



**Archaeological trial trench evaluation  
on land at Peace Hill  
Bugbrooke, Northamptonshire  
July 2017**

Report No.17/91

Author: Paul Sharrock

Illustrator: Joanne Clawley



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Event number: ENN108777

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Report No. 17/91

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Finds: Liz Muldowney & Jules Agnew BA MA

Animal bone Rebecca Gordon BSc MSc PhD

**OASIS REPORT FORM**

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		<b>Oasis No. molanort1-291261</b>	
Project title	Archaeological trial trench evaluation on land at Peace Hill Bugbrooke, Northamptonshire		
Short description	<i>MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology) carried out a trial trench evaluation on land at Peace Hill, Bugbrooke, Northamptonshire. Three trenches were excavated and recorded a series of post-medieval or modern postholes, furrows on an east-west alignment and modern wheel ruts.</i>		
Project type	Trial trench evaluation		
Previous work	-		
Current land use	Paddock		
Future work	Unknown		
Monument type and period	Post-medieval ditches, postholes and furrows		
Significant finds	None		
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>			
County	Northamptonshire		
Site address	Peace Hill, Bugbrooke		
Easting and northing	NGR SP 673 569		
Area (sq m/ha)	c 0.49ha		
Height aOD	c 82-84m aOD		
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>			
Organisation	MOLA Northampton		
Project brief originator	Liz Mordue, Northamptonshire County Council		
Project Design originator	MOLA		
Director/Supervisor	Paul Sharrock, MOLA		
Project Managers	Liz Muldowney, MOLA		
Sponsor or funding body	Snowdon Homes		
<b>PROJECT DATE</b>			
Start date	10 July 2017		
End date	11 July 2017		
<b>ARCHIVES</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Contents</b>	
Physical	BUG PHL 17 ENN108777	-	
Paper		Site records	
Digital		Survey data, report, photographs	
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>			
Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (MOLA report)			
Title	Archaeological trial trench evaluation on land at Peace Hill, Bugbrooke, Northamptonshire		
Serial title & volume	MOLA Northampton report 17/91		
Author(s)	Paul Sharrock		
Page numbers	10		
Date	July 2017		

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# Archaeological evaluation on land at Peace Hill, Bugbrooke, Northamptonshire July 2017

## *Abstract*

*MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology) carried out a trial trench evaluation on land at Peace Hill, Bugbrooke, Northamptonshire. Three trenches were excavated and recorded a series of post-medieval or modern postholes, furrows on an east-west alignment and modern wheel ruts.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

MOLA was commissioned by Snowdon Homes to undertake archaeological trial trenching on land at Peace Hill, Bugbrooke, Northamptonshire (NGR SP 673 569, Fig 1), in advance of residential development (Planning Ref: S/2015/1573/MAF).

Northamptonshire County Council required that a programme of archaeological evaluation should be undertaken in accordance with a Brief (Mordue 2016) supplemented by a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) (MOLA 2017). This work was undertaken in July 2017 and conformed to the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (DCLG 2012).

## **2 LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY**

The area targeted by the archaeological trenching comprises a small paddock positioned south of Peace Hill, on the west side of the village (NGR SP 673 569; Fig 1). It is bounded to the north and east by domestic properties, to the south and west by agricultural fields.

The underlying geology of the site is recorded as Dyrham formation – siltstone and mudstone. Superficial deposits are not recorded (BGS 2017).

## **3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

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

The general aims of the investigation were to investigate:

- the date, nature, significance and extent of activity or occupation in the development site;
- the relationship of any remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscapes;
- the potential for the recovery of artefacts to assist in the development of type series within the region;
- the potential for palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions;
- and to inform any future excavation or mitigation strategy.

The results were considered in light of the research aims suggested by English Heritage and the East Midlands Regional Research Framework (EH 1991; 1997; Cooper 2006; Knight et al 2012).

#### **4 HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

A geophysical survey was undertaken to the north of the site by Northamptonshire Archaeology (Simmonds 2011) in May 2011. The survey identified an L shaped linear anomaly on the eastern boundary and the survey reflected the extant ridge and furrow earthworks. A number of ferrous anomalies were also encountered within the survey area.

