BMMG/01

LAND OFF BROAD MARSTON ROAD, MICKLETON, GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Archaeological Evaluation

commissioned by CgMs Consulting
on behalf of Gladman Developments Ltd

November 2014

HEADLAND ARCHAEOLOGY

REGISTERED ORGANISATION IfA

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project info

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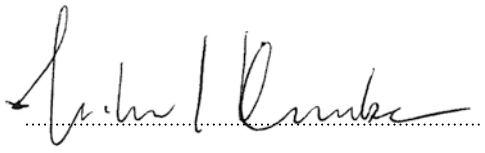

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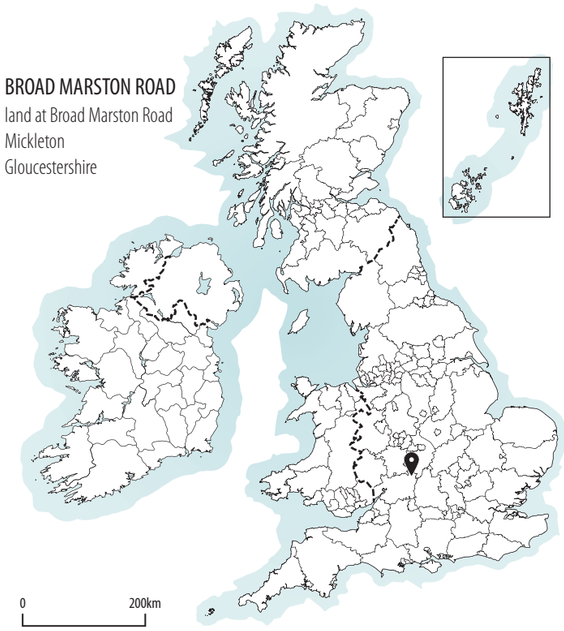
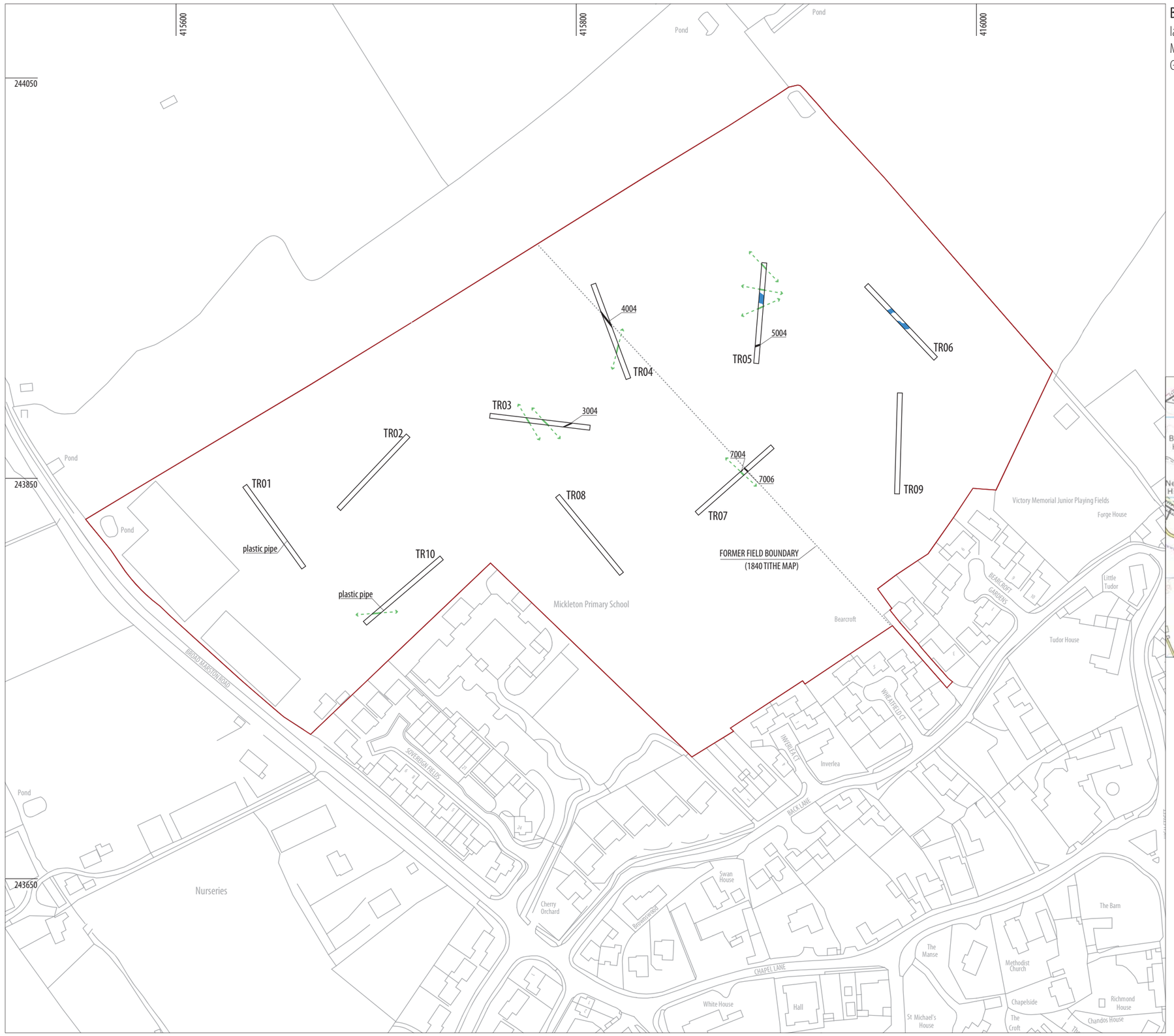
BROAD MARSTON ROAD

