Land at Holyhead Road, Oakengates, Telford. NGR SJ 6940 1055

SITE CODE: TWC/2016/0687 HER PRN 03405 OASIS ID: mjgreene1-317592

An Archaeological Watching Brief

by

Archaeology, History and Heritage Consultancy, Research and Educational Services in the Historic Environment

Prepared by

M. J. Greene M.A.(Res), M.A., P.C.I.f.A

On behalf of

Green Homes Telford Ltd 42 Queen Square Wolverhampton WV1 1TX

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An Archaeological Watching Brief Land at Holyhead Road, Oakengates, Telford

OASIS Summary Form

Project details

Project name Holyhead Road, Oakengates, Telford

Short description of

the project

Watching brief on the site of a short section of the former Ketley Canal. This was in response to a planning condition for the building of eleven houses. The site had been

undisturbed by building since the abandonment of the canal in 1880.

Project dates Start: 11-05-2017 End: 30-05-2018

Previous/future work No / Not known

reference codes

Any associated project PRN 03405 - HER event no.

reference codes

Any associated project mjgreene1-317592 - OASIS form ID

Recording project Type of project

Site status Area of Archaeological Importance (AAI)

Current Land use Other 13 - Waste ground

Monument type CANAL POST MEDIEVAL Post Medieval

Significant Finds NONE Post Medieval

Investigation type "Watching Brief"

Prompt Planning condition

Project location

Country England

Site location SHROPSHIRE TELFORD AND WREKIN OAKENGATES Holyhead Road,

Postcode TF2 0AB

Study area 0.2 Hectares

Site coordinates SJ 694 105 52.690975554354 -2.452784233871 52 41 27 N 002 27 10 W Point

Lat/Long Datum Unknown

Height OD / Depth Min: 136.9m Max: 136.9m

Project creators

Name of Organisation M. J. Greene

Project brief originator

Consultant

Project design originator

M. J. Greene

Project

director/manager

M. J. Greene

Project supervisor

M. J. Greene

Type of

sponsor/funding body

Developer

Name of

Green Homes Telford Ltd

sponsor/funding body

Project archives

Physical Archive

recipient

HER

Physical Contents

"Ceramics", "Environmental", "Glass", "Industrial", "Metal"

Digital Archive

recipient

HER

Digital Contents

"none"

Digital Media available "Database", "Images raster / digital photography", "Spreadsheets", "Survey", "Text"

Paper Archive

recipient

HER

Paper Contents

"none"

Paper Media available

"Drawing", "Map", "Notebook - Excavation', 'Research', 'General

Notes", "Photograph", "Plan", "Report", "Survey "

Project bibliography

Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Publication type

Title An Archaeological Watching Brief - Land at Holyhead Road, Oakengates, Telford

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Figure 1: Site location, annotated with dimensions

Figure 2: Site plan showing the trench positions

Figure 3: Site plan with the canal superimposed

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

A watching brief for land at Holyhead Road, planning reference TWC/2016/0687, conducted during April 2018, necessitated by the excavation of trenches for the residential development for the erection of 11 houses with access drives, car parking and associated external works.

Although the trenching was over the known course of the former Ketley Canal, no archaeological features were encountered. The trenches had minimal effect on any underlying archaeology due to the raising of the ground level prior to the commencement of the groundwork.

1. Introduction

1.1 Scope of the Report

This Archaeological Watching Brief report (WBR) has been prepared by M. J. Greene, Archaeology, History and Heritage: *Consultancy, Research and Educational Services in the Historic Environment* (hereafter 'the Consultant Archaeologist) on behalf of Green Homes Telford Ltd, 42 Queen Square, Wolverhampton, WV1 1TX (hereafter 'the Contractor').

It represents a Project Design in accordance with the agreed Written Scheme of Investigation for the archaeological works required in relation to the development of land at Holyhead Road, Oakengates, Telford (hereafter 'the site'): planning reference TWC/2016/0687. This satisfies the conditions recommended by the Senior Archaeological Advisor for Shropshire County Council and issued by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) for approval. The aim of the watching brief was to identify and record any surviving archaeological deposits affected by the groundworks and determine the archaeological significance of the site.

1.2 Site Location

The site is located at National Grid Reference (NGR SJ 694 105) on the northern slope of Ketley Bank at 138.8 metres OD contour and covers approximately 0.2025 hectares as an irregular rectangle measuring 75 x 27 metres. Here the ground is effectively a terrace created by the formation of the Ketley Canal and the A5 road (Figure 1).