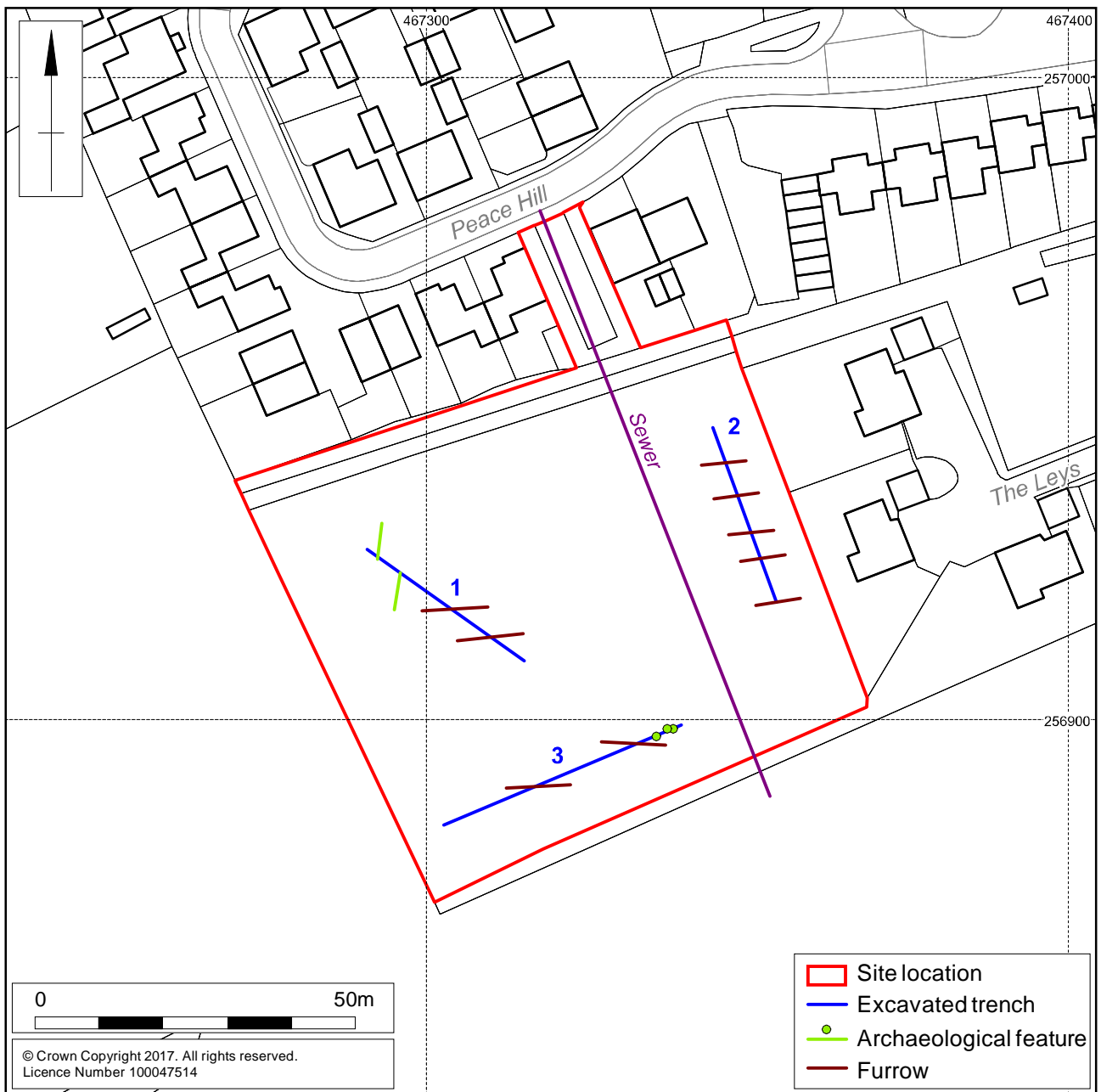
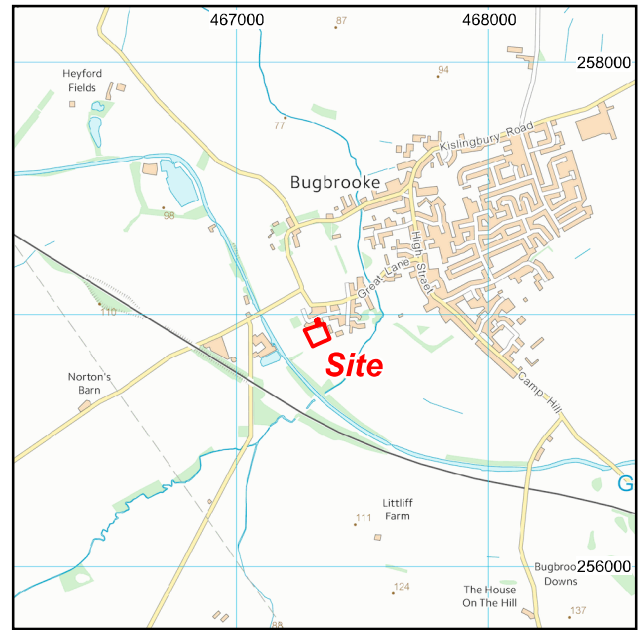
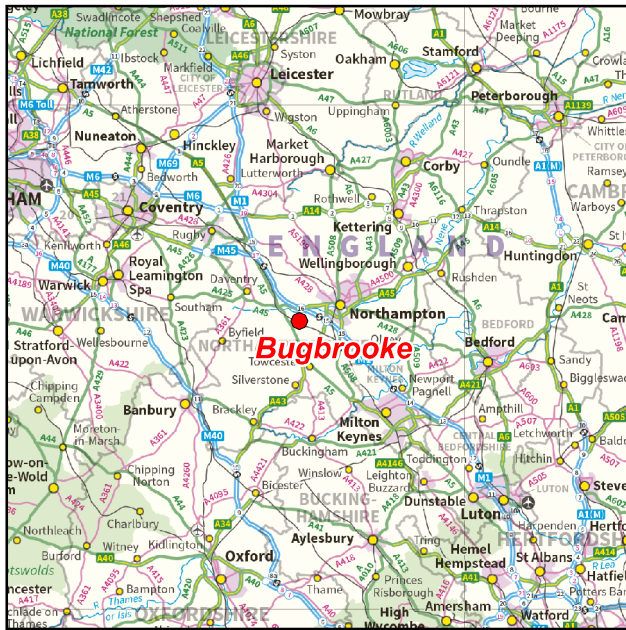
The subsequent archaeological evaluation (Wolfram-Murray 2012) and excavation (Jones & Walker 2013) undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology identified part of an Iron Age enclosure. The work was carried out in two phases, in December 2012 and January 2013. To the north there were two ditches and a large pit, probably the margins of an area of open settlement, and to the south-east there was a large linear ditch, possibly a boundary system. All the features produced hand-built pottery which has been dated to the early-middle Iron Age. The current site is between the activity identified in the adjacent site and earthworks relating to medieval activity to the south.

