

WCNO/01



# LAND SOUTH AND EAST OF WALTERBUSH ROAD, CHIPPING NORTON, OXFORDSHIRE

## Archaeological Evaluation

commissioned by The Environmental Dimension Partnership (EDP) Ltd  
on behalf of Bellway Homes Ltd

June 2015



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project info

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# LAND SOUTH AND EAST OF WALTERBUSH ROAD, CHIPPING NORTON, OXFORDSHIRE

## Archaeological Evaluation

Headland Archaeology undertook a trial trench evaluation on a plot of land on the southern edge of Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire. The evaluation identified the presence of a number of agricultural furrows, one of which has been dated to the modern period. No archaeologically significant features were identified during the trial trench evaluation.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 PLANNING BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

This report presents the results of an archaeological field evaluation on land south and east of Walterbush Road, Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire. The archaeological works, commissioned by The Environmental Dimension Partnership (EDP) Ltd on behalf of Bellway Homes Ltd and its successors in title to the land, were undertaken in order to satisfy Conditions 17 and 18 of planning permission granted for residential development of the site.

- Condition 17 requests the submission of a Written Scheme of Investigation detailing the proposed archaeological works.
- Condition 18 relates to the safeguard and recording of archaeological matters within the site in accordance with the NPPF:

18. Following the approval of the Written Scheme of Investigation referred to in condition 17, and prior to any demolition on the site and commencement of the development (other than in accordance with the agreed WSI), a staged programme of archaeological evaluation and mitigation shall be carried out by the commissioned archaeological organisation in accordance with the approved WSI. The programme of work shall include all processing, analysis and research necessary to produce an accessible and useable archive and a full report for publication which will be submitted to the Local Planning Authority.

This archaeological evaluation and report form part of the programme of works referred to in condition 18.

Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd was commissioned by EDP on behalf of Bellway Homes to undertake the required works in accordance with an Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation (Craddock-Bennett 2015) approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The submission and agreement of the WSI fulfilled condition 17 of the planning permission.

