

EREG/01



ELTON ROAD SOLAR FARM, ELTON, GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Archaeological Evaluation

commissioned by CgMs Consulting Ltd
on behalf of Wessex Solar Energy

August 2015

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project info

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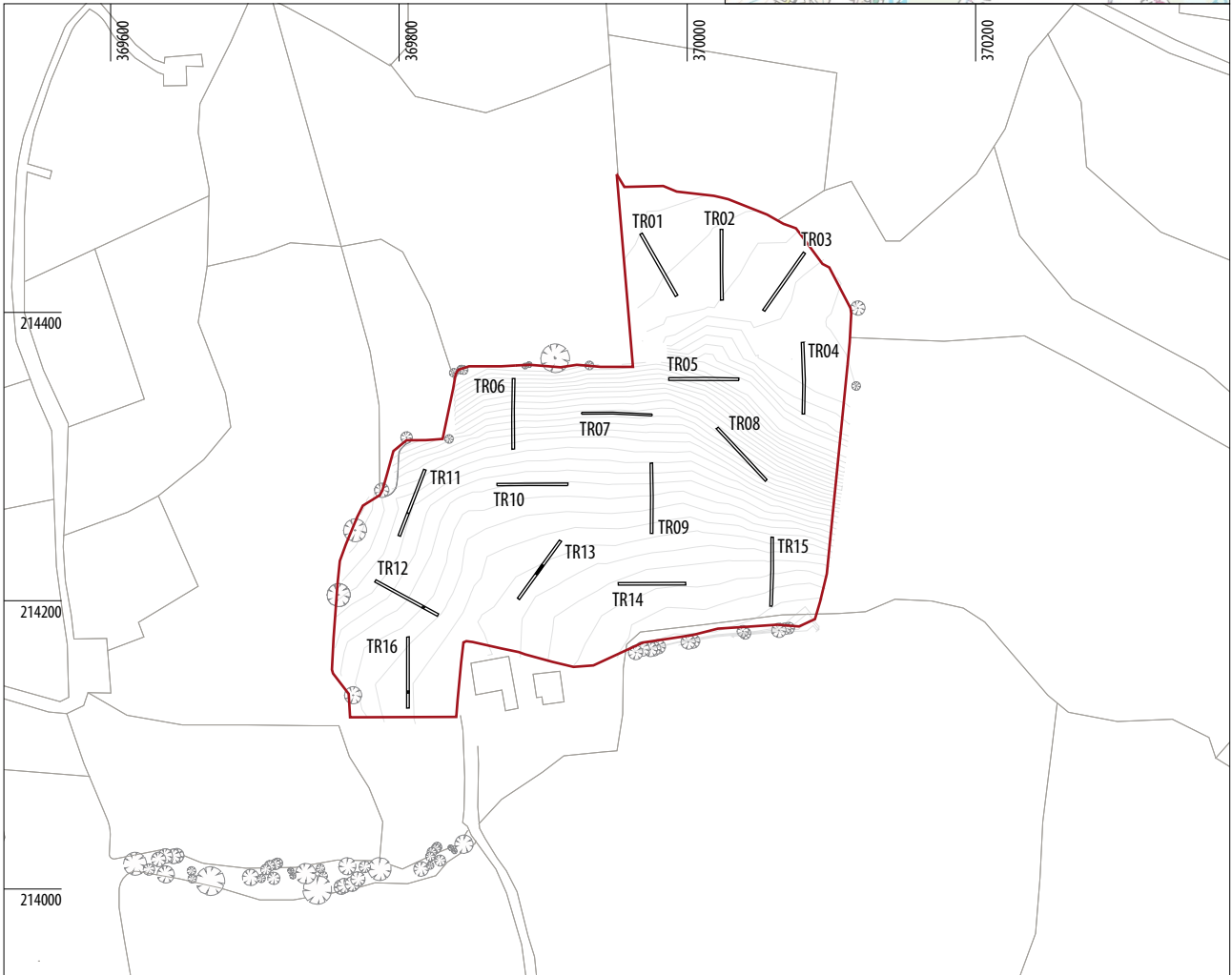
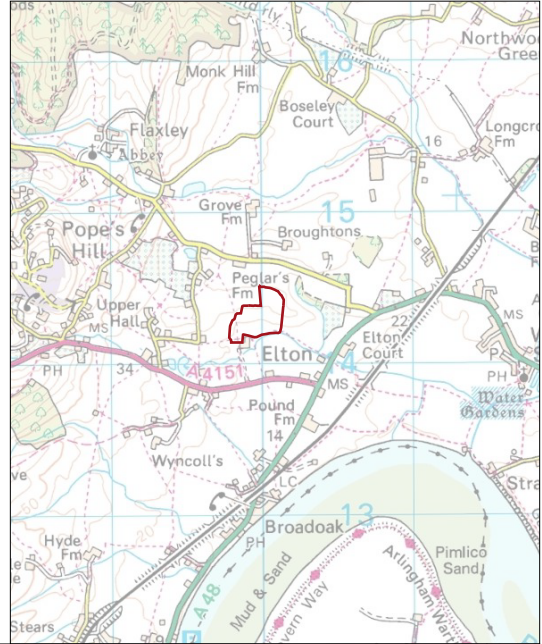
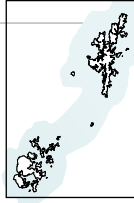
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**ELTON ROAD SOLAR FARM
(EREG/01)**
land west of Westbury-on-Severn
Elton Road
Gloucestershire

