



**An Archaeological Evaluation
'Windy Slopes', Melton Road, West
Langton, Market Harborough,
Leicestershire.**

NGR: SK 71940 91323
By Tim Higgins



ULAS Report No 2016-121

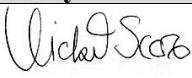
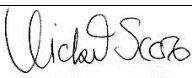
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An Archaeological Evaluation
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Leicestershire

NGR: SK 71940 91323

Tim Higgins

For: Paul and Rosalyn Mitchell

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CONTENTS

Summary	1
1. Introduction.....	1
2. Site Description, Topography and Geology.....	1
3. Historical and Archaeological Background	3
4. Aims and Objectives	3
4.1 Research Aims	4
5. Methodology	4
6. Results.....	5
7 Discussion.....	7
8. Conclusion	7
9. Archive.....	7
10. Publication	7
11. Bibliography	9
12. Acknowledgements.....	9
Appendix 1: Trench Photos	10
Appendix 2: Trench Descriptions	13

FIGURES

Figure 1: Site location plan within the UK and county of Leicestershire.....	2
Figure 2 Development Area.....	3
Figure 3 Trench Location Plan	6
Plate 1: Trench 1	10
Plate 2: Trench 2	10
Plate 3: Trench 3	11
Plate 4: Trench 4	11
Plate 5; Trench 5	12

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Summary

University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) carried out an archaeological evaluation at ‘Windy Slopes’, Melton Road, West Langton, Market Harborough, Leicestershire, (SK 71940 91323) from the 26 to 28 July 2016. Five trial trenches were excavated to evaluate an area for a proposed new eco-house and associated access located within pasture fields. None of the trenches contained any archaeological features. The site archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council under accession number X.A90.2016.

1. Introduction

An archaeological evaluation was carried out on land at ‘Windy Slopes’, Melton Road, West Langton, Market Harborough, Leicestershire (SK 71940 91323) by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS), in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 12 *Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment*. This document forms the report for an archaeological evaluation, with an assessment of the potential impact on buried archaeological remains from groundworks associated with future development.

Planning permission that had been granted for the erection of an eco-house and relocation of access (Planning Ref. 16/00200/FUL). According to Condition 14, no development shall commence on site until a programme of archaeological work, informed by an initial phase of trial trenching. Evaluation in the form of trial trenching and recording had been requested by the Planning Archaeologists at Harborough District Council as advisor to the planning authority as an initial stage of archaeological mitigation. A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority (ULAS 2016).

This report presents the results of a programme of archaeological trial trenching, which took place between the 26 and 28 June 2016. It follows a strategy for the work devised by ULAS, which was set out in the WSI (ULAS 2016).

2. Site Description, Topography and Geology

The proposed development site is an area of pasture land approximately 0.8ha in size, located on the B6047, just south of the villages of East Langton and West Langton (Figs 1-2). The development area comprises fields mostly laid to grass with some off-road car parking and outbuildings. The ground level is c.80m.

The Ordnance Survey Geological Survey of Great Britain indicates that the site lies on mudstone of the Blue Lias and Charmouth Mudstone formation, which was laid down in the Jurassic and Triassic periods, overlain with patches of mid-Pleistocene Diamicton Till.