land at Broad Marston Road
Mickleton
Gloucestershire





KEY

- development boundary
- trench location
- archaeological features
- land drain
- palaeochannel

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ILLUS 1
Site location

LAND OFF BROAD MARSTON ROAD, MICKLETON, GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Archaeological Evaluation

Headland Archaeology undertook an archaeological field evaluation on a parcel of land in Mickleton, Gloucestershire. No archaeological finds were recovered during the course of the evaluation. Two linear ditches were identified thought to represent former field boundaries present on 19th century maps of the area. The course of a palaeochannel was identified in the north of the site. The results of the evaluation suggest that the site has a low potential for archaeological activity of all periods.

1 INTRODUCTION

Headland Archaeology was commissioned by CgMs Consulting on behalf of their client Gladman Developments Ltd to undertake an archaeological field evaluation on a parcel of land in Mickleton Gloucestershire. The client intends to submit a planning application to Cotswold District Council for the residential development of the site.

A project design (Kimber 2014) was agreed with the archaeological advisor to Cotswold District Council and the field evaluation was undertaken between the 13th and 16th October 2014.

The proposed development site (**Illus 1**) comprises an 8ha area of land located at NGR 415834,243887 (site centre). Levels across the site rise from approximately 69m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) in the north-east to 72m AOD at the south of the study site. At the time of the evaluation the site was arable land surrounded by mature hedgerows.

The underlying solid geology within the site comprises Blue Lias formation and Charmouth Mudstone formation, formed during the Jurassic and Triassic periods. Superficial deposits of Glacial Head are recorded (British Geological Survey website; (http://www.bgs.ac.uk).

