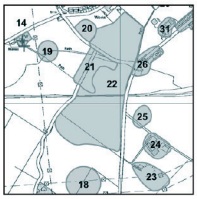
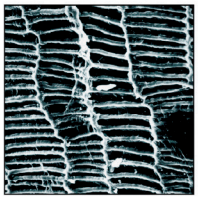
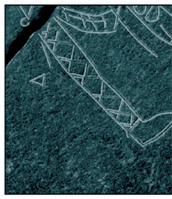
GBSW12







ALAMO WORKS, STATION ROAD, SALFORD PRIORS, WARWICKSHIRE

Archaeological Evaluation

for Alamo Manufacturing Services Ltd

April 2013

HEADLAND ARCHAEOLOGY Ltd

REGISTERED ORGANISATION IfA

ALAMO WORKS, STATION ROAD, SALFORD PRIORS, WARWICKSHIRE

Archaeological Evaluation

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April 2013

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Project Manager	Mike Kimber
Author	Luke Craddock-Bennett
Fieldwork	Luke Craddock-Bennett & Adam Lee
Graphics	Caroline Norrman – Illustrations Anna Sztromwasser – Typesetting
Approved by	Mike Kimber – Project Manager

Headland Archaeology
Midlands & West

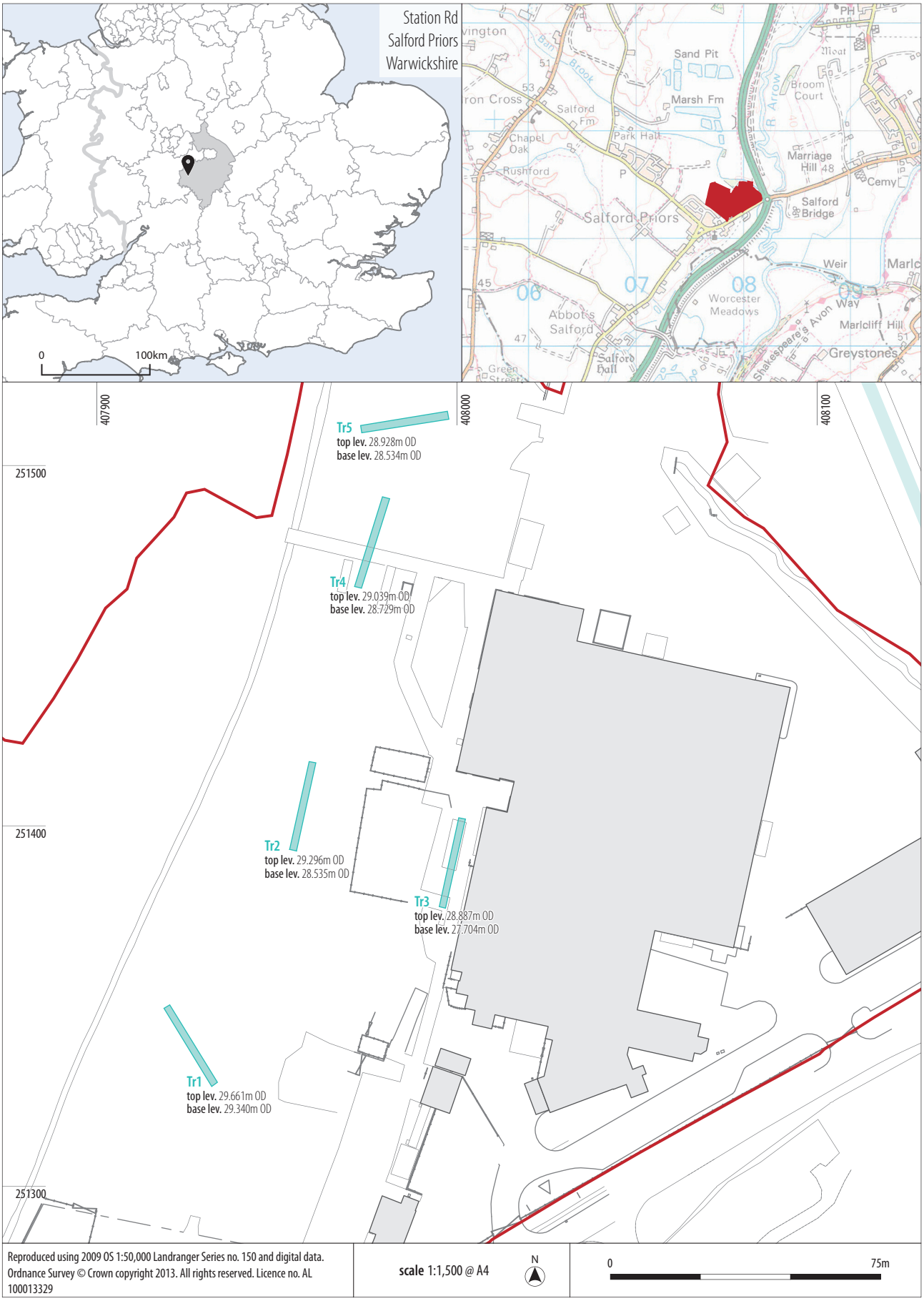
Unit 1, Premier Business Park, Faraday Road
Hereford HR4 9NZ