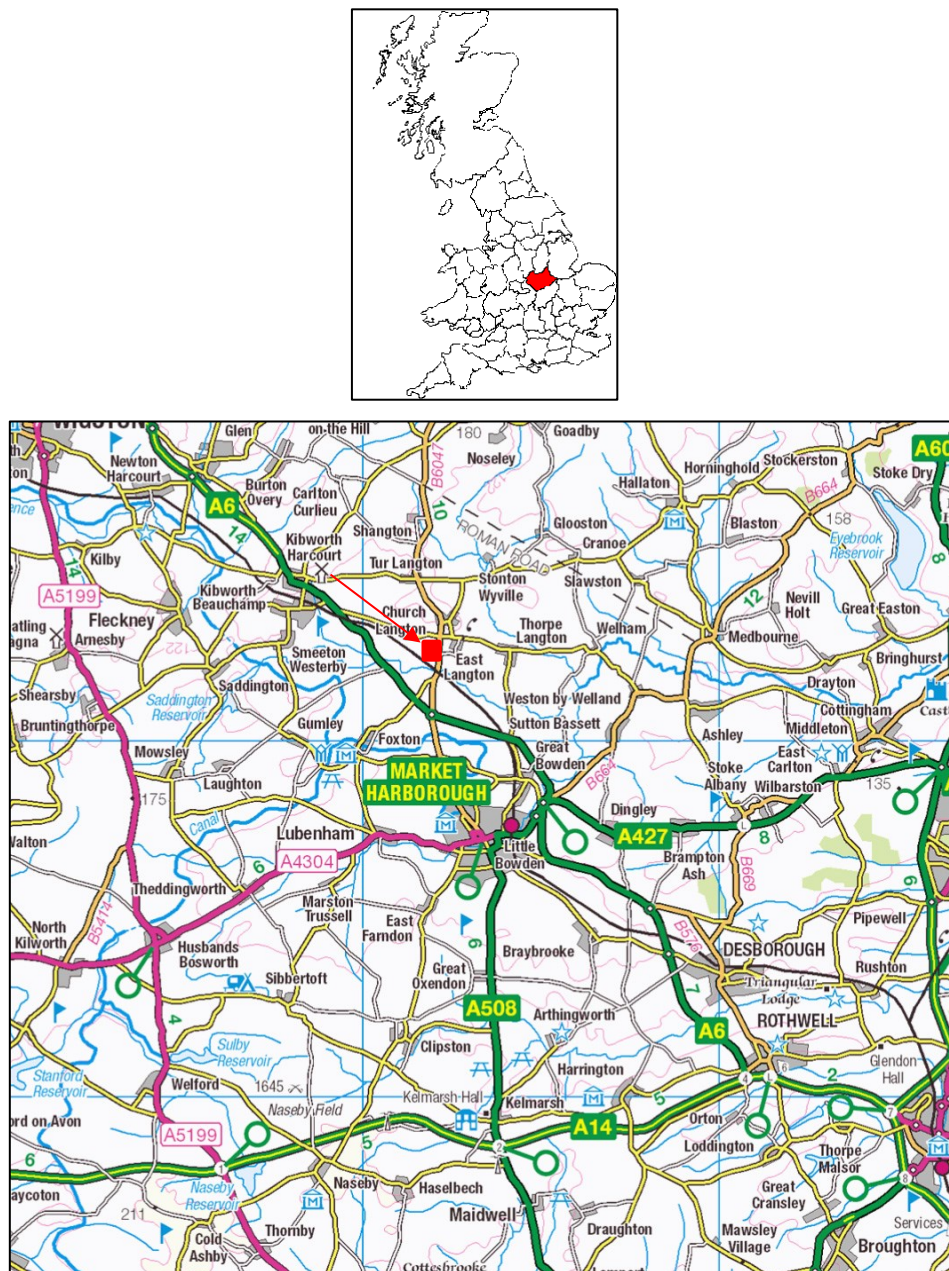


Figure 1: Site location plan within the UK and county of Leicestershire

Reproduced from the Explorer 141 Kettering, Corby & surrounding area 1:20 000 map by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown Copyright 2005. All rights reserved. Licence number AL 100029495

3. Historical and Archaeological Background

Although the development site lies in fields outside any historic villages, it does lie in an archaeological rich area. Metal detecting has found a number of Roman coins to the east (**MLE10307**) and to the northwest geophysical survey and excavation has recorded Iron Age and Roman features including ditches, and buildings (**MLE20790**, **MLE1509**), while a Roman villa site lies to the north-east (**MLE2617**). In addition there is an Anglo-Saxon cemetery to the west of the site (**MLE1505**) as well as possible prehistoric features (**MLE20788**) and Iron Age/Roman pottery (**MLE6470**). Anglo-Saxon pottery has also been found at various places to the north. Just to the north-west is Langton Hall which had extensive gardens during the post-medieval period (**MLE2629**).