1.1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

An archaeological desk-based assessment of the site was prepared by CgMs Consulting in February 2014 (Shepherd 2014). The results are summarised below;

- The study site lies outside the historic village core of Mickleton and the HER records no undesignated heritage assets within or adjacent to the study site. There are no undesignated archaeological assets recorded within the study site. The site is considered to have a low potential for Prehistoric, Roman and Early Medieval archaeological remains.
- The site appears to have been located outside the historic village core of Mickleton. The road layout represented by the 17th century mapping suggests the village has expanded to the north and west from the church, but never extended north of Back Lane to the south of the proposed development area. The key elements and organisation of the medieval landscape around Mickleton are relatively well understood and it is clear that the site lay on the edge of the village, within the surrounding fields. On this basis, the site is considered to have a low potential for activity other than agricultural practices during the medieval period.
- Historic map evidence illustrates that the study site remained an area of enclosed agricultural land from at least the 17th century to the present. A very low potential for archaeological remains of the Post-Medieval and Modern period is identified for the proposed development site, and any surviving evidence is likely to be limited to that of former agricultural activity.
- A geophysical survey was subsequently undertaken in September 2014 (Richardson 2014). The preliminary results indicated the presence of ridge and furrow cultivation, a possible palaeochannel and a linear feature likely to represent a former field boundary.

ILLUS 2

Sample section in Trench 8

ILLUS 3

Trench 3, looking W

ILLUS 4

[5004] (pre-excavation)

1.2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

In general, the purpose of the evaluation was to provide sufficient evidence for confident prediction of the impact of the proposal by establishing the extent, nature and importance of any heritage assets within the affected area (following the National Planning Policy Framework). The results of the evaluation will be used to describe the significance of heritage assets potentially affected by the development. This will allow the local planning authority to make an informed assessment of any potential impacts on the historic environment in line with Paragraph 128 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

The resulting archive (finds and records) will be organised and deposited with Tewkesbury Museum to facilitate access for future research and interpretation for public benefit.

2 METHOD

The evaluation comprised the excavation of 10 trenches totalling 500 linear metres. All trenches measured 2.1m in width and 50m in length. Trenches were positioned to provide even coverage across the site.

All trenches were set-out using differential GPS, which also provided absolute heights above OD. Service plans were consulted in advance of excavation and safe digging techniques were observed. All trenches were opened by a 14 tonne tracked excavator equipped with a 2.1m wide ditching bucket under direct archaeological supervision and excavated in controlled spits. Spoil was stored beside the trench; topsoil and subsoil were kept separate by putting topsoil on one side of the trench and subsoil on the other. Trenches were backfilled by replacing excavated materials in reverse order of excavation; and by tamping down with the excavator as tidily as practicable.

The stratigraphic sequence was recorded in full in each of the trenches, even where no archaeological deposits were identified. All recording followed IfA Standards and Guidance for conducting archaeological evaluations. All contexts were given unique numbers and recorded on pro forma record cards. 35mm colour transparencies and black-and-white prints were taken with a graduated metric scale clearly visible. Digital images were taken for illustrative purposes.

ILLUS 5
Section through [5004]

ILLUS6
Section through ditch [7006]

ILLUS 7
Possible pit feature [7004] and land drain


5


6


7

3 RESULTS

A full description of all contexts is included in Appendix 1. Features discussed in the text are located on Illustration 1.

3.1 GENERAL SITE STRATIGRAPHY

Deposit composition was generally consistent across the site (**Illus 2**) although depths varied considerably. A dark brown silty sand topsoil deposit with a grey hue e.g. [1000, 2000] between 0.17m and 0.28m in depth overlay a mid-brown silty sand subsoil deposit measuring between 0.23m and 0.49m in depth eg [1001, 2001]. Geological deposits were encountered at a depth of between 0.4m and 0.72m and consisted of a light brown silty sand with a yellow hue eg [1002, 2002].

3.2 TRENCHES CONTAINING POTENTIAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL DEPOSITS

Trench 3

Ditch [3004] measured 1.2m in width and was orientated on a NE-SW alignment, corresponding with the position of a linear anomaly identified by the geophysical survey (**Illus 3**). The feature was identified beneath subsoil deposits at a depth of 0.60m below ground level and measured 0.2m in depth. The mid brown silty sand fill [3003] of the ditch was devoid of dateable material.

