

Archaeological Services

An Archaeological Evaluation Land at Shilton Lane, Coventry

NGR: SP 372 829 centre

Tim Higgins



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An Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation

at Shilton Lane, Coventry

NGR: SP 372 829

Tim Higgins

For: CgMs Consulting

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An Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation at Shilton Lane, Coventry (SP 372 829)

Tim Higgins

Summary

An archaeological field evaluation by trial trenching was undertaken on land off Shilton Lane, Coventry, by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) in advance of proposed construction of residential dwellings with associated landscaping and infrastructure. Twenty one trial trenches were excavated in an area defined as having low to moderate archaeological potential. The trial trenching revealed only ploughed out evidence of medieval ridge and furrow strip field systems. No dating evidence was recovered but the ridge and furrow is likely to be medieval or early post-medieval in origin. The site archive will be held with Coventry Museums Service.

Introduction

Outline planning permission has been granted (Application No OUT/2013/0473) for the construction of residential dwellings, on land off Shilton Lane, Coventry, (SP 372 829). The development is to comprise the construction of residential dwellings with associated landscaping and infrastructure covering c. 5 ha.

In accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 12 Enhancing and Conserving the Historic Environment (March 2012), the evaluation was undertaken by University of Leicester Archaeological Services as an initial stage to address a condition of planning. The planning authority, Coventry City Council, have requested an evaluation by trial trenching to verify whether any archaeological remains of significance were present and, if so, to propose suitable treatment to avoid or minimise damage that may be caused by the development. The work followed the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for an Archaeological Evaluation prepared by CgMs Consulting (Bourn 2014) and approved by Coventry City Council planning authority.

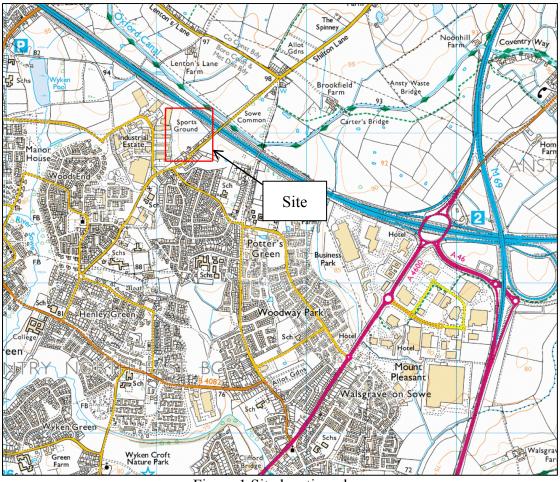


Figure 1 Site location plan

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Site Description, Topography and Geology

The site is located immediately adjacent and to the north of the Boat Inn, Shilton Lane, Coventry at grid reference SP 372 829.

The underlying geology is Glacial Till comprising brown and reddish brown pebbly clay. It is on a gentle east to west slope lying at c. 96m OD at its eastern extent falling to approximately 95m OD at its western extent. Along the western boundary of the site is an in-filled former channel of the Oxford Canal, the backfilling of which is shown to vary with raised mounded sections containing woodland and scrub and depressed areas containing wetland grasses along its length.

Archaeological Background

An archaeological desk-based assessment has been undertaken which in summary, concluded that there is no direct evidence for prehistoric or Roman activity within the

site or within its immediate vicinity. However, the site does contain a parchmark enclosure of uncertain date, and whilst this is thought likely to relate to later activity associated with occupation along Shilton Lane given its location and orientation, the possibility that this may relate to prehistoric and/or Roman activity cannot be dismissed. The site is considered to have low potential for remains of all other periods (Bourn 2012).

Aims and Objectives

The main aims and objectives of the evaluation were:

- To identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits.
- To establish the character, extent and date range for any archaeological deposits to be affected by the proposed ground works.
- To produce an archive and report of any results.

Within the stated project objectives, the principal aim of the evaluation was to establish the presence, nature, extent, date, depth, significance and state of preservation of any archaeological deposits on the site in order to determine the potential impact upon them from the proposed development.

Trial trenching is an intrusive form of evaluation that will demonstrate the existence of earth-fast archaeological features that may be present within the area.

Methodology

The WSI requested a 3% random sample by trial trenching that would be the equivalent of c. 20 40m x 1.8m trenches totaling c. 1440 sq. metres. An area along the eastern and southern boundary formed an exclusion zone for a high pressure gas main.