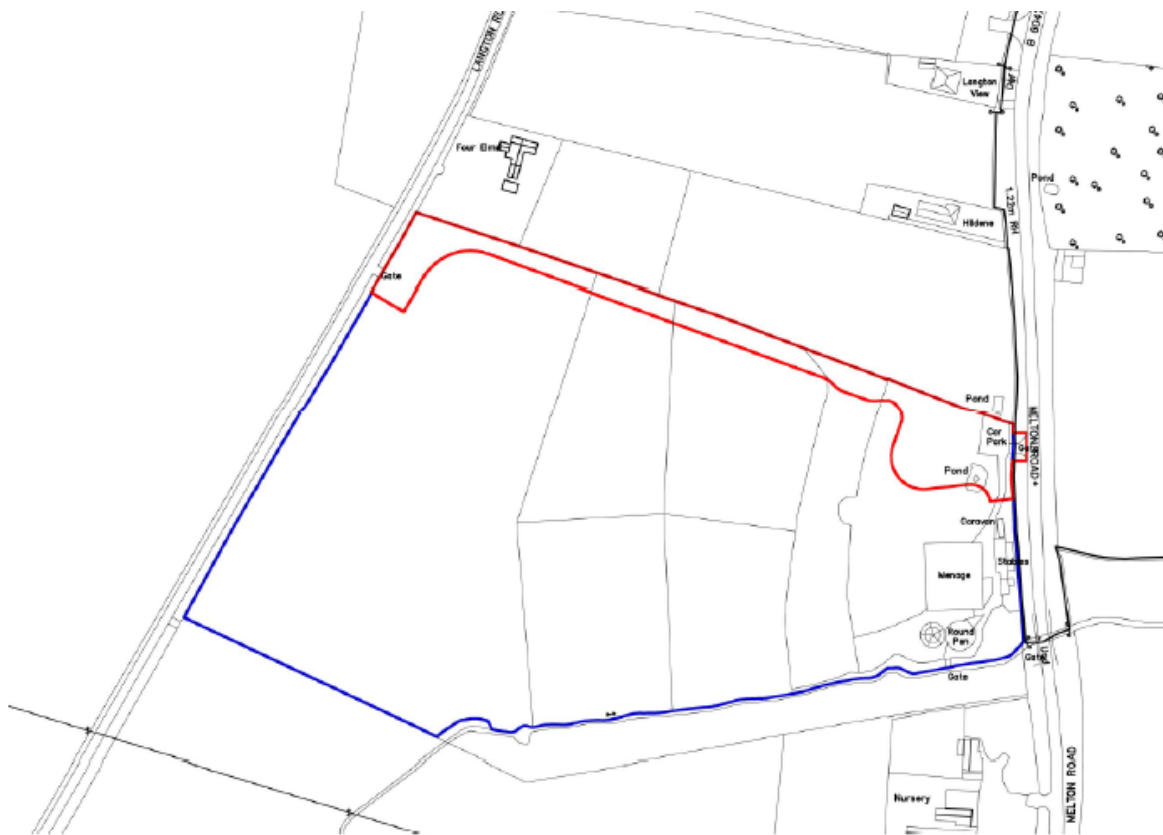


Figure 2 Development Area

4. Aims and Objectives

The broad aims of the archaeological evaluation trenches 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 record any archaeological deposits to be affected by the ground works.

- To establish the relationship of any remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscape.
- To recover artefacts and ecofacts to compare with other assemblages and results
- To produce an archive and report of any results.

The detailed objectives of the archaeological evaluation trenches are:

- Insofar as possible within methodological constraints, to explain any temporal, spatial or functional relationships between the structures/remains identified, and any relationships between these and the archaeological and historic elements of the wider landscape.

4.1 Research Aims

The initial assessment suggested that archaeological work would be able to contribute towards several research objectives derived from *The Archaeology of the East Midlands: An Archaeological Resource Assessment and Research Agenda* (Cooper 2006) and *East Midlands Heritage: An updated research agenda and strategy for the Historic Environment of the East Midlands* (Knight et al. 2012).

The Iron Age - Roman Periods (Willis 2006; Taylor 2006; Knight et al 2012; English Heritage 2012)

There are Roman sites within the study area including enclosures and a Roman road. The evaluation may contribute to knowledge on Iron Age – Roman and Roman-Saxon transitions in rural settlement, landscape and society. Artefacts may identify trade links and economy.

