

Meon Vale Estate (Phase 3b);

former Long Marston Storage Depot, Campden Road, Lower Quinton,
Warwickshire



Meon Vale Estate (Phase 3b);

former Long Marston Storage Depot, Campden Road, Lower
Quinton, Warwickshire

Archaeological recording

SP 16490 46523

Site code: LM18

HER ref: 18/288

OASIS ID: 110archa1-322770

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Front cover; overall view west of the east-west trench arm

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SUMMARY

Archaeological recording was carried out during July 2018 on land at the Meon Vale Estate, the former Long Marston Storage Depot, Campden Road, Lower Quinton, CV37 8QR at the request of St. Modwen Homes Ltd.

Historic mapping (OS 1884) shows the study site and the wider Long Marston estate originally comprised agricultural land. In the early 1940's a military storage depot was constructed. The site was poorly drained and large quantities of ash were subsequently imported for use across the site as a sub-base to improve drainage on the site. Evidence of this activity was clearly visible during the excavation as a thick layer directly overlying the Lias clay substrate. An attempt to solve the drainage problem had also been made in the late C19 as evidenced by the inserted land drains.

The layout of the depot can be clearly seen on the OS 1970 which also shows three buildings formerly sited to the north the phase 3b site. A further two buildings (the subject of this report) were identified on the map from 1993. In 2000 the depot closed, and the land was subsequently used for commercial purposes including the storage of rolling stock.

In subsequent years the former depot has been largely developed for residential use and the subject of archaeological investigation and mitigation. Although an earlier desk-based assessment suggested that the site may have some potential for evidence of Roman and/or medieval activity, a subsequent field evaluation on the land to the east of the Gran Brook and a watching brief during remediation works associated with the Phase 3a area to the north of the site produced negative results suggesting that the phase 3b site was likely to have limited archaeological potential. The negative result of the current watching brief during remediation works connected with the two buildings formerly occupying the site supports the conclusion that archaeological deposits are unlikely to have been present within the wider area of the phase 3b site.