0 200km



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- KEY**
- development boundary
 - trench location
 - archaeological/natural features

0 250m
N
scale 1:5,000 @ A4



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ILLUS 1
Site location

ELTON ROAD SOLAR FARM, ELTON, GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Archaeological Evaluation

Headland Archaeology undertook a trial trench field evaluation on a plot of land at Elton, Gloucestershire. The evaluation identified no significant archaeological remains on the site. Linear anomalies identified by geophysical survey related to field boundaries visible on historic mapping.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PLANNING BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

This report presents the results of an archaeological field evaluation on land at Elton Gloucestershire, which was commissioned by Wessex Solar Energy through their agent CgMs Consulting, and undertaken by Headland Archaeology.

The evaluation was carried out prior to the submission of a planning application by Wessex Solar Energy, with the aim of providing further information about the archaeological resource, and to enable appropriate decisions to be reached regarding the planning submission.

The field work was carried out in accordance with a project design (Craddock-Bennett 2015) submitted by Headland Archaeology, and agreed by the archaeological planning officer for the Forest of Dean Council, Mr Charles Parry.

1.2 SITE LOCATION, DESCRIPTION AND SETTING

The proposed development site comprises 8ha of arable pasture located at NGR 369910,214271 (**Illus 1**), and is bordered by high hedgerows to the west and east. The site rises steadily from the south to the north.

Underlying geology is Mudstone of the Mercia Mudstone group, with a narrow band of sand and gravel of the Bushley Green Member located on the northern part of the site (British Geological Society 2015).

1.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

An archaeological desk based assessment produced by CgMs Consulting in April 2015, concluded that the site had low potential for archaeological remains of all periods.

The assessment (which included the results of a comprehensive geophysical survey) identified a theoretical potential for the recovery of non-stratified Prehistoric artefacts, such as flint tools, within the site.

