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Northway Lane, Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire/Worcestershire

Archaeological Evaluation Report



Ref: 102151.01
August 2014



**Northway Lane, Tewkesbury,
Gloucestershire/Worcestershire**

Archaeological Evaluation Report

Prepared for:

North Midland Construction PLC
Nunn Close
The County Estate
Huthwaite
Sutton-in-Ashfield
Nottinghamshire

Prepared by:

Wessex Archaeology
Unit R6, Riverside Block
Sheaf Bank Business Park
Prospect Road
Sheffield
South Yorkshire
S2 3EN

www.wessexarch.co.uk

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* I= Internal Draft; E= External Draft; F= Final

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Northway Lane, Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire/Worcestershire

Archaeological Evaluation Report

Contents

Summary.....	iii
Acknowledgements.....	iv
1 INTRODUCTION.....	5
1.1 Project background	5
1.2 The Site.....	5
2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND	6
2.1 Introduction	6
2.2 Previous archaeological investigations	6
3 METHODOLOGY.....	6
3.1 General	6
3.2 Fieldwork methodology	7
3.3 Machine excavation	7
3.4 Hand excavation	7
3.5 Recording.....	7
3.6 Specialist strategies	7
4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS.....	8
4.1 Introduction	8
4.2 General summary.....	8
4.3 Carrant Brook bank.....	9
5 DISCUSSION.....	9
5.1 Summary.....	9
5.2 Conclusions	9
6 STORAGE AND CURATION.....	9
6.1 Museum	9
6.2 Preparation of archive	10
6.3 Discard policy.....	10
6.4 Security copy	10
7 REFERENCES.....	11
7.1 Bibliography	11



8	APPENDICES	12
8.1	Appendix 1: Trench context tables.....	12
8.2	Appendix 2: OASIS form.....	14

Figures

- Figure 1: Site location and trench plan
- Figure 2: Trenches 1 - 5
- Figure 3: Trenches 6 - 9

Plates

- Plate 1: Trench 2 showing the natural clay deposit
- Plate 2: Trench 9 showing sondage through the clay natural deposit
- Plate 3: Trench 8 showing representative section



Northway Lane, Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire/Worcestershire

Archaeological Evaluation Report

Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by North Midland Construction PLC to carry out an archaeological evaluation ahead of a programme of works to replace the rising main at Northway Lane on land to the north-west of Tewkesbury (hereafter the 'Site'), within Gloucestershire and Worcestershire. The Site comprises pasture and fallow grassland centred on NGR 390438 233444 (**Figure 1**).

A total of eight 15m trenches were excavated across the Site to assess the results of a previous desk-based assessment and geophysical survey (Wessex Archaeology 2014a and b), to determine the archaeological potential of the Site, and to inform the requirement and scope of any potential mitigation. One of the trenches comprised two 15m lengths in an L-shape. A further proposed trench could not be excavated due to access restrictions.

No archaeological features were uncovered during the evaluation. The natural geology and sub and topsoil overburden observed was similar throughout the majority of the Site, generally extending down to at least 1.2m bgl. The geophysical trends and geological anomalies indicated by the geophysical survey were not uncovered by the evaluation and the uniformity of the natural clay was a distinctive feature. It is considered that the proposed development will have little effect on significant archaeological remains within the upper levels of construction. However, further monitoring will likely be needed for proposed launch and reception pits which may extend down 4m.

The project archive has been compiled according to the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) (Wessex Archaeology 2014c) and is fully cross-referenced and indexed. It is currently held by Wessex Archaeology under the project code **102151** and will be transferred to the Tewkesbury Museum under accession number **2014/009**. The Worcestershire Archive & Archaeology Service event number for the evaluation is **WSM58040**. A copy of this report will be sent to the Worcestershire Archive & Archaeology Service.



Northway Lane, Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire/Worcestershire

Archaeological Evaluation Report

Acknowledgements

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by North Midland Construction PLC and are grateful to Eddie MacColgan in this regard. Wessex Archaeology would also like to thank the relevant Local Planning Authority - LPA) archaeological advisors, Charles Parry (Gloucestershire County Council Archaeology Service Planning Officer) and Mike Glyde (Worcestershire Archive & Archaeology Service Historic Environment Planning Officer), for their involvement in the project. The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Richard O'Neill. The fieldwork was directed by Neil Dransfield with the assistance of Phil Roberts. The report was compiled by Neil Dransfield. The illustrations were prepared by Neil Dransfield and Alix Sperr.