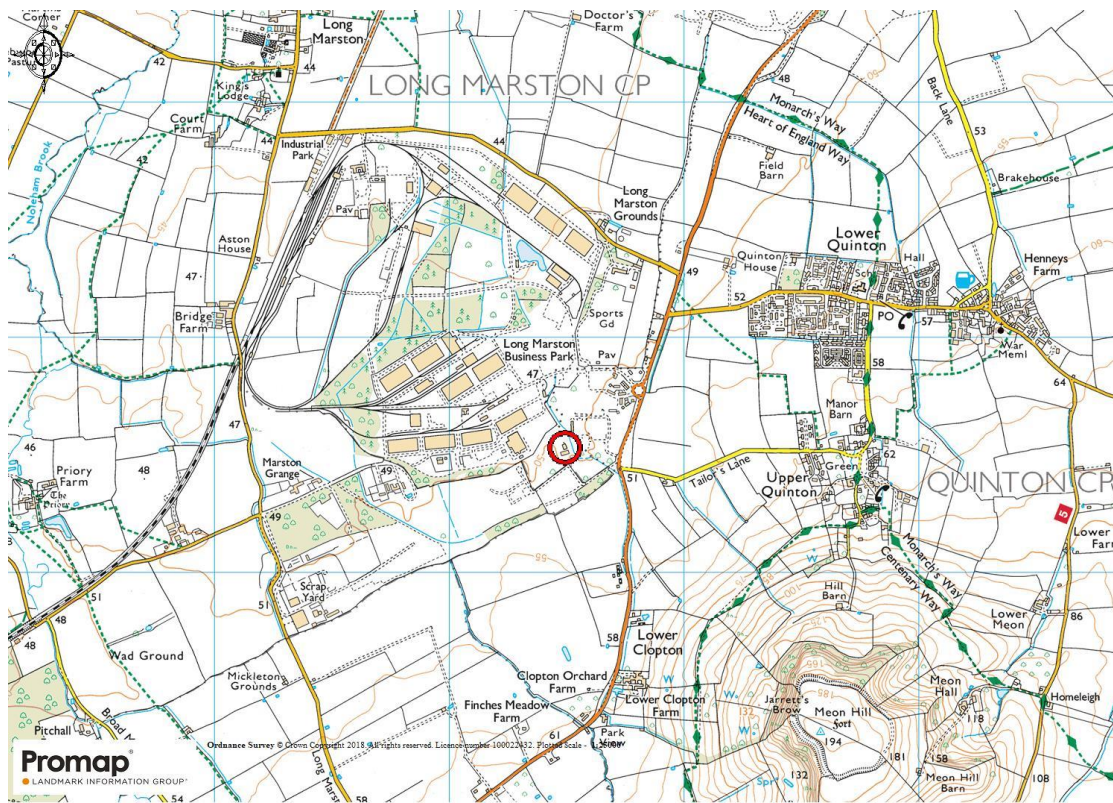


Fig. 1; site location (circled in red)

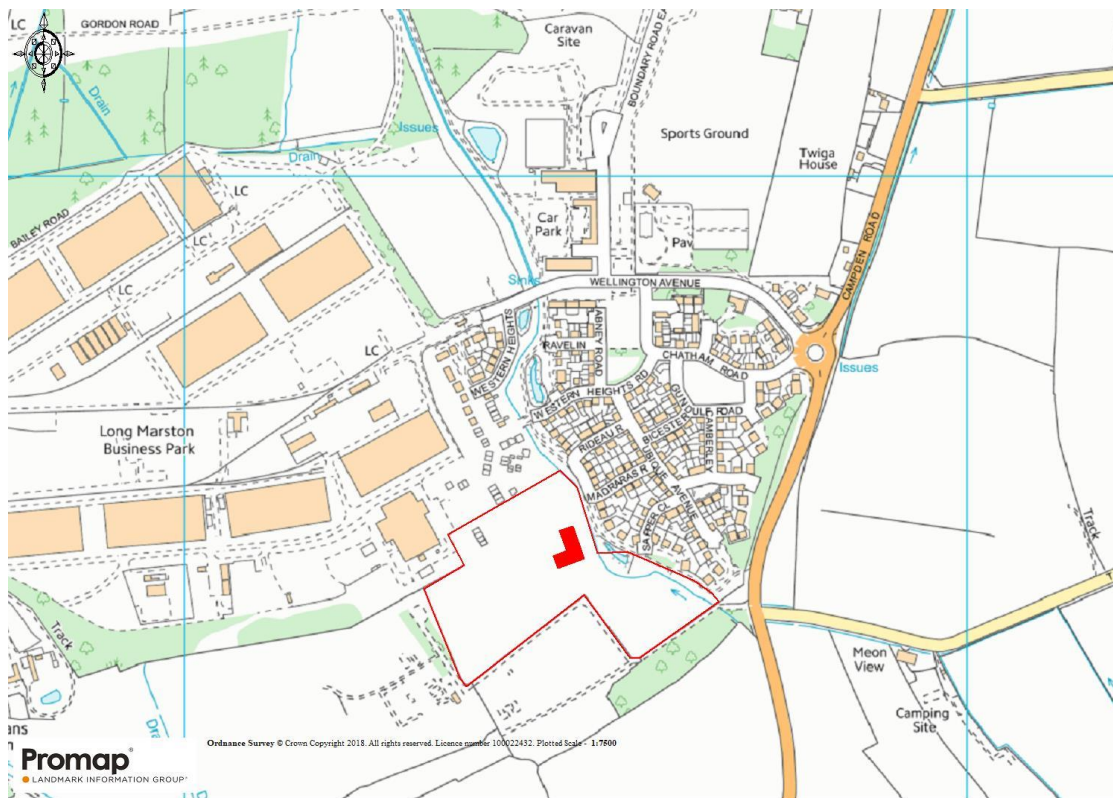


Fig. 2; area of phase 3b (red outline), area of archaeological recording (block red)

INTRODUCTION

Location and scope of works (Figs. 1 & 2)

This document sets out the results of archaeological recording ('watching brief') during 2nd and 3rd July for archaeological recording ('watching brief') at the former Long Marston Storage Depot, Campden Road, Lower Quinton, CV37 8QR at the request of St. Modwen Homes Ltd. The archaeological work was required as a condition of planning permission granted by Stratford on Avon District Council in respect of an application (Ref: 09/00835/FUL) to develop the area. The site which is described as phase 3b is one of a series of areas forming part of the Meon Vale Estate, a large on-going residential development.