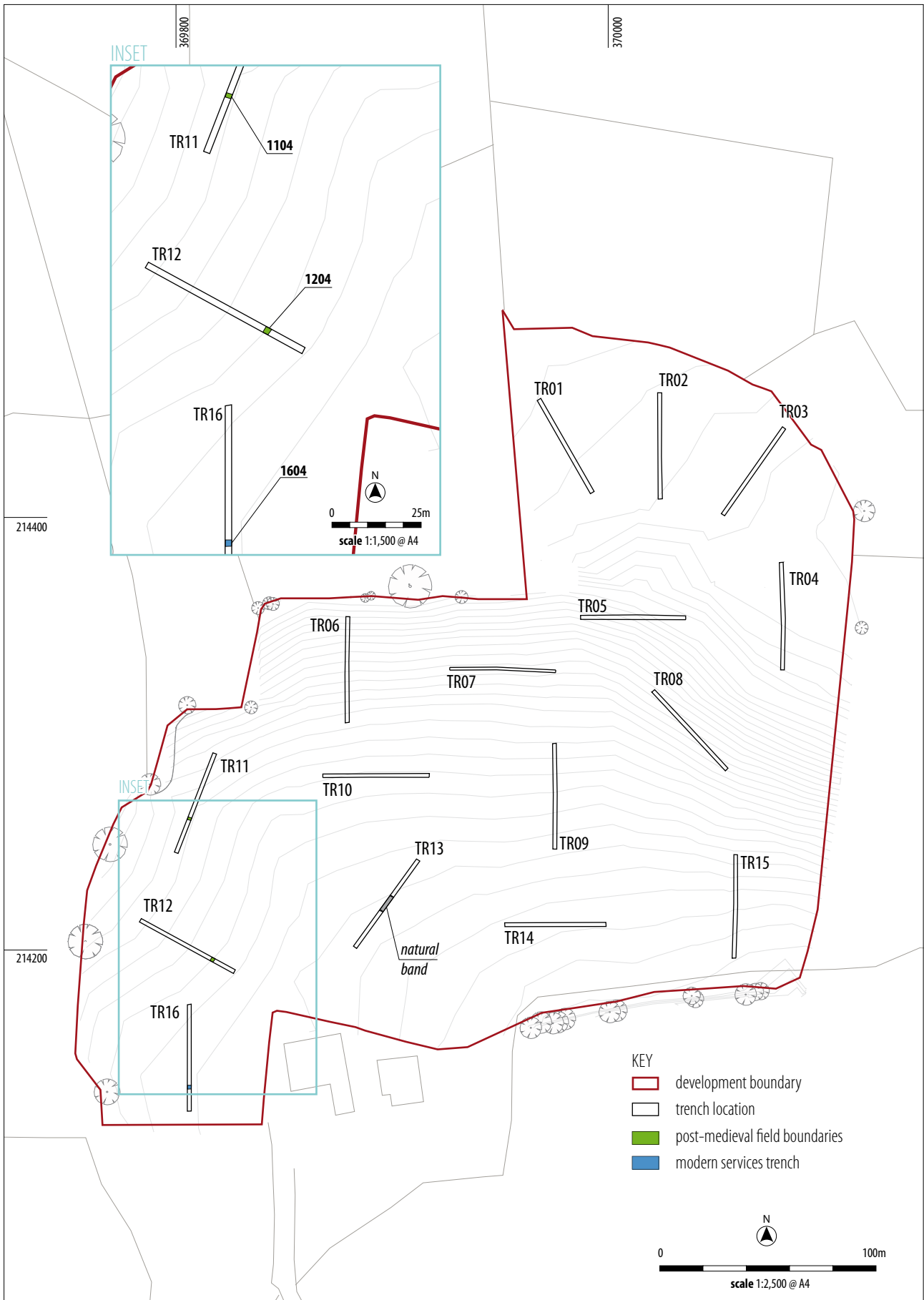
The geophysical survey identified a number of anomalies interpreted as being of a possible archaeological origin, however these could equally be related to changes in geology.

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:

- Assess the nature of anomalies identified by the geophysical survey;
- Provide sufficient information on the archaeological potential of the site to enable the archaeological implications of any proposed development to be assessed;
- Assess the impact of previous land use on the site;



ILLUS 2

Trench plan showing archaeology/natural features

ILLUS 3

Section showing general site stratigraphy, TR16, facing NW



ILLUS 4

Plan of TR13, facing SW, 2x1m scale



- Produce a site archive for deposition with the local museum and to provide information for accession to the Gloucestershire Historic Environment Record.