Northway Lane, Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire/Worcestershire

Archaeological Evaluation Report

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology were commissioned by North Midland Construction PLC, 'the Client', to carry out an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching as part of a programme of works to replace the rising main at Northway Lane, Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire/Worcestershire (hereafter 'the Site'). The Site is centred on national grid reference (NGR) 390438 233444 (**Figure 1**).
- 1.1.2 The archaeological evaluation followed the completion of a desk-based assessment (DBA; Wessex Archaeology 2014a) and a geophysical survey (Wessex Archaeology 2014b). The results of these informed the current programme of archaeological works. The evaluation comprised trial trenching in the area of proposed topsoil strip and the machine-excavation of launch-and-reception pits for the new water main.
- 1.1.3 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI), which set out the strategy and methodology by which Wessex Archaeology (2014c) would implement the archaeological evaluation, was submitted to the Client and the LPA archaeological planning advisors, Charles Parry (Gloucestershire County Council Archaeology Service Planning Officer) and Mike Glyde (Worcestershire Archive & Archaeology Service Historic Environment Planning Officer), for approval prior to fieldwork commencing. The WSI was prepared in line with local (GCCAS 2013 and WAAS 2010) and national guidance (IfA 2008).

1.2 The Site

- 1.2.1 The Site is located north-east of Tewkesbury town centre, covering three arable fields in an irregular parcel of land between an industrial estate to the south and a housing estate and streams to the north (**Figure 1**). The eastern half of the Site (**Figure 2**) is under pasture and fallow grassland with the Carrant Brook running across the north of the Site. The western half of the Site (**Figure 3**) lies on a narrow strip of fallow grassland between Carrant Brook to the north and a Carrant Brook tributary stream and industrial estate to the south.
- 1.2.2 The south-west section of the Site Brook lies within Gloucestershire and the north-east section within Worcestershire.
- 1.2.3 The Site is located on a relatively flat piece of land lying at 12m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) with a plateau of 14m in the centre. The western half of the Site is underlain by the Charmouth Mudstone Formation with the eastern half underlain by the Rugby Limestone member. These are both overlain by alluvium (British Geological Survey Sheet 216 - Tewkesbury).



2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 The following information on the Site is summarised from the results of previous desk-based assessment and geophysical survey on the Site (Wessex Archaeology 2014a and b).
- 2.1.2 The DBA established that there was potential archaeological interest within the Site. This is defined as the potential for the presence of buried archaeological remains, in particular relating to medieval and later milling activity and medieval and later agricultural activity.
- 2.1.3 The Site has been disturbed by 20th century ploughing activities and although the extant earthworks associated with the water meadow system, visible on 1940s aerial photography, have been ploughed level, the extent of the disturbance on any archaeological remains below ground associated with the meadows is as yet unknown. No obvious signs of disturbance were noted during the walkover for the DBA save for an uneven ground surface within one of the fields. It is not known what effect the 20th century ploughing disturbance will have had on the remains of the medieval mill located either within or on the edge of the Site.
- 2.1.4 The DBA established the presence of a historically important hedgerow within the Site, visible on the Ashchurch – Northway and Newton Tithe map of 1841. The Site visit confirmed that that this is still extant.
- 2.1.5 As with all green-field sites there remains the potential for discovering previously unknown remains. The presence of the Roman-British settlement and the Saxon abbey at Tewkesbury increases the likelihood of remains from these periods being uncovered, although the location of the Site places it firmly within the settlement's agricultural hinterland.