Medieval (Lewis 2006; Knight et al 2012)

The evaluation may contribute towards research into the origins and development of medieval settlement, landscape and society. Environmental evidence could provide information on local environmental conditions as well as settlement activity, craft, industry and land use. Artefacts can assist in the development of a type series within the region and provide evidence for evidence for craft, industry and exchange across broad landscape areas. The evaluation has the potential to contribute to Research Agenda topics 7.1.2, 7.1.4, 7.2.1-7.2.4, 7.3.1-7.3.5, 7.5.4, 7.6.1-2, 7.7.1-7.7.5 and Research Objective 7E - Investigate the morphology of rural settlements.

5. Methodology

Prior to any machining of trial trenches, general photographs of the site areas were taken.

The trenches were excavated using a mechanical excavator equipped with a 1.6m wide toothless ditching bucket. The topsoil and overlying layers were removed under full archaeological supervision until either the top of archaeological deposits or the natural

undisturbed substratum was reached. Trenches were examined for archaeological deposits or finds by hand cleaning. The trenches were tied into the Ordnance Survey National Grid and then were backfilled and leveled at the end of the evaluation.

The work followed the approved design specification (ULAS 2016) and adhered to the Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Code of Conduct* and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations* (2014).

6. Results

The results of all excavated trenches are presented below in Table 1, with archaeologically positive trenches highlighted in grey. For easier cross-referencing the results of the trenches will be presented below according to each specific area of the site that was evaluated.

Table 1 Trench Summaries

Trench	Length (m)	Height of Trench base (m OD)	Natural Substratum	Notes	Min. depth to archaeology/natural (m)
1	c.25	84.38	Light greyish silty clay	Negative trench	0.34m
2	c.29	85.46	Light greyish silty clay	Negative trench	0.23
3	c.29	84.40	Light greyish silty clay	Negative trench. Modern pottery sherds found within the subsoil	0.30
4	c.28	80.50	Light greyish silty clay	Negative trench.	0.28m
5	c.20	81.80	Light greyish silty clay	Negative trench	0.22m

Trenches

A total of 5 trenches was excavated in the north western and eastern parts of the development area in locations targeting the site for the new eco house and new access road (Fig. 3).