3 METHOD

The fieldwork was conducted in accordance with the following documents:

Cifa 2014 Standard and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation

Cifa 2014 Standards and Guidance for the creation and compilation and deposition of archaeological archives

The evaluation comprised the excavation of 16 trenches totalling 800 linear metres.

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 colour 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.

silty subsoil (eg 1502) measuring from 0.20m–0.40m in depth. Geological deposits were encountered at a depth of between 0.20m–0.40m and consisted of a firm, dark reddish brown mudstone in the lower southern part of the site (Trenches 4–16) (Illus 4), and firm sandy gravels in the northern upper part of the site (Trenches 1–3). The sandy gravels contained visible concentrations of degraded manganese and mineralisation.

4 RESULTS

The location of features discussed below can be found on illustration 2. A full trench and context register is included in Appendix 1.

4.1 GENERAL SITE STRATIGRAPHY

Deposits were generally consistent across the site (Illus 3). A topsoil/vegetation deposit, composed of a dark brown clayey silt, and measuring approximately 0.10m in depth (eg 1501), overlay a brown,

4.2 TRENCHES CONTAINING POTENTIAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL DEPOSITS

Trench 11

A linear feature [1104] (Illus 5) was orientated northwest-southeast across the trench and measured 0.80m wide x 0.23m deep. It had a shallow irregular v-shaped profile, and was filled by a dark brown, firm, silty clay (1105). No finds were recovered from the feature.



ILLUS 5

Section of feature [1104]

ILLUS 6

Section through natural band of mudstone in TR13, facing S



Trench 1, 3, 7, 8

Geophysical anomalies of possible archaeological potential had been identified in these trenches. In all cases the anomalies equated to concentrated areas of mineralisation or discolouration, and upon investigation were interpreted as being of natural origin.

4.4 TRENCHES CONTAINING MODERN DEPOSITS

A series of wide plough scars were identified in the base of all trenches except numbers 5 and 8. They were generally straight and measured approximately 1m wide x 0.05-0.15m deep.

Trench 16

A linear feature was identified on an east-west orientation. It measured 1.8m wide, with a modern truncated fence post protruding from the top. Excavation indicated a capping of stoney, firm, reddish natural, overlying a lower, brown silt fill. This feature equates to a straight linear anomaly identified on the geophysics report.

Trench 12

A linear feature [1204], was orientated northeast-southwest across the trench. It measured approximately 0.70m wide x 0.20 deep, with an irregular v-shaped profile. It was filled by a firm, reddish brown, silty clay (1205), which contained a brick fragment.

4.3 TRENCHES CONTAINING GEOLOGICAL FEATURES

Trench 13

A wide band of reddish brown mudstone was visible in the trench on a northwest-southeast alignment. It measured approximately 6m wide, and was machine excavated to a depth of 1m (Illus 6). The feature appeared to represent a variation in the natural geology, although lies on the same alignment as feature [1204] suggesting a possible relationship between the two features.

5 DISCUSSION

The evaluation identified all the features of potential archaeological significance that were indicated by the geophysics report and concluded that they represented the remains of post-medieval field boundaries.

The linear feature identified in Trench 11 [1104] equates to the line of a former hedgerow/field boundary evident on the 1841 Tithe map. The feature identified in Trench 12 [1204], is of a near identical profile and depth as feature [1104], and it is likely that this too represents the remains of a former post-medieval field boundary.

The evaluation also confirmed that geophysical anomalies identified in trenches 1, 3, 7 and 8, were of geological origin.

6 CONCLUSION

The evaluation confirmed that the proposed development site contained no significant archaeological remains from any period. Located away from any known settlements sites, it appears to have been used solely for agricultural purposes.