### 1.2 SITE LOCATION, DESCRIPTION AND SETTING

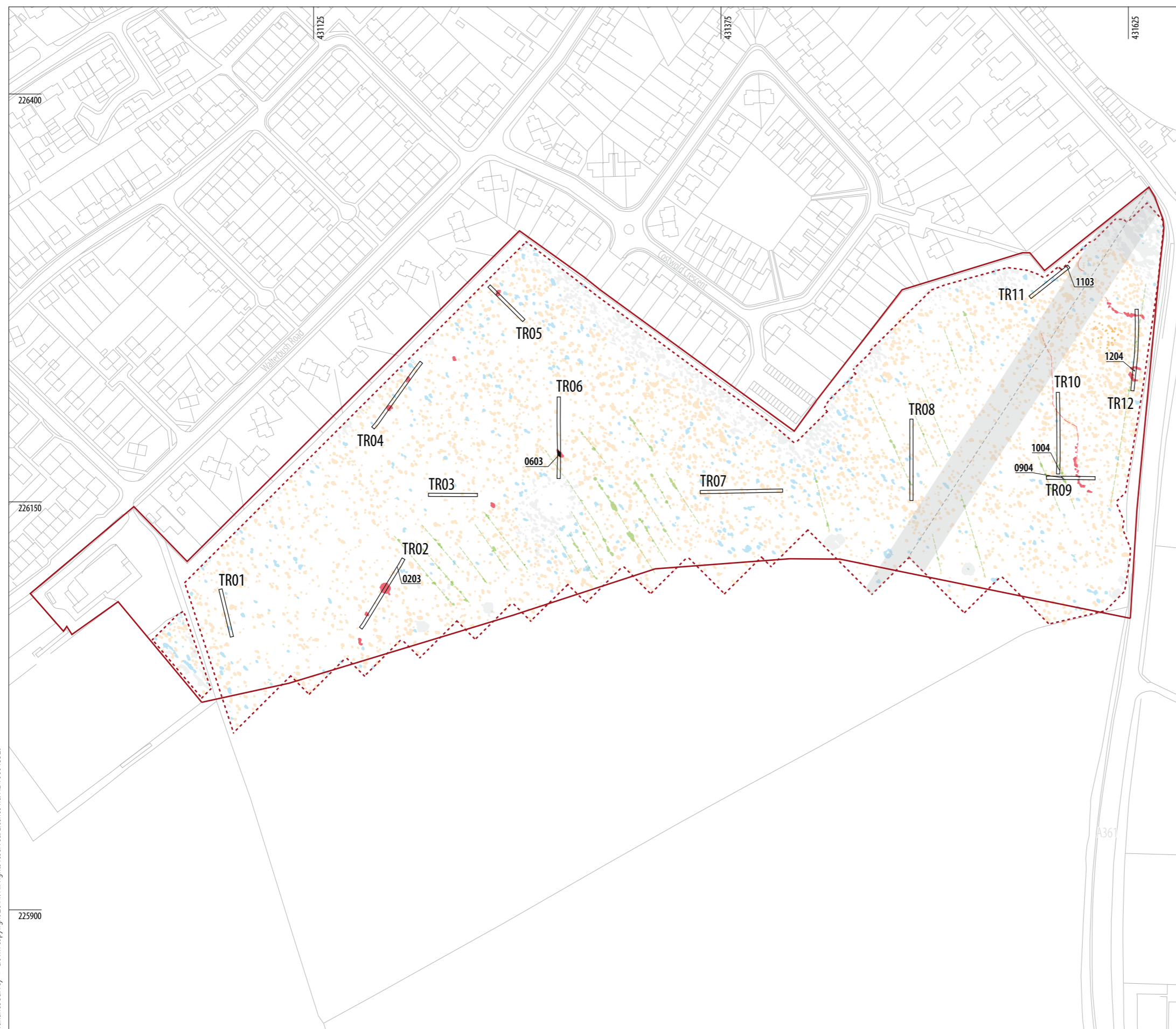
The development site (**Illus 1**) comprises an area of land located at NGR 431332, 226206 (site centre). The total site occupies the northern half of a single field and the small area of an adjoining football ground to the west, and measures approximately 9.7 hectares. It is located on the southern edge of Chipping Norton to the south-east of Walterbush Road.

The site is bound to the north and north-west by a housing estate, to the west by an unused football club, to the south by farmland and by the A361 to the east. Overhead power lines run north-east – south-west across the eastern section of the site.

The site has a gradual slope from c210m above Ordnance Datum (AOD) in the north to c205m AOD in the south.

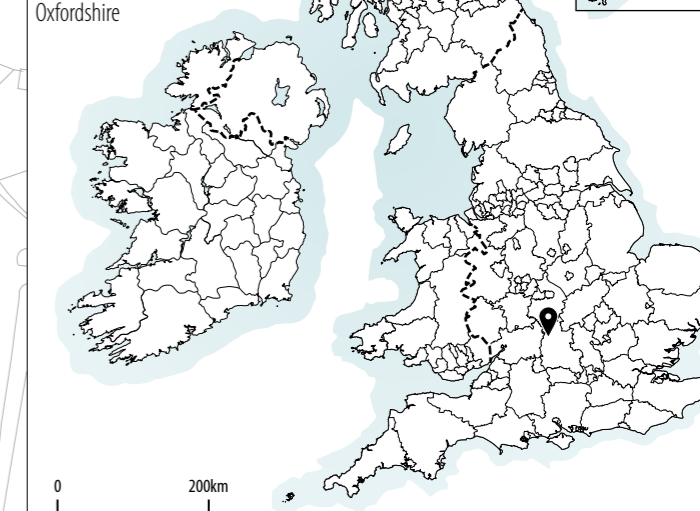
The underlying geology is recorded as limestone and argillaceous rocks of the Great Oolite Group, with the far north tip of the site also taking in subordinate sandstone and limestone of the Sharp's Hill Formation. There are no superficial deposits recorded (BGS 2015).

