

Tagwell Road, Droitwich, Worcestershire

Archaeological Evaluation Report

HER Reference No. WSM 47445





TAGWELL ROAD, DROITWICH, WORCESTERSHIRE

Archaeological Evaluation Report

HER Reference No. WSM 47445

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**TAGWELL ROAD, DROITWICH, WORCESTERSHIRE
Archaeological Evaluation Report**

Contents

	Summary.....	v
	Acknowledgements.....	vi
1	INTRODUCTION.....	1
	1.1 Project Background.....	1
	1.2 Site Location and Geology.....	1
2	ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND.....	1
	2.1 Archaeological Background.....	1
	2.2 Prehistoric and Roman.....	2
	2.3 Anglo-Saxon and Medieval.....	2
	2.4 Post-Medieval to Modern.....	3
3	AIMS AND SCOPE OF WORK.....	3
	3.1 General.....	3
4	METHODOLOGY.....	4
	4.1 General.....	4
5	EVALUATION RESULTS.....	4
	5.1 Summary.....	4
	5.2 Trench 1.....	4
	5.3 Trench 2.....	5
	5.4 Trench 3.....	5
	5.5 Trench 4.....	5
	5.6 Trench 5.....	5
	5.7 Trench 6.....	5
	5.8 Trench 7.....	5
	5.9 Trench 8.....	6
	5.10 Trench 9.....	6
	5.11 Trench 10.....	6
	5.12 Trench 11.....	6
6	FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL.....	6
	6.1 Summary.....	6
7	DISCUSSION.....	6
	7.1 Summary.....	6
8	ARCHIVE AND COPYRIGHT.....	7
	8.1 Archive.....	7
	8.2 Copyright.....	7
9	REFERENCES.....	8

Figures

- Figure 1 Site location
Figure 2 Trench location

Plates

- Plate 1: Sondage within Trench 1, looking east
Plate 2: Trench 2, looking east
Plate 3: Trench 3, looking north
Plate 4: Trench 4, looking east
Plate 5: Trench 5, looking south-east
Plate 6: Sondage within Trench 5, looking south-west
Plate 7: Trench 6, looking south
Plate 8: Sondage within Trench 6, looking east
Plate 9: Trench 7, looking north-east
Plate 10: Sondage within Trench 7, looking north-west
Plate 11: Trench 8, looking north-east
Plate 12: Trench 9, looking north-west
Plate 13: Trench 10, looking south
Plate 14: Representative section Trench 10, looking west
Plate 15: Trench 11, looking east

TAGWELL ROAD, DROITWICH, WORCESTERSHIRE**Archaeological Evaluation Report****Summary**

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by CgMs Consulting Ltd on behalf of Barratt West Midlands, to undertake an archaeological evaluation in support of a planning application for residential development at Tagwell Road, Droitwich, Worcestershire, NGR 39088 26139 (hereafter 'the Site').

Due to the archaeological potential of the Site, Mike Glyde of Worcestershire County Council (WCC) requested the excavation of eleven 50m trial trenches prior to the approval of planning permission.

No archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were uncovered during the archaeological evaluation. The stratigraphy of the Site was turfed topsoil overlying substantial deposits of made ground over the north-eastern half of Site and natural clay in the trenches to the south-west.

The level of the natural deposits varied greatly across the Site, and was indicative of landscaping prior to the importing of up to c. 2m of made ground. The absence of any archaeological features or residual finds indicated that the Site lay away from any areas of archaeological significance. Any low density of archaeological features would have been lost during landscaping for the M5.

The archive is currently held at Wessex Archaeology's Sheffield offices and will be deposited with Worcestershire Museums Services in due course under an agreed accession number.

TAGWELL ROAD, DROITWICH, WORCESTERSHIRE

Archaeological Evaluation Report

Acknowledgements

This project was commissioned by CgMs Consulting and Wessex Archaeology is grateful to Cathy Patrick in this regard. Wessex Archaeology is also grateful to Mike Glyde of Worcestershire County Council (WCC).