01432 364 901
midlandsandwest@headlandarchaeology.com

www.headlandarchaeology.com

CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS



Illus 1

Site location

ALAMO WORKS, STATION ROAD, SALFORD PRIORS, WARWICKSHIRE

Archaeological Evaluation

Headland Archaeology excavated five evaluation trenches on a plot of land off Station Road in Salford Priors, Warwickshire. The trenches were excavated as a planning condition related to the extension of buildings belonging to the Alamo Manufacturing Works. No archaeological finds or features were revealed. In the south of the site alluvial deposits were present overlying geological deposits. In the north, the site had been stripped of alluvial material and geological deposits were present immediately beneath the modern hard-standing.

1. INTRODUCTION

Headland Archaeology was commissioned by the Harris Lamb Partnership (acting on behalf of Alamo Manufacturing Services Ltd) to undertake an archaeological evaluation on a site adjacent to Station Road in Salford Priors, Warwickshire (*Illus 1*).

Planning consent had been granted by the Stratford on Avon Borough Council for the demolition of existing buildings and the extension of the existing factory at Alamo Manufacturing Services Ltd. The proposed development site lies within an area of significant archaeological potential.

A brief prepared by the archaeological advisor to Warwickshire County Council determined that:

> *'It is likely that some archaeological deposits of interest may be disturbed or exposed by the development. It is a condition of the planning permission that, before the development commences, the applicant should secure the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Planning Authority. This is in line with government advice as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.'*

A written scheme of investigation proposing the excavation of five evaluation trenches was submitted by Halcrow Group Ltd in February 2013. The scheme was approved by the archaeological advisor to the Planning Authority.

2. LOCATION AND GEOLOGY

The Development Area (DA) is 2ha in size and is located on land immediately to the west of the Alamo Manufacturing Works in Salford Priors, Warwickshire (site centre: NGR SP 07985 51422). The land was previously used as a storage area for the works. Parts of the site to the north and east are under concrete and tarmac. The remainder of the development area is set to grass.

The site is underlain by mudstones of the Mercian Group and superficial deposits of sand and gravel of the Bretford Member. Deposits of alluvium comprised of clay, silt, sand and gravel are recorded in the north of the development area. The site slopes gently from west to east, the average height being approximately 30m OSL.

3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

An archaeological desk-based assessment of the development area (Halcrow 2012) identified moderate potential for remains dating to the prehistoric and Romano-British periods. Although no remains have been identified within the development area, an Iron Age enclosure, a Neolithic or Bronze Age ring ditch, and two further crop marks likely to date to this period have been identified in the vicinity of the site.

Romano-British settlement activity was identified at Marsh Lane in the vicinity of a Scheduled Monument approximately 1,200m to the north of the development area. A number of phases of activity were recorded. Material including painted plaster, roof and hypocaust tiles suggested the presence of a villa complex. Further settlement evidence was identified 800m to the north of Salford Priors, and several additional find spots of coins, pottery and metalwork are recorded in the vicinity.

Dating to the Early Medieval period, the Grade I listed church of St Matthew is located 400m to the south-west of the development area. There is also evidence for a track-way or road referred to as '*Sealt Street*' dating to this period, which has been interpreted as

relating to the salt industry and likely to connect to Droitwich in Worcestershire.

The remains of a medieval settlement were revealed immediately to the south-west of the development area during an archaeological evaluation undertaken in 1993. Find spots, ditches and gullies dated to this period have also been identified within the vicinity of the site.

Immediately to the east of the site is the former course of the Barnt Green Evesham and Ashchurch Branch Line which ran from Redditch to Birmingham. The line was built between 1859 and 1868 and closed in 1964. The station building is still present on the site. A railway goods building formerly stood adjacent to the station, but was demolished as part of the current development, following a photographic survey.

