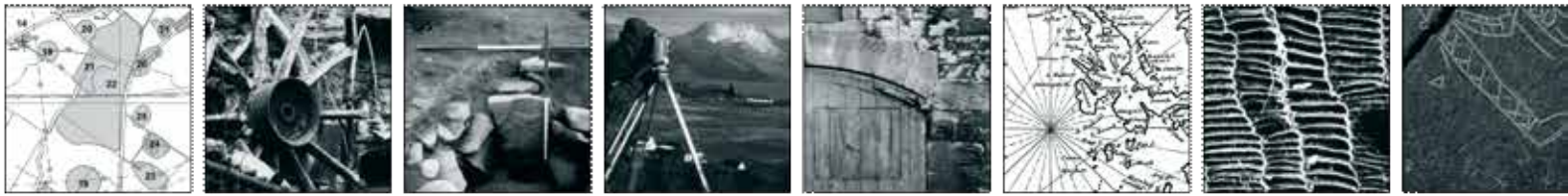


CHWH/02



CHURCH HOUSE FARM, WELLINGTON

Trial Trenching

commissioned by Bell Homes Ltd

P141253/F

August 2014

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August 2014

project info

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HAS NO. 1065
NGR 349798, 248157
PARISH Wellington
LOCAL AUTHORITY Herefordshire
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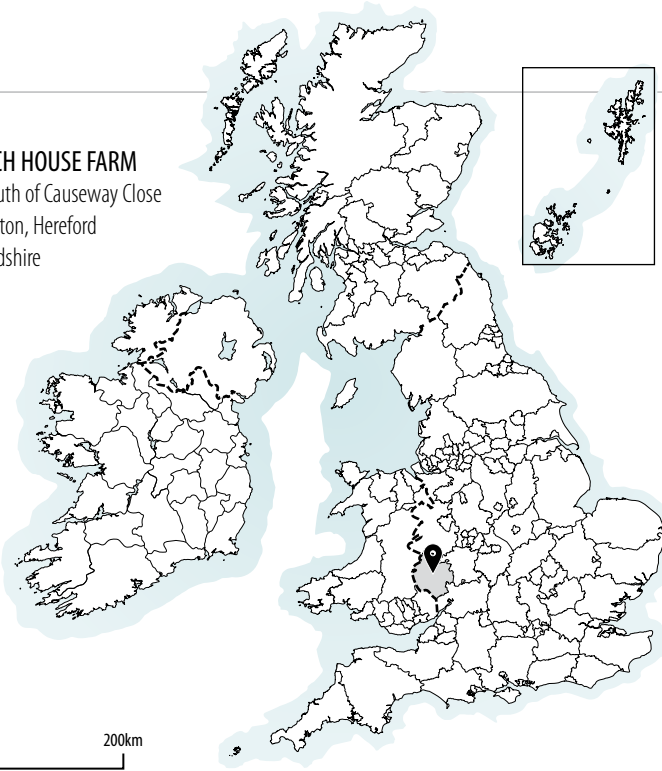
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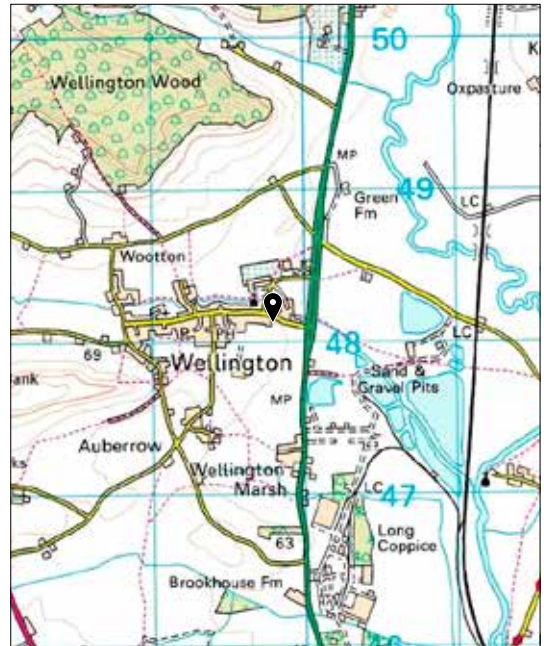
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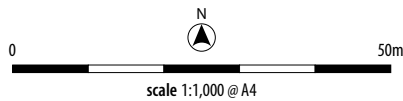
CHURCH HOUSE FARM
land south of Causeway Close
Wellington, Hereford
Herefordshire