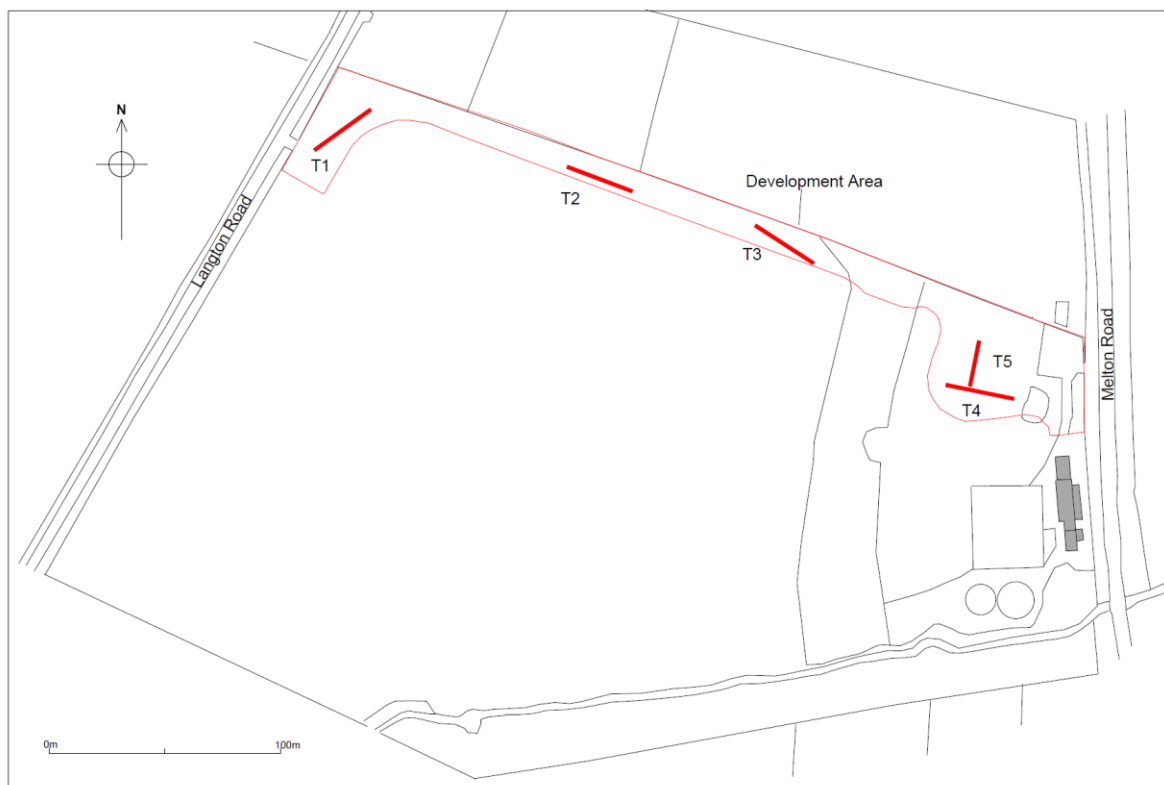


Figure 3 Trench Location Plan

Trench 1, 2 and 3

Trenches 1, 2 and 3 were excavated in north-western and central parts of the field and were excavated on a north-east - south-west and north-west - south-east alignments. All three trenches contained a thin turf layer overlying leached compacted light grey-blue clay subsoil. All the soils were fairly clean with no finds found in either Trenches 1 or 2. In Trench 3, two sherds of modern pottery and one glass sherd were found within the subsoil. These finds were examined and then discarded. The underlying natural comprised light greyish-yellow silty-clay mixed with occasional pebble. No archaeological features were revealed. All the trenches appear to be very sterile and displayed regular leached soil structures with no evidence modern truncations or intrusions.

Trenches 4 and 5

Trenches 4, and 5 were excavated in the south-east corner of the field and were excavated on north-south and east-west alignments. These trenches again contained very compacted leached light grey-blue clay subsoil below a thin turf layer. The underlying natural substrata comprised light greyish-yellow silty-clay. The trenches were very clean and sterile and the only find was a horseshoe found within the subsoil of Trench 4. No archaeological features were found in

either of the trenches. Both trenches displayed regular leached soil structures with no evidence of modern truncations caused by ploughing.

7 Discussion

The archaeological evaluation by trial trenching revealed no evidence for archaeological features or finds within any of the trenches, apart from modern pottery and glass sherds found within trench 3. All the trenches appear to be very sterile and displayed regular stable soil structures with no evidence of modern intrusions or truncations caused by ploughing. The field appears to have remained predominately in use as pasture in the modern period.

8. Conclusion

The trial trenching at 'Windy Slopes' Melton Road, indicates that there are unlikely to be any archaeological deposits present within the proposed development area for the eco house and new access road.

9. Archive

The site archive will be held by *Leicestershire Museums Service*, under accession no. *X.A90.2016*.

The site archive consists of:

- 1 Unbound A4 copy of this report
- 5 A4 Trench recording sheets
- 1 A4 Photo record sheet
- A4 Colour digital contact print 1 CD of 25 digital photos

The archive will be held by Leicestershire Museum Service under the accession number X.A90.2016.

10. Publication

Since 2004 ULAS has reported the results of all archaeological work to the *Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations* (OASIS) database held by the Archaeological Data Service at the University of York (Appendix 1). A summary of the work will also be submitted for publication in the local archaeological journal, the *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society*, in due course