Trench 4

A shallow gully [4004] measuring 0.6m in width and 0.18m in depth was identified on a NW-SE orientation. The feature, which contained no dateable material, comprised a light brown silty sand [4003] within a v-shaped cut. The feature

corresponded with a linear anomaly on the geophysical survey and a correlating field boundary is recorded on the 1840 Mickleton Tithe map (Shepherd 2014).

Trench 5

Ditch [5004] measured 2m in width and was excavated to a depth of 0.55m before the ingress of groundwater prevented further excavation (**Illus 4** & **5**). The ditch was observed to continue below this depth. The feature, orientated on a NE-SW alignment appears to represent a continuation of ditch [3004] and also corresponds to a linear anomaly identified by the geophysical survey. The respective depths of features [3004] (0.2m) and [5004] (0.55m+) were significantly different, however, and the fill of ditch [5004] contained frequent charcoal inclusions [5003] unlike its counterpart in Trench 3. No dateable material was recovered from deposit [5003].

Trench 7

Linear [7006] measured 0.77m in width and was orientated on a NW-SE alignment (**Illus 6**). The mid-brown silty sand fill [7005] of the feature measured 0.3m in depth and contained no dateable artefacts. The v-shaped profile of the feature was identical in form to feature [4004] and both features appear to relate to a c19th field boundary.

ILLUS 8

Possible paleochannel deposit 8 within Trench 6, camera facing W

Immediately to the south-west of linear [7006] was an apparently discrete feature [7004] which extended to the north-west beyond the boundaries of the trench (**Illus 7**). The feature, measuring 0.8m x 0.4m+ in plan and 0.2m in depth contained a mid brown silty sand fill [7003] devoid of dateable material.

3.3 EVIDENCE FOR PALAEOCHANNEL DEPOSITS

The geophysical survey identified an irregular curvilinear anomaly within the northern part of the site which was believed to represent the course of a palaeochannel. A mid grey sandy silt deposit with a blue hue [6003] was identified at the postulated location within Trench 6 (**Illus 8**). The deposit, visible as two linear bands measuring 2.0m and 1.5m in width crossed the trench on an E-W orientation. The deposit was also recorded in Trench 5.

3.4 BLANK TRENCHES

No evidence for archaeological activity was identified in Trenches 1, 2, 8 (**Illus 9**), 9 or 10.

4 DISCUSSION

No archaeological finds were recovered from the site and therefore interpretation of the archaeological resource is uncertain. The significant variation in the depth of subsoil deposits observed across the site is likely to relate to the re-modelling of deposits caused by ridge and furrow agriculture. The lack of evidence for furrows may be a result of the plough not impacting upon the upper geological surface due to deep deposits of subsoil, and therefore little evidence for the agricultural systems exists below the topsoil/subsoil horizons.

Cartographic evidence appears to confirm that feature [4004/7006] was a former field boundary. The boundary is first evident on the 1840 Tithe map, and is also present on the 1884, 1885 and 1902 Ordnance Survey maps. The northern part of the boundary is present on the 1923 OS map and is completely removed by the time the area was resurveyed in 1970.

The linear feature [3004/5004] did not produce any dateable material but also potentially relates to a former field boundary. An 1812 Ordnance Survey drawing of Mickleton (Shepherd 2014) appears to show a field boundary arrangement at odds with the 1840 Tithe map, and more in keeping with the orientation and position of the linear identified during the geophysical survey and evaluation as feature [3004/5004].

Although there was a strong correlation between the results of the geophysical survey and the evaluation trenching, there were instances of geophysical anomalies that were not identified during the trenching. Trench 4 was located to target a NE-SW linear anomaly, however the feature was not observed, likewise a NW-SE linear targeted by Trench 3 was not identified. It is possible that these features were confined to topsoil and subsoil deposits and did not impact upon the geological deposits. In the case of the NW-SE linear targeted by Trench 3, it is possible that the feature terminates to the north of the trench as the feature is not well

defined towards its southern extent on the survey greyscale plot (Richardson 2014).