0 200km



- KEY**
- development boundary
 - trench location



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ILLUS 1
Site location

CHURCH HOUSE FARM, WELLINGTON

Trial Trenching

In advance of the construction of 20 dwellings on land at Church House Farm, Wellington, by Bell Homes Ltd, a programme of archaeological work was agreed by the archaeological advisor, Julian Cotton, which involved the excavation of six evaluation trenches over the area of the development footprint. The remains of a relatively modern brick built structure and associated yard, were found in the north-west of the site, but other than this, no significant archaeological remains were uncovered. The work did confirm a change in the superficial geology, from gravels and clay in the west of the site, to mudstone towards the east.

1 INTRODUCTION

Planning permission was granted for the erection of 20 dwellings on land at Church House Farm, Wellington (P141253/F), consequently an archaeological condition was attached to the development stating that:

'No development shall take place until the developer has secured 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 in writing by the local planning authority. This programme shall be in accordance with a brief prepared by the County Archaeology Service.'

The archaeological advisor to the planning authority, Julian Cotton, issued a brief requiring an archaeological watching brief 'during the principal phases of deeper ground disturbance on the site' (Herefordshire Archaeology Brief b082946s2).

However given the previous disturbance of the site from building demolition, and the anticipated length of the ground works programme (12 months), an agreement was reached with the archaeological advisor, that limited pre-development trial trenching would help to focus any subsequent mitigation work on the most appropriate areas (if any). This report summarises the findings of the pre-development trial trenching

2 SITE DESCRIPTION

The site comprises a triangular plot of land on the outskirts of the village of Wellington NGR 349798 248157, adjacent to the south of the main village road which runs east-west (**Illus 1**). Wellington Beck, a feeder tributary of the River Lugg runs parallel with the road immediately to the north. As the result of the clearance of the pre-existing farm buildings on the site, there are several demolition mounds standing in the western part of the site (**Illus 6**). The central part of the development plot stands slightly higher than the rest of the site, and from here the ground falls away very gently to the east which is quite badly overgrown with shrubs, which in places stand to a height of several feet.

The solid geology of the site is Raglan mudstone, but there are over-bank deposits of silt and clays, identifiable on the Geological survey of the area, occupying the western half of the development footprint, and the site appears to sit astride this division.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Wellington is defined as an Archaeologically Important Urban Area in the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan. The project site falls within the broad medieval form of the settlement, close



ILLUS 2

Trench 1 - metallised surface (103), facing W



ILLUS 3

Trench 5 - sample section showing tip line of deposit (504)



ILLUS 4

Palaeochannel in Trench 5, facing NW

to the Norman church. The site is also recorded as a historic farm site on the county historic environment record.

The previous farm buildings have been demolished already, and it is understood that this is likely to have caused significant ground disturbance at shallower depths.

One of the first references to Wellington was by Silas Taylor who said 'At this towne, was the beginning of the Danish massacre', the reference being to the infamous measure by which Ethelred sought to examine his foes in the year 1002 – the presence of the Danes in Herefordshire is marked by very few local names, but it is noted that Sweyn, who avenged the above massacre of his countrymen, appears to have bequeathed his name to the little hill on the west side of the city of Hereford. After the conquest, Wellington was held by the Chandoses of Snodhule for several generations, and in the reign of Henry 6th, the manor was divided, one part falling to the share of John Walwyn, whose daughter sold her portion to William Ward. Wellington was subsequently held by a succession of Lords until relatively recently (RCAHME. Vol 2. An inventory of the Historical Monuments in Herefordshire)

The oldest surviving building within the village, is the Church of St Margaret, opposite the development site. The tower and nave are Norman, with a 13th century chancel, and a 15th century north transept. In addition, there are several timber framed agricultural

buildings still standing throughout the village dating to the 16th/17th century, as well as numerous domestic dwellings and cottages dating to the 18th century.

