

NFWW/01



LAND AT NORTHWICK FARM WORCESTER

Archaeological Evaluation

commissioned by Bloor Homes (Western) Ltd

WCM 102097

July 2015

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project info

HA JOB NO. NFWW/01
HAS NO. 1123
NGR SO 8392 5802
LOCAL AUTHORITY Worcester City Council
OASIS REF. headland3-214553

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CONTENTS

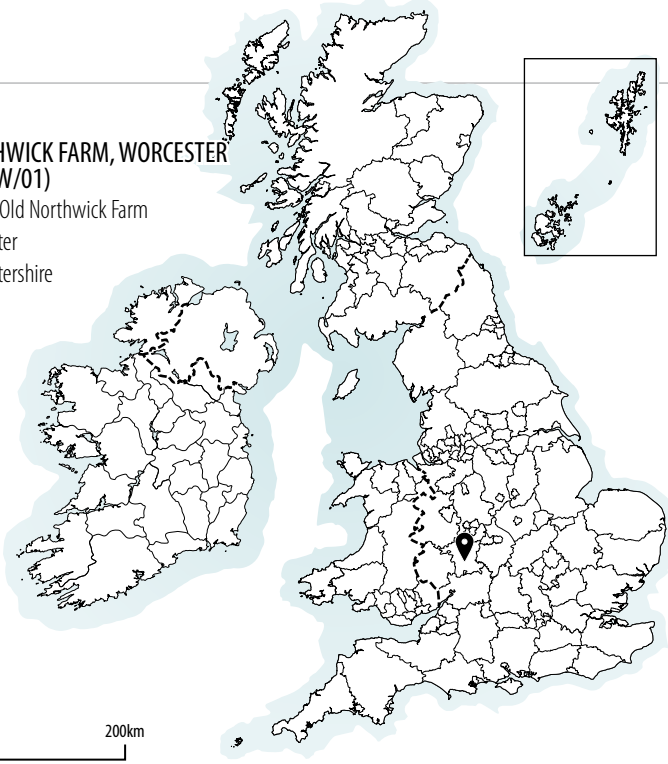
1	INTRODUCTION	1
1.1	PLANNING BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES	1
1.2	SITE LOCATION, DESCRIPTION AND SETTING	1
1.3	ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND	1
2	AIMS AND OBJECTIVES	2
3	METHOD	2
4	RESULTS	2
4.1	GENERAL SITE STRATIGRAPHY (ILLUS 3)	2
4.2	TRENCHES CONTAINING MODERN FEATURES	2
	Trenches 4 and 11	2
4.3	TRENCHES CONTAINING TREE THROW PITS	2
4.4	BLANK TRENCHES	5
5	DISCUSSION	5
6	CONCLUSION	5
7	BIBLIOGRAPHY	5
8	APPENDICES	7
	APPENDIX 1 TRENCH AND CONTEXT REGISTER	7