2.2 Previous archaeological investigations

- 2.2.1 The detailed gradiometer survey was successful in detecting anomalies of possible archaeological interest within the Site, in addition to many regions of increased magnetic response, one modern service and large areas of superficial geology. It is possible that one of these anomalies may have related to a former canalised branch of Carrant Brook. There are a number of examples of water management in the immediate vicinity, suggesting that canalisation may be a conceivable, local response to the frequent flooding of the area.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 General

- 3.1.1 The general aims of the project were:
- *to determine the extent, condition, character, significance and date of any archaeological deposits encountered that will be removed or disturbed by groundworks.*
 - *to investigate the anomalies and responses identified on the Site identified by the geophysical survey.*



- *to accurately record the location and stratigraphy of areas excavated.*
- *to prepare a comprehensive record and report of any archaeological deposits or structures or artefacts identified.*
- *to gain an understanding of the development of the Site.*
- *to put the results of the excavation in context by comparing it with similar/related Sites within the local area as well as its regional and national contexts.*
- *To enable development of a suitable mitigation strategy, of required.*

3.1.2 More specifically it was hoped that the results of the evaluation would be used to determine the requirement for, and form of, any further archaeological works required to mitigate against the effects of any groundworks to be undertaken by Severn Trent Water and/or its sub-contractors as part of the current scheme.

3.2 Fieldwork methodology

3.2.1 The proposed evaluation comprised the excavation of ten trenches measuring 15m by 3m (**Figure 1**). However, height and width restrictions to the gate giving access to **Trench 5** was inaccessible by the mechanical excavator and excavation of the trench was terminated. Two trenches were combined into a single L-shaped trench (**Trench 6**). **Trench 9** was narrowed to 1.7m in width due to constrictions in the form of mature trees to the immediate south and the proximity of the Carrant Brook to the immediate north.

3.3 Machine excavation

3.3.1 Topsoil and subsoil were removed using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, working under the continuous direct supervision of a suitably experienced archaeologist. Topsoil was removed in a series of level spits down to the archaeological horizon at the upper level of the natural geology.

3.4 Hand excavation

3.4.1 Natural features were sampled sufficiently to establish their origin and to characterise any related human activity.

3.4.2 No archaeological archaeological features were uncovered.

3.5 Recording

3.5.1 All recording was undertaken using Wessex Archaeology pro forma recording sheets and a continuous unique numbering system. A stratigraphic matrix was compiled to record the relationships between deposits in the blank trenches. A full trench by trench context listing is appended to this report (**Appendix 1**).

3.5.2 All trenches were located in relation to the OS grid and representative sections and elevations of archaeological deposits were drawn at 1:10.

3.5.3 Photographs were taken of all trenches and deposits to produce a photographic record consisting of digital images to a resolution of at least 10 megapixel.

3.6 Specialist strategies

Artefacts

3.6.1 All finds were treated in accordance with relevant industry guidance (UKIC 2001; MGC 1991; English Heritage 2005, 2006), and the requirements of GCCAS and WAAS.



- 3.6.2 A very small quantity of modern (late 19th/20th century) artefacts present in the topsoil were recorded and discarded in line with recommendations on modern artefacts in the WSI.

Environmental

- 3.6.3 No archaeological features or deposits were encountered that warranted archaeological sampling.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 The evaluation comprised the excavation of 9 trenches measuring up to 15m x 3m (**Trenches 1 - 4 and 6 – 9**). **Trench 6** formed an L-shape consisting of two joined 15m x 3m trenches. **Trenches 1 – 4** are illustrated on **Figure 2** and **Trenches 6 – 9** are illustrated on **Figure 3**. **Trench 5** could not be excavated.

- 4.1.2 All of the excavated trenches (**1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8 and 9**) were archaeologically sterile. Natural and overburden deposits were recorded and a full context record is listed in **Appendix 1**. Notable deposits are referred to in the text in **bold** font.

4.2 General summary

Natural geology

- 4.2.1 The underlying natural geology was a very homogeneous deposit across the entire Site. The layer consisted of light grey or yellowish brown clay (**Plate 1**) with no inclusions at all. A slight orangey or greenish mottling was detected in the trenches indicating a gleyed formation under fluctuating wet and dry conditions. Sondages were placed in several trenches (**1, 6, 8 and 9**) to confirm the depth and homogeneity of the deposit. These sondages revealed that the deposit was consistent across the Site, with a maximum thickness of 0.8+m uncovered in **Trench 9 (Plate 2)**.

- 4.2.2 It would appear that the deposit was laid in a low energy fluvial environment with little layering evident.

Subsoil

- 4.2.3 The subsoil to the east of the Site (**Trenches 1 - 4**) consisted of mid-greyish yellow silty clay. Orange mottling was observed suggesting gleying under periodic flooding and drying episodes.