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# LAND OFF WALTERBUSH ROAD (WCNO/01)

land adjacent to A361  
Walterbush Road  
Chipping Norton  
Oxfordshire



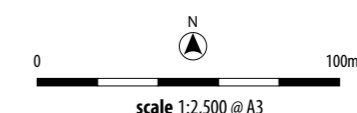
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## KEY

- development boundary
- geophysics area
- trench location
- features
- power line and buffer

## GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY RESULTS

- strong ferrous magnetic anomaly
- magnetic anomaly (possibly archaeological)
- small background magnetic anomaly
- strong magnetic disturbance (recent)
- cultivation



ILLUS 1  
Site location



## 1.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

A heritage assessment undertaken by EDP (2014) identified a moderate potential for archaeological finds of prehistoric and Roman dates. Finds of this period have previously been recorded within 50m of the north-east corner of the site.

The site was considered to have a low potential for previously unrecorded finds of early medieval date and a low-moderate potential for finds of medieval date.

A geophysical survey undertaken by Bartlett-Clark Consultancy (2014) identified a few widely dispersed pit-like features of uncertain significance, and irregular linear markings towards the east of the site. The linears were not considered to represent a well-preserved or clearly interpretable field system or group of settlement enclosures, and are located in a part of the site with a high level of background activity.

## 2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

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 local and regional contexts are provided by the Solent Thames Research Framework.

Specifically the evaluation aimed to:

- assess the nature of anomalies identified by the geophysical survey;
- describe the significance of heritage assets potentially affected by the development, allowing for the need (or lack thereof) for further archaeological mitigation to be assessed prior to development taking place;
- produce a site archive for deposition with the County Museums Service to facilitate access for future research and interpretation for public benefit.

## 3 METHOD

The fieldwork was conducted in accordance with the following documents:

- Code of Conduct (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2014)
- Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists 2014)

The evaluation comprised the excavation of five trenches measuring 30m x 1.8m and seven trenches measuring 50m x 1.8m. Trenches were located to target potential archaeological anomalies identified by the geophysical survey and also to achieve sufficient coverage of the site (**Illus 1**).

The evaluation trenches were excavated under archaeological supervision, with topsoil/upper subsoil being removed by machine and excavation terminating at the uppermost significant

archaeological horizon or when geological deposits were encountered.

The stratigraphic sequence was recorded in full in each of the trenches, even where no archaeological deposits were identified.

All recording followed standard archaeological guidelines as set out by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA). The recorded contexts were assigned unique numbers and recording was undertaken on Headland Archaeology pro forma trench and context record sheets. Digital photographic images and black and white photographs were taken of all trenches with a graduated metric scale clearly visible. Digital surveying was undertaken using a Trimble dGPS system.

## 4 RESULTS

The location of features discussed below can be found on **Illus 1**. A full trench and context register is included in Appendix 1.

### 4.1 GENERAL SITE STRATIGRAPHY

Geological deposits varied slightly across the site, but were consistently encountered at a depth of c0.25m below ground level (BGL). In the north-east of the site (Trenches 09–12), geological deposits comprised a mid-orange/brown sandy clay with occasional patches of small-medium sub-angular stones eg (1102, 1203) (**Illus 2**). Within the western part of Trench 09 and the southern part of Trench 10 a mouldable yellow/grey clay with slightly more frequent small-medium sub-angular stones was present. In Trench 08, further west, geological deposits comprised a mouldable mid-yellow/orange clay with occasional small-large stones visible throughout; eg (0802). Geological deposits varied again towards the west of the site with the amount of stones increasing and the natural deposits becoming a slightly lighter yellow/orange sandy clay; eg (0302, 0202) (**Illus 3**). In Trenches 04 and 05, in the north-west of the site, geological deposits were observed as a slightly darker orange/brown clay with bands of red clay throughout; eg (0402, 0502) (**Illus 4**).

Variations in geology are likely to relate to the sites location on a geological border between the Great Oolite Group and Sharp's Hill Formation. The presence of an east-west orientated shallow valley located at the southern extent of the development area may also have influenced the geological formation of the site.