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

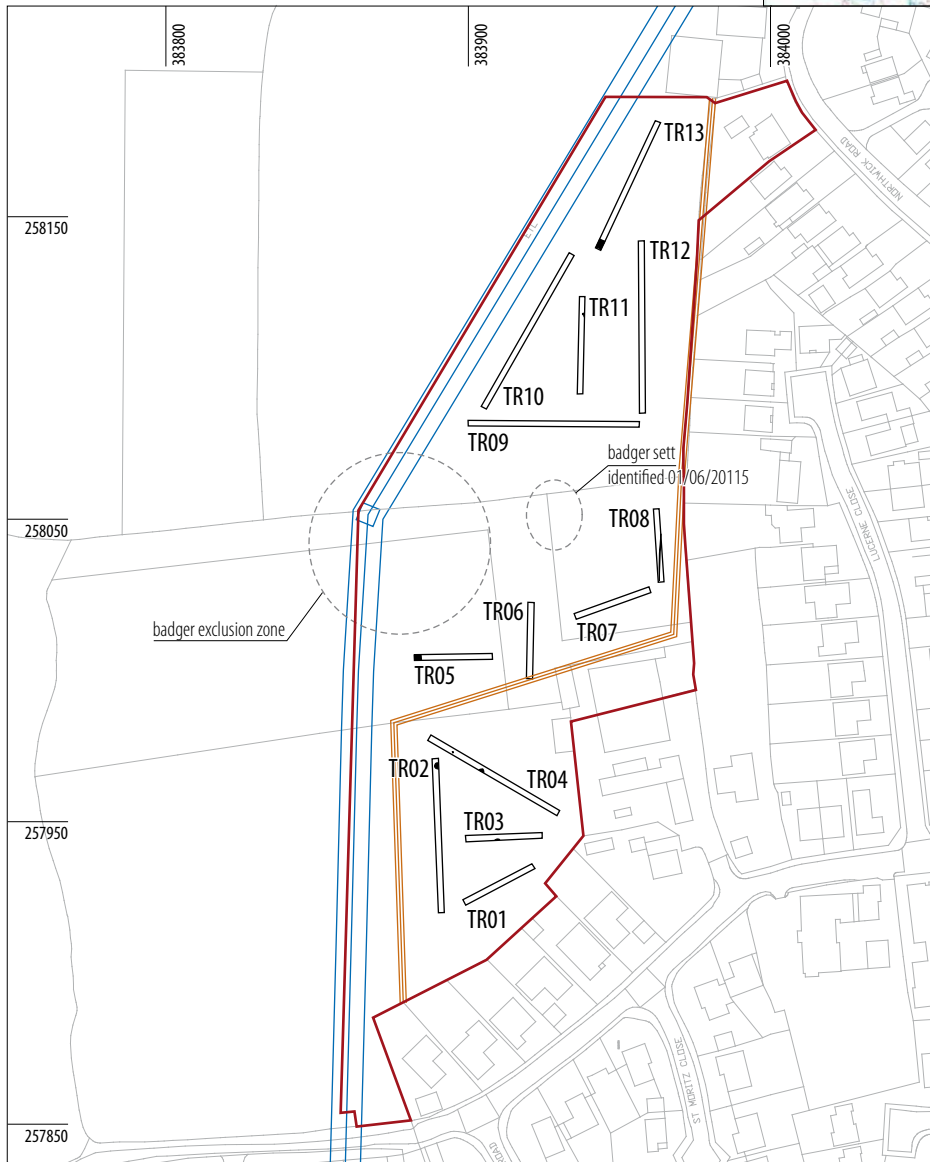
ILLUS 1 Site location	VI
ILLUS 2 Site plan	3
ILLUS 3 Trench 1, NW facing section	5
ILLUS 4 Trench 5 (sondage in foreground)	5
ILLUS 5 Pit feature [0404]	6
ILLUS 6 Post-hole [0406]	6
ILLUS 7 Tree throw pit [0304]	6

**NORTHWICK FARM, WORCESTER
(NFWW/01)**

land at Old Northwick Farm
Worcester
Worcestershire



0 200km



- KEY**
- development boundary
 - trench location
 - overhead cables
 - sewer pipe

0 100m
scale 1:2,500 @ A4

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ILLUS 1
Site location

LAND AT NORTHWICK FARM, WORCESTER

Archaeological Evaluation

Headland Archaeology undertook a trial trench evaluation at Northwick Farm, Worcester in order to satisfy a planning condition relating to the residential development of the site. Evidence for a former orchard was identified in the south of the site. No deposits, finds or features of archaeological significance were identified during the course of the evaluation.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PLANNING BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

This report presents the results of an archaeological field evaluation on land at Northwick Farm, Worcester. The archaeological works were commissioned by Bloor Homes Ltd and relate to the discharge of Condition 11 of planning permission P14E0368. Condition 11 stipulated that no development should take place until a programme of archaeological investigation including a Written Scheme of Investigation had been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority. Headland Archaeology was commissioned by Bloor Homes to undertake the required works in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (Craddock-Bennett 2015) agreed with the archaeological advisor to Worcester City Council, Mr. James Dinn.

1.2 SITE LOCATION, DESCRIPTION AND SETTING

The proposed development site (**Illus 1**) comprises four small land parcels located to the north and west of Old Northwick Farm (NGR 371850, 219495). The site, measuring approximately 2.2ha is located on the edge of the flood-plain of the River Severn to the north of the City of Worcester, close to the historic hamlet of Northwick.

The site is bound by pasture land on the flood-plain to the north and west and housing developments to the south and east.