ILLUS 7

General site shot, facing NE

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8 APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 TRENCH AND CONTEXT REGISTER

TR01	Context	Description	Dimensions	Deposit D (BGL)
0101		Topsoil/vegetation: dark brown, soft, clayey silt, occasional small stone	50m x 2.0m	0.00 – 0.10m
0102		Subsoil: greyish brown, soft, clayey silt, occasional stone		0.10 – 0.40m
0103		Natural: very firm, stoney gravel		0.40m+

Summary: Located on the highest part of the site, traces of plough furrows identified running east/west across the trench.

TR02	Context	Description	Dimensions	Deposit D (BGL)
0201		Topsoil: Dark brown, soft, clayey silt, occasional small stone	50m x 1.8m	0.00 – 0.20m
0202		Subsoil: greyish mid brown, soft, clayey silt, occasional small stone		0.20 – 0.38m
0203		Natural: very firm, stoney gravel		0.38m+

Summary: Located on the high part of the site, evidence of furrows running east/west across the trench.

TR03	Context	Description	Dimensions	Deposit D (BGL)
0301		Topsoil/vegetation: dark brown, soft, clayey silt, occasional stone	50m x 2.0m	0.00 – 0.20m
0302		Subsoil: brown/grey, soft, clayey silt, occasional stone		0.20m – 0.38m
0303		Natural: very firm, stoney gravel, with concentrations of mineral manganese		0.38m+

Summary: No features of archaeological significance.

TR04	Context	Description	Dimensions	Deposit D (BGL)
0401		Topsoil/vegetation: dark brown, soft, clayey silt, occasional small stone	50m x 2.0m	0.00 – 0.12m
0402		Subsoil: dark greyish brown, soft, clayey silt, occasional small stone		0.12 – 0.38m
0403		Natural: very firm, dark reddish brown mudstone.		0.38m

Summary: Located on gradient of hill in northern part of site. No features of archaeological significance.

TR05	Context	Description	Dimensions	Deposit D (BGL)
0501		Topsoil: dark brown, soft, clayey silt, occasional small stone	50m x 1.8m	0.00 – 0.10m
0502		Subsoil: mid brown, soft, clayey silt, occasional small stone		0.10 – 0.20m
0503		Natural: very firm, dark reddish brown mudstone		0.20m+

Summary: Trench orientated across gradient of hill. No features of archaeological significance.

TR06	Context	Description	Dimensions	Deposit D (BGL)
0601		Topsoil: dark brown, soft, clayey silt, occasional stone	50mx2.0m	0.00 – 0.10m
0602		Subsoil: mid brown, soft, clayey silt, occasional small stone		0.10 – 0.25m
0603		Natural: reddish brown, very firm, mudstone		0.25 – 0.40m

Summary: Running N/S with the slope, evidence of furrows also running N/S.

TR07	Context	Description	Dimensions	Deposit D (BGL)
0701		Topsoil: dark brown, soft, clayey silt, occasional stone	50mx2.0m	0.00 – 0.10m
0702		Subsoil: mid brown, soft, clayey silt, occasional stone		0.10 – 0.35m
0703		Natural: reddish brown, very firm, stony mudstone.		0.35 – 0.50m+

Summary: Orientated across the slope, evidence of furrows running N/S.

TR08	Context	Description	Dimensions	Deposit depth
0801		Topsoil: dark brown, soft, clayey silt, occasional stone	50mx2.0m	0.00 – 0.10m
0802		Subsoil: mid brown, soft, clayey silt, occasional stone		0.10 – 0.40m
0803		Natural: reddish brown, very firm, mudstone.		0.40m+

Summary: Trench orientated N/S across the slope, no features of archaeological significance.

TR09	Context	Description	Dimensions	Deposit D (BGL)
0901		Topsoil: dark brown, friable, silty clay.	50mx2.0m	0.00 – 0.10m
0902		Subsoil: light brown with a yellow hue, silty clay		0.10 – 0.30m
0903		Natural: light brown with a yellow hue, clay with discrete patches of orange gravel		0.30 – 0.35m+

Summary: Orientated NE/SW, traces of furrow running N/S.