A thin subsoil (between 0.05m and 0.07m in depth) was identified in Trenches 09, 10 and 12. In all other trenches topsoil directly overlay geological deposits; eg (0902, 1202) (**Illus 5**).

Topsoil was consistent across the site and comprised a dark brownish grey silty clay; eg (0101, 0801) and varied in depth between 0.18m and 0.35m.



ILLUS 2

W facing section of Trench 12



ILLUS 3

S facing section of Trench 03



ILLUS 4

NE facing shot of geological banding in Trench 04



ILLUS 5

SW facing section of Trench 09



## 4.2 TRENCHES CONTAINING POTENTIAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL DEPOSITS

### Trench 06

A wide (3.1m) post-medieval furrow [0603] on a NW-SE orientation was located 14m from the southern end of the trench (Illus 6). The feature measured 0.24m in depth with a single mid-greyish brown sandy clay fill containing modern pottery, animal bone and Fe objects such as nails. The northern edge of the furrow sloped steeply while the southern edge sloped slightly to an undulating base. The feature was cut into underlying geological deposits, the undulating base likely being a result of the extremely frequent sub-angular stones present within the natural geology.



ILLUS 6

Oblique SE facing section of furrow [0603]



ILLUS 7

SE facing section of furrow [1004]



ILLUS 8

SW facing section of machine excavated slot through geological feature in Trench 05

### Trenches 09 and 10

A small furrow [1004] measuring 0.45m in width was identified in Trench 10 on a NW – SE orientation. This feature, which measured 0.11m in depth, contained a single mixed grey/brown sandy clay fill (1005) with occasional small sub-angular stones and no finds (Illus 7). The furrow had gently sloping sides with a concave base and non-perceptible breaks of slope.

Furrow [0904] in Trench 09 was of comparable dimensions and on the same orientation as furrow [1004]. Both features appear to represent contemporary episodes of ploughing.

## 4.3 TRENCHES CONTAINING NATURAL FEATURES

### Trenches 02, 11 and 12

Trenches 02, 11 and 12 contained irregular discrete features (0203, 1103 and 1204) that upon excavation were determined to be non-archaeological in origin and are likely to represent tree throw pits.

### Trenches 04 and 05

Bands of red clay were identified towards the south-west of Trench 04 and the north-west of Trench 05. A hand dug investigative slot was excavated through the deposit in Trench 05. With agreement from the LPA archaeological advisor, the slot was widened with the use of a machine and excavated to a depth of 0.65m (Illus 8). The red clay deposit was homogenous in nature and contained no archaeological finds. The similarity of the deposit to the geological deposits identified in the north-west of the site; eg (1203, 1102); confirms the geological rather than archaeological nature of the banding.

## 4.4 BLANK TRENCHES

No features or significant deposits were identified in Trenches 01, 03, 07 and 08



## 5 DISCUSSION

Furrow [0603] matches the orientation of the predominant cultivation pattern identified by the geophysical survey. The presence of modern pottery within the furrow suggests a recent date for its formation. Furrows [0904 and 1004], although undated, are on a comparable orientation and may therefore be contemporary.

The potential features noted in the geophysical survey have been found to be non-archaeological and in most cases relate to geological variations or agricultural activity.

The high concentration of stones in the topsoil across the site suggests that underlying geological deposits are regularly being disturbed by ploughing. This activity may explain the geophysical responses within the site and the lack of evidence for archaeological activity.

## 6 CONCLUSION

The trial trench evaluation identified the presence of a small number of agricultural furrows, one confirmed as modern in date. The lack of archaeological finds or features within the trial trenches suggests that the proposed development area has a low potential for previously unrecorded archaeological activity.

## 7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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EDP 2014 Land South and East of Walterbush Road, Chipping Norton: Heritage Statement. EDP1296\_02b.