This report was compiled by Jessica Tibber and Alex Sotheran, and the illustrations produced by Chris Breeden. The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Andrew Norton, and the fieldwork conducted by Alex Sotheran and Dane Wright.

TAGWELL ROAD, DROITWICH, WORCESTERSHIRE

Archaeological Evaluation Report

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by CgMs Consulting Ltd (hereafter 'the Client') to undertake an archaeological evaluation in support of a planning application for residential development at Tagwell Road, Droitwich, Worcestershire ('the Site' **Figure 1**). The Site covers an area of approximately 4.6 hectares between Tagwell Road and the M5 motorway, centred on NGR 39088 26139.

1.1.2 The works comprised the excavation of eleven trial trenches to assess the level of survival of archaeological remains within the Site. Wessex Archaeology produced a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI; 2012) outlining how the archaeological requirements of the work would be met. The WSI was approved by Cathy Patrick (CgMs) and Mike Glyde (WCC) prior to work commencing on Site.

1.2 Site Location and Geology

1.2.1 The Site is situated within pasture land on the south-eastern limits of Droitwich. The Site is located to the north of an unmetalled track (formerly a lane leading to Shernal Green), which separates the Site from housing and a paddock beyond. Tagwell Road and modern residential development lie to the west of the Site and the M5 motorway lies to the east. The south of the Site borders onto fields.

1.2.2 The Site lies at an average height of 70m AOD and is c. 4.6 hectares in area. The underlying geology comprises Triassic mudstone, siltstones and sandstone (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>).

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Archaeological Background

2.1.1 A detailed description of the historical and archaeological background is provided within the desk based assessment (Flitcroft 2010). The following summarises the key findings from that document.

2.1.2 Information obtained from English Heritage indicates that the study Site does not contain any areas protected through designation as a Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Registered Park or Registered Battlefield. Thirteen Listed Buildings are recorded within the surrounding 1000m radius search area; the majority being located around Hadzor, which lies approximately 1000m to the north-east of the study Site. The closest Listed Building is the Grade II Listed Grange Cottage in Trench Lane (LB ref 147726; Worcestershire HER ref WSM1554). This is located around 280m south-east of the study Site, on the opposite side the M5 motorway.

2.2 Prehistoric and Roman

- 2.2.1 Activity within the locality of Droitwich has been recorded since the Mesolithic period, with settlement dating from the first millennium BC. The brine springs on the northern edge of Droitwich have been exploited for salt production since at least the middle Iron Age. Salt extraction and production continued as a major activity in the northern edge of Droitwich in the Vines Park area 2km to the north of the Site.
- 2.2.2 An evaluation carried out at St Peter de Witton church recorded a linear feature (WSM29691); although this could not be dated accurately, it may date from the Neolithic period. Unstratified finds of Iron Age or Roman date are recorded as being found in a limestone quarry at Himbleton in 1865 (WSM15626).
- 2.2.3 There are few indications of Roman activity within the vicinity of the study Site, which is 2km south of both the known Roman roads and the Roman town. Roman coins (WSM08000) and finds (WSM18246) are recorded from Hadzor, around 1000m north-east of the study Site. A possible occupation Site (WSM24758) is noted 400m west of the study Site, although the interpretation is conjectural and the Site may date from as late as the Post-Medieval period.