The area has previously been the subject of a desk-based assessment (Waterman, 2009) which suggested that the site may have some potential for evidence of Roman and/or medieval activity. A subsequent field evaluation (Reynish, 2011) on the land to the east of the Gran Brook and a watching brief during remediation works associated with the Phase 3a area to the south of the site (Cook, 2015) produced negative results suggesting that the phase 3b site may have limited archaeological potential.

The archaeological work at the phase 3b site was carried out during groundworks associated with the demolition of two buildings which occupied an area within the site. Remediation works have already been carried out across the remaining area of the phase 3b site without archaeological mitigation and the watching brief provides an opportunity to record any archaeological deposits that may be exposed during these current works.

Geology and topography

The phase 3b site is located within the south eastern corner of the Long Marston Estate, which is located approximately 9km to the south west of Stratford upon Avon. The site is bounded by the Phase 3 residential development to the north, the wider Meon Vale residential development to the east and woodland and agricultural land to the south. Commercial units are located to the west. The Gran Brook follows the eastern boundary of the site flowing in a northerly direction. The excavation area, the subject of this report, is represented by an L-shaped plot (approx. 900m²) previously occupied by buildings associated with the former engineers' depot. The site lies at a height of about 48m Above Ordnance Datum

(AOD) and the underlying geology comprises Lower Lias, mainly clay (BGS, 1974). This was confirmed during excavation.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

A desk-based assessment was carried out by Waterman Energy, Environment and Design Ltd (Waterman, 2009). This showed, based on previous archaeological work carried out north of the site, that there was potential for Roman remains on the site. The assessment also uncovered limited potential for medieval remains relating to the medieval shrunken village at Long Marston to the west of the site. Medieval and post-medieval ridge and furrow ploughing was recorded across the site and its environs by the English Heritage National Mapping Programme (EHNMP). This was likely to have been heavily impacted by later ploughing and activity associated with the Central Engineers Depot across the site.

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken (Reynish, 2011) in February and March 2011 at Areas A1, A4, A8 and A9, Long Marston Estate, Warwickshire. 47 trenches were excavated. The evaluation identified a number of modern features consisting of service trenches, manholes and foundations. No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed, and no artefactual material was recovered.

The Warwickshire Historic Environment Record (HER) was consulted in 2018 with a search carried out over a 1km radius centred on the site and revealed no additional significant entries to the record.

RESULTS (Figs. 3 & 4)

Method and nature of the excavation

Archaeological recording was undertaken to obtain an appropriate record of any archaeological deposits or finds disturbed or exposed during excavation associated with the removal of concrete foundations and services connected with two former buildings erected in the 1970s. Machine excavation was only used for the removal of non-archaeologically significant material (modern deposits) and was used to excavate these layers stratigraphically. All machining was conducted under constant and close archaeological supervision at all times using a toothless bucket.

The archaeological fieldwork and post-excavation was carried out in accordance with standards and guidance for archaeological watching briefs produced by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA, 2014).

Description of deposits

The natural substrate comprised a stiff Lias clay, predominantly blue/grey, but with areas of light to mid-brown clay. This was exposed throughout the excavation lying at a level height of about 47.50m AOD. No significant archaeological features or deposits were observed cut into or overlying this layer. A large area of clay within the east-west trench arm had been truncated and backfilled with modern stone chippings. The clay was generally truncated to a depth varying between 0.10-0.50m during the course of the excavation.

The clay was overlain by alternate layers of modern consolidation, comprising initially of ash or clinker, generally mixed with clay and in places soil and limestone rubble to a depth varying between 0.30-60m. this was in turn sealed by an approx. 0.50m thick layer of soil and stone rubble with a component of brick, fragments of concrete and lenses of stone chippings.