The site slopes from a height of c.19m AOD in the east to approximately 17m in the west (i.e. towards the river).

The underlying geology of the site comprises Mudstone of the Sidmouth Formation overlain by superficial deposits of Sand and Gravel of the Power House Terrace deposits (BGS 2015).

1.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

An archaeological desk top assessment was undertaken by Mike Napthan Archaeology in November 2011. The results of the assessment are summarised below:

Historical and cartographical sources indicate that most of the site lay within the common field of Northwick prior to enclosure, and that its character remained as a number of small parcels and strips well into the 19th century. Land ownership history is complex – the lands all belonged to the Bishop but were held long-term on copy-hold leases that were sometimes sub-let and exchanged in small parcels. The agricultural use seems to have been principally pasture, but most of the site was used for orchards in the 19th century. No historic building or occupation sites have been identified within the site boundaries despite a wealth of cartographic evidence running back to the early 18th century. Brickworks and clay extraction are known to have occupied the lands immediately to the west in the 18th and 19th centuries, but it appears that these did not extend as far as the present site.

There are no recorded find-spots within the development area or its immediate environs, and the potential for buried archaeological remains or artefacts appears very low.

An updated Historic Environment Record (HER) assessment was undertaken in June 2015. Seven entries post-dating the 2011 desk top assessment were recorded, none of which were relevant to the archaeological development of the site.



2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the extent, nature and importance of any buried heritage assets within the proposed development area.

Specifically the evaluation aimed to:

- 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;
- determine the location of archaeological features and deposits within the development area in order to determine the need for further archaeological mitigation;
- produce a site archive for deposition with Worcestershire Museum Service and to provide information for accession to the Worcester City Historic Environment Record.

3 METHOD

The fieldwork was conducted in accordance with the following documents:

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

The evaluation comprised the excavation of approximately 4% of the proposed development area by means of thirteen trenches totalling 502.50 linear metres.

A number of constraints were present across the proposed development area which affected the positioning of evaluation trenches, and necessitated a variation from the agreed trench plan. Overhead power lines form the western boundary of the site and an underground sewerage pipe crosses the site in a south-west to north-east direction. Whilst it is understood the main badger setts are located away from the development site to the north-west, outlier and subsidiary setts were identified in the central part of the site. A plant exclusion zone (30m diameter) was established around the setts which necessitated the repositioning of some trenches.

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.

Fieldwork was undertaken between the 1st and 4th June 2015.

4 RESULTS

A full trench and context register is included in Appendix 1. A plan of the excavated trenches can be found on **Illus 2**.

4.1 GENERAL SITE STRATIGRAPHY (ILLUS 3)

Geological deposits of mid orange/brown silty sand e.g. [103] were identified at a depth of between 0.44m and 0.50m below ground level (BGL). Sondages were excavated to depths of 1.0m and 1.2m in Trenches 5 (**Illus 3**) and 13 to confirm the geological nature of this deposit.

Overlying the geological deposits and present between 0.30 and 0.50m BGL, a light orange/brown silty sand was present e.g. [102]. The deposit was similar in nature to the underlying geology, but contained occasional small CBM and brick fragments suggesting a degree of disturbance.

A light grey/brown silty sand topsoil deposit e.g. [101] overlay the subsoil to a depth of c.0.30m. Occasional small sub-rounded stones and flecks of charcoal were present within the deposit.

4.2 TRENCHES CONTAINING MODERN FEATURES

Trenches 4 and 11

Cutting into geological deposits at a depth of 0.50m BGL an apparently square pit feature [404] was identified (**Illus 4**). The pit continued beyond the south-western limit of the trench. Measuring 1.25m+ x 1.25m+ in plan, the feature had steep, near vertical sides, terminating in a flat base at 0.95m BGL. Pit [404] contained a silty sand fill [405] containing brick fragments and ferrous wire. The feature appears to relate to the disposal of farm rubbish during the modern period.

Approximately 10m to the NW of pit [404] a square post hole was identified. Measuring 0.30m x 0.30m in plan, feature [406] measured 0.20m in depth (**Illus 5**). Although no dateable finds were recovered, the regularity of the feature in both plan and section suggests a relatively modern date.

A further square post hole [1104] of similar dimensions was identified in Trench 11. The light brown/grey clayey sand fill [1105] of the feature contained a red brick suggesting a modern date for its deposition.