Curving field boundaries to the north and west of the site indicate the presence of both extant and former streams that drain north and west into Norton Brook, a tributary of the River Avon. The palaeochannel identified in the north of the site appears to match this model and potentially joins up with a curving field boundary present to the north of the site.

5 CONCLUSION

The field evaluation has confirmed the results of the desk-based assessment in identifying that the site has a low potential for archaeological remains of all periods. The site appears to have been used as agricultural land from the medieval period onwards and there is no evidence for activity from earlier periods.

ILLUS 9

Trench 8, camera facing SE

6 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Richardson, T 2014 ***Geophysical Survey Report: Mickleton, Gloucestershire***, Stratascan Report J7393.

Shepherd, N 2014 ***Land off Broad Marston Road, Mickleton, Gloucestershire***, Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment, CgMs Consulting. Ref: NS/16459.

7 APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 SITE REGISTER

Trench and context register

Trench	Context	Description	Dimensions	Deposit depth (BGL)
1	1000	Topsoil. Dark brown silty sand with a grey hue. Slightly stoney.	50m x 2.1m	0.0–0.28m
	1001	Subsoil. Mid brown silty sand with a grey hue. Slightly stoney.		0.28–0.67m
	1002	Natural. Light brown silty sand with a yellow hue, Slightly stoney.		0.67m+

Summary: No archaeological finds or features. In situ plastic piping on NE-SW alignment identified at SE end of trench.

Trench	Context	Description	Dimensions	Deposit depth (BGL)
2	2000	Topsoil. Dark brown silty sand with a grey hue. Slightly stoney.	50m x 2.1m	0.0–0.23m
	2001	Subsoil. Mid brown silty sand with a grey hue. Slightly stoney.		0.23–0.72m
	2002	Natural. Light brown silty sand with a yellow hue, Slightly stoney.		0.72m+

Summary: No archaeological finds or features.

Trench	Context	Description	Dimensions	Deposit depth (BGL)
3	3000	Topsoil. Dark brown silty sand with a grey hue. Slightly stoney.	50m x 2.1m	0.0–0.26m
	3001	Subsoil. Mid brown silty sand with a grey hue. Slightly stoney.		0.26m–0.6m
	3002	Natural. Light brown silty sand with a yellow hue, Slightly stoney.		0.6m+
	3003	Fill of ditch [3004]. Mid brown silty sand with a grey hue. Occasional small sub-angular stones, well sorted.		0.6m–0.8m
	3004	Cut of ditch. NE-SW orientation, 6m length revealed within trench. Width 1.2m max. Linear in plan. Gently sloping to concave base in profile.		0.6–0.8m

Summary: Shallow ditch or gully on NE-SW alignment. Undated.

Trench	Context	Description	Dimensions	Deposit depth (BGL)
4	4000	Topsoil. Dark brown silty sand with a grey hue. Slightly stoney.	50m x 2.1m	0.0–0.26m
	4001	Subsoil. Mid brown silty sand with a grey hue. Slightly stoney.		0.26–0.62m
	4002	Natural. Light brown silty sand with a yellow hue, Slightly stoney.		0.62m+
	4003	Fill of ditch [4004]. Light brown silty sand with a grey hue. No visible inclusions.		0.62–0.8m
	4004	Cut of ditch. NW-SE alignment, 6m length revealed within trench. Width 0.6m max. Linear in plan. V-shaped in profile.		0.62–0.8m

Summary: Shallow ditch or gully on NW-SE alignment. Undated.