#### **5 METHODOLOGY**

A total of three trenches were investigated; two were 30m long and one was 40m long. The locations of the trenches as outlined in the WSI and approved by Northamptonshire County Council Archaeological Advisor. The trenches were located using a Leica Survey Grade RTK GPS operating to an accuracy of +/-0.05m to Ordnance Survey National Grid and Datum and were positioned to examine a representative sample across the development area.

A JCB 3CX fitted with a 1.60m wide toothless ditching bucket was used to remove overburden to archaeological levels or the natural substrate, whichever was encountered first. The trenches were cleaned sufficiently to enable the identification and definition of archaeological features. Archaeological deposits were examined by hand excavation to determine their nature. Recording followed standard MOLA Northampton procedures as described in the Fieldwork Manual (MOLA 2014). Deposits were described on *pro-forma* sheets to include measured and descriptive details of the context, its relationships, interpretation and a checklist of associated finds. A photographic record was compiled using digital images supplemented by 35mm black and white film.

All works were conducted in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (CIfA 2014a) and *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (CIfA 2014b) and the Historic England procedural document, *Management of Field Projects in the Historic Environment* (HE 2015).



Scale 1:1000

Site location and excavated trenches Fig 1



## 6 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

### 6.1 General Stratification

The geological substrate across the site was consistent light brown-yellow sandy clay. Within Trenches 1 and 3 this was overlain by friable, mid orange-brown sandy clay subsoil varying in thickness from 0.33m to 0.37m. The topsoil across the site was friable, mid greyish-brown loam varying in depth from 0.21m to 0.26m.

### 6.2 Evaluation trenches

#### *Trench 1*

Trench 1 was located to the north west of the site on a northwest southeast alignment and was intersected by several furrows along its length from east to west (Fig 1). Two very shallow irregular parallel linear features, most likely wheel ruts, were present on a north south alignment at the north-western end of the trench. They were positioned on a slight rise in the land and may have been created by farm vehicles tracking up hill in bad ground conditions. Both contained post-medieval and modern material.



Trench 1, looking north-east, showing wheel ruts in foreground Fig 2



Trench 1: Oblique photo of east/west furrow [109], looking north-west      Fig 3

### ***Trench 2***

Trench 2 was aligned northwest southeast and was located in the eastern half of the site (Fig 1). East to west aligned furrows seen in Trench 1 continued in this trench, no other archaeological features were encountered.



Trench 2, looking north-east      Fig 4



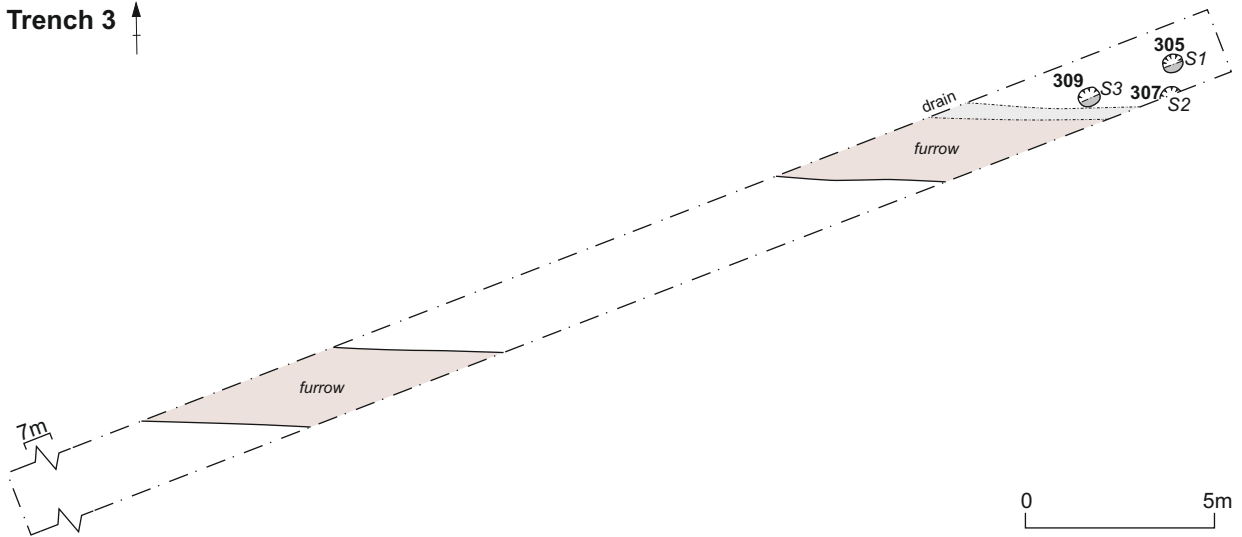
***Trench 3***

Trench 3, located on a north-east southwest alignment along the site's southern edge (Fig 1) contained east west aligned furrows with an associated land drain. Three postholes, located towards the north-eastern end of the trench. Two of the postholes, [305] and [307], contained a high frequency of chicken bones and the third, [309] contained a small fragment of modern, late 20th century pottery.