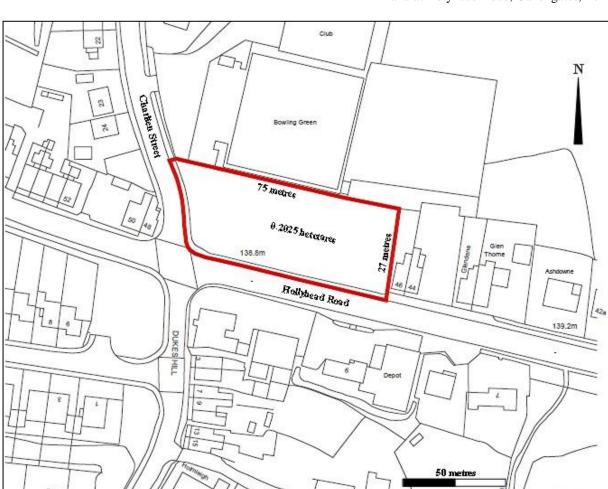


Figure 1: Site location with dimensions

1.3 Archaeology

Within the proximity of the site of the development, there are both designated and non-designated heritage assets. Several structures of historic significance have been scheduled and graded accordingly. There are entries recorded on the Shropshire Historic Environments record (HER) for several finds in the proximity of the development. The historic significance of the area is given in the Desk-based Assessment (Greene, M. J. May 2017)

2. Aims and Methodology

2.1 Aims and Objectives

The general aim of the watching brief was to mitigate the effect of the proposed development on the potential archaeological resource through preservation by record of any archaeology encountered during the groundworks. The specific aim was to identify, record, and where possible, characterise any archaeological remains encountered during the groundwork.

2.2 Methodology

- 2.2.1 All site work was carried out in accordance with the methodology described in the written scheme of investigation (Greene 2018). This was based on a brief issued by the senior archaeological advisor for Shropshire County Council and CIFA guidance (2014).
- 2.2.2 The foundation trenching was conducted with a small excavator using a 60cm toothless bucket. The depth of the trenches were at 190cm below the site datum of 138.87 metres
- 2.2.3 The trenching, for the purpose of the watching brief, began with building plot 7 and trench 3, to the south of the site. A total of 32 individual trenches were excavated in related groups of five consisting of eleven building plots. Each group constitutes an area in the context field record (Figure 2). The recording of the trench sections and sampling was conducted following the cessation of works at the end of the day. Finds were recovered as the excavation continued with invigilation of the contracted archaeologist.
- 2.2.4 Material samples were taken from representational contexts of the strata in addition to artefactual material.

2.3 Fieldwork Programme

The project was conducted and managed by Mr. M. J. Greene, the Consultant Archaeologist April 2018.

3. Results

3.1 Trenching

The excavation of the foundation trenches were conducted on 13th, 16th, 23rd and 25th April 2018. The conditions were favourable although cold and unsettled on the 13th and 16th April. Figure two, shows the position and numbering of the trenches for the purpose of the report.

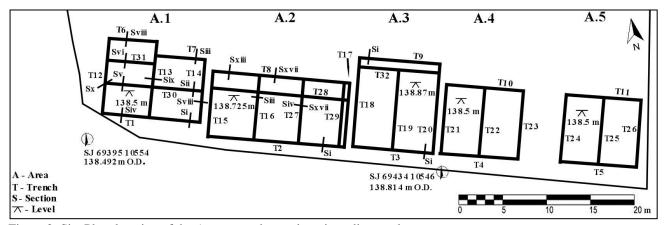


Figure 2: Site Plan: location of the Areas, trenches and sections discussed.

3.2 Due to the raising of the ground level prior to excavation the layer of gravel varied in thickness due to the underlying topography of the site. This is reflected in the variation of the depth of the

trenches although the bottom of each trench was maintained at 1.90metres below the site datum at 138.87 metres O.D.