2.3 Anglo-Saxon and Medieval

- 2.3.1 Salt production is known to have continued at Droitwich in the post-Roman and Saxon periods, although relatively little detail is available regarding settlement and it is possible that there were a number of small settlements around salt wells.
- 2.3.2 Hadzor is first referred to in an eleventh century charter (WS31153), and it is noted in Domesday Book that it was held by Brictrmer, a thane of King Edward's, in 1066. By 1086, it was held by Gilbert, son of Thorold, and it comprised arable land and seven salt-houses, and supported a population of two villagers, eight smallholders, four cottagers, and four ploughmen. It is referred to in Domesday as 'Hadesore', which is taken to mean 'Headdi's bank'.
- 2.3.3 The pattern of medieval settlement in the vicinity of the Site can be inferred from the records of medieval activity. A number of buildings and settlement features are recorded from the vicinity of Hadzor. These include the Old Manor House (WSM30347), Hadzor Court Farm (WSM15580), a dovecote (WSM15583), and a possible moat (WSM15581). The village itself is considered to exhibit signs of shrinkage, and the mapped extent of the historic village core (WSM06606) is larger than the modern settlement.
- 2.3.4 Further medieval settlement is recorded at Manor Farm Himbleton (WSM38522), 1km south-east of the study Site, at Oakley 1100m west of the Site, and at Newland 1300m south-west of the Site where the Site of a deserted settlement and salt work are recorded.
- 2.3.5 Closer to the study Site, a holloway is recorded running from east to west, 200m north of the study Site boundary (WSM10158), and a possible moated Site is recorded at Primsland (WSM10615) 100m north-west of the study Site.

2.3.6 Land holdings within open fields are recorded in the parish of Hadzor on post-medieval maps, although it is considered that the south-west part of the parish, including the study Site, formed woodland or common pasture during the medieval period.

2.4 Post-Medieval to Modern

2.4.1 Approximately 700 of the 996 acres within the parish of Hadzor had been enclosed during the medieval and early post-medieval periods. The remaining open land was enclosed by Act of Parliament in 1773, and this included the study Site.

2.4.2 The early post enclosure landscape of Hadzor parish is illustrated in a plan of the parish prepared when the estate was sold in 1823 (Worcestershire Record Office re 705:7). The plan shows the study Site as the western part of a field, E17, named as 'Clink Gate piece'; a small field pond is shown in the north-west part of the field. The western and northern boundaries of the Site are formed by lanes; a second field, E18, is shown to the south of the study Site. Outside the study Site, the plan shows a small area of settlement at Primsland End directly north-west of the Site; further farmsteads are shown at Primsland Farm west of the Site, Newland Hurst to the south-west, Top Barn to the east and Grange Cottage to the south-east (WSM15584).

2.4.3 The first edition Ordnance Survey 6" maps of 1889, 1905, 1930, and 1938 show the pattern and extent of settlement is comparable to the 1823 map. The field pond shown on the 1823 plan may have been replaced by a new pond located further east on the boundary of the study Site. The most significant change in the vicinity have been the construction of the M5 motorway, which forms the eastern boundary of the study Site, and the expansion of Droitwich, whose residential suburbs now extend along the western side of Tagwell Road.

3 AIMS AND SCOPE OF WORK

3.1 General

3.1.1 The objectives of the trial trenching were as follows:

- To determine the presence/absence and the specific nature and depth below current ground surface of any archaeological remains present on the Site.
- To determine the character, condition, approximate date or date range, distribution and potential of any remains, by means of artefactual or other evidence where development is proposed.
- To determine the degree of complexity of the horizontal and/or vertical stratigraphy present.
- To provide information on which to base future decisions concerning the treatment of any archaeological remains on the Site.

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 General

- 4.1.1 The methodology employed for the evaluation trenching programme was fully outlined in the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2012), and is summarised below.
- 4.1.2 Machining was undertaken using a 360° excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, working under the continuous direct supervision of an experienced archaeologist. Topsoil/overburden was removed in a series of level spits down to the level of the natural geology or the first archaeological horizon, whichever was reached first.
- 4.1.3 Where made ground was c. 2m deep and too unstable for safe excavation, following discussions between CgMs and WCC, trenching was halted and test pits were excavated to establish the depth of natural geology.
- 4.1.4 Deposits and depositional sequences in the trenches were recorded on the Wessex Archaeology pro-forma trench record sheets and photographed. Representative sections were photographed, levelled and drawn to scale. Levels were taken in each trench and the locations were recorded to Ordnance Datum.
- 4.1.5 All aspects of the programme were carried out in accordance with the relevant Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) Code of Conduct (IfA 2010) and Standard and Guidance (IfA 2008b & 2008b), and best industry practice.