The 1st Edition OS Map, shows a plan of the village, in which the triangular parcel of land equating to the modern development site is clearly visible, it includes an 'L' shaped building with an associated yard or path, in the north-west of the site.

4 METHOD

All trenches were set out according to the constraints of service plans.

The trenches measured 30m long x 2m wide, and were opened with a mechanical excavator, equipped with a toothless ditching bucket under direct archaeological supervision. Machine excavation was taken down in spits to the natural geological horizon, with the spoil being stored beside the trench.

On completion of the machine excavation, all faces of the trenches that required examination or recording were cleaned using appropriate hand tools where required. The stratigraphic sequence was recorded in full in each of the trenches, even where no archaeological deposits were identified.





All recording followed IfA and County Standards and Guidance, using pro forma record cards. 35mm colour transparencies and black-and-white prints were taken, in addition to a full digital photographic record of the work using a 7.2mp camera, which was taken for illustrative purposes only, and not forming part of the site archive.

Plans of all the trenches excavated during the evaluation were drawn on pro-forma Trench record sheets at an appropriate scale, and surveyed using GPS surveying equipment. Records from the evaluation were integrated with a main excavation/ numbering sequence, and all drawings will be related to the National Grid and Ordnance Datum.

5 RESULTS

In the western half of the site, excavation of trenches one, two and six indicated that both topsoil and subsoil deposits, had been removed down to the top of the geological horizon, with the existing overburden comprising a mixed deposit of light vegetation, modern gravel and demolition rubble. The geological substrate in all three of these trenches was reddish brown, stony clay, with softer gravels appearing towards the northern part of the site in the direction of the Wellington Beck (Trench 1).

In the north-west of the site, the remains of what appeared to be a metalled surface (Illus 2), was uncovered, comprising small rounded stones, 3–5cm diameter, with the occasional larger cobble, impressed into the underlying red clay (103). There was no formal edging to the metalled surface, which was relatively flat, however it butted up against the remains of a brick wall foundation (104), which was located in the southern part of Trench 1. The brick foundation was of relatively modern construction, and included a right angle corner, suggesting a building or enclosure (Illus 6).

In contrast to the western part of the site, in the east, the soil horizon had survived to a depth of up to 1m in places (Trench 5). Similar to trenches one, two and six, a relatively thin deposit of demolition rubble formed the upper part of the visible sections, however below this, the topsoil and subsoil deposits remained, comprising a greyish brown, friable silty clay (Illus 3). The topography showed a very slight drop in height from west to east. The deepest section could be seen along the north east part of the site (Illus 3), where a mixed topsoil/ demolition deposit overlay a re-deposited layer of natural gravel (504), below which was a thick band of compacted subsoil (501).

A wide palaeochannel was visible running in a north-west/south-east direction in the base of Trench 5. It was approximately 2m wide and was filled by a reddish brown, silty clay, containing common, medium to large rounded cobbles (Illus 5).

An unidentified animal burial was recovered from the lower deposit (501) in Trench 5.

A change in the geology across the site was also noted, going from a reddish brown clay, in the west, to a more compacted clean, orangey mudstone in the eastern part of the site.

6 CONCLUSIONS

The evaluation confirmed the presence of a former structure in the north-west part of the site, comprising a brick building with an associated area of hard standing or metalling, and which is the remains of the farm building seen in the 1st Edition OS map. Apart from this, there was no further evidence of any significant archaeological remains. The absence of any topsoil/subsoil in the western part of the site, would indicate that any archaeological remains previously present would have been removed during the demolition and levelling in this part of the site. The present topography of the site reflects this clearance when the overburden appears to have been pushed towards the central and eastern part of the site, accounting for the greater depth of the overburden in the excavated trenches in these areas. This is clear in Trench 5, where the tip line of deposit (504) indicates having been pushed from the western area.

A pronounced terrace between the site and the Wellington Beck, on which the road sits, would indicate increased water volume in the past, of which the overbank deposit of clay seen in the western part of the site, and the palaeochannel were a likely consequence.