## 8 APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1 TRENCH REGISTER

TR01	Orientation	Length (m)	Width (m)	Av. depth (m)
	N-S	30	1.8	0.35

Context	Description	Depth of deposit (mBGL)
0101	Topsoil – Dark grey brown silty clay. Friable. Frequent small – large angular stones.	0.0–0.25
0102	Natural – Light yellow-orange sandy clay, mouldable. Very frequent small – large stones throughout.	0.25–0.35+

Summary: No archaeology.

2 x plough scars visible in natural at northern end of trench, they follow the direction of the modern ploughing activity visible on the surface.

TR02	Orientation	Length (m)	Width (m)	Av. Depth (m)
	NE-SW	50	1.8	0.24

Context	Description	Depth of deposit (mBGL)
0201	Topsoil – Dark grey brown silty clay. Friable. Frequent small – large angular stones.	0.0–0.24
0202	Natural – Mid orange-brown, sandy clay. Very frequent sub-angular stones. Firm but friable. Changes slightly at northern end of trench, light grey-yellow clay sand, friable, small – large sub-angular stones, very frequent.	0.24+
0203	Geological feature – Irregular plan, very gentle sides, irregular base, non-perceptible break of slope. Fill – mid brownish grey, small stone, occasional charcoal flecking. Post-medieval pottery sitting on surface of feature. Likely from topsoil.	0.24–0.28

Summary: No archaeology.

TR03	Orientation	Length (m)	Width (m)	Av. depth (m)
	E-W	30	1.8	0.33

Context	Description	Depth of deposit (mBGL)
0301	Topsoil – Dark grey brown silty clay. Friable. Frequent small – large angular stones	0.0–0.27
0302	Subsoil – Light yellow-orange sandy clay, mouldable. Very frequent small – large stones throughout.	0.27–0.33+

Summary: No archaeology.

TR04	Orientation	Length (m)	Width (m)	Av. depth (m)
	NW-SE	50	1.8	0.22

Context	Description	Depth of deposit (mBGL)
---------	-------------	-------------------------

0401	Topsoil – Dark grey brown silty clay. Friable. Frequent small – large angular stones.	0.0–0.20
0402	Natural – Mid orange-brown friable clay, frequent small – large white angular stones throughout. Band of red clay towards western end of trench. Natural (geological) feature.	

Summary: No archaeology.

Band of red clay not investigated as comparable feature excavated in TR05.

TR05	Orientation	Length (m)	Width (m)	Av. depth (m)
	NW-SE	30	1.8	0.33

Context	Description	Depth of deposit (mBGL)
0501	Topsoil – Dark grey brown silty clay. Friable. Frequent small – large angular stones.	0.0–0.23
0502	Natural – Mid orange-brown friable clay, frequent small – large white angular stones throughout. Band of red clay at NW end of trench, machine dug slot trough feature after small hand dug investigative slot. (slot 0.65m x 3m) Proven as a geological feature.	0.23–0.33+

Summary: No archaeology.

TR06	Orientation	Length (m)	Width (m)	Av. depth (m)
	NE-SW	50	1.8	0.24

Context	Description	Depth of deposit (mBGL)
0601	Topsoil – Mid brownish-grey, sandy clay, friable, occasional small – medium sized sub-angular stones throughout.	0.0–0.24
0602	Natural – Northern end of trench – Mid orange brown sandy clay, very frequent small – large sub-angular stones throughout. Firm but friable/loose. Southern end of trench – Light greyish yellow sandy clay, frequent small – large sub angular stones, firm but friable/loose.	0.24+
0603	Cut of large post-medieval furrow – Linear, north side steeply sloping, southern side gently sloping. Flat base, gradual break of slope.	0.24–0.48
0604	Fill of [0603] – mid greyish brown sandy clay, clear deposit interface, firm but friable. Very frequent small – large sub angular stones and occasional charcoal flecking. Occasional post-medieval pottery, Fe objects and animal bone.	0.24–0.48

Summary: 1 x large post-medieval furrow orientated NW – SE 14m from Southern end of trench.