- 4.2.4 The subsoil to the west of the Site was slightly different, consisting of mid-yellowish brown silty clay. A greenish tint to the broken clast was suggestive of gleying.

- 4.2.5 The depth of subsoil across Site averaged between 0.1 and 0.15m in thickness. The horizon between the sub and top soils were distinct yet uneven (**Plate 3**), suggesting either agricultural or bioturbatory disturbance. No plough scars were noted scarring the natural surface. The interface between the subsoil and natural was more diffuse showing a gradual change.

Topsoil

- 4.2.6 The topsoil was predominantly a mid-yellowish to greyish brown clayey silt typically present to a depth of 0.10 to 0.2m below ground level (bgl). Very little difference was noted in the character of the layer across the site.



4.2.7 Artefact recovery across the Site was very low and no artefacts were noted in the western half of the Site. **Trenches 1 – 3** uncovered a small fragment of ceramic building material, small fragments of whiteware and blue and white transferware pottery and two undiagnostic clay pipe stem fragments from the topsoil. A Fanta can and milk bottle were recovered from the topsoil in **Trench 4**. The finds were recorded and discarded in the field.

4.3 Carrant Brook bank

4.3.1 **Trench 9** was excavated along the southern bank of the Carrant Brook. The lower part of the more noticeable banking was made up of a 0.54m thick layer of mid-yellowish brown silty clay **903**. No artefacts were recovered from the deposit. Above this was a 0.26m thick layer of mid-brown clayey silt **902** which contained patches of orangey/reddish sand indicative of a dumped made ground. The friability of the deposit suggests that this bank may have been reinforced fairly recently.

5 DISCUSSION

5.1 Summary

5.1.1 A total of eight 15m long trenches were excavated across the Site. The trenches were targeted on geophysical trends and superficial geological anomalies. The evaluation uncovered no archaeological remains. The natural geology and sub and topsoil overburden observed was similar throughout the majority of the Site, generally extending down to at least 1.2m bgl.

5.2 Conclusions

5.2.1 The homogeneity of the natural geology along the Site suggests that the alluvial clay formed part of the same depositional event. The cleanliness of the deposit and lack of inclusions suggests that the deposit was laid in a low energy fluvial environment. The gleying observed in the deposit indicated that the deposit has been subjected to periodic flood and drying episodes.

5.2.2 The targeted geophysical trends and geological anomalies were not detected during the evaluations. The homogeneity of the underlying natural geology was a remarkable feature throughout.

5.2.3 It is considered that the proposed development will have little effect on significant archaeological remains within the upper levels of construction. However, further monitoring will likely be needed for proposed launch and reception pits which may extend down 4m.

6 STORAGE AND CURATION

6.1 Museum

6.1.1 It is recommended that the relevant sections of the project archive resulting from the evaluation be deposited with the Tewkesbury Museum under the accession number **2014/009**. The museum has agreed in principle to accept the project archive on completion of the project.



6.2 Preparation of archive

- 6.2.1 The complete site archive, which will include paper records and digital data, will be prepared following the standard conditions for the acceptance of excavated archaeological material by the Tewkesbury Museum under accession number **2014/009**, and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; IfA 2009; Brown 2011; ADS 2013). The Worcestershire Archive & Archaeology Service event number for the evaluation is **WSM58040**. A copy of this report will be sent to the Worcestershire Archive & Archaeology Service.
- 6.2.2 All archive elements will be marked with the site/accession code, and a full index will be prepared. The physical archive comprises the following:
- *One document case of paper records and a CD ROM of digital photographs.*

6.3 Discard policy

- 6.3.1 Wessex Archaeology follows the guidelines set out in Selection, Retention and Dispersal (Society of Museum Archaeologists (SMA) 1993), which allows for the discard of selected artefact and ecofact categories which are not considered to warrant any future analysis. Any discard of artefacts will be fully documented in the project archive.
- 6.3.2 The discard of environmental remains and samples follows nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1993; 1995; English Heritage 2002).

6.4 Security copy

In line with current best practice (e.g. Brown 2011), on completion of the project a security copy of the written records will be prepared, in the form of a digital PDF/A file. PDF/A is an ISO-standardised version of the Portable Document Format (PDF) designed for the digital preservation of electronic documents through omission of features ill-suited to long-term archiving.