FINDS

No artefacts were recovered during the excavation.

Environmental data

None of the deposits exposed during the excavation proved suitable for palaeo-environmental sampling.

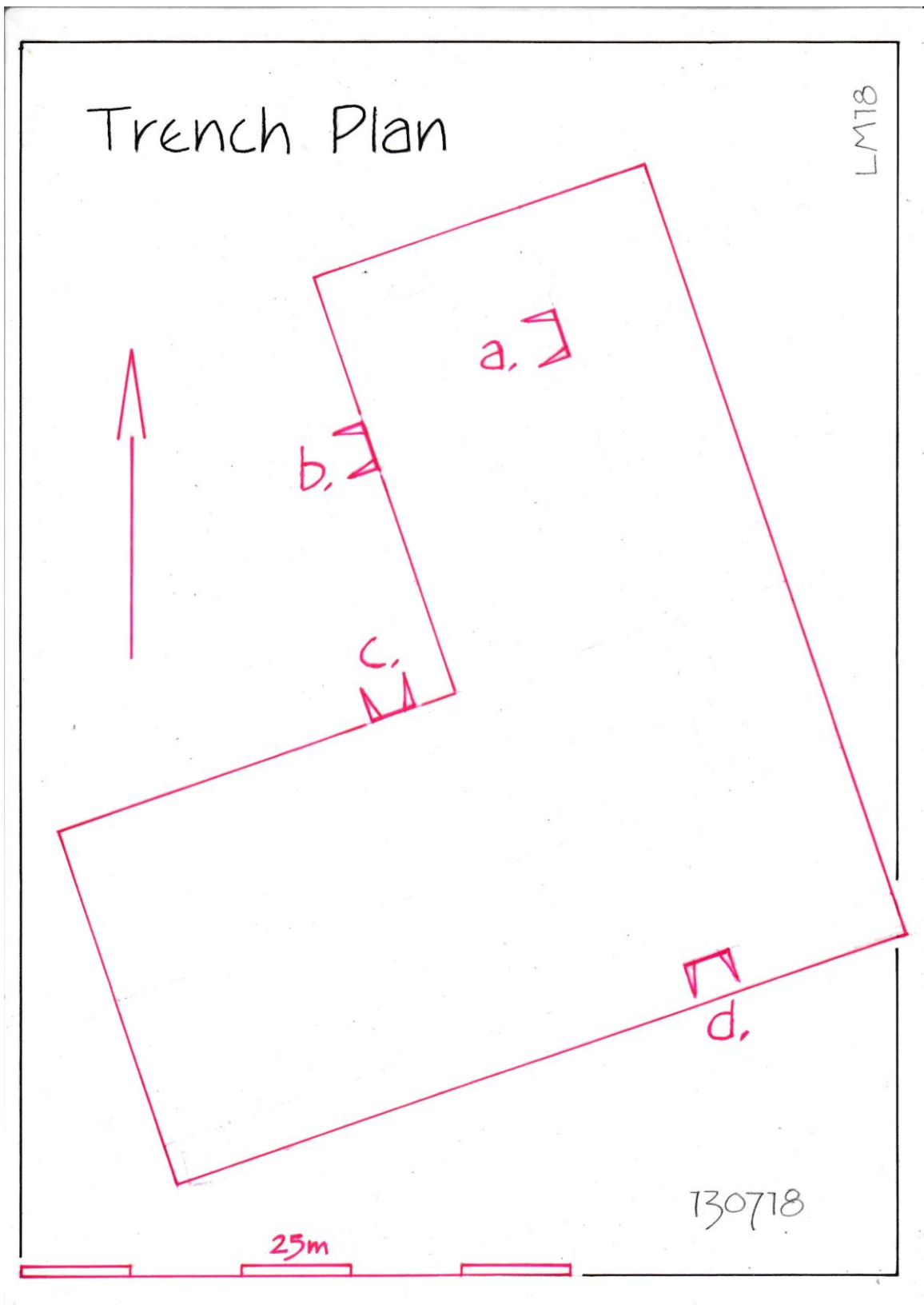


Fig. 3; site plan showing area of excavation and section locations

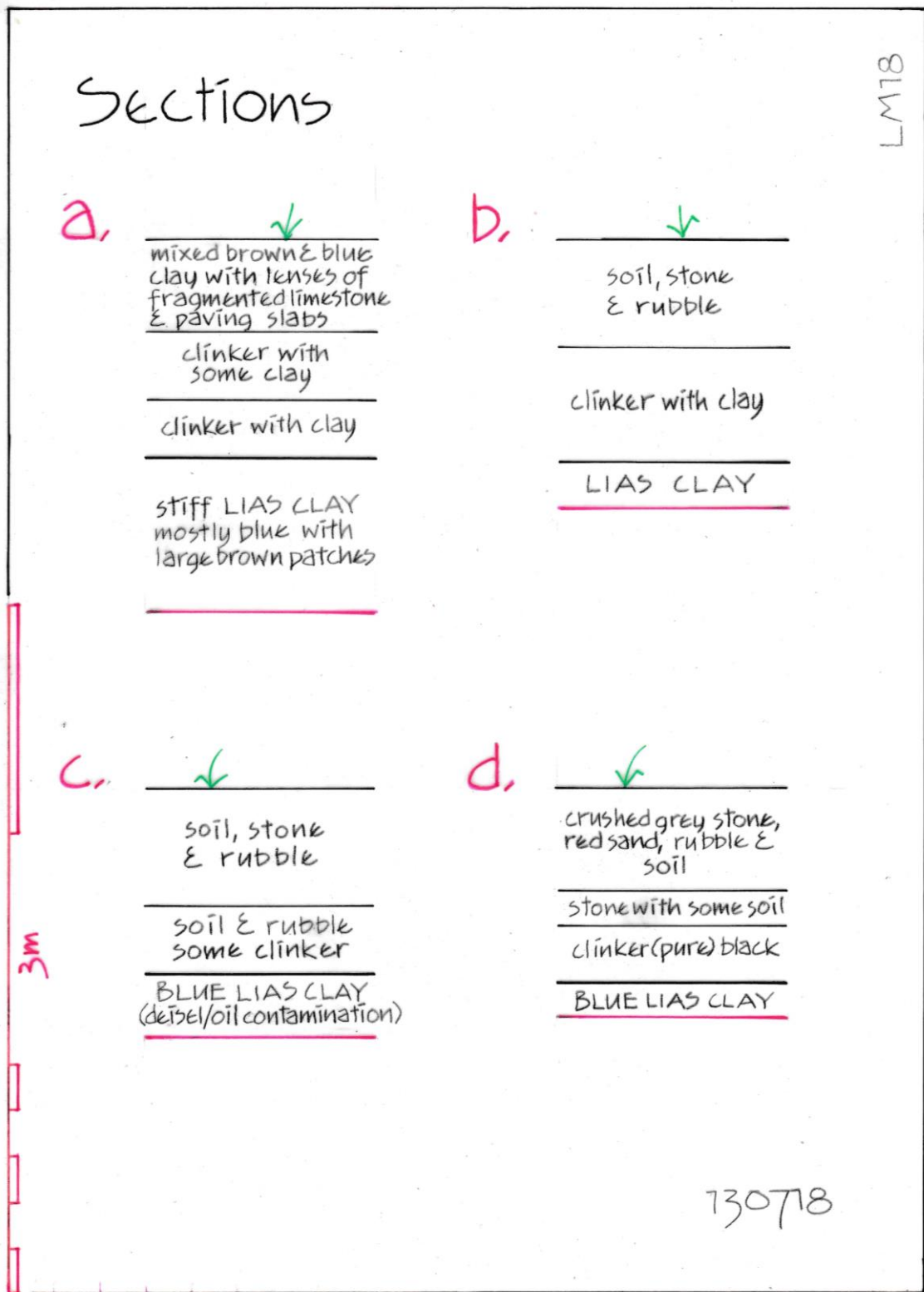


Fig. 4; sample trench sections with descriptions

DISCUSSION (Fig. 5)

Historic mapping (OS 1884) shows the study site and the wider Long Marston estate originally comprised agricultural land. In the early 1940's a military storage depot (Engineer Central Supply Depot) was constructed. The site was marshy and poorly drained and approximately 0.5 million tonnes of ash had been subsequently imported from Hinckley Power Station for use across the site as a sub-base to improve drainage on the site (Mullen, 2016). Evidence of this activity was clearly visible as a thick layer (clinker & clay) directly overlying the Lias clay substrate. An attempt to solve the drainage problem had also been made in the late C19 as evidenced by the inserted land drains.