OASIS data entry

PROJECT DETAILS	Oasis No	universil-259106		
	Project Name	'Windy Slopes' Melton Road West Langton, Market Harborough, Leicestershire		
	Start/end dates of field work	026-07-2016 - 28-07-2016		
	Previous/Future Work	No / Not known		
	Project Type	Evaluation		
	Site Status	None		
	Current Land Use	Pasture		
	Monument Type/Period	None		
	Significant Finds/Period	None		
	Development Type	Residential Eco house		
	Reason for Investigation	NPPF		
	Position in the Planning Process	Planning Condition		
	Planning Ref.	16/00200/FUL		
PROJECT LOCATION	Site Address/Postcode	Leicester Road, Melton Mowbray, LE16 7TG		
	Study Area	0.8 ha		
	Site Coordinates	SK 71940 91323		
	Height OD	85m to 80m AOD		
PROJECT CREATORS	Organisation	ULAS		
	Project Brief Originator	Local Planning Authority (LCC)		
	Project Design Originator	ULAS		
	Project Manager	Vick Score		
	Project Director/Supervisor	Tim Higgins		
	Sponsor/Funding Body	Paul and Rosalyn Mitchell		
PROJECT ARCHIVE		Physical	Digital	Paper
	Recipient	LCC Mus Service	LCC Mus Service	LCC Mus Service
	ID (Acc. No.)	X.A90.2016	X.A90.2016	X.A90.2016
	Contents	None	Photos	Evaluation records Field Notes
PROJECT BIBLIOGRAPHY	Type	Grey Literature (unpublished)		
	Title	An Archaeological Evaluation		
	Author	Higgins, T.		
	Other bibliographic details	ULAS Report No 2016-121		
	Date	26/07/2016 to 28/07/2016		
	Publisher/Place	University of Leicester Archaeological Services / University of Leicester		
	Description	Developer Report A4 pdf		

11. Bibliography

CIFA, 2014 *Codes of Conduct*

CIFA, 2014 *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation*

Score, V., 2016 *An Archaeological desk-based assessment for land to the rear of Langton Hall, Leicestershire, (SK 71499 2249)* ULAS Report 2016-089

ULAS, 2016, *Written scheme of investigation for archaeological work: 'Windy Slopes' Melton Road, West Langton, Market Harborough, Leicestershire (NGR: SK 71940 91323)* ULAS Specification 16-221 (Appendix 3 of this report).

12. Acknowledgements

The fieldwork was carried out by the author and James Earley of ULAS. Vicki Score managed the project. Teresa Hawtin of LCC HNET monitored the work on behalf of the planning authority.

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30/08/2016

Appendix 1: Trench Photos



Plate 1: Trench 1



Plate 2: Trench 2



Plate 3: Trench 3



Plate 4: Trench 4



Plate 5; Trench 5

Appendix 2: Trench Descriptions

Trench No	Orient		Length		Width	
1	SW-NE		26m		1.80m	
Interval	0m	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m
Topsoil	0.14m	0.15m	0.13m	0.14m	0.19m	0.21m
Subsoil	0.40m	0.36m	0.39m	0.39m	0.34m	0.36m
Base of Trench	0.49m	0.49m	0.56m	0.53m	0.41m	0.44m

Trench No	Orient		Length		Width		
2	NW-SE		29.00m		1.80m		
Interval	0m	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	28m
Topsoil	0.15m	0.13m	0.16m	0.21m	0.21m	0.22m	0.21m
Subsoil	0.30m	0.23m	0.34m	0.35m	0.33m	0.36m	0.35m
Base of Trench	0.35m	0.32m	0.41m	0.45m	0.36m	0.42m	0.38m

Trench No	Orient		Length		Width		
3	NW-SE		29m		1.80m		
Interval	0m	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	28
Topsoil	0.14m	0.16m	0.17m	0.17m	0.19m	0.18m	0.17m
Subsoil	0.31m	0.32m	0.31m	0.31m	0.30m	0.37m	0.36m
Base of Trench	0.37m	0.36m	0.35m	0.35m	0.33m	0.44m	0.41m

Trench No	Orient		Length		Width		
4	E-W		27m		1.80m		
Interval	0m	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	
Topsoil	0.13m	0.17m	0.16m	0.14m	0.18m	0.15	
Subsoil	0.29m	0.36m	0.29m	0.28m	0.34m	0.31m	
Base of Trench	0.32m	0.43m	0.34m	0.32m	0.40m	0.34m	

Trench No	Orient		Length		Width		
5	N-S		20m		1.80m		
Interval	0m	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	
Topsoil	0.19m	0.18m	0.19m	0.18m	0.15m		
Subsoil	0.31m	0.32m	0.30m	0.26m	0.22m		
Base of Trench	0.34m	0.38m	0.32m	0.31m	0.25m		

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