5 EVALUATION RESULTS

5.1 Summary

- 5.1.1 Eleven 50m x 2m trenches were proposed within the Site (**Figure 2**), **Trenches 1-8** within the north and eastern part of the Site, were cut through a substantial amount of modern made ground. The material was likely to have been deposited during construction work on the adjacent motorway to the east of the Site. The depositional sequences were similar in each of these trenches, with a maximum depth of 4m of material observed, and with the deposits becoming shallower towards the south.
- 5.1.2 The remaining trenches (**9, 10 and 11**) comprised a topsoil layer directly overlaying the natural geology, at a depth of between 0.25m and 0.33m and with no evidence for made ground.

5.2 Trench 1

- 5.2.1 The natural geology (**103**) in **Trench 1** was recorded at a depth of 0.83m and revealed in a sondage to 1.73m, above this was 0.67m of made ground (**102**), which consisted of dark reddish brown sandy clay with modern rubble, wood and concrete. The made ground was overlain by 0.3m of topsoil. Due to the loose nature and depth of **102**, natural geology was only revealed in c. 3m long sondages at either end of the trench (**Figure 2; Plate 1**).

5.3 Trench 2

5.3.1 **Trench 2** could not be fully excavated as the made ground collapsed after approximately 15m of the length of the trench had been excavated (**Plate 2**).

5.3.2 The natural geology **203** was recorded at 4m depth and comprised a dark greyish blue clay with some iron panning. Above the natural geology was a made ground layer (**202**), which had a depth of approximately 3.70m. This layer was overlain by 0.30m of topsoil (**201**).

5.4 Trench 3

5.4.1 Approximately 20m of **Trench 3** was excavated prior to the trench collapsing in the poor weather conditions. Natural greyish blue clay (**303**) was recorded at 3.33m, which was overlain by made ground layer **302**.

5.4.2 The modern made ground was 2.94m in depth and overlain by topsoil **301** (**Plate 3**).

5.5 Trench 4

5.5.1 Modern made ground (**402**) was revealed to a depth of 2.20m in sondages at either end of the trench. The instability of the ground meant that natural geology was not seen. Made ground was overlain by below 0.3m of topsoil (**401**; **Plate 4**).

5.6 Trench 5

5.6.1 **Trench 5** was excavated to 1.96m in sondages at either end of the trench where the natural geology was revealed. Above this was 1.72m of made ground (**502**) and topsoil (**501**; **Plates 5 and 6**).

5.7 Trench 6

5.7.1 Natural geology (**603**) was recorded at 1.58m below the ground surface in sondages at either end of the trench. Above this was 1.30m of made ground (**602**). Similar to the made ground seen across the rest of the Site, this layer consisted of modern rubble and brick debris.

5.7.2 The modern topsoil (**601**) had a maximum depth of 0.28m and covered the entire trench (**Plates 7 and 8**).

5.8 Trench 7

5.8.1 Dark bluish grey clay natural geology (**703**) was reached at 1.62m below current ground in sondages at the south-west end of the trench and 2m at the north-east end. This difference in the level was consistent with the fall off of the modern ground surface towards the south of the Site (**Plates 9 and 10**).

5.8.2 The layer **702** was also consistent with the made ground that was seen across the rest of the Site with modern rubble and brick debris inclusions. This deposit was overlain by the modern topsoil **701** which had a depth of 0.30m.

5.9 Trench 8

- 5.9.1 The natural geological layer in **Trench 8** was a mid-yellowish brown sandy clay and was recorded at a level of 0.56m below ground level. Above the natural geology, to a depth of 0.32m, was made ground deposit **802**.
- 5.9.2 Topsoil **801** overlay the made ground to the east end of **Trench 8** and natural deposits, to the west end of **Trench 8**, to a depth of 0.24m below ground level (**Plate 11**).
- 5.9.3 The level of the natural geology in **Trench 8** appeared to demonstrate that the original ground surface had been removed prior to the deposit of the modern made ground.

5.10 Trench 9

- 5.10.1 Only two deposits were noted in **Trench 9**; the natural geology (**902**) was 0.30m below the ground surface and was overlain by topsoil **901**.
- 5.10.2 The natural geology in this trench appeared to be undisturbed in comparison to the natural geology in **Trench 8**. No archaeological features were noted (**Plate 12**).