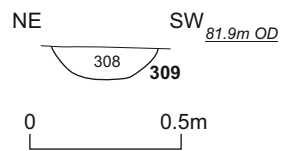
Trench 3, looking south-west    Fig 5

Trench 3 ↑

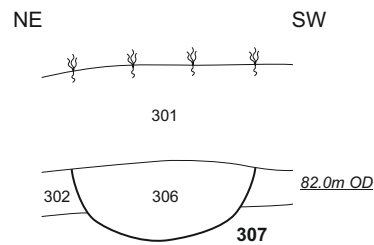


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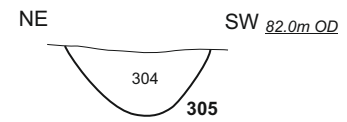
**Section 3**



**Section 2**



**Section 1**



Posthole group looking south-east

Scale 1:200 (plan) 1:25 (sections)

Trench 3 plan, sections and photograph of post-hole group, looking south east

Fig 6

## 7 THE FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL REMAINS

### 7.1 All finds by Liz Muldowney and Jules Agnew

A small assemblage of finds including pottery, ceramic building material, vessel glass and clay tobacco pipe was recovered from six features across the evaluated area (Table 1). All were post-medieval or modern in date.

The pottery, brick fragments and vessel glass were small in size and generally abraded indicative of exposure to the elements and cultivation practices prior to final deposition. The brick fragments were hand fired but hand mixed and not machine made indicating a 19th or possibly early 20th century date.

All finds have been discarded.

*Table 1: Finds quantification*

<b>Pottery</b>				
<b>Fill/Cut/Type</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Weight (g)</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Comments</b>
106/[107]/Rut	2	1.7	Modern - late 20th century	Small fragments of blue glazed ceramic
108/[109]/Furrow	7	30.7	Modern - late 20th century	Small sherds of glazed and decorated pottery from at least three vessels. One large sherd from a terracotta plant pot
203/[204]/Furrow	1	2.7	Modern - late 20th century	One small sherd of cream glazed pottery, possibly part of same vessel also recovered from Furrow [109]
308/[309]/Posthole	1	2.7	Modern - late 20th century	Small sherd of glazed vessel
<b>Totals</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>37.8</b>		
<b>Glass</b>				
104/[105]/Rut	2	5.7	Modern - late 20th century	Two sherds of machine-made blue vessel glass with applied greyish-brown glaze
<b>Totals</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5.7</b>		
<b>CTP</b>				
108/[109]/Furrow	3	10.7	19th century	Three clay pipe stems. Makers mark SF or FS on one. If FS, may be Francis Street: Oundle 1824 & Northampton 1826-50
<b>Totals</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10.7</b>		
<b>CBM</b>				
106/[107]/Rut	2	20.7	Post-medieval	Two fragments of brick, both hand made. Probably 19th century
203/[204]/Furrow	2	10.7	Post-medieval	One small fragment of ex-foliated brick face. One small fragment of fired clay, possibly part of a poorly fired hand-made brick
304/[305]/Posthole	2	2.7	Post-medieval	Two small brick fragments
<b>Totals</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>34.1</b>		

## 7.2 Animal bone by Rebecca Gordon

A total of 34.4g of animal bone was recovered. It comprised solely chicken bones. The bones were retrieved from fills [304] and [308] and are in good condition. The range of elements suggests that partial skeletons from two mature birds were present. Medullary bone was observed inside the marrow cavity of a broken femur, which implies that the bird was egg-laying at the time of death.

*Table 2: Fragment count and weight of animal bone from Bugbrooke, Peace Hill*

Fill/Cut/Type	No. of fragment	weight (g)
304/[305]/Posthole	20	12.7
308/[309]/Posthole	19	21.7
Total	39	34.4

## 8 CONCLUSION

Limited archaeological remains were encountered in the evaluated area, all dating from the medieval to modern period. The earliest features were the furrows forming part of the remnant cultivation system. This probably had its origins in the medieval period, however the artefacts recovered from the furrows suggests that they continued as landscape features into the later post-medieval period after which they were ploughed out. The ruts and postholes were of recent origin, probably later 20th century in date. The presence of chicken bones from an egg laying aged bird in the postholes suggests the field was probably used for poultry at some point, perhaps with fences or structures associated with their coops.