The Alamo Manufacturing Works, which still operates on the site, started life in 1904 as the Bomford and Evershed Engineering Works. The company produced portable steam engines, threshing machines and road rolling equipment. Alamo continues to produce various cultivation machines for the farming industry.

4. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the evaluation was to gather sufficient information to establish the nature of archaeological activity within the development area.

Specifically the evaluation aimed to:

- establish the location, extent, nature and date of archaeological features or deposits that may be present within the areas proposed to be disturbed during the development;
- establish the integrity and state of preservation of archaeological features or deposits that may be present within the areas proposed to be disturbed during the development.

5. METHOD

Topsoil in the region of Trench 1 had been removed prior to the commencement of the archaeological evaluation. A rapid photographic survey and an inspection of the exposed subsoil surface were undertaken.

Five trenches, each measuring 25m by 1.8m were excavated within the development area. The trenches were positioned to obtain maximum coverage of the development area.

Surface deposits of tarmac and concrete were broken out prior to the excavation of trenches 3, 4 and 5.

Trenches were excavated under archaeological supervision, with topsoil and deposits of made-ground being removed by machine and excavation terminating at the uppermost significant archaeological horizon or when geological deposits were encountered.

All trenches were planned using a Trimble differential GPS system. A record sheet was completed for each trench, even where no deposits of archaeological significance were present.

All recording followed IfA Standards and Guidance. All contexts were given unique numbers and recording was undertaken on *pro forma* record cards. Colour transparencies and black and white photographs were taken to record archaeological contexts and to illustrate the progress of the trial trenching. Digital photographs on a 7.2mp camera were taken for illustrative purposes but will not form part of the site archive.

6. RESULTS

No significant archaeological finds or features were identified. Full context descriptions are included in Appendix 1.

6.1 Trench 1

Prior to the commencement of trial trenching, topsoil deposits measuring approximately 0.15–0.25m in depth had been removed from the site at the location of Trench 1. The movement of heavy machinery over the area had caused disturbance to the upper surface of alluvial deposits composed of silts and clays.

Natural gravels [103] were encountered immediately below the topsoil in the north of the trench. A deposit of clean alluvium [102] 0.3–0.4m thick was revealed overlying the gravels within the remainder of the trench.

6.2 Trench 2

A consistent profile was present along the full length of Trench 2. Topsoil overlay a clean deposit of silt and clay alluvium [201] measuring 0.4–0.45m in depth. Natural gravels [202] were present below the alluvium at a maximum depth of 0.75m (*Illus 2*).

6.3 Trench 3

Located adjacent to the existing factory building, concrete and hardcore were present to a depth of 0.5m. Beneath the hardcore, alluvial deposits [302] surviving to a depth of 0.6m overlay the natural gravels [303] (*Illus 3*). In the southern part of the trench, modern deposits of contaminated ground were cut through the alluvium into the natural gravels beneath.

6.4 Trench 4

Tarmac hard-standing overlying natural gravel was encountered in the northern part of the trench. To the south, a profile consistent with Trench 2 was observed. Topsoil [400] overlay a clean deposit of alluvium [401] measuring 0.35m in depth. Natural gravels [402] were present beneath the alluvium.

6.5 Trench 5

Tarmac hard standing overlay a deposit of stone hardcore [500]. Immediately beneath this deposit, natural gravels [501] were

Illus 2

Trench 2, east facing section

Illus 3

Trench 3, east facing section

Illus 4

Trench 5, natural gravels immediately below surface

present at a depth of 0.2m below ground level (*Illus 4*).

7. CONCLUSION

No archaeologically significant deposits were encountered during the field evaluation. In the southern part of the site, clean alluvial silts and clays overlay natural sand and gravel deposits. The depth of the alluvial deposits increased from west to east. At the northern end of Trench 1 topsoil directly overlay natural gravels with no evidence for alluvium. The depth of alluvium was 0.42m in Trench 2 and increased to 0.6m in Trench 3. The alluvium, therefore, appears to be present within a depression which may indicate the presence of a former river channel.

Alluvial deposits were not present with the northern part of Trench 4 and the entirety of Trench 5. Potentially alluvium was never deposited in these areas, although the presence of an area of hard-standing correlating with the absence of alluvium could suggest that such deposits had been stripped away from this part of the site prior to the laying of the hard-standing.

The deeper deposits of made ground revealed in Trench 3 suggest that the area has been built up to raise the developed part of the site above the water table. Water ingress was evident in all the excavated trenches.

The presence of high levels of ground-water may explain the lack of archaeological activity within the development area. Medieval settlement has previously been identified to the south-west of the site on more elevated land. It seems likely that settlement did not extend eastwards into the development area due to the unfavourable drainage conditions of the site.

8. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Halcrow Group Ltd 2012 *Archaeological Desk Based Assessment. Station Road, Salford Priors, Evesham.*

Halcrow Group Ltd 2013 *Written Scheme of Investigation for a Programme of Archaeological Work. Alamo Works, Station Road, Salford Priors, Warwickshire.*

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Site registers

Appendix 1.1 Trench register

Trench	Length (m)	Width (m)	Av. depth (m)	Max. depth (m)
1	25	1.8	0.4	0.6
2	25	1.8	0.5	0.75
3	25	1.8	1.1	1.1
4	25	1.8	0.35	0.65
5	25	1.8	0.4	0.45

Appendix 1.2 Context register

Trench	Context	Description	Depth (m below surface)
1	100	Topsoil. Mid grey / orange brown silt, frequent small-large stones	0 –0.15
1	101	Made ground. Mixed deposit of orange / brown clayey silt and grey clay with modern CBM	0–0.35m
1	102	Alluvium. Firm mid orange / brown clayey silt with frequent small-large stones	0.3–0.4+
1	103	Natural. Dark reddish brown sands and gravels	0.3+
2	200	Topsoil. Firm mid grey / orange brown silt, frequent small-large stones. Occasional modern CBM	0–0.28m
2	201	Alluvium subsoil. Firm mid orange / brown clayey silt with frequent small-large stones	0.28–0.7
2	202	Natural. Dark reddish brown sands and gravels	0.7–0.75
3	300	Concrete surface	0–0.15
3	301	Hardcore. Cotswold stone chips	0.15–0.5
3	302	Alluvium subsoil. Firm mid orange / brown clayey silt with frequent small-large stones	0.5–1.1
3	303	Natural. Dark reddish brown sands and gravels	1.1+
3	304	Contaminated soil deposits. Cut into alluvium. Strong petro-chemical odour	0.5–1.1+
4	400	Topsoil. Firm mid grey / orange brown silt, frequent small-large stones. Occasional modern CBM	0–0.25
4	401	Alluvium subsoil. Firm mid orange / brown clayey silt with frequent small-large stones	0.25–0.6
4	402	Natural. Dark reddish brown sands and gravels	0.3–0.65+
4	403	Modern hardcore. Present in northern part of trench	0.15–0.3
5	500	Tarmac surface and hardcore – cotswold stone chips	0–0.2
5	501	Natural. Dark reddish brown sands and gravels	0.2–0.45+

Appendix 1.3 Photographic register

Photo	C/S	B/W	Digital	Direction	Description
1	750/36	740/36	010	SW	Trench 2 – Plan
2	750/35	740/35	011	NE	Trench 2 – Plan
3	750/34	740/34	012	NW	Trench 2 – SE facing section
4	750/33	740/33	013	SW	Trench 3 – Excavation in progress, natural gravels

Photo	C/S	B/W	Digital	Direction	Description
5	750/32	740/32	014	W	Trench 5 – Plan
6	750/31	740/31	015	E	Trench 5 – Plan
7	750/30	740/30	016	SW	Trench 4 – Plan
8	750/29	740/29	017	NE	Trench 4 – Plan
9	750/28	740/28	018	NW	Trench 3 – SE facing section
10	750/27	740/27	019	SW	Trench 3 – Plan
11	750/26	740/26	020	NE	Trench 5 – Section
12	–	–	021	E	Trench 5 – Groundwater level
13	–	–	022	SW	Trench 4 – Groundwater level
14	–	–	023	SW	Trench 2 – Groundwater level
15	–	–	024	SW	Trench 3 – Groundwater level
16	750/25	740/25	025	S	Trench 1 – Plan
17	750/24	740/24	026	N	Trench 1 – Plan
18	750/23	740/23	027	E	Trench 1 – West facing section

Headland Archaeology
North East

13 Jane Street
Edinburgh EH6 5HE

0131 467 7705
northeast@headlandarchaeology.com

Headland Archaeology
North West

10 Payne Street
Glasgow G4 0LF

0141 354 8100
northwest@headlandarchaeology.com

Headland Archaeology
Midlands & West

Unit 1, Premier Business Park, Faraday Road
Hereford HR4 9NZ

01432 364 901
midlandsandwest@headlandarchaeology.com

Headland Archaeology
South & East

Building 68A, Wrest Park, Silsoe
Bedfordshire MK45 4HS

01525 850 878
southandeast@headlandarchaeology.com

www.headlandarchaeology.com