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8 APPENDICES

8.1 Appendix 1: Trench context tables

Trench 1		Dimensions: 15 x 3m Max depth: 0.7m
Context	Description	Depth (m)
101	Topsoil – Mid reddish brown clayey silt with rootlets and grass over	0 – 0.12
102	Subsoil – Greyish yellow/mottled orange, gleyed silty clay subject to periodic flooding	0.12 – 0.3
103	Natural – Light greyish brown clay with gleyed orange mottling throughout. Alluvial deposit subject to periodic flooding	0.3 – 0.7+

Trench 2		Dimensions: 15 x 3m Max depth: 0.4m
Context	Description	Depth (m)
201	Topsoil – Mid reddish brown clayey silt with rootlets and grass over	0 – 0.16
202	Subsoil – Greyish yellow/mottled orange, gleyed silty clay	0.16 – 0.35-0.40
203	Natural – Light greyish yellow clay with gleyed orange mottling throughout. Clean and homogeneous alluvial deposit subject to periodic flooding	0.35 – 0.4+

Trench 3		Dimensions: 15 x 3m Max depth: 0.32m
Context	Description	Depth (m)
301	Topsoil – Dark yellowish grey (reddish fabric on breaking), clayey silt with rootlets and grass over	0 – 0.19
302	Subsoil – Yellowish grey silty clay with gleyed orange mottling	0.19 – 0.32
303	Natural – Light greyish yellow clay with gleyed orange mottling throughout. Alluvial deposit subject to periodic flooding	0.32+

Trench 4		Dimensions: 15 x 3m Max depth: 0.34m
Context	Description	Depth (m)
401	Topsoil – Mid greyish brown clayey silt	0 – 0.14
402	Subsoil – Greyish/yellow brown silty clay	0.14 – 0.24
403	Natural – Light greyish brown clay. Clean and homogeneous alluvial deposit	0.24 – 0.34+

Trench 6		Dimensions: 15 x 3m (x2 L-shaped) Max depth: 0.38m
Context	Description	Depth (m)
601	Topsoil – Mid greyish brown clayey silt with rootlets and grass over	0 – 0.12
602	Subsoil – Mid yellowish brown clay with greenish gleyed tint	0.12 – 0.28
603	Natural – Pale yellowish brown clay with greenish gleyed tint	0.28 – 0.38+



Trench 7		Dimensions: 15 x 3m Max depth: 0.43m
Context	Description	Depth (m)
701	Topsoil – Mid greyish brown fine clayey silt with rooting and grass over	0 – 0.1
702	Subsoil – Mid yellowish brown silty clay	0.1 – 0.26
703	Natural – Pale greyish yellow clay	0.26 – 0.43+

Trench 8		Dimensions: 15 x 3m Max depth: 1.16m
Context	Description	Depth (m)
801	Topsoil – Mid greyish brown clayey silt with rooting and grass over	0 – 0.12
802	Subsoil – Mid yellowish brown fine silty clay	0.12 – 0.28
803	Natural – Greyish yellow clay with greenish gleyed tint	0.28 – 1.16+

Trench 9		Dimensions: 15 x 1.7m Max depth: 1.7m
Context	Description	Depth (m)
901	Topsoil – Thin band of mid greyish brown clayey silt with rooting	0 – 0.1
902	Made ground – Mid brown clayey silt with occasional patches of orangey red sand. Represents a soil made ground bank on the S edge of Carrant Brook	0.1 – 0.36
903	Made ground – Mid yellowish brown silty clay. Represents a made ground bank on the S edge of Carrant Brook	0.36 – 0.9
904	Natural – Pale yellowish brown with a gleyed grey mottling. Homogeneous throughout entire excavated depth	0.9 – 1.7+