During the evaluation the length of some of the evaluation trenches was reduced from those on the provisional plan due to various site constraints. To maintain the sample size the total number of trenches was now increased to 21. The trenches were positioned to provide a random sample in order to examine representative areas of the proposed development site.

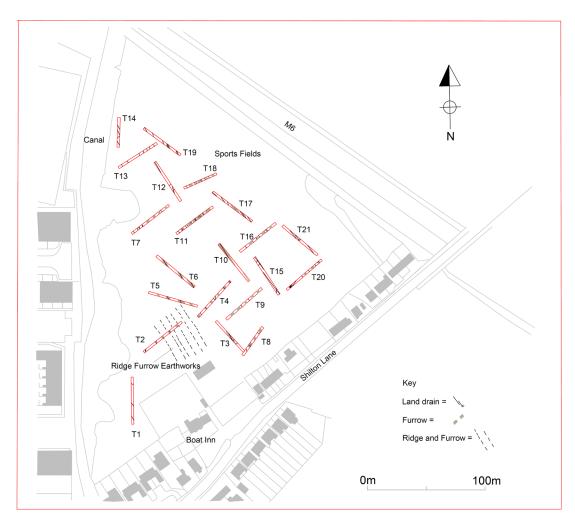
The topsoil and overlying layers were removed under full archaeological supervision by a 360 excavator fitted with 1.8m wide ditching bucket. The layers of soil will be removed until either the top of archaeological deposits or natural undisturbed substratum was reached, or to a maximum safe depth given the specific site conditions.

The bases of the trenches were to be hand cleaned in areas where potential archaeology was observed. Any archaeological remains were to be recorded and

sample excavation undertaken in order to determine the character and date of any remains. Bulk soil samples were to be taken as appropriate in order to evaluate the environmental potential of the site. Archaeological contexts as a cut are indicated by square brackets e.g [09], while those that are fills are indicated by round brackets e.g (07).

The trenches were located using a Topcon Hiper Pro GPS+ RTK System attached to a Topcon FC-100 controller. The data was processed using Topcon Tools GPS+ Post Processing Software and the final plans completed with the aid of TurboCad v.15 design software.

All the work followed the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) *Code of Conduct (2010) Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations (2010).*



Results

Figure 2 Trench location plan

Sports Fields Area

Trenches 3-4; 6-11; 15-21

Most of the trenches (16) were located within former sports fields in the eastern half of the development area. These trenches were located within an area which had been modified with the ground levels levelled and reduced during construction of the sports fields. Most trenches contained the truncated remnants of furrows and all appeared to be running north-west to south-east orientation away from the Shilton Lane. No dating evidence was recovered although these are likely to be medieval or early post-medieval in origin. Within these trenches were several field drains which were varied in their orientation and are likely to have been inserted when the playing fields were constructed. The natural clay substratum was reached after around 0.20m - 0.50m of topsoil and subsoil had been removed.



Plate 1 Trench 11 looking south-west

Ridge and Furrow Area

Trenches 2 and 5

This area was located towards the south-west corner of the development area and contained two trenches, numbered 2 and 5. These trenches cut across ridge and furrow which had survived as shallow visible earthworks. Both trenches contained the truncated remnants of ridges, furrows and modern land drains. Again all appeared to be running in a north-west to south-east direction away from the Shilton Lane. In contrast to These trenches appeared to be in an area that had not been heavily modified and reduced during construction of the sports fields. Natural clay was reached after around 0.24m - 0.39m of topsoil and subsoil had been removed.



Plate 2 Trench 5 looking north-east

Canal Area

Trenches 12-14

Trenches 12-14 inclusive were located in north-western end of the development area close to the canal and contained layers of made ground. These layers contained modern pottery, glass and layers of demolition, which suggests that they were perhaps deposited when the canal was closed and backfilled in the late 20th century.

All the trenches featured modern land drains, cutting the natural clay and orientated north to south and south-west to north-east. A thick layer of made ground and topsoil directly overlay the firm grey-orange natural clay substratum, with subsoil being absent from both trenches. No other archaeological finds or deposits were located.