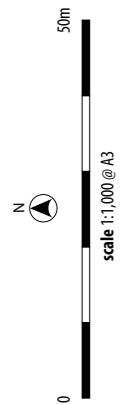
4.3 TRENCHES CONTAINING TREE THROW PITS

Trenches 2 and 3 contained features of irregular form believed to represent tree throw pits. Pit [204] comprised a large, shallow depression measuring 5.0m x 1.2m+ in plan, filled with a mid grey/brown silty sand [205] containing rotten tree roots.

Pit [304] measured 2.8m x 0.35m+ and extended to a depth of 0.40m (**Illus 6**). The feature was filled with a dark grey/brown silty sand [305] containing occasional charcoal fleck.



- KEY
- ▭ development boundary
 - overhead cables
 - sewer pipe
 - trench location
 - excavated section with base



4.4 BLANK TRENCHES

No significant deposits were identified in Trenches 1, 5–10, 12 and 13. The stratigraphic sequence in these trenches conformed to the general site stratigraphy.

5 DISCUSSION

No deposits, finds or features of archaeological significance were identified during the course of the field evaluation.

A modern rubbish pit and two square cut post holes were identified which are likely to relate to farming activity within the development area.

The presence of tree throw pits within Trenches 2 and 3 can be explained by previous land use within the site. A plan of Northwick dated 1875 (Napthan 2011) shows an orchard covering the southern part of the development area.

6 CONCLUSION

The trial trench evaluation confirmed that the proposed development area has a low archaeological potential.

On the basis of the results of the field evaluation, it is considered that no further archaeological work is required in advance of development.

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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ILLUS 3

Trench 1, NW facing section

ILLUS 4

Trench 5 (sondage in foreground)



ILLUS 5
Pit feature [0404]

ILLUS 6
Post-hole [0406]

ILLUS 7
Tree throw pit [0304]

8 APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 TRENCH AND CONTEXT REGISTER

TR01	Orientation	Length (m)	Width (m)	Av. Depth (m)
	NE-SW	25	1.8	0.5
Context	Context description	Depth of deposit (mBGL)		
101	Topsoil – light greyish brown, silty sand. Friable. Occasional small sub-rounded stones. Flecks of charcoal.	0.00–0.30		
102	Subsoil – light orange/brown, silty sand. Firm but friable. Occasional small sub-rounded stones. Flecks of charcoal. Minor rooting. Occasional small CBM/brick fragments.	0.30–0.50		
103	Geological deposits – Mid orange/brown, silty sand. Friable. Occasional small sub-rounded stones. Flecks of charcoal. Some rooting.	0.50+		

Summary: No archaeological deposits identified.

TR02	Orientation	Length (m)	Width (m)	Av. Depth (m)
	N-S	51	1.8	0.5
Context	Context Description	Depth of deposit (mBGL)		
201	Topsoil – light greyish brown, silty sand. Friable. Occasional small sub-rounded stones. Flecks of charcoal.	0.0–0.30		
202	Subsoil – light orange/brown, silty sand. Firm but friable. Occasional small sub-rounded stones. Flecks of charcoal. Minor rooting. Occasional small CBM/brick fragments.	0.30–0.50		
203	Geological deposits – Mid orange/brown, silty sand. Friable. Occasional small sub-rounded stones. Flecks of charcoal. Some rooting.	0.50+		
204	Cut for tree throw pit. Large, shallow depression. Irregular in plan with gentle sides and flat base. 5.0m x 1.2m.	0.30–0.80		
205	Fill of [204]. Mid grey/brown silty sand. Charcoal flecks and large rotten roots present within fill.	0.30–0.80		

Summary: No archaeological deposits identified. Tree throw pit at northern end of trench.