8.2 Appendix 2: OASIS form

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

OASIS ID: wessexar1-186866

Project details

Project name Northway Lane, Tewkesbury

Short description of the project A total of eight 15m trenches were excavated across the Site to determine the results of a previous geophysical survey and to assess the archaeological potential of the Site, to inform any mitigation strategy prior to the impact of the development. A ninth proposed trench could not be excavated due to access restrictions to the 3CX excavator. No archaeological features were uncovered during the evaluation. The results of the evaluation revealed that the Site was covered by a 0.1 - 0.19m thick, fairly homogeneous mid-brown clayey silt topsoil with rootlets and grass over. A 0.15m thick subsoil of silty clay underlay the topsoil with a distinct but uneven horizon between them. This was probably due to recent agricultural activity and bioturbation. The underlying geology consisted of a very homogeneous light yellow/grey alluvial clay which was probably laid in a low energy fluvial environment. Gleying in the form of orangey and greenish mottling indicated that the deposit was subject to periodic flooding and drying. Sondages excavated through the natural clay indicated that the deposit was over 1m thick. The geophysical trends and geological anomalies indicated by the geophysical survey were not uncovered by the evaluation and the uniformity of the natural clay was a distinctive feature. The results from the evaluation indicate that the development is highly unlikely to impact on any significant archaeological remains.

Project dates Start: 28-07-2014 End: 31-07-2014

Any associated project reference codes 102151 - Sitecode

Type of project Field evaluation



Current Land use Cultivated Land 1 - Minimal cultivation

Project location

Country England

Site location GLOUCESTERSHIRE TEWKESBURY TEWKESBURY Northway
Lane, Tewkebury

Postcode GL20 8JE

Site coordinates SO 390438 233444 51.904863087 -2.88613666352 51 54 17 N 002
53 10 W Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation Wessex Archaeology

Project brief originator NMC Nomenca

Project design originator Wessex Archaeology

Project director/manager R. O'Neill

Project supervisor Neil Dransfield

Type of sponsor/funding body Severn Trent Water

Entered by Dran (n.dransfield@wessexarch.co.uk)