Plate 3 Trench 14 looking north

Discussion

The archaeological evaluation by trial trenching revealed no evidence for archaeological features apart from furrows probably from the pre-Enclosure strip field system. Most trenches contained the truncated remnants of furrows although some survived as shallow earthworks located in the south west corner of the site, and all appeared to be running north-west to south-east direction away from the Shilton Lane. No dating evidence was recovered although but they likely to be medieval or early post-medieval in origin.

Modern field drains were located within many of the trenches and often running down the centre of furrows and are thought to be associated with a period when field was under agricultural use. In the eastern half of the site the number of field drains increased and varied in their orientation and these may have been inserted when the various playing fields were constructed. The subsoil and topsoil were both very clean and contained no pre-modern finds.

The majority of the trenches within the former playing fields showed evidence of having been levelled. The layers of made ground present in trenches 12-14 located close to the canal contained modern pottery, glass and layers of demolition debris, which suggests that they were probably deposited when the canal closed and was backfilled in the late 20th century.

The trial trenching suggests that there are unlikely to be any significant archaeological deposits present within the proposed development area.

Archive and Publication

A full copy of the archive as defined in Brown 2008 will be deposited with will be deposited with the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum, Coventry. This archive awaiting accession number will include all written, drawn and photographic records relating to the investigations undertaken.

The archive consists of:

A copy of the report,

Indices

1 A3 Drawing sheets

21 trench recording sheets

Digital and B&W photos with contact prints, photographic index

A summary of the work will also be submitted for publication in a suitable regional archaeological journal in due course

Bibliography

Brown, D., 2008 *Standard and guidance for the preparation of Archaeological Archives* (Institute for Archaeologists)

Bourn, R., 2012 An archaeological desk-based assessment Boat Inn, Shilton Lane, Coventry (SP 372 829) CgMs Limited Report Ref RB/KB/7613

Bourn, R., 2014 Specification for an Archaeological Evaluation Land at Shilton Lane, Coventry (SP 372 829) CgMs Limited Report Ref RB 7613

IfA, 2008 Codes of Conduct and Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation.

Acknowledgements

The fieldwork was carried out by the author, assisted by Nathan Flavell both of ULAS. Dr. Patrick Clay managed the project. We would like to thank CgMs for arranging access and their help and assistance during the evaluation.

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24.11.2014

Appendix 1 OASIS

INFORMATION	EXAMPLE
REQUIRED	
Project Name	An Archaeological Evaluation on Land at Shilton
	Lane Coventry
Project Type	Trial treenh evaluation
Project Manager	Patrick Clay
Project Supervisor	Tim Higgins
Previous/Future work	Desk-based assessment
Current Land Use	Derelict Land
Development Type	Residential
Reason for Investigation	NPPF Section 12
Position in the Planning	As a condition
Process	
Site Co ordinates	NGR: SP 372 829
Start/end dates of field work	11/11/2014 to 18/11/2014
Archive Recipient	Coventry City Council
Study Area *	5 hectares

Trench 1	Trench 1		Length 38.5m	Notes: Va drains	rious land	Minimum depth to archaeology or natur substratum 0.22m			
Interval	0m SW	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30m	35m	38.5m NE
Topsoil Depth	0.26m	0.26m	0.30m	0.31m	0.30m	0.33m	0.26m	0.24m	0.22m
Subsoil Depth	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Top of Natural	0.26m	0.26m	0.30m	0.31m	0.30m	0.33m	0.26m	0.24m	0.22m
Base of Trench	0.38m	0.36m	0.36m	0.38m	0.54m	0.40m	0.42m	0.42m	0.40m

Appendix 2 Trench Descriptions

Trench 2		Orientation NE - SW	Length 41m	Notes: R furrow Va drains	idge and rious land				
Interval	0m SW	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30m	35m	41m NE
Topsoil Depth	0.28m	0.36m	0.30m	0.28m	0.33m	0.30m	0.40m	0.30m	0.28m
Subsoil Depth	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Top of Natural	0.28m	0.36m	0.30m	0.28m	0.33m	0.30m	0.40m	0.30m	0.28m
Base of Trench	0.35m	0.44m	0.37m	0.38m	0.41m	0.40m	0.50m	0.50m	0.31m