Activities undertaken at the depot included Bailey Bridge repair, general engineer stores, packaging and crating of stores equipment, repair maintenance and storage of rubber barges, servicing, maintenance, repair and storage of vessels and servicing of military vehicles. Railway tracks extended across the Engineer Central Supply Depot from a branch line of the Great Western Railway located to the west. The layout of the depot can be clearly seen on the OS 1970 which also shows three buildings formerly sited to the north the phase 3b site. A further two buildings (the subject of this report) identified on the map from 1993. A series of smaller features are identified on the south of the Phase 3b site on the 1970 map where it is understood that this area was historically used as a rifle range (Halcrow, 2011). In 2000 the depot closed, and the land was subsequently used for commercial purposes including the storage of rolling stock.

In subsequent years the former depot has been largely developed for residential use and the subject of archaeological investigation and mitigation. Although a desk-based assessment (Waterman, 2009) suggested that the site may have some potential for evidence of Roman and/or medieval activity, a subsequent field evaluation (Reynish, 2011) on the land to the east of the Gran Brook and a watching brief during remediation works associated with the Phase 3a area to the north of the site (Cook, 2015) produced negative results suggesting that the phase 3b site may have limited archaeological potential. The negative result of the current watching brief during remediation works connected with the two buildings formerly occupying the site supports the conclusion that archaeological deposits are unlikely to have been present within the wider area of the phase 3b site.