- 3.3 Trenches. As representative of the site, twelve trenches were recorded. The trenches reported below are given in the order of trench number rather than the date excavated. (See appendices 3 and 4 for details).
- 3.3.1Trench 01: As can be seen in photograph 100_4017, this is a stratified area. The strata shown in the section reveals a dark humic ashy material with stone and ceramic building materials inclusions. This is typical of the site and is the result of deposited accumulations.
- 3.3.2 Trench 02: photograph 100_3941, again shows the stratum of dark humic material mixed with ashy waste. However, at this section there was evidence of an underlying stratum of grey clay. This may be a part of the lining of the canal since it accords with the edge of the known course of it.
- 3.3.3 Trench 03: Here the material used to raise and level the site can be seen as the dark grey gravel layer, 0.39m depth, although this varies over the site. This overlies a varying layer of brown clay of approximately 0.17m to 0.23m thick, (photograph 100_3922), which is suspected of being a consequence of the building of the adjacent A5, Holyhead Road. At 70cms depth, revealed a mixture of dark humic soil with a mix of course industrial waste of ash and furnace material. The identification of furnace material was due to the presence of small and vitrified pieces that had been molten. A check for iron content with a magnetic compass showed no deviation that would be expected with the presence of iron. The bottom of the trench revealed the presence of a line of grey clay, (photograph 100_3925), which is considered to be a part of the lining of the canal.
- 3.3.4 Trench 06: This shows a similar stratigraphy as section 10 of trench 3, which is adjacent to it, although here brick inclusions can be seen in the ashy deposits in context. This can be attributed to the heterogeneous nature of the site due to its formation process, particularly sedimentation, deposition of industrial waste and general material, such as building material (photograph 100_4020).
- 3.3.5 Trench 07: Initially excavated as an evaluation prior to the full foundation excavation of the trench, it demonstrated a variation in the formation process of the site. Photograph 100_4001 shows the deposition of material including building brick that did not demonstrate exposure to heat and is probably the result of the dumping of building material. This western side of the site revealed a bias in the material, especially metal and ceramic building materials. The proposed reason for this is that although the site has been open the only direct and level access to it, prior to development, has been from the west Charlton Street end and so has attracted illegal depositing of material. As can be seen from the photograph, the general material matrix of the site is dark humic and ashy.
- 3.3.6 Trench 08: Located in Area 2, the ten sections recorded show a general continuity of the strata. Away from Area 1, this presents greater homogeneity with less deposition events (photograph 100_3958). Section 13, however, shows a bifurcation of the dark stratum with a stratum of light brown soil with brick inclusions. This has been interpreted as caused by surface disruption of the site as part of the post-canal formation process (photograph 100_3938).

- 3.3.7 Trench 09: photograph 3935, section 01, below 0.50m of levelling, a dark ashy deposit with broken brick and furnace waste was observed. No structures were evident, however, the brick showed signs of being exposed to heat and may have come from a furnace lining. The presence of this material can be attributed to deliberate deposition. Samples were retained from this section. The stratigraphy continues through the adjacent trench 33.
- 3.3.8 Trench 12: This is at the most western extent of the trench work near the site entrance and the prior access to the site. The section showed deposited material over plant material indicating that this had been until recently lower and over grown (see photograph 100-4022). Below this, dark humic material with evidence of hearth and furnace waste.
- 3.3.9 Trench 13: In contrast to trench 12, above, this shows the same dark contaminated humic stratum without the overlying deposition other than the gravel layer to raise and level the site (see photograph 100_4023). This can be explained by the greater distance from the site entrance and so not subject to general and deliberate deposition of material. The excavation of the fine humic hearth and furnace deposits did not reach any earlier deposits or the canal silt accumulations.
- 3.3.10 Trench 14: This further shows the dark humic ashy material typical of the site with evidence of ceramic building material deposits consistent with this area of the site, (photograph 100_4016).
- 3.3.10 Trench 16: The continuity continues as with trench 14 confirming the formation bias seen in Area 1due to material dumping (photograph 100_401).
- 3.3.12 Trench 27: As can be seen from photographs 100_3943 to 3957 there is variation in the depositions revealed by the six sections recorded. The principle common stratum, which appears in all sections, is the dark ashy humic layer, however within and in some cases overlying it is a mixture of hearth and furnace deposits mixed with brick, although this is not consistent. The deposited material can be followed through to adjacent trench eight.
- 3.3.13 Trench 30: A dark humic stratum can be seen in both section photographs 100_4015 and 4018, however, the heterogeneous nature of the site can be seen with the brick inclusions in 100_4015 which are absent in 100_4018. The base of the trench revealed the further humic material with inclusions indicating that the natural post abandonment sediments had not been reached.
- 3.3.14 Trench 31: This section shows four strata of deposition below the layer deposited for raising the ground level for development. This consists of a thin dark humic stratum over a stratum of course reddish furnace deposits, which is above a light brown gravelly stratum with some ceramic building material inclusions. Below this is a stratum of dark ashy humic material typical of the site consisting of hearth, furnace and building material. The final stratum here can be seen as a layer of brown silty clay. This may be a mixture of the canal lining and later sediment that has been disturbed and mixed (photograph 100_4019).
- 3.3.15 Embankment Trench 33: The embankment along the north side of the site was subject to major earthworks for the formation of a substantial revetment to ensure the stability of the site. Photograph 100-3937i shows the stratification of the site as excavated along the northern edge. The