5.11 Trench 10

- 5.11.1 Natural geology (**1002**) was overlain by 0.25m of topsoil (**1001**). No archaeological features were noted in **Trench 10** (**Plates 13 and 14**).

5.12 Trench 11

- 5.12.1 Natural geology (**1102**) was overlain by 0.26m of topsoil (**1101**). No archaeological features were noted in **Trench 11** (**Plate 15**).

6 FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL

6.1 Summary

- 6.1.1 No artefacts were recovered from any of the contexts in the eleven trenches and no deposits suitable for environmental sampling were encountered.

7 DISCUSSION

7.1 Summary

- 7.1.1 **Trenches 9-11**, in the southern part of the Site, were all excavated to 50m in length and no archaeological features, deposits or residual finds were recorded.
- 7.1.2 Due to the depth of made ground in the northern part of the Site, the full extent of the proposed trenches could not be excavated. The made ground was most likely deposited during the construction of the M5 to the east, and became deeper from south to north.

- 7.1.3 Natural geology was seen in all trenches apart from **Trench 4**, and no archaeological deposits were seen or residual finds recovered. It was also evident that landscaping, comprising removal of topsoil and reduction of the natural ground level, had taken place prior to the dumping of made ground, with natural deposits deeper in the eastern part of **Trench 8**.

8 ARCHIVE AND COPYRIGHT

8.1 Archive

- 8.1.1 The archive will be deposited with Worcestershire Museums Services in due course under an agreed accession number. The Site archive will be prepared in line with relevant national guidelines (Walker 2001) and the guidelines and requirements of Worcestershire County Council.

8.2 Copyright

- 8.2.1 This report, and the archive generally, may contain material that is non-Wessex Archaeology copyright (e.g. Ordnance Survey, British Geological Survey, Crown Copyright), or the intellectual property of third parties, which we are able to provide for limited reproduction under the terms of our own copyright licences, but for which copyright itself is non-transferrable by Wessex Archaeology. Users remain bound by the conditions of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with regard to multiple copying and electronic dissemination of the report.

9 REFERENCES

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APPENDIX 1: TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS

Trench No. 1		Dimensions: 50 x 2m Max depth: 1.73m
Context	Description	Depth (m)
101	Topsoil: Dark grey brown silty clay loam. Frequent well sorted well rounded stones. Turfed with root action visible.	0 – 0.16
102	Deposit: Dark reddish brown sandy clay with brick, wood and concrete mixed within made ground. Possibly waste material from the motorway construction.	0.16 – 0.83
103	Natural: Dark bluish grey clay silt. Pliable with some well sorted, well rounded stones and iron panning.	0.83 +

Trench No. 2		Dimensions: 15 x 2m Max depth: 4m
Context	Description	Depth (m)
201	Topsoil: Dark greyish brown loam with frequent small rounded stones and roots.	0 – 0.3
202	Deposit: Dark reddish brown silty clay with brick, wood, and concrete mixed modern made ground.	0.3 – 4.0
203	Natural: Dark bluish grey clay silt with some rounded stones and iron panning.	4.00 +

Trench No. 3		Dimensions: 20 x 2m Max depth: 3.3m
Context	Description	Depth (m)
301	Topsoil: Dark greyish brown loam with frequent small rounded stones and roots.	0 – 0.33
302	Deposit: Dark reddish brown sandy clay with brick, wood and concrete mixed within made ground. Visible layers within made ground. Very compact due to the weight of the overburden. Possibly the original top soil is present within the section.	0.33 – 3.27
303	Natural: Dark bluish grey clay silt with some rounded stones and iron panning.	3.27 – 3.33

Trench No. 4		Dimensions: 50 x 2m Max depth: 2.2m
Context	Description	Depth (m)
401	Topsoil: Dark greyish brown loam with frequent small rounded stones and roots.	0 – 0.3
402	Deposit: Dark reddish brown sandy clay with brick, wood and concrete mixed within made ground. Possibly waste material from the motorway construction. (Natural not reached.)	0.3 – 2.2+