Entered on 7 August 2014

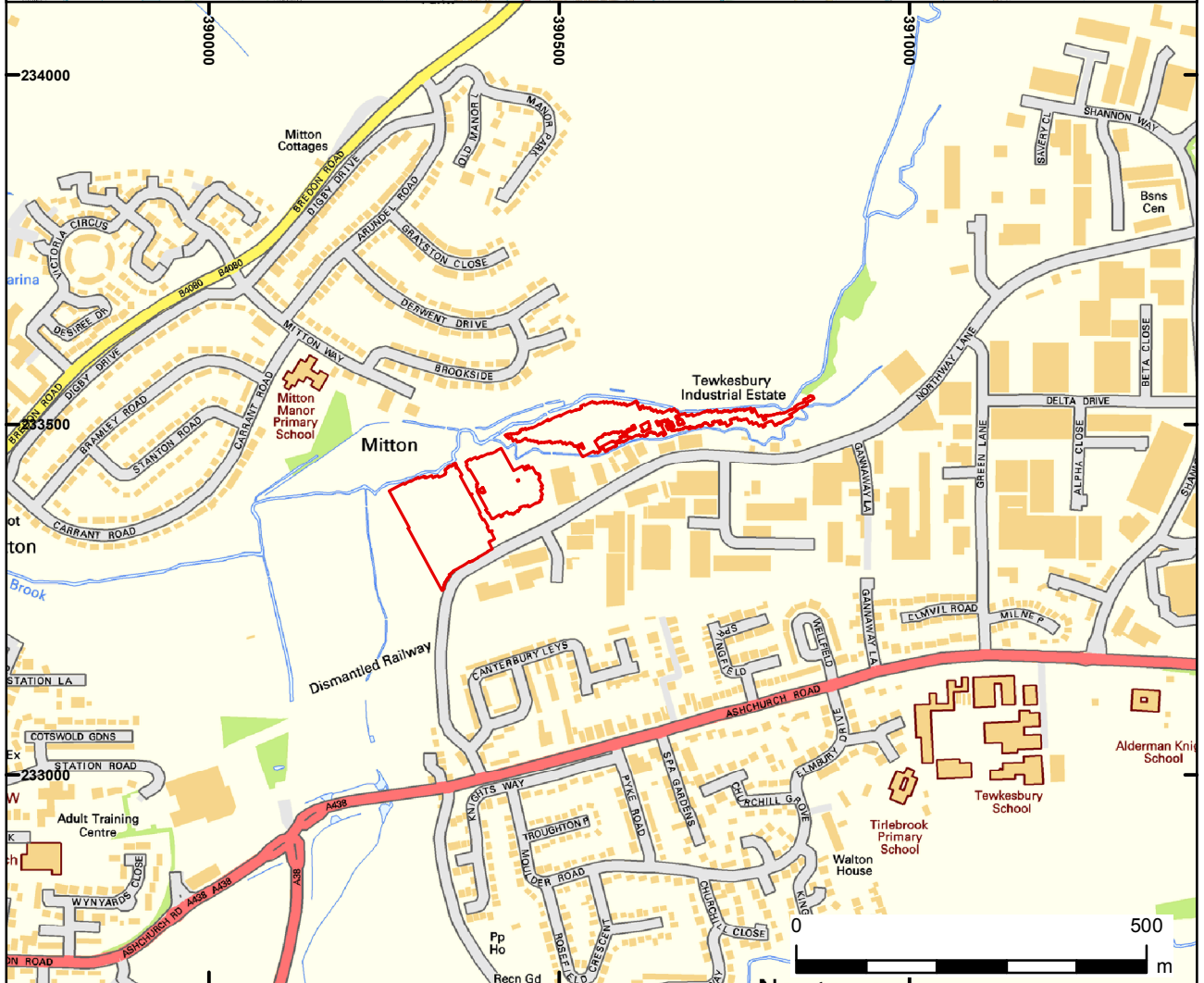
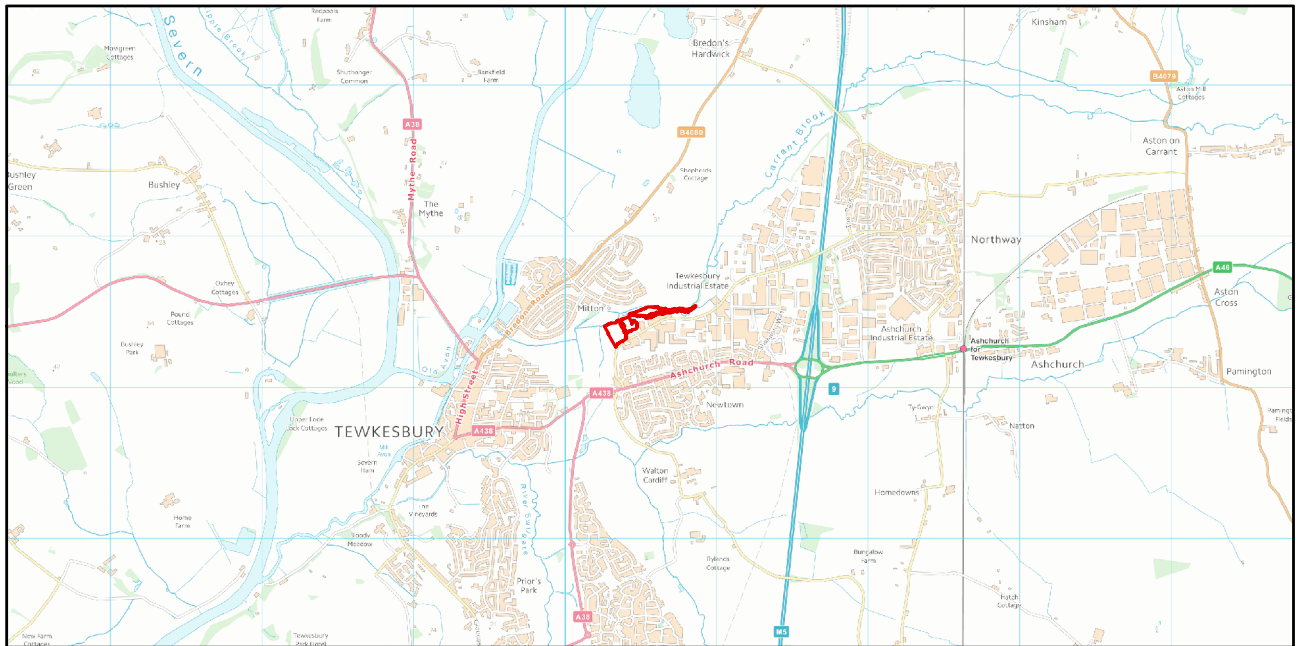




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