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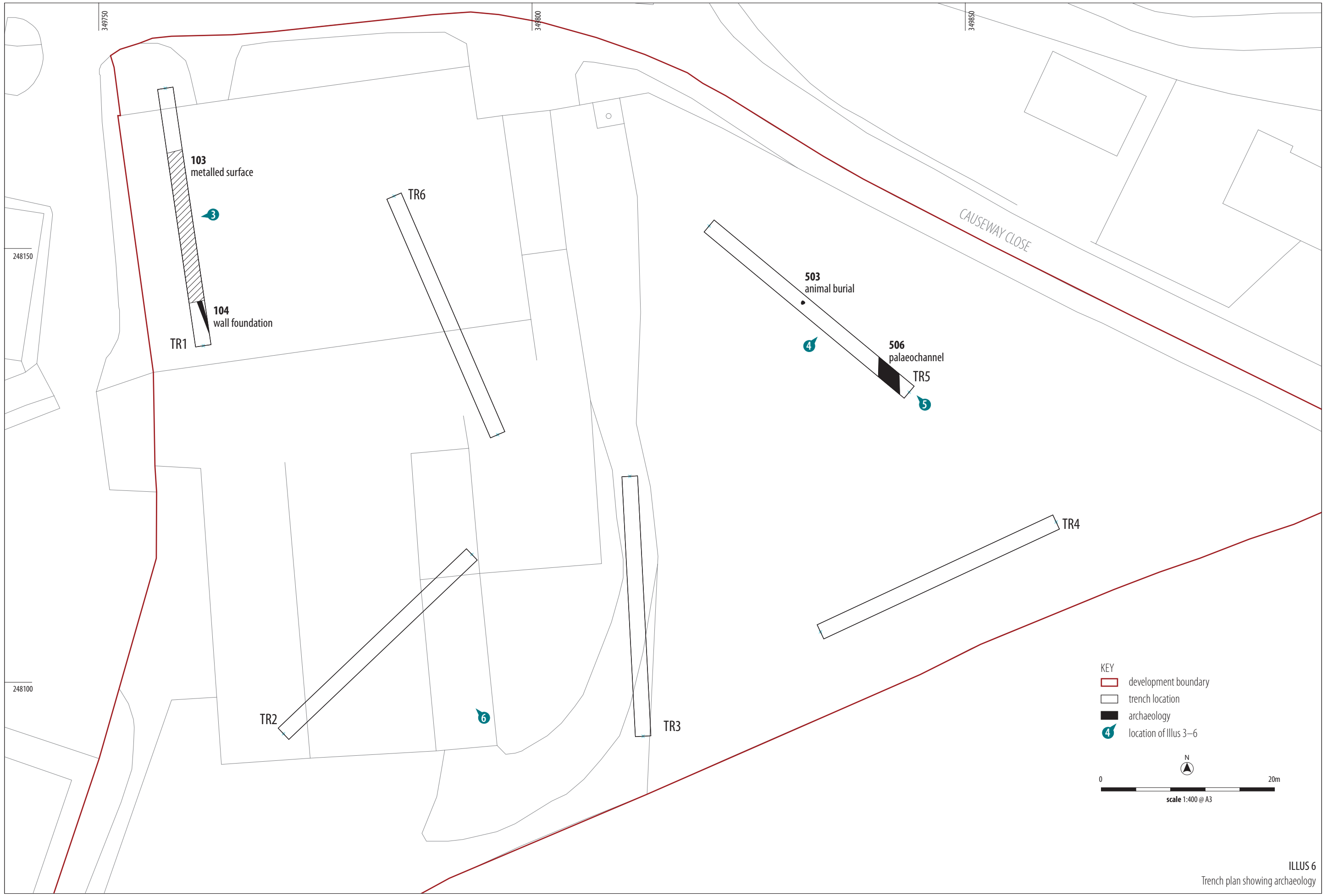
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ILLUS 6
Trench plan showing archaeology

8 APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 SITE REGISTER

Trench and context register

Trench 1 L:30, W:1.8, D:0.2

Context	Description
100	Demolition rubble. Bricks, concrete and hardcore. In patches along trench but mostly towards the Northern end. D: 0.2.
101	Topsoil. Mid reddish brown clay with a wavy interface and a friable consistency. Contains demolition rubble. New topsoil forming over disturbed ground. D: 0.07.
102	Natural. Light pink brown clay. D: +0.05.
103	Cobbled/metaled surface. Local pink-brown medium-small angular and sub-rounded sandstone stones. No formal structure to layout of stones. Contains post-medieval glass and pottery. Possibly cut by [104] although relationship difficult to establish in the confines of the trench.
104	Wall foundations for brick wall at Southern end of trench. Possible cuts (103) but they could abut.
105	Levelling layer. Light green grey sand with medium and large angular stones and gravels. Modern levelling deposit. D:0.12