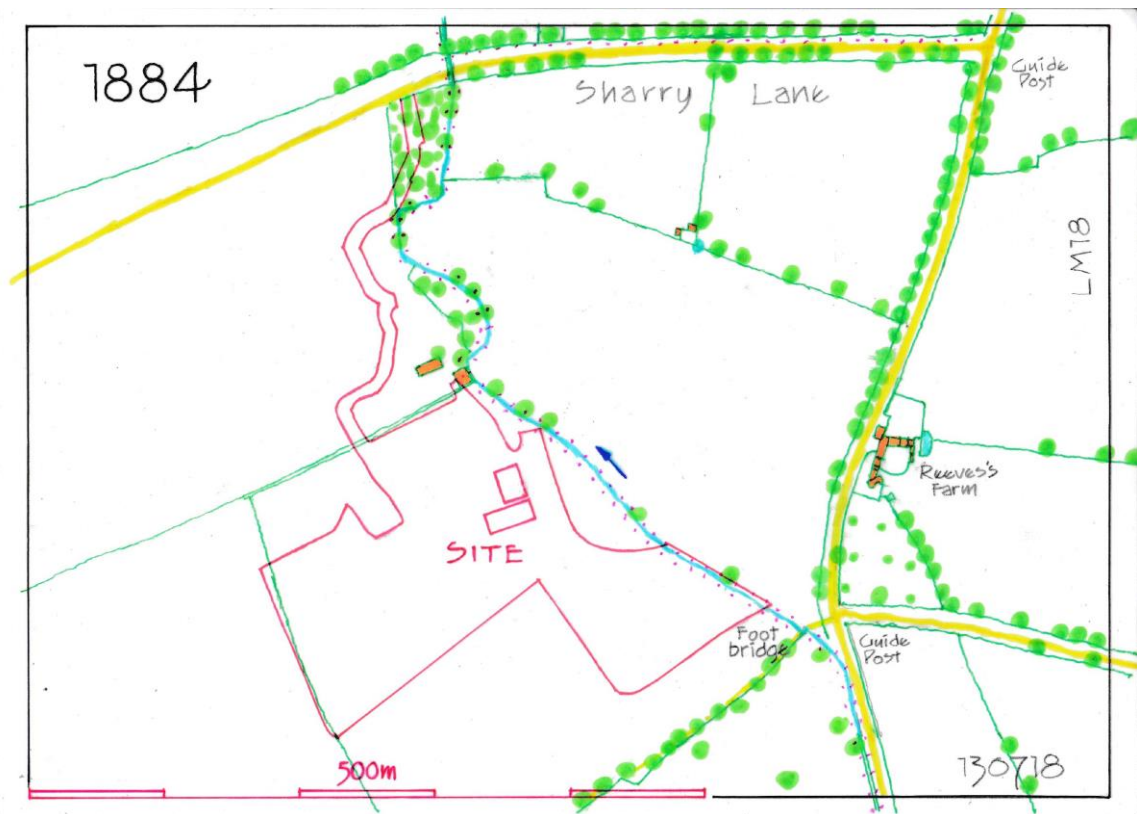


Figure 5; the study site and the historic environment, based on the OS 1884

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Plate 1; overall view north of the north-south trench arm