TR03	Orientation	Length (m)	Width (m)	Av. Depth (m)
	E-W	25	1.8	0.5
Context	Context Description	Depth of deposit (mBGL)		
301	Topsoil – light greyish brown, silty sand. Friable. Occasional small sub-rounded stones. Flecks of charcoal.	0.0–0.30		
302	Subsoil – light orange/brown, silty sand. Firm but friable. Occasional small sub-rounded stones. Flecks of charcoal. Minor rooting. Occasional small CBM/brick fragments.	0.30–0.50		
303	Geological deposits – Mid orange/brown, silty sand. Friable. Occasional small sub-rounded stones. Flecks of charcoal. Some rooting.	0.50+		
304	Cut for tree throw pit. Irregular in plan and section. 2.8m x 0.35m+ (continues into S. section of trench).	0.30–0.70		
305	Fill of [304]. Dark grey/brown silty sand. Firm compaction. Occasional charcoal flecks.	0.30–0.70		

Summary: No archaeological deposits identified. Tree throw pit at mid-point of trench.

TR04	Orientation	Length (m)	Width (m)	Av. Depth (m)
	NW-SE	50	1.8	0.5
Context	Context Description	Depth of deposit (mBGL)		
401	Topsoil – light greyish brown, silty sand. Friable. Occasional small sub-rounded stones. Flecks of charcoal.	0.0–0.30		
402	Subsoil – light orange/brown, silty sand. Firm but friable. Occasional small sub-rounded stones. Flecks of charcoal. Minor rooting. Occasional small CBM/brick fragments.	0.30–0.50		
403	Geological deposits – Mid orange/brown, silty sand. Friable. Occasional small sub-rounded stones. Flecks of charcoal. Some rooting.	0.50+		
404	Cut for post-med/modern pit. Square/rectangular in plan (continues into SW section). Steep sides to flat base. 1.25m+ x 1.25m+.	0.50–0.95		
405	Fill of [404]. Dark grey/brown silty sand. Friable, moist. Occasional small sub-rounded stones and charcoal flecks. Brick fragments and Fe wire within fill.	0.50–0.95		
406	Cut for post-med/modern post hole. Square in plan. Steep sides to flat base. 0.30m x 0.30m	0.50–0.70		
407	Fill of [406]. Dark grey/brown silty sand. Friable, moist. Occasional small sub-rounded stones and charcoal flecks.	0.50–0.70		

Summary: Two post-med/modern features identified.



TR05	Orientation	Length (m)	Width (m)	Av. Depth (m)
	E-W	25	1.8	0.5
Context	Context Description	Depth of deposit (mBGL)		
501	Topsoil – light greyish brown, silty sand. Friable. Occasional small sub-rounded stones. Flecks of charcoal.	0.0–0.30		
502	Subsoil – light orange/brown, silty sand. Firm but friable. Occasional small sub-rounded stones. Flecks of charcoal. Minor rooting. Occasional small CBM/brick fragments.	0.30–0.50		
503	Geological deposits – Mid orange/brown, silty sand. Friable. Occasional small sub-rounded stones. Flecks of charcoal. Some rooting.	0.50–1.0+		

Summary: No archaeological deposits identified. Sondage excavated at western end of trench to confirm geological deposits.

TR06	Orientation	Length (m)	Width (m)	Av. Depth (m)
	N-S	25	1.8	0.45
Context	Context Description	Depth of deposit (mBGL)		
601	Topsoil – light greyish brown, silty sand. Friable. Occasional small sub-rounded stones. Flecks of charcoal.	0.0–0.25		
602	Subsoil – light orange/brown, silty sand. Firm but friable. Occasional small sub-rounded stones. Flecks of charcoal. Minor rooting. Occasional small CBM/brick fragments.	0.25–0.45		
603	Geological deposits – Mid orange/brown, silty sand. Friable. Deposit becomes darker and more mixed towards the northern end of the trench. Occasional small sub-rounded stones. Flecks of charcoal. Some rooting.	0.45m+		

Summary: No archaeological deposits identified.

TR07	Orientation	Length (m)	Width (m)	Av. Depth (m)
	NE-SW	25	1.8	0.5
Context	Context Description	Depth of deposit (mBGL)		
701	Topsoil – light greyish brown, silty sand. Friable. Occasional small sub-rounded stones. Flecks of charcoal.	0.0–0.30		
702	Subsoil – light orange/brown, silty sand. Firm but friable. Occasional small sub-rounded stones. Flecks of charcoal. Minor rooting. Occasional small CBM/brick fragments.	0.30–0.50		
703	Geological deposits – Mid orange/brown, silty sand. Friable. Occasional small sub-rounded stones. Flecks of charcoal. Some rooting.	0.50+		

Summary: No archaeological deposits identified.