No evidence was found to indicate that the Iron Age activity, noted in the area directly north of the site continued into the target area. The furrows on the site were also much less pronounced than in surrounding fields where they were clearly discernible from the surface prior to excavation.

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July 2017

# APPENDIX: CONTEXT INVENTORY

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>	<b>NGR</b>	<b>Surface height (aOD)</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>30m x 1.80m NW-SE</b>		<b>84.21m</b>	<b>0.54m deep 83.67m aOD</b>
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/ Samples</b>
101	Topsoil	Loose mid greyish brown loam with occasional small stones	0.21m deep	-
102	Subsoil	Friable mid orange/brown sandy clay	0.33m deep	-
103	Natural	Moderately compact light brownish yellow sandy clay with frequent stones and chalk flecks	-	-
104	Fill of ditch /wheel rut	Moderately compact mid greyish brown loamy silt with occasional charcoal and small stones	0.40m wide 0.03m deep	Glass
105	Cut of ditch /wheel rut	N-S linear, very shallow and a flat to concave base	0.40m wide 0.03m deep	-
106	Fill of ditch /wheel rut	Moderately compact mid greyish brown loamy silt with occasional charcoal and small stones	0.60m wide 0.07m deep	Pottery
107	Cut of ditch /wheel rut	N-S linear, very shallow, gradual western side and moderate eastern side leading to a flat base	0.60m wide 0.07m deep	-
108	Fill of furrow	Moderately compact light brown clayey silt with frequent charcoal and occasional stones	2.50m wide 0.16m deep	Pottery, brick and clay pipe
109	Cut of furrow	Shallow linear with moderate sides and a wide flat base	2.50m wide 0.16m deep	-

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>	<b>NGR</b>	<b>Surface height (aOD)</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>30m x 1.80m NE-SW</b>		<b>82.34m</b>	<b>0.21m deep 82.13m aOD</b>
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/ Samples</b>
201	Topsoil	Loose mid greyish brown loam with occasional small stones	0.21m deep	-
202	Natural	Moderately compact light brownish yellow sandy clay with frequent stones and chalk flecks	-	-
203	Fill of furrow	Moderately compact light brown clayey silt with frequent charcoal and occasional stones	1.30m wide 0.30m deep	Pottery
204	Cut of furrow	Shallow linear with moderate sides and a wide flat base	1.30m wide 0.30m deep	-



<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>	<b>NGR</b>	<b>Surface height (aOD)</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>40 x 1.80m NE-SW</b>		<b>82.38m</b>	<b>0.37m deep 82.01m aOD</b>
<i><b>Context</b></i>	<i><b>Context type</b></i>	<i><b>Description</b></i>	<i><b>Dimensions</b></i>	<i><b>Artefacts/ Samples</b></i>
301	Topsoil	Loose mid greyish brown loam with occasional small stones	0.24m deep	-
302	Subsoil	Friable mid orange/brown sandy clay	0.37m deep	-
303	Natural	Moderately compact light brownish yellow sandy clay with frequent stones and chalk flecks	-	-
304	Fill of posthole	Loose mid greyish brown silty sand with occasional small stones and charcoal	0.45m dia 0.20m deep	Animal bone and fired clay
305	Cut of posthole	Small circular posthole with steep sides and a concave base	0.45m dia 0.20m deep	-
306	Fill of posthole	Loose mid greyish brown silty sand with occasional small stones and frequent charcoal	0.60m dia 0.25m deep	Animal bone
307	Cut of posthole	Small circular posthole with moderate sides and a concave base	0.60m dia 0.25m deep	-
308	Fill of posthole	Loose mid greyish brown silty sand with occasional small stones	0.35m dia 0.10m deep	Pottery
309	Cut of posthole	Small circular posthole with steep sides and a concave base	0.35m dia 0.10m deep	-



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