north end of the trench was aligned north-east to south-west. It had a wide V-shaped profile, 0.75m wide and 0.35m deep, with moderately steep sides with a rounded base (Figs 3 and 5, Section 1). The fill (1006) was a firm light grey, silty clay mixed with orange-blue clays similar to the natural. There were no finds. Ditch [1007] cut into the northern edge of ditch [1005]. Both ditches appear to have a fair amount of root disturbance which may have been caused by an associated hedge line.



Trench 10: ditches [1005] [1007] looking south-east

Fig 3

Ditch [1011] towards the southern end of the trench was aligned north-east to south-west. It was 0.75m wide and 0.35m deep, with a wide U-shaped profile and a flat base. (Figs 4 and 5, Section 2). Sherds of Lyveden/ Stanion pottery of 12th-15th date were in the fill (1010). The ditch was cut by a pit [1009]

Shallow pit [1009] was 2m wide by 0.10m deep. It had a wide dish-shaped profile with a flattish base and was probably a result of rooting from the trees within the area.



Trench 10, ditch [1011] and pit [1009] looking south-west

Fig 4

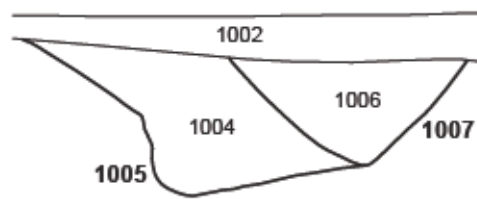
Trench 10



Section 1



1001



Section 2



6.2 Trench 1-9, 11 and 12

These 11 trenches showed the remains of post-medieval ridge and furrow. In trenches 1 to 9 in the larger western field the alignment was north-east to south west, between 3-4m wide and roughly 5m apart. This can be seen in the geophysical survey (Meadows 2015, fig 2). In the smaller eastern field the ridge and furrow is running north-west to south east and can be seen in trenches 11 and 12 (Fig 2,6,7 and 8). These were roughly 2m wide by 0.4m deep.