Trench No. 5		Dimensions: 50 x 2m Max depth: 1.96m
Context	Description	Depth (m)
501	Topsoil: Dark greyish brown loam with frequent small rounded stones and roots.	0 – 0.24
502	Deposit: Dark reddish brown sandy clay with brick, wood and concrete mixed within made ground. Possibly waste material from the motorway construction. (Natural not reached.)	0.24 – 1.96+

Trench No. 6		Dimensions: 50 x 2m Max depth: 1.65m
Context	Description	Depth (m)
601	Topsoil: Dark greyish brown loam with frequent small rounded stones and roots.	0 – 0.28
602	Deposit: Dark reddish brown silty clay with brick, wood, and concrete mixed modern made ground.	0.285 – 1.38
603	Natural: Dark bluish grey clay silt, pliable and water retentive, evident from the gleying.	1.38 – 1.65

Trench No. 7		Dimensions: 50 x 2m Max depth: 1.66
Context	Description	Depth (m)
702	Topsoil: Dark grey brown silty clay loam. Frequent well sorted, well rounded stones. Turf with root action visible.	0 – 0.3
702	Deposit: Dark reddish brown sandy clay with brick, wood and concrete mixed within made ground. Possibly waste material from the motorway construction. Some Plough scarring on the surface.	0.3 – 1.62
703	Natural: Dark bluish grey clay silt. Pliable with some well-rounded stone and iron panning. To the SW end of the trench the depth to the natural is 1.62m NE end was up to 2m in depth.	1.62 – 2.00

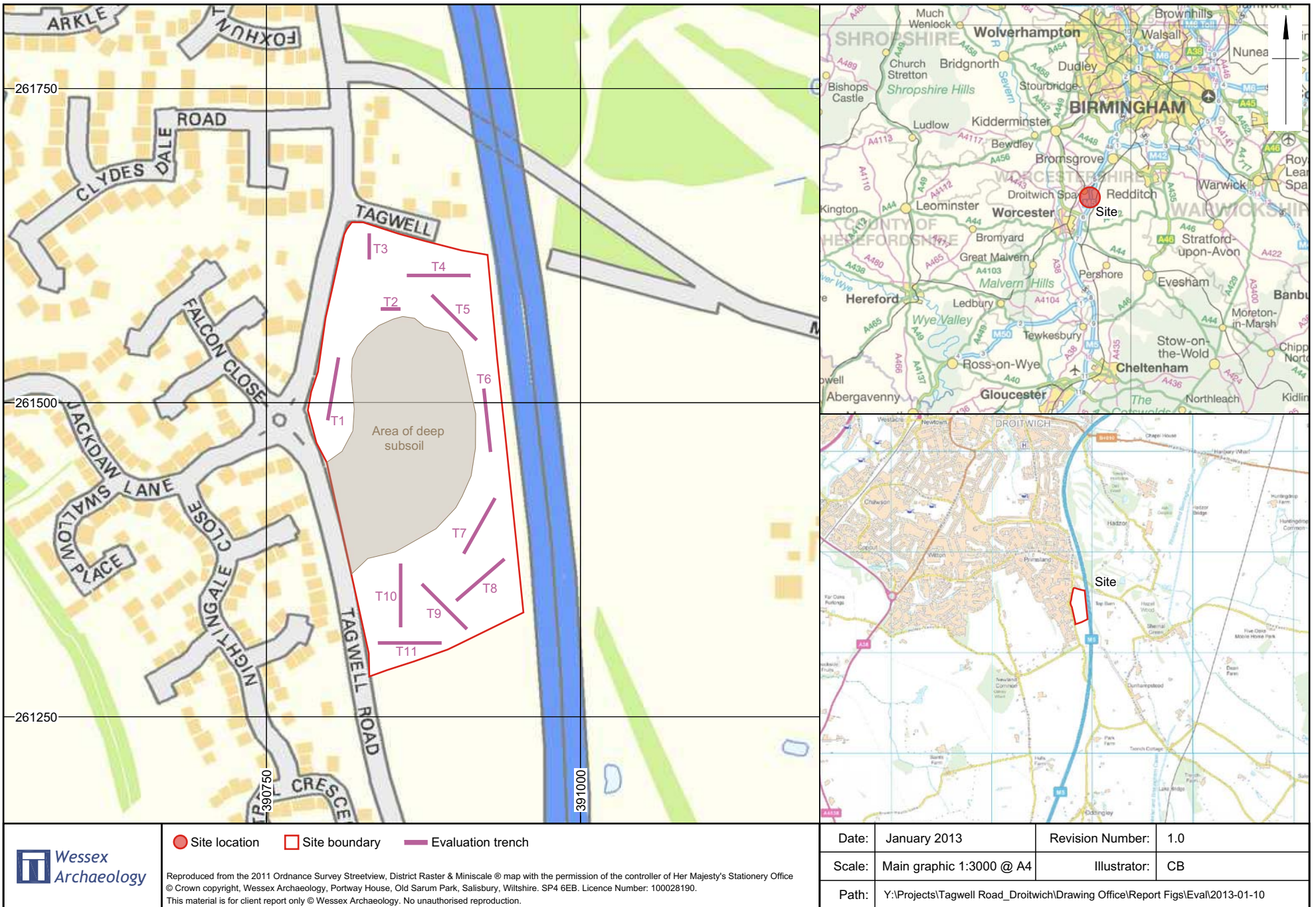
Trench No. 8		Dimensions: 50 x 2m Max depth: 0.65m
Context	Description	Depth (m)
801	Topsoil: Dark grey brown silty clay loam. Frequent well sorted, well rounded stones. Turf with root action visible.	0 – 0.24
802	Deposit: Dark reddish brown sandy clay with brick, wood and concrete mixed within made ground. Possibly waste material from the motorway construction. Toward the south east of the field the ground reduces in height as the made ground shallows out.	0.24 – 0.56