Trench 2 L:30, W:1.8, D:0.23

Context	Description
200	Topsoil. Mid reddish brown clay with a wavy interface and a friable consistency. Contains demolition rubble. New topsoil forming over disturbed ground. D: 0.07.
201	Natural. Light pink brown clay. D: +0.05.
202	Gravel layer. Blue-grey gravel. A modern area of hard standing. D: 0.13.
203	Demolition rubble. Bricks, concrete, plastic and wood. In patches towards the eastern end of the trench. Not excavated to full depth.

Trench 3 L:30, W:1.8, D:0.58

Context	Description
300	Topsoil. Mid reddish brown silt clay with a clear, smooth interface and a friable consistency. Truncated by (303) further to the North so only present in Southern 5m of trench. D: 0.23.
301	Subsoil. Mid grey brown silt clay with occasional small-medium rounded stones, a clear, smooth interface and a friable, firm consistency. D: 0.24 max.
302	Natural. Light pink brown clay. D: +0.23.
303	Demolition rubble. Dark pink brown silt clay with abundant blue-grey gravel tarmac, and bricks. Truncates (300) across trench.

Trench 4 L:30, W:1.8, D:0.5

Context	Description
---------	-------------

400	Topsoil. Mid reddish brown silt clay with a clear, smooth interface and a friable consistency. Truncated by (303) further to the North so only present in Southern 5m of trench. D: 0.2.
401	Subsoil. Mid grey brown silt clay with occasional small-medium rounded stones, a clear, smooth interface and a friable, firm consistency. D: 0.13.
402	Natural. Mid orange-brown silt clay. D: +0.17.

Trench 5 L:30, W:1.8, D:0.58

Context	Description
500	Topsoil. Mid reddish brown silt clay with a diffuse, wavy interface and a friable consistency. Imported material probably redeposited from the western end of the site where the ground level has been reduced. D: 0.4.
501	Subsoil. Mid grey brown silt clay with occasional small-medium rounded stones, a clear, smooth interface and a friable, firm consistency. D: 0.3.
502	Natural. Light pink brown clay. D: +0.17.
503	Articulated animal skeleton
504	Layer. Redeposited natural likely to be from western end of site where the ground level has been reduced. Light pink brown clay. D: +0.12.
505	Natural – Mid orange-brown silt clay. D: +0.12
506	Palaeochannel. Unexcavated. At eastern end of trench.

Trench 6 L:30, W:1.8, D:0.26

Context	Description
600	Topsoil. Mid reddish brown silt clay with a diffuse, wavy interface and a friable consistency. Contains demolition rubble. New topsoil forming over disturbed ground. D: 0.05.
601	Natural. Light pink brown clay. D: +0.17.

Photographic register

Photo	Colour	B+W	Digital	Facing	Description
01	1	1	1	/	Id Shot
02	2	2	2	SE	TR6 – plan
03	3	3	3	W	TR6 – section
04	4	4	4	W	TR2 – plan
05	5	5	5	N	TR2 – section
06	6	6	6	S	TR1 – plan shot of (103)
07	7	7	7	S	TR1 – plan shot of (103)
08	8	8	8	N	TR1 – plan
09	9	9	9	W	TR1 – plan shot of (103)
10	10	10	10	S	TR3 – plan
11	11	11	11	E	TR3 – section
12	12	12	12	E	TR3 – section



Photo	Colour	B+W	Digital	Facing	Description
13	13	13	13	NW	TR5 – SK (503)
14	/	/	14	NW	TR5 – SK (503)
15	14	14	15	NE	TR4 – plan
16	16	15	16	SW	TR4 – section
17	16	16	17	N	TR5 – section shot of hard-core/overburden
18	/	/	18	N	TR5 – section shot of hard-core/overburden
19	/	/	19	N	TR5 – section shot of hard-core/overburden
20	17	17	20	N	TR5 – plan



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