section shows fine clay overlain by boulder clay. Over the latter is a deposit of considerable depth of mixed mining and humic material. This confirms the statement in the *Coal Mining Risk Assessment* (Hardy 2016 p. 3) that the land has been raised because of the deposition of colliery waste. In addition to the colliery waste, the upper strata contained deposited building material, 19th, and 20th century's pottery fragments.

4. Finds

The finds recovered during the watching brief were taken as indicative of the ubiquitous distribution of material relating to the abandonment and formation phase of the canal after 1880. Materially, the artefacts consisted of nineteenth and twentieth century pottery fragments, some iron objects and modern plastics, glass bottles and glass fragments. One object recovered is identified as a possible canal lock key; however, on closer inspection following finds processing the remains of a plastic handle grip was identified. The conclusion is that it could be the starter handle for an engine or a winding handle for a machine. The object was a surface find and so was not in a stratified context.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

5.1 Discussion

The course of the Ketley canal passes through the site from the north-east to the south west passing through Area 2 and 3, and partly the north-west part of Area 4 (Figure 3). The course of the towpath passes through the north of the site passing directly through Area 1. The canal has not been visible as an earthwork since before 1927 (Greene, M. J. May 2017). The evidence revealed by the groundwork showed that the canal basin had been subject to industrial depositions, presumably form the local iron and coal industries. This had been over the natural sediments in the canal that overlaid the clay lining. The course of the towpath that had been on the north side of the canal could not be located. The evidence for both the canal and the adjacent towpath showed that they were not constructed of durable materials, such as stone, and no associated structures were identified. The evidence suggests that the canal was a clay-lined earthwork with an associated earthen towpath. The subsequent history of the site has been one of continued depositing of industrial waste and building material, mainly brick and some tile. Some of the brick showed signs of being exposed to great heat and may have been a part of the lining of a furnace. The amount of vitrified waste would attest to this conclusion.

The finds are not of significance and represent the general material due to discardment. As stated above, they are a result of the formation process of the site following abandonment.

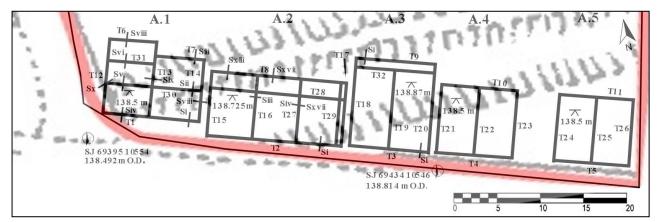


Figure 3: Site plan with the course of the canal superimposed

5.2 Conclusion

The development of the land has had little effect on the remaining canal archaeology and any structures or artefactual material remains too deeply buried to have been compromised. However, the watching brief records the formation process of the site since the abandonment of the canal and demonstrates the presence of the canal structure.

6. Archive

The paper site records, drawings and photographs will be held by M. J. Greene Archaeological Consultancy with a copy of the watching brief report. A copy of the report will be deposited with the Historic Environments Record, Archaeological Data Service and OASIS. The soil samples taken during the watching brief will be held by M.J. Greene Archaeological Consultancy while the few finds will be returned to the client, due to their archaeological insignificance.