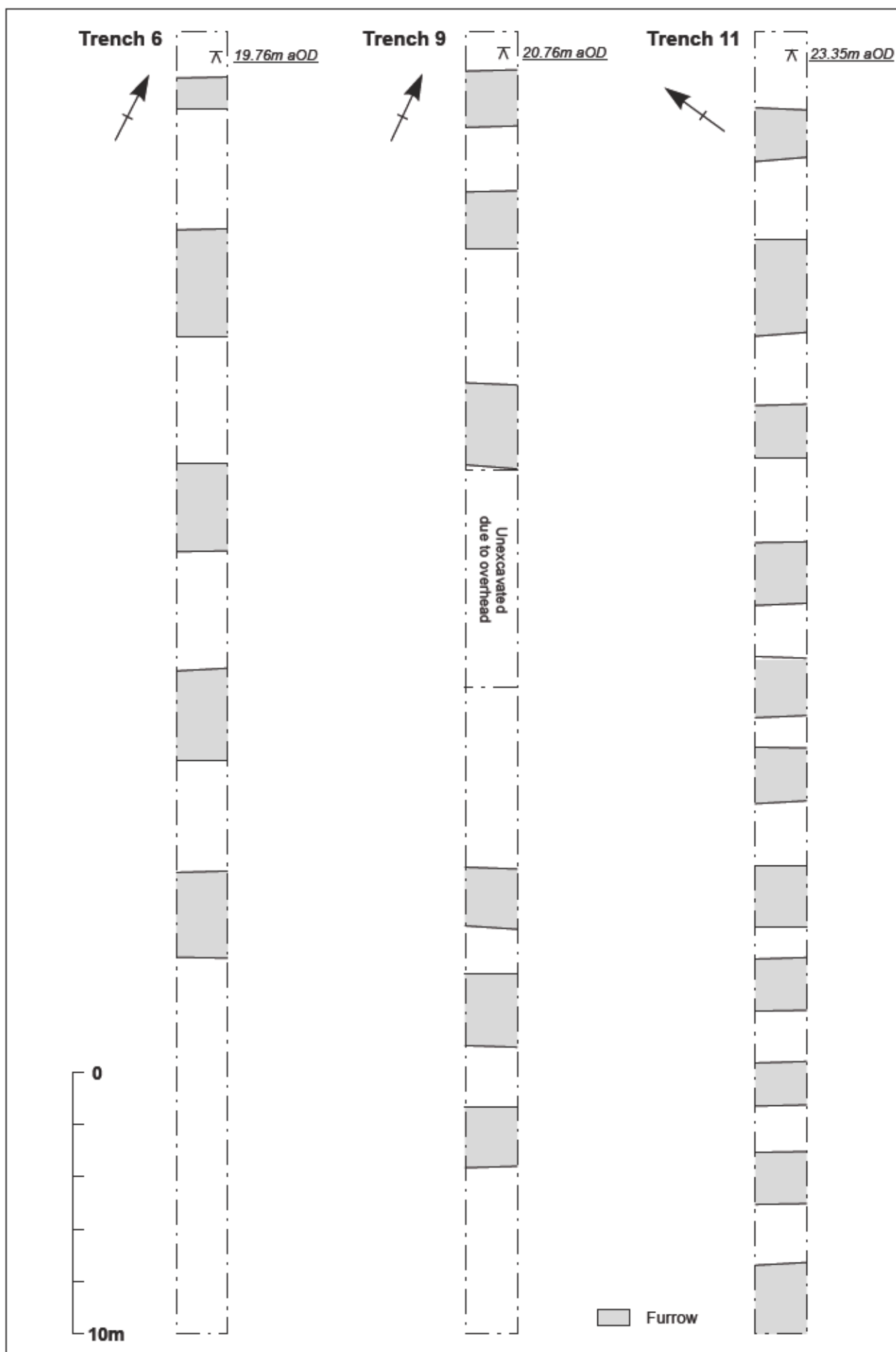


Trench 11 looking north-east

Fig 6



Eastern field Ridge and furrows looking north-east Fig 7



Scale 1:200

Furrows in Trenches 6, 9 and 11 Fig 8

7 THE FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

7.1 The pottery by Paul Blinkhorn

The pottery assemblage comprised 10 sherds with a total weight of 55g. It is all of mid-12th century date. The following fabric types were noted:

STAM: Stamford Ware (Kilmurry 1980). c AD900-1200.

Wheel-thrown. White, pink, buff or grey fabric, usually with sparse to dense quartz up to 0.5mm, occasional black or red ironstone up to 1mm. Often glazed with yellow, pale or sage green glaze. One sherd, 13g.

LA: Lyveden/Stanian 'A' Ware (McCarthy 1979). c AD1150-1400.

Handmade/Wheel finished. Moderate to dense, ill-sorted shelly limestone platelets up to 3mm, sparse to moderate red ironstone up to 10mm, occasional quartz, ooliths, black ironstone. Produced at numerous kilns in the villages of Lyveden and Stanion in north-east Northamptonshire. Nine sherds, 42g.

The pottery occurrence by number and weight of sherds per context by fabric type is shown in Table 1. Each date should be regarded as a *terminus post quem*. The fabrics are typical of finds at sites in the region. The sherds are all in good condition, and appear reliably stratified. All the sherds from context (1010) are from the same vessel.

Table 1: Pottery occurrence by number and weight (in g) of sherds per context by fabric type

Fabric type	Stamford ware	Lyveden/Stanian 'A' Ware	
Fill/cut	No/weight (g)	No/weight (g)	Date
1004/1005 ditch	1/13	1/17	Mid-12th century
1010/1011 ditch	-/-	8/25	Mid-12th century
Total	1/13	9/42	

7.2 Animal bone by Adam Reid

Four bone fragments, weighing 45g, were recovered from context (1010), the fill of ditch [1011]. Two of the fragments are from the humerus of a sheep or goat, one is a vertebral fragment from a juvenile large mammal (cattle or horse) and the other fragment is indeterminate. The assemblage is too small to be of any interpretive value but the presence of identifiable bone could indicate the possibility for future faunal analysis, should any further work take place.