Trench 3		Orientation NW - SE	Length 34.1m	furrow Va	idge and rious land odern post	substratum 0.31m			
Interval	0m NW	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30m	34m	SE
Topsoil Depth	0.22m	0.24m	0.22m	0.22m	0.26m	0.20m	0.20m	0.19m	
Subsoil Depth	0.15m	0.18m	0.17m	0.13m	0.20m	0.20m	0.18m	0.12m	
Top of Natural	0.37m	0.42m	0.39m	0.35m	0.46m	0.40m	0.38m	0.31m	
Base of Trench	0.45m	0.53m	0.47m	0.43m	0.50m	0.55m	0.42m	0.38m	

Trench 4		Orientation NE - SW	Length 40m		idge and rious land Modern	substratum 0.20m			
Interval	0m NE	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30m	35m	40m SW
Topsoil Depth	0.23m	0.20m	0.15m	0.30m	0.17m	0.19m	0.19m	0.15m	0.12m
Subsoil Depth	0.12m	0.16m	0.16m	0.12m	0.12m	0.20m	0.16m	0.12m	0.08m
Top of Natural	0.35m	0.36m	0.31m	0.42m	0.29m	0.39m	0.35m	0.27m	0.20m
Base of Trench	0.37m	0.40m	0.35m	0.46m	0.34m	0.40m	0.44m	0.36m	0.34m

Trench 5		Orientation SE - NW	Length 42m	Notes: R furrow Va drains.	idge and rious land				
Interval	0m NE	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30m	35m	42m SW
Topsoil Depth	0.20m	0.26m	0.20m	0.30m	0.20m	0.20m	0.23m	0.17m	0.20m
Subsoil Depth	0.10m	0.07m	0.07m	0.07	0.14m	0.19m	0.16m	0.18m	0.10m
Top of Natural	0.30m	0.33m	0.27m	0.37m	0.24m	0.39m	0.39m	0.35m	0.30m
Base of Trench	0.38m	0.43m	0.39m	0.37m	0.44m	0.39m	0.41m	0.42m	0.36m

Trench 6	Trench 6		Length 40.5m	Notes: R furrow Va drains.	idge and rious land				
Interval	0m NW	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30m	35m	40m SE
Topsoil Depth	0.29m	0.20m	0.25m	0.20m	0.20m	0.26m	0.23m	0.20m	0.26m
Subsoil Depth	0.06m	0.10m	0.12m	0.23m	0.03m	0.07m	0.16m	0.10m	0.14m
Top of Natural	0.35m	0.30m	0.37m	0.43m	0.23m	0.33m	0.39m	0.30m	0.40m
Base of Trench	0.40m	0.39m	0.45m	0.50m	0.40m	0.33m	0.47m	0.50m	0.40m

Trench 7	Trench 7		Length 38.7m		idge and rious land				
Interval	0m SW	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30m	35m	38m NE
Topsoil Depth	0.16m	0.17m	0.20m	0.14m	0.20m	0.24m	0.22m	0.24m	0.19m
Subsoil Depth	0.08m	0.10m	0.08m	0.16m	0.12m	0.10m	0.10m	0.10m	0.10m
Top of Natural	0.24m	0.27m	0.28m	0.30m	0.32m	0.32m	0.32m	0.34m	0.29m
Base of Trench	0.24m	0.27m	0.36m	0.44m	0.38m	0.36m	0.43m	0.43m	0.39m

Trench 8		Orientation NE - SW	Length 28.7m	0			substratum 0.32m			
Interval	0m SW	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	28m	NE		
Topsoil Depth	0.30m	0.20m	0.23m	0.19m	0.26m	0.20m	0.20m			
Subsoil Depth	0.12m	0.12m	0.13m	0.14m	0.11m	0.15m	0.16m			
Top of Natural	0.42m	0.32m	0.36m	0.33m	0.37m	0.35m	0.36m			
Base of Trench	0.42m	0.32m	0.36m	0.33m	0.37m	0.35m	0.36m			

Trench 9		Orientation NE - SW	Length 39.10m	Notes: R furrow Va drains.	idge and rious land	Minimum d substratum	lepth to arch 0.25m	aeology or	• natural
Interval	0m NE	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30m	35	39m SW
Topsoil Depth	0.23m	0.15m	0.17m	0.17m	0.20m	0.24m	0.20m	0.17m	0.15m
Subsoil Depth	0.10m	0.12m	0.12m	0.10m	0.14m	0.11m	0.10m	0.12m	0.10m
Top of Natural	0.33m	0.27m	0.29m	0.27m	0.34m	0.35m	0.30m	0.29m	0.25m
Base of Trench	0.33m	0.37m	0.39m	0.34m	0.40m	0.42m	0.34m	0.38m	0.30m