7. References

Greene, M. J. 2017, A Desk-Based Assessment: Land at Holyhead Road, Oakengates, Telford. NGR SJ 6940 1055

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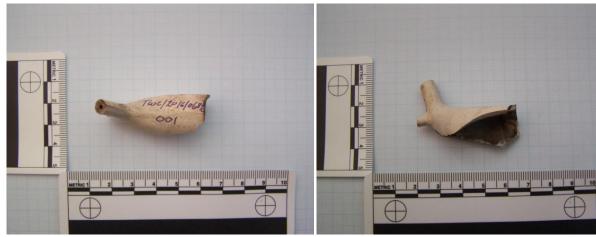
8. Appendices

Appendix 1: Samples Register								
Location: Holyhead Rd, Oakengates, NGR SJ 6940 1055 Site Code: TWC/2016/0687								
HER PRN 03405 OASIS ID: mjgreene1-317592 Date: April 2018								
Sample No.	Context	Weight(gms)	Material Description					
001	001	3.2	Dark humic soil of course structure					
002	002	7.2	Clay: gritty and orange					
003	003	4.3	Fine dark and ashy					
004	005	9.0	Course dark and ashy					
005	003	4.2	Light ashy hearth waste					
006	003	39.4	Course, concreted furnace waste					
007	003	101.1	Partially vitrified furnace waste with gaseous extrusions					
008	001	30.7	Low density furnace waste					
009	001	567.4	Partially vitrified, gaseous furnace waste					
010	004	151.7	Ceramic building material (firebrick) furnace lining with					
			adhered waste.					
011	001	6.9	Vitrified furnace waste					

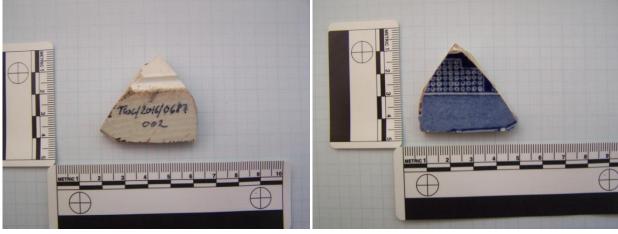
Appendix 3 – Finds Photographs

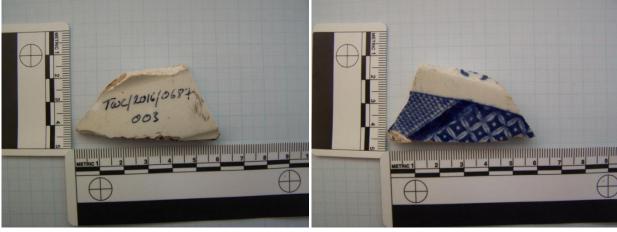
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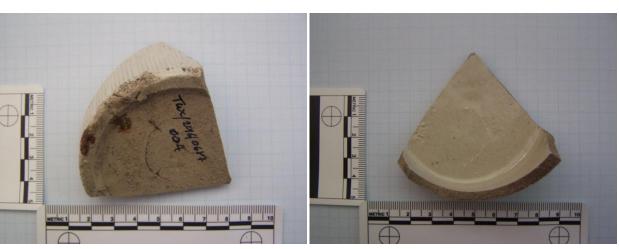
HER PRN 03405 OASIS ID: migreene1-317592 Date: April 2018



001/100_4234 001/100_4235







004/100_4240 004/100_4241



004/100_4242



005/100_4243 005/100_4244





007/100_4248 006/100_4246



 $008/100_4250$



009/100_4253 009/100_4251





010/100_4254



011/100_4256



010/100_4255



011/100_4257







014/100_4260



015/100_4261

Location	Location: Holyhead Road, Oakengates, NGR SJ 6940 1055 Site Code: TWC/2016/0687							
HER PRN 03405 OASIS ID: mjgreene1-317592 Date: April 2018								
Trench	Section	Roll	Frame	Date	Direction Description			
01	04	100	4017	٠.	North	Dark humic ash mix sandy deposits		
02	01	66	3941	٠.	South	Dark humic clay overlay		
03	01	۲۲	3922	13-04-18	South	Clay overlaying humic ash stratum		
"	Base	66	3925	٠.	Vertical	Grey clay stratum		
06	07	"	4020	25-04-18	North	Mixed stratum over rubble deposits		
07	02	۲,	4001	"	South	Dark humic ash and rubble strata		
"	Base	66	4008	٠.	Vertical	Clay stratum		
08	13	"	3938	16-04-18	North	Bifurcated stratum		
"	17	۲۲	3958	"	South	Dark humic with brick over clay		
09	01	66	3935		North	Dark humic with brick		
12	10	"	4022	25-04-18	East	Dark humic stratum		
13	09	66	4023	٠.	East	Dark humic stratum		
14	08	66	4021	٠.	West	Dark humic with brick		
16	03	"	4016	25-04-18	North	Dark humic with brick over clay		
27	04	"	3943	16-04-18	South	Dark humic with brick		
"	17	"	3957	"	South	Dark humic with brick		
30	02	"	4015	25-04-18	North	Dark humic with brick		
"	05	"	4018	"	North	Dark humic stratum		
31	06	"	4019	"	North	Dark humic with brick over clay		
32	01	"	3937i	16-04-18	West	Section through natural deposits		