8 CONCLUSION

A low volume of medieval archaeological features were identified during the evaluation and comprised three medieval ditches. They are likely to have been elements of a field system and correspond well with the area of old enclosures or small paddocks shown on the Alwalton enclosure map (Flitcroft, fig 5, 2014). Pottery recovered from two of the three ditches indicates that they were long-lived elements of this landscape, in use throughout the early medieval period.

The evaluation also identified the remains of post-medieval furrows of a former ridge and furrow field cultivation system. These features were identified in the geophysical survey in the larger western field, but not in the smaller eastern field. This could have been due to the interfaces of the pitch and putt ground (Fig 2).

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MOLA
October 2014

APPENDIX

Trench No	Length, width & alignment			
1	SW-NE 50MX2M			
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
101	Topsoil	Med grey brown, sandy silt	0.20m	-
102	Subsoil	light brownny-grey sandy clay	0.20m	-
103	Natural	Light brown sandy clay with patches of blue-yellow clays	-	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment			
2	NW-SE 50MX2M			
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
201	Topsoil	Same as 101	0.20m	-
202	Subsoil	Same as 102	0.30m	-
203	Natural	Same as 103	-	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment			
3	SW-NE 50MX2M			
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
301	Topsoil	Same as 101	0.20m	-
302	Subsoil	Light grey-brown, silty clay	0.20m	-
303	Natural	Light grey, sandy clay with occasional stones	-	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment			
4	NW-SE 50MX2M			
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
401	Topsoil	Same as 101	0.20m	-
402	Subsoil	Same as 102	0.30m	-
403	Natural	Same as 103	-	-
Trench No	Length, width & alignment			
5	SE-NW 50MX2M			
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
501	Topsoil	Same as 101	0.20m	-
502	Subsoil	Same as 102	0.30m	-
503	Natural	Yellow-blue clay	-	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment			
6	N-S 50MX2M			
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
601	Topsoil	Same as 101	0.30m	-
602	Subsoil	Same as 102	0.30m	-
603	Natural	Same as 103	-	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment			
7	SW-NE 50MX2M			
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
701	Topsoil	Same as 101	0.20m	-
702	Subsoil	Same as 102	0.20m	-
703	Natural	Yellow clay	-	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment			
8	SW-NE 50MX2M			
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
801	Topsoil	Same as 101	0.40m	-
802	Natural	Browny -yellow, sandy clay	-	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment			
9	NW-SE 41MX2M			
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
901	Topsoil	Same as 101	0.20m	-
902	Subsoil	Same as 102	0.20m	-
903	Natural	Same as 103	-	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment			
10	NE-SW 30MX2M			
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
1001	Topsoil	Same as 101	0.30m	-
1002	subsoil	Mid grey, silty-sand with 30% roots	0.30m	-
1003	Natural	Yellow sand with 30% roots	-	-
1004	Fill	Dark grey-black, silty clay	L:1m W:0.59m D:0.45m	Pottery
1005	Ditch	Linear U-shaped with a rounded uneven base	L:1m W:0.59m D:0.45m	-
1006	Fill	Mottled grey silt with orange-blue clays	L:1m W:0.75m D:0.35m	-
1007	Ditch	Linear V-shaped with pointed base	L:1m W:0.75m D:0.35m	-
1008	Fill	Light grey silty clay	L:1.0m W:2.0m D:0.10m	-
1009	Pit	Sub-circular dish shaped with flat uneven base.	L:1.0m W:2.0m D:0.10m	-
1010	Fill	Light brown-grey silty clay	L:1.0m W:1.3m D:0.25m	Pottery, animal bone
1011	Ditch	Linear, bowl shaped with a flat uneven base.	L:1.0m W:1.3m D:0.25m	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment			
11	SW-NE 50MX2M			
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
1101	Topsoil	Med brown-grey, silty clay	0.10m	-
902	Subsoil	Light brown, silty clay	0.20m	-
903	Natural	Yellow clay and brown sandy-clay	-	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment			
12	NW-SE 41MX2M			
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
1201	Topsoil	Same as 1101	0.20m	-
1202	Subsoil	Same as 1102	0.20m	-
1203	Natural	Same as 1103	-	-



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