TR08	Orientation	Length (m)	Width (m)	Av. Depth (m)
	N-S	25	1.8	0.45
Context No.	Context Description	Depth of deposit (mBGL)		
801	Topsoil – light greyish brown, silty sand. Friable. Occasional small sub-rounded stones. Flecks of charcoal.	0.0–0.15		
802	Subsoil – light brown/grey silty sand. Compact. Moderate frequency of small to medium sub-rounded stones. Presence of building rubble/brick and charcoal noted.	0.15–0.45		
803	Geological deposits – Dark orange/pink silty sand with brown hue. Friable. Occasional small sub-angular stones present.	0.45+		

Summary: No archaeology deposits identified. Cut for known sewerage pipe identified in south and east of trench.

TR09	Orientation	Length (m)	Width (m)	Av. Depth (m)
	E-W	57	1.8	0.50
Context No.	Context Description	Depth of deposit (mBGL)		
901	Topsoil – light grey/brown silty sand. Very small-medium sized angular stones throughout.	0.0–0.30		
902	Subsoil – light yellow/grey sand. Frequent charcoal flecking from rooting. Occasional small-medium stones throughout.	0.30–0.45		
903	Geological deposits – light yellow-orange sand. Occasional charcoal flecking from rooting. Rare shall-medium sub-angular stones.	0.45–0.55+		

Summary: No archaeological deposits identified.

TR10	Orientation	Length (m)	Width (m)	Av. Depth (m)
	NE-SW	58.50	1.8	0.49
Context	Context Description	Depth of deposit (mBGL)		
101	Topsoil – light grey/brown silty sand. Very small-medium sized angular stones throughout.	0.0–0.29		
1002	Subsoil – light yellow/grey sand. Frequent charcoal flecking from rooting. Occasional small-medium stones throughout.	0.29–0.44		
1003	Geological deposits – light yellow-orange sand. Occasional charcoal flecking from rooting. Rare shall-medium sub-angular stones.	0.44+		

Summary: No archaeological deposits identified.

TR11	Orientation	Length (m)	Width (m)	Av. Depth (m)
	N-S	32	1.8	0.50

Context Context Description Depth of deposit (mBGL)

1101 Topsoil – light grey/brown silty sand. Very small-medium sized angular stones throughout. 0.0–0.30

1102 Subsoil – light yellow/grey sand. Frequent charcoal flecking from rooting. Occasional small-medium stones throughout. 0.30–0.45

1103 Geological deposits – light yellow-orange sand. Occasional charcoal flecking from rooting. Rare shall-medium sub-angular stones. 0.45–0.55+

1104 Cut for square post hole. Vertical sides, flat base. 0.25m x 0.25m 0.45–0.85

1105 Fill of [1104]. Light brown/grey clayey sand. Occasional charcoal flecks. Brick fragment in top of fill. 0.45–0.85

Summary: Post-med/modern post hole.

TR12	Orientation	Length (m)	Width (m)	Av. Depth (m)
	N-S	57	1.8	0.50

Context Context Description Depth of deposit (mBGL)

1201 Topsoil – light grey/brown silty sand. Very small-medium sized angular stones throughout. 0.0–0.30

1202 Subsoil – light yellow/grey sand. Frequent charcoal flecking from rooting. Occasional small-medium stones throughout. 0.30–0.45

1203 Geological deposits – light yellow-orange sand. Occasional charcoal flecking from rooting. Rare shall-medium sub-angular stones. 0.45–0.55+

Summary: No archaeological deposits identified.

TR13	Orientation	Length (m)	Width (m)	Av. Depth (m)
	NE-SW	47	1.8	0.50

Context Context Description Depth of deposit (mBGL)

1301 Topsoil – light grey/brown silty sand. Very small-medium sized angular stones throughout. 0.0–0.30

1302 Subsoil – light yellow/grey sand. Frequent charcoal flecking from rooting. Occasional small-medium stones throughout. 0.30–0.45

1303 Geological deposits – light yellow-orange sand. Occasional charcoal flecking from rooting. Rare shall-medium sub-angular stones. 0.45–1.20+

Summary: No archaeological deposits identified. Sondage excavated at SW end of trench to confirm geological deposits.



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