Trench No. 8		Dimensions: 50 x 2m Max depth: 0.65m
Context	Description	Depth (m)
803	Natural: Yellowish brown sandy clay. Field drain cuts the natural – so there is considerably better drainage than in Trench 6.	0.56 – 0.65m

Trench No. 9		Dimensions: 50 x 2m Max depth: 0.33m
Context	Description	Depth (m)
901	Topsoil: Dark grey brown silty clay loam. Frequent well sorted well rounded stones. Turfed with root action visible.	0 – 0.3
902	Natural: Reddish brown clay with abundant small to medium well rounded stones.	0.3 – 0.33+

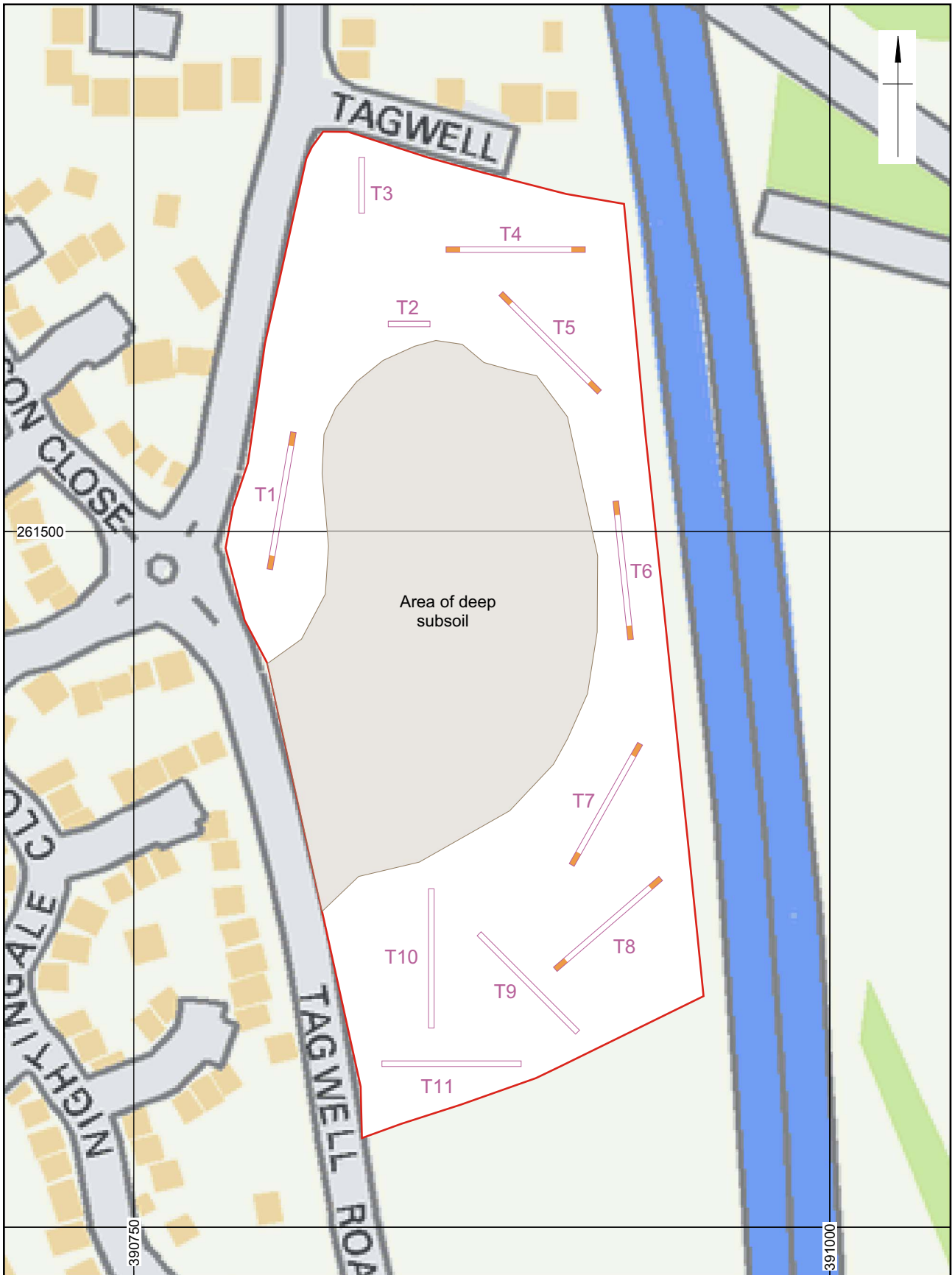
Trench No. 10		Dimensions: 50 x 2m Max depth: 0.25m
Context	Description	Depth (m)
1001	Topsoil: Dark greyish brown silty clay loam. Frequent well sorted, well rounded stones. Turfed with root action visible.	0 – 0.25
1002	Natural: Yellowish brown sandy clay with abundant small to medium well rounded stones.	0.25+


Trench No. 11		Dimensions: 50 x 2m Max depth: 0.32m
Context	Description	Depth (m)
1101	Topsoil: Dark greyish brown silty clay loam. Frequent well sorted, well rounded stones. Turfed with root action visible.	0 – 0.26
1102	Natural: Dark yellowish brown sandy clay with abundant well sorted small to medium well rounded stones.	0.26 – 0.32+



Site location

Figure 1



			
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Trench location

Figure 2



Plate 1: Sondage within Trench 1, looking east



Plate 2: Trench 2, looking east


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Plate 3: Trench 3, looking north



Plate 4: Trench 4, looking east


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Plate 5: Trench 5, looking south-east



Plate 6: Sondage within Trench 5, looking south-west


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Plate 7: Trench 6, looking south



Plate 8: Sondage within Trench 6, looking east


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Plate 9: Trench 7, looking north-east



Plate 10: Sondage within Trench 7, looking north


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Plate 11: Trench 8, looking north-east



Plate 12: Trench 9, looking north-west


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Plate 13: Trench 10, looking south



Plate 14: Representative section Trench 10, looking west



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Plate 15: Trench 11, looking east

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