Plate 2; overall view north-west of the east-west trench arm

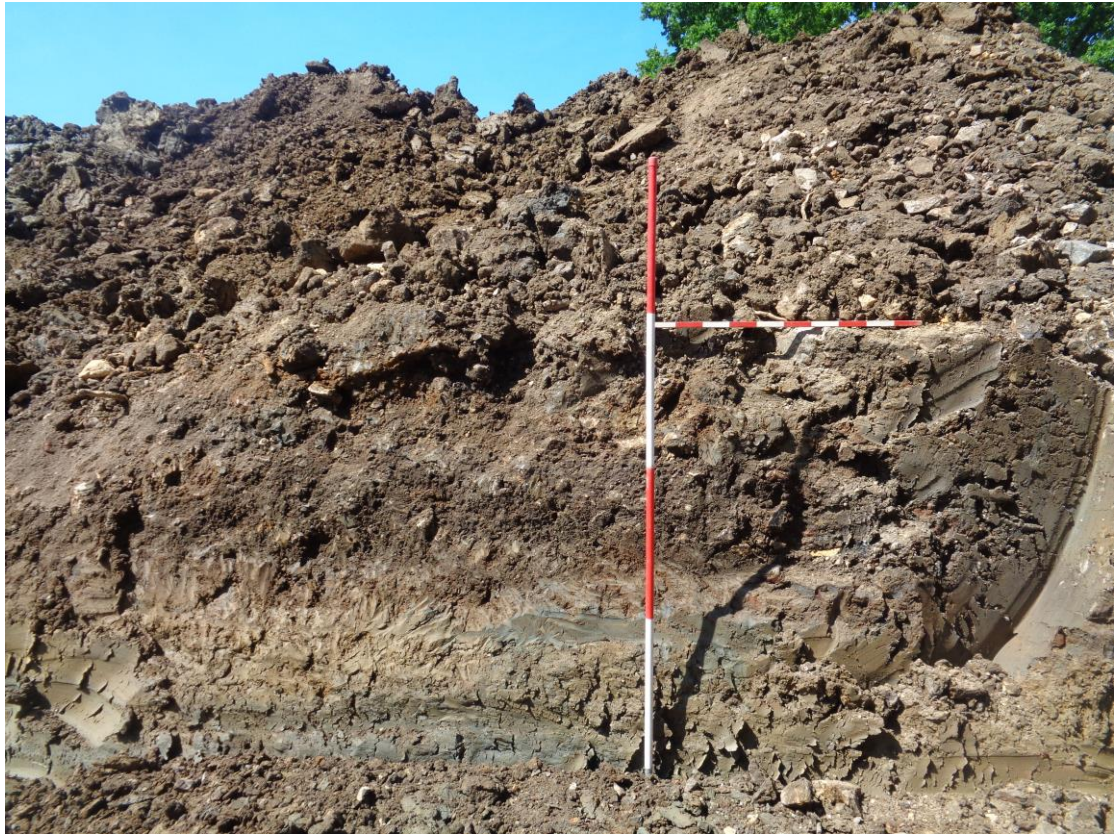


Plate 3; section a

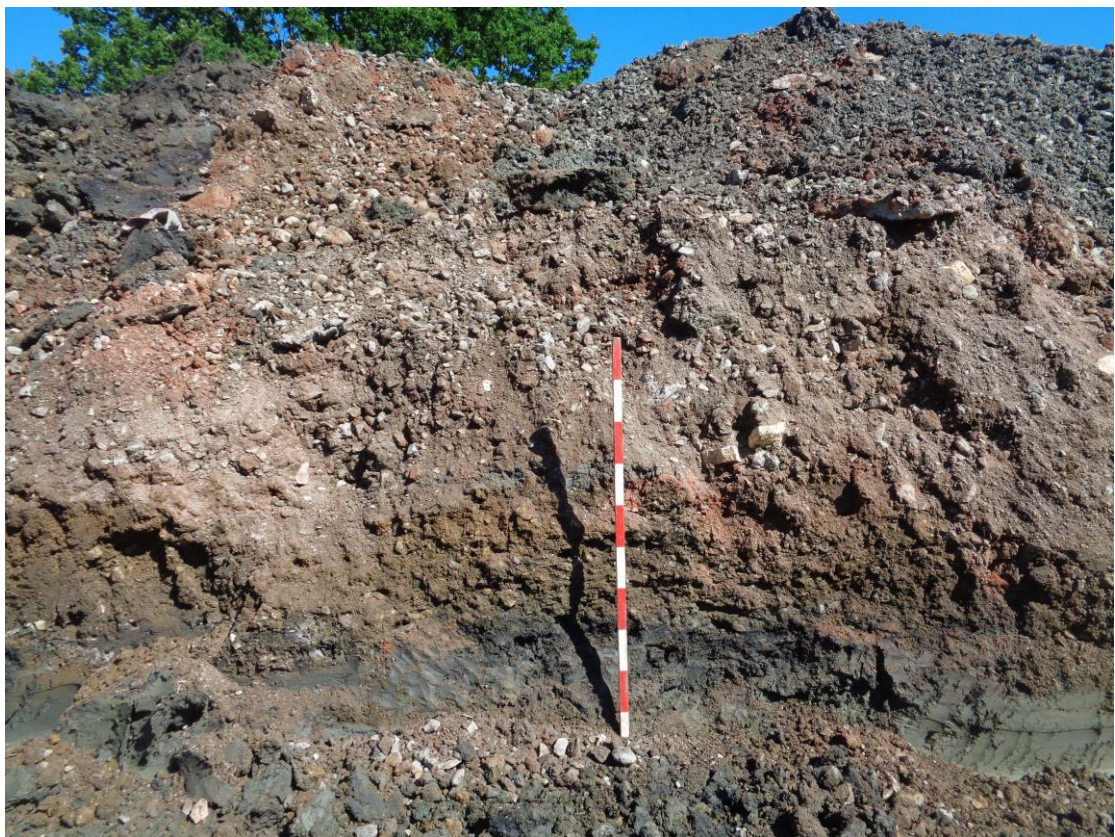


Plate 4; section c



Plate 5; section d

Appendix 1; OASIS

Project name	Meon Vale Estate (Phase 3b), Campden Road, Lower Quinton, Warwickshire; archaeological recording
Project dates	Start: 02-07-2018 End: 03-07-2018
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	LM18 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	""Watching Brief""
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF
Country	England
Site location	WARWICKSHIRE STRATFORD ON AVON LONG MARSTON Meon Vale Estate (Phase 3b); former Long Marston Storage Depot, Campden Road, Lower Quinton
Postcode	CV37 8QR
Site coordinates	SP 16490 46523 52.116369172467 -1.75914969064 52 06 58 N 001 45 32 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 48m Max: 48m
Name of Organisation	one ten archaeology
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	one ten archaeology
Project director/manager	sean cook
Project supervisor	sean cook
Type of sponsor/funding body	Landowner
Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	OASIS
Paper Archive Exists?	No
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
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