${\bf Appendix}\; {\bf 5-Survey\; Photographs}$





T.01/S.04/100_4017

T.02/S.01/100_3941





T.03/S.01/100_3922

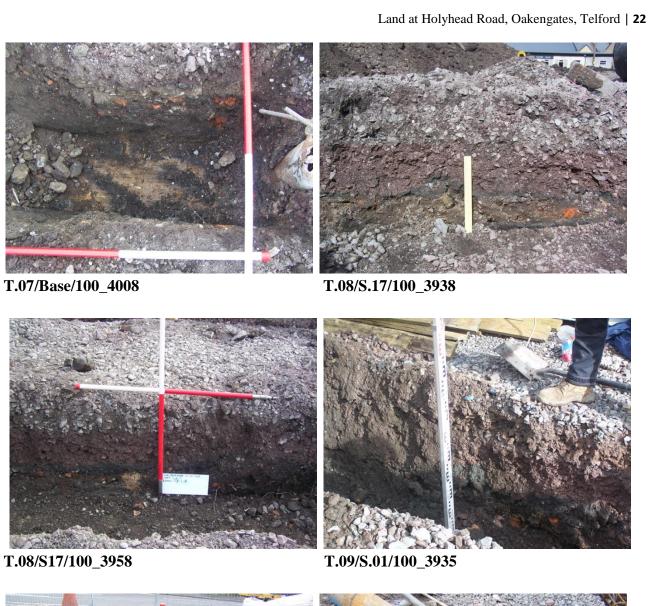
T.03/Base/100_3925





T.06/S.07/100_4020

T.07/S.02/100_4001



T.12/S.10/100_4022

T.13/S.09/100_4023





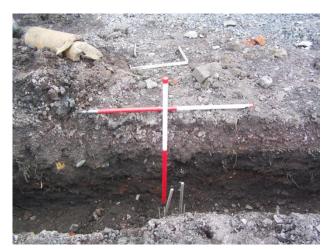
T.16/S.03/100_4016





T.27/S.04/100_3943

T.27/S.17/100_3957





T.30/S.02/100_4015

T.30/S.05/100_4018







T.31/S06/100_4019

T.32/S.01/100_3937i

APPENDIX 6

RISK ASSESSMENT – MINOR WORKS TWC/2016/0687

Details of tasks	Potential	A	В	Overall	Control	Action	Revised
to be carried out	Hazard	Likelihood	Severity	Risk	Measures		Risk
			Rating	Rating			Rating
				A x B			
1. Mark out	1.1 Injury	4	3	12	Wear protective	Gloves and safety	2x1=2
survey grid	from using			Moderate	clothing	spectacles to be worn	Low
Installation of	hammer					by survey assistant	
control points	knocking in						
using road pins.	road pins.	2	_	10	***	T 11 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1	
	1.2 Injury	2	5	10	Wear high	Ensure high visibility	1x1=1
	from site traffic as result of			Moderate	visibility clothing.	outer garments worn at all times including wet-	Low
	working in				ciouning.	weather gear	
	access road					weather gear	
	1.3 Tripping	3	4	6	Engender an	Keep site tidy with	2X2=4
	1.5 Tripping	3	•	Low	awareness of	regard to tapes and	Low
					risk from	survey lines. Keep	
					tripping	away from bunds	
2. Conducting	2.1 Injury from	3	2	Moderate			2X2=4
the invigilation	site traffic and					Ensure high visibility	Low
of the watching	the mechanical				Engender	outer garments worn at	
brief	excavator				awareness of the	all times and that the	
					risk of tripping	excavator driver is	
					or coming into	aware of the	
					contact with the	archaeologists presence	
					excavator		