TR07	Orientation	Length (m)	Width (m)	Av. depth (m)
	E-W	50	1.8	0.28

Context	Description	Depth of deposit (mBGL)
0701	Topsoil – Dark grey brown silty clay. Friable. Frequent small – large angular stones.	0.0–0.24



0702 Natural — Mid yellow — orange clay. Very frequent large stones throughout. Some large sheets of stones some approximately 1m in width by at least the full width of the trench.

Summary: No archaeology.

TR08	Orientation	Length (m)	Width (m)	Av. depth (m)
	N-S	50	1.8	0.35

Context	Description	Depth of deposit (mBGL)
0801	Topsoil — Dark grey brown silty clay. Friable. Frequent small — large angular stones.	0.0–0.28
0802	Natural — Mid yellow-orange clay, mouldable occasional patches of topsoil that have worked in from ploughing (modern) occasional small-large stones visible in natural.	0.28–0.35+

Summary: No archaeology.

Trench was to the direct west of the power lines.

TR09	Orientation	Length (m)	Width (m)	Av. depth (m)
	NE-SW	30	1.8	0.35

Context	Description	Depth of deposit (mBGL)
0901	Topsoil — Mid brownish grey, sandy clay, very moist, friable, occasional small — medium sub-angular stones.	0.0–0.18
0902	Interface — Light brownish grey, sandy clay, very moist, firm. Occasional small — medium sub-angular stones.	0.18–0.25
0903	Natural — Mid orange brown, sandy clay, firm but friable, patches of small — medium sub-angular stone.	0.25+
0904	Furrow — Linear, gently sloping sides, concave base, non-perceptible break of slope, orientated NW — SE 10m from west of trench end. L: 2.4m, W: 0.5m, D: 0.1m, 0.3m BGL.	0.3–0.4
0905	Fill of [0904] — mixed grey brown, sandy clay (with yellow/blue natural clays) loose, occasional small sub-angular stones, charcoal flecks.	0.3–0.4

Summary: Trench adjoins TR10 to the north, Furrow [0904] is possibly a continuation of [1004] although they seem to be on slightly different alignments.

TR10	Orientation	Length (m)	Width (m)	Av. depth (m)
	N-S	50	1.8	0.35

Context	Description	Depth of deposit (mBGL)
1001	Topsoil — Mid brownish grey, sandy clay, very moist, friable, occasional small — medium sub-angular stones.	0.0–0.18
1002	Interface — Light brownish grey, sandy clay, very moist, firm. Occasional small — medium sub-angular stones.	0.18–0.25
1003	Natural — Mid orange brown, sandy clay, firm but friable, patches of small — medium sub-angular stone.	0.25+

1004 Furrow — Linear, gently sloping sides, concave base, non-perceptible break of slope, orientated NW — SE 10m from west of trench end. L: 2.7m, W: 0.45m, D: 0.11m, 0.25m BGL.

1005 Fill of [904] — mixed grey brown, sandy clay (with yellow/blue natural clays) loose, occasional small sub-angular stones, charcoal flecks.

Summary: Trench adjoins TR09 to the south, Furrow [1004] is possibly a continuation of [904] although they seem to be on slightly different alignments.

TR11	Orientation	Length (m)	Width (m)	Av. depth (m)
	NE-SW	30	1.8	0.26

Context	Description	Depth of deposit (mBGL)
1101	Topsoil — Mid brownish grey, sandy clay, very moist, friable, occasional small — medium sub-angular stones.	0.0–0.2
1102	Natural — Mid orange brown, sandy clay, firm but friable, patches of small — medium sub-angular stone.	0.2–0.26
1103	Tree throw pit— Irregular in plan, gentle slides, concave base, non-perceptible break of slope. L: 1.5m, W: 0.65m, D: 0.13m. Filled by a light greyish brown sandy/silty clay, loose, occasional charcoal flecking.	0.26–0.33

Summary: 1 x tree throw pit.