Trench 10		Orientation SE - NW	Length 39.80m		idge and rious land Modern	substratum 0.25m			
Interval	0m SE	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30m	35	39m NW
Topsoil Depth	0.15m	0.13m	0.16m	0.15m	0.13m	0.20m	0.15m	0.16m	0.24m
Subsoil Depth	0.16m	0.16m	0.10m	0.10m	0.10m	0.15m	0.16m	0.14m	0.17m
Top of Natural	0.31m	0.29m	0.26m	0.25m	0.33m	0.35m	0.31m	0.30m	0.41m
Base of Trench	0.31m	0.44m	0.31m	0.31m	0.34m	0.44m	0.39m	0.31m	0.41m

Trench 11		Orientation NE - SW	Length 37.5m	Notes: R furrow Va drains. Service.	idge and rious land Modern	Minimum depth to archaeology or natura substratum 0.25m			
Interval	0m NE	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30m	37m	SW
Topsoil Depth	0.17m	0.16m	0.20m	0.20m	0.23m	0.20m	0.18m	0.20m	
Subsoil Depth	0.08m	0.16m	0.12m	0.08m	0.10m	0.14m	0.12m	0.18m	
Top of Natural	0.25m	0.32m	0.32m	0.28m	0.33m	0.34m	0.30m	0.38m	
Base of Trench	0.25m	0.40m	0.40m	0.39m	0.40m	0.40m	0.36m	0.38m	

Trench 12		Orientation SE - NW	Length 37.5m	modern	Contained xed with pottery, layers of	Minimum depth to archaeology or natur substratum 0.32m			• natural
Interval	0m SE	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30m	35m	38.7m NW
Topsoil Depth	0.24m	0.22m	0.26m	0.30m	0.18m	0.20m	0.18m	0.23m	0.23m
Subsoil Depth	0.08m	0.15m	0.19m	0.12m	0.14m	0.10m	0.18m	0.20m	0.12m
Top of Natural	0.32m	0.37m	0.45m	0.42m	0.32m	0.30m	0.36m	0.43m	0.35m
Base of Trench	0.40m	0.40m	0.48m	0.49m	0.46m	0.39m	0.36m	0.48m	0.35m

Trench 13		Orientation NE - SW	Length 37.5m	modern	Contained ixed with pottery, layers of				• natural
Interval	0m NE	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30m	35m	37.5m SW
Topsoil Depth	0.30m	0.30m	0.30m	0.30m	0.30m	0.20m	0.20m	0.25m	0.26m
Subsoil Depth	0.15m	0.08m	0.14m	0.19m	0.20m	0.12m	0.18m	0.11m	-
Top of Natural	0.45m	0.38m	0.44m	0.49m	0.50m	0.32m	0.30m	0.36m	-
Base of Trench	0.60m	0.50m	0.47m	0.58m	0.60m	0.40m	0.31m	0.45m	0.26m

Trench 14		Orientation NE - SW	Length 24m	Notes: Va drains.	otes: Various land Minimum depth to archaeology or nat rains. substratum 0.30m			r natural	
Interval	0m SSW	5m	10m	15m	20m	24m	NNE		
Topsoil Depth	0.26m	0.30m	0.20m	0.29m	0.30m	0.26m			
Subsoil Depth	0.10m	0.16m	0.10m	0.12m	0.12m	0.13m			
Top of Natural	0.36m	0.46m	0.30m	0.41m	0.42m	0.39m			
Base of Trench	0.39m	0.46m	0.30m	0.45m	0.42m	0.39m			

Trench 15		Orientation NW - SE	Length 37m	Notes: Va drains.	rious land	Minimum d substratum	lepth to arch 0.30m	aeology or	[.] natural
Interval	0m NW	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30m	35m	37m SE
Topsoil Depth	0.20m	0.28m	0.18m	0.18m	0.18m	0.26m	0.20m	0.19m	0.24m
Subsoil Depth	0.18m	0.16m	0.19m	0.20m	0.20m	0.24m	0.15m	0.16m	0.14m
Top of Natural	0.38m	0.44m	0.37m	0.38m	0.38m	0.50m	0.35m	0.35m	0.38m
Base of Trench	0.38m	0.44m	0.37m	0.37m	0.38m	0.50m	0.35m	0.42m	0.38m