Trench	Context	Description	Dimensions	Deposit depth (BGL)
5	5000	Topsoil. Dark brown silty sand with a grey hue. Slightly stoney.	50m x 2.1m	0.0–0.17m
	5001	Subsoil. Mid brown silty sand with a grey hue. Slightly stoney.		0.17–0.4m
	5002	Natural. Light brown silty sand with a yellow hue, Slightly stoney.		0.4–0.66m+
	5003	Fill of ditch [5004]. Dark grey silty sand with a black hue. Charcoal rich. Very occasional small sub-angular stone inclusions.		0.4–0.95m+
	5004	Cut of ditch. NE-SW alignment, 2.2m length revealed within trench. Width 2m max. Linear in plan. Gently sloping sides in profile. Base not identified due to groundwater.		0.4–0.95m+

Summary: Ditch on NE-SW alignment identified. Undated. Charcoal rich fill. Feature not bottomed due to presence of groundwater.

Trench	Context	Description	Dimensions	Deposit depth (BGL)
6	6000	Topsoil. Dark brown silty sand with a grey hue. Slightly stoney.	50m x 2.1m	0.0–0.27m
	6001	Subsoil. Mid brown silty sand with a grey hue. Slightly stoney.		0.27–0.51m
	6002	Natural. Light brown silty sand with a yellow hue, Slightly stoney.		0.51m+
	6003	Mid grey sandy silt with a blue hue. Variation in natural indicating anaerobic conditions. Possible Palaeochannel. Extends across base of trench on E-W alignment. Width 2m.		0.51m+

Summary: Potential palaeochannel on E-W alignment. Not excavated. Feature visible on geophysical survey greyscale plot.

Trench	Context	Description	Dimensions	Deposit depth (BGL)
7	7000	Topsoil. Dark brown silty sand with a grey hue. Slightly stoney.	50m x 2.1m	0.0–0.24m
	7001	Subsoil. Mid brown silty sand with a grey hue. Slightly stoney.		0.24–0.62m
	7002	Natural. Light brown silty sand with a yellow hue, Slightly stoney.		0.62m+
	7003	Fill of pit [7004]. Mid brown silty sand with a grey hue. No inclusions identified.		0.62–0.82m
	7004	Cut of pit. Feature extends into NW trench section. Width 0.8m, Length 0.4m+. Moderately sloping sides to concave base.		0.62–0.82m
	7005	Fill of ditch [7006]. Mid brown silty sand with a grey hue. No inclusions identified.		0.62–0.92m
	7006	Cut of ditch. Linear in plan. NW-SE alignment. Width 0.77m. V-shaped in profile.		0.62–0.92m

Summary: Linear [7006] and potential pit feature [7004] identified. Both features were undated.

Trench	Context	Description	Dimensions	Deposit depth (BGL)
8	8000	Topsoil. Dark brown silty sand with a grey hue. Slightly stoney.	50m x 2.1m	0.0–0.22m
	8001	Subsoil. Mid brown silty sand with a grey hue. Slightly stoney.		0.22–0.62m
	8002	Natural. Light brown silty sand with a yellow hue, Slightly stoney.		0.62m+

Summary: No archaeological features identified.

Trench	Context	Description	Dimensions	Deposit depth (BGL)
9	9000	Topsoil. Dark brown silty sand with a grey hue. Slightly stoney.	50m x 2.1m	0.0–0.28m
	9001	Subsoil. Mid brown silty sand with a grey hue. Slightly stoney. Evidence for leaching of deposit.		0.28–0.66m
	9002	Natural. Light brown silty sand with a yellow hue, Slightly stoney.		0.66m+

Summary: No archaeological finds or features identified.

Trench	Context	Description	Dimensions	Deposit depth (BGL)
10	10000	Topsoil. Dark brown silty sand with a grey hue. Slightly stoney.	50m x 2.1m	0.0–0.22m
	10001	Subsoil. Mid brown silty sand with a grey hue. Slightly stoney. Evidence for leaching of deposit.		0.22–0.69m
	10002	Natural. Light brown silty sand with a yellow hue, Slightly stoney.		0.69m+

Summary: No archaeological finds or features identified. Plastic service pipe on SE-NW orientation identified near southern end of trench.

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