TR12	Orientation	Length (m)	Width (m)	Av. depth (m)
	N-S	50	1.8	0.3

Context	Description	Depth of deposit (mBGL)
1201	Topsoil — Mid brownish grey, sandy clay, very moist, friable, occasional small — medium sub-angular stones.	0.0–0.25
1202	Interface — Light brownish grey, sandy clay, very moist, firm. Occasional small — medium sub-angular stones.	0.25–0.3
1203	Natural — Mid orange brown, sandy clay, firm but friable, patches of small — medium sub-angular stone.	0.3+
1204	Tree throw pit— Irregular in plan (bean shaped), very gently sloping sides, irregular shape, non-perceptible break of slope. Fill is a mid-brownish grey, sandy clay, friable, small sub angular stones, flecks of charcoal/lump of coal. Very degraded animal bone fragments. L: 1.35, W: 0.6m, D: 0.05m. 12m from SW end of trench.	0.28–0.33

Summary: Machine dug sondage excavated at SW end of trench to confirm natural.

## APPENDIX 2 PHOTOGRAPHIC REGISTER

Photo	B&W	Digital	Facing	Description
001	—	001	W	General site shot
002	—	002	E	General site shot
003	—	003	W	Well
004	—	004	E	General site shot — crossing under overheads
005	37	005	N	TR12 Tree throw section
006	36	006	NW	TR12 Tree throw plan
007	35	007	SE	TR12 Sample section
008	34	008	SW	TR12 General trench shot
009	33	009	SW	TR12 Patch of stone natural on crest of hill
010	32	010	NW	TR10 Furrow section
011	31	011	NW	TR09 Furrow section
012	30	012	N	TR10 General trench shot
013	29	013	E	TR09 General trench shot
014	28	014	N	TR09 Sample section
015	27	015	E	TR10 Sample section
016	26	016	N	TR11 tree throw section
017	25	017	NW	TR11 tree throw in plan
018	24	018	N	TR02 Geological feature
019	23	019	SW	TR02 General trench shot
020	22	020	SE	TR02 Sample section
021	—	021	NW	TR04 Geological feature
022	21	022	E	TR01 Sample section
023	20	023	N	TR01 General trench shot
024	19	024	N	TR03 Sample section
025	18	025	W	TR03 General trench shot
026	17	026	S	TR07 Sample section
027	16	027	W	TR07 General trench shot
028	15	028	E	TR8 Sample section
029	14	029	N	TR08 General trench shot
030	13	030	NW	TR04 Sample section
031	12	031	SW	TR04 General trench shot
032	11	032	NE	TR05 SW facing section of machine dug Sondage through geological feature
033	10	033	NW	TR05 Plan of machine dug slot through geological feature.
034	9	034	NE	TR05 Sample section
035	8	035	NW	TR05 General trench shot

Photo	B&W	Digital	Facing	Description
036	7	036	SE	TR06 Oblique section of furrow [603]
037	—	037	SE	TR06 Oblique section of furrow [603]
038	6	038	E	TR6 Section of furrow [603]
039	5	039	N	TR06 General trench shot
040	4	040	E	TR06 Sample section
041	—	041	N	TR12 Post-ex shot
042	—	042	W	TR07 Post-ex shot
043	—	043	N	TR06 Post-ex shot
044	—	044	NW	TR05 Post-ex shot
045	—	045	SW	TR04 Post-ex shot
046	—	046	N	General post-ex shot
047	—	047	E	TR03 Post-ex shot
048	—	048	SW	TR02 Post-ex shot
049	—	049	N	TR01 Post-ex shot
050	—	050	E	General shot
051	—	051	E	General shot
052	—	052	NW	General shot
053	—	053	NW	General shot
054	—	054	N	General shot
055	—	055	SW	General shot
056	—	056	SW	TR11 Post-ex shot
057	—	057	NW	Plant under goalposts
058	—	058	NW	Plant under goalposts
059	—	059	N	TR08 Post-ex shot
060	—	060	SE	General shot of overhead cable crossing point
061	—	061	W	TR09 Post-ex shot
062	—	062	N	TR10 Post-ex shot
063	—	063	NW	TR09 and 10 Post-ex shot





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