TR10	Context	Description	Dimensions	Deposit D (BGL)
1001		Topsoil: dark brown silty clay with grey hue.	50mx2.0m	0.00 – 0.10m
1002		Subsoil: light brown silty clay with a yellow hue.		0.10 – 0.30m
1003		Natural: light brown with a yellow hue, clay with discrete patches of orange gravel.		0.30 – 0.35m+

Summary: Orientated NW/SE, evidence for furrows running N/S across the site.

TR11	Context	Description	Dimensions	Deposit D (BGL)
1101		Topsoil: dark brown, soft, clayey silt, occasional stone	50mx2.0m	0.00 – 0.20m
1102		Subsoil: mid brown, soft, clayey silt, occasional stone		0.20 – 0.43m
1103		Natural: reddish brown, very firm, mudstone		0.43 – 0.45m+
1104		Cut of linear feature: W0.8m x D0.23m, gradual break of slope, shallow sides. Filled by (1105)		0.50 – 0.73m
1105		Fill of [1104]: dark brown, firm, silty clay, W0.8m x D0.23m		0.50 – 0.73m

Summary: Post-medieval field boundary identified.

TR12	Context	Description	Dimensions	Deposit D (BGL)
1201		Topsoil: dark brown/black loam.	50mx2.00m	0.00 – 0.25m
1202		Subsoil: light brown with a green hue, silty clay.		0.25m – 0.42m
1203		Natural: light brown with a yellow hue, clay with discrete patches of orange gravel.		0.42m+
1204		Cut of linear feature: shallow sides, gradual break of slope, uneven base. Filled by (1205)		0.38 – 0.58m
1205		Fill of [1204]: brown, firm, silty clay, occasional small stone, fragment of brick		0.38 – 0.58m

Summary: Possible post-medieval field boundary identified.

TR13	Context	Description	Dimensions	Deposit D (BGL)
1301		Topsoil: dark brown, friable, common small stones, clayey silt.	50mx2.00m	0.00 – 0.10m
1302		Subsoil: light sandy brown, friable, clayey silt, occasional stone		0.10 – 0.40m
1303		Natural: very firm, mottled, reddish brown mudstone		0.40 – 0.55m+

Summary: Wide band of mudstone identified running NW/SE through the trench, appearing to join with feature [1104].

TR14	Context	Description	Dimensions	Deposit depth
1401		Topsoil: dark brown, soft, clayey silt, occasional small stone	50mx2.0m	0.00 – 0.10m
1402		Subsoil: mid brown, soft, clayey silt, occasional small stone		0.10 – 0.25m
1403		Natural: very firm, reddish brown, mudstone		0.25 – 0.30m+

Summary: Traces of agricultural furrows visible within the trench.

TR15	Context	Description	Dimensions	Deposit D (BGL)
1501		Topsoil: dark brown, soft, occasional small stone, clayey silt	50mx2.0m	0.00 – 0.10m
1502		Subsoil: mid brown, soft, clayey silt, occasional small stone		0.10-0.35m
1503		Natural: very firm, reddish brown, mudstone		0.35-0.40m+

Summary: Orientated N/S, subsoil build up was deeper at the southern end.

TR16	Context	Description	Dimensions	Deposit depth
1601		Topsoil: dark brown, soft, clayey silt, occasional stone	50mx2.0m	0.00 – 0.10m
1602		Subsoil: mid brown, soft, clayey silt, occasional stone		0.10 – 0.40m
1603		Natural: very firm, reddish brown, mudstone		0.40 – 0.45m+
1604		Modern feature: likely services. Capped by reddish clay, overlying brown fill, fence-post inserted in the top		0.10m+

Summary: Agricultural furrows on E-W alignment. Modern fence line.



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