Trench 16		Orientation NE - SW	Length 38m	Notes: R Furrow. land drains	idge and Various s.	1 87			[.] natural
Interval	0m SW	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30m	35m	38m NE
Topsoil Depth	0.18m	0.17m	0.19m	0.25m	0.15m	0.22m	0.20m	0.20m	0.20m
Subsoil Depth	0.12m	0.15m	0.18m	0.19m	0.14m	0.20m	0.15m	0.14m	0.14m
Top of Natural	0.30m	0.32m	0.37m	0.44m	0.29m	0.42m	0.35m	0.34m	0.34m
Base of Trench	0.30m	0.43m	0.40m	0.39m	0.40m	0.45m	0.43m	0.46m	0.40m

Trench 17		Orientation SE - NW	Length 41m	Notes: Va drains.	rious land	Minimum d substratum	lepth to arch 0.29m	aeology or	natural
Interval	0m WW	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30m	35m	41m SE
Topsoil Depth	0.16m	0.20m	0.17m	0.21m	0.26m	0.29m	0.23m	0.20m	0.25m
Subsoil Depth	0.20m	0.13m	0.12m	0.16m	0.15m	0.15m	0.15m	0.18m	0.12m
Top of Natural	0.36m	0.33m	0.29m	0.37m	0.41	0.44m	0.38m	0.38m	0.37m
Base of Trench	0.42m	0.43m	0.38m	0.43m	0.41	0.50m	0.47m	0.39m	0.38m

Trench 18		Orientation NE - SW	Length 29.7m	Notes: R furrow. Va drains.	idge and prious land				[.] natural
Interval	0m SW	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	29m	NE	
Topsoil Depth	0.17m	0.20m	0.20m	0.19m	0.29m	0.21m	0.21m		
Subsoil Depth	0.14m	0.08m	0.08m	0.14m	0.18m	0.17m	0.12m		
Top of Natural	0.31m	0.28m	0.28m	0.33m	0.37m	0.39m	0.33m		
Base of Trench	0.31m	0.42m	0.38m	0.38m	0.50m	0.47m	0.41m		

Trench 19		Orientation SE - NW	Length 37.7m	Notes: R furrow. Va drains.	idge and arious land				[.] natural
Interval	0m NW	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30m	35m	37m SE
Topsoil Depth	0.28m	0.23m	0.20m	0.30m	0.20m	0.29m	0.20m	0.18m	0.28m
Subsoil Depth	0.14m	0.12m	0.12m	0.12m	0.10m	0.11m	0.11m	0.11m	012m
Top of Natural	0.32m	0.35m	0.32m	0.32m	0.30m	0.40m	0.31m	0.29m	0.40m
Base of Trench	0.49m	0.44m	0.34m	0.42m	0.38m	0.47m	0.44m	0.38m	0.40m

Trench 20		Orientation NE - SW	Length 38m		ow. Various land substratum 0.30m			[.] natural	
Interval	0m NE	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30m	35m	38m SW
Topsoil Depth	0.20m	0.23m	0.17m	0.20m	0.16m	0.23m	0.16m	0.27m	0.22m
Subsoil Depth	0.12m	0.09m	0.16m	0.10m	0.16m	0.13m	0.14m	0.15m	0.10m
Top of Natural	0.32m	0.32m	0.33m	0.30m	0.32m	0.36m	0.30m	0.42m	0.32m
Base of Trench	0.35m	0.40m	0.39m	0.40m	0.39m	0.36m	0.44m	0.50m	0.32m

Trench 21		Orientation SE - NW	Length 37.8m	Notes: Ridge and furrow. Various land drains.		Minimum depth to archaeology or natural substratum 0.22m			
Interval	0m NW	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30m	35m	38m SE
Topsoil Depth	0.20m	0.18m	0.13m	0.19m	0.19m	0.20m	0.25m	0.16m	0.20m
Subsoil Depth	0.11m	0.18m	0.09m	0.10m	0.16m	0.18m	0.16m	0.32m	0.10m
Top of Natural	0.31m	0.36m	0.22m	0.29m	0.35m	0.38m	0.41m	0.38m	0.30m
Base of Trench	0.38m	0.40m	0.26m	0.29m	0.35m	0.44m	0.40m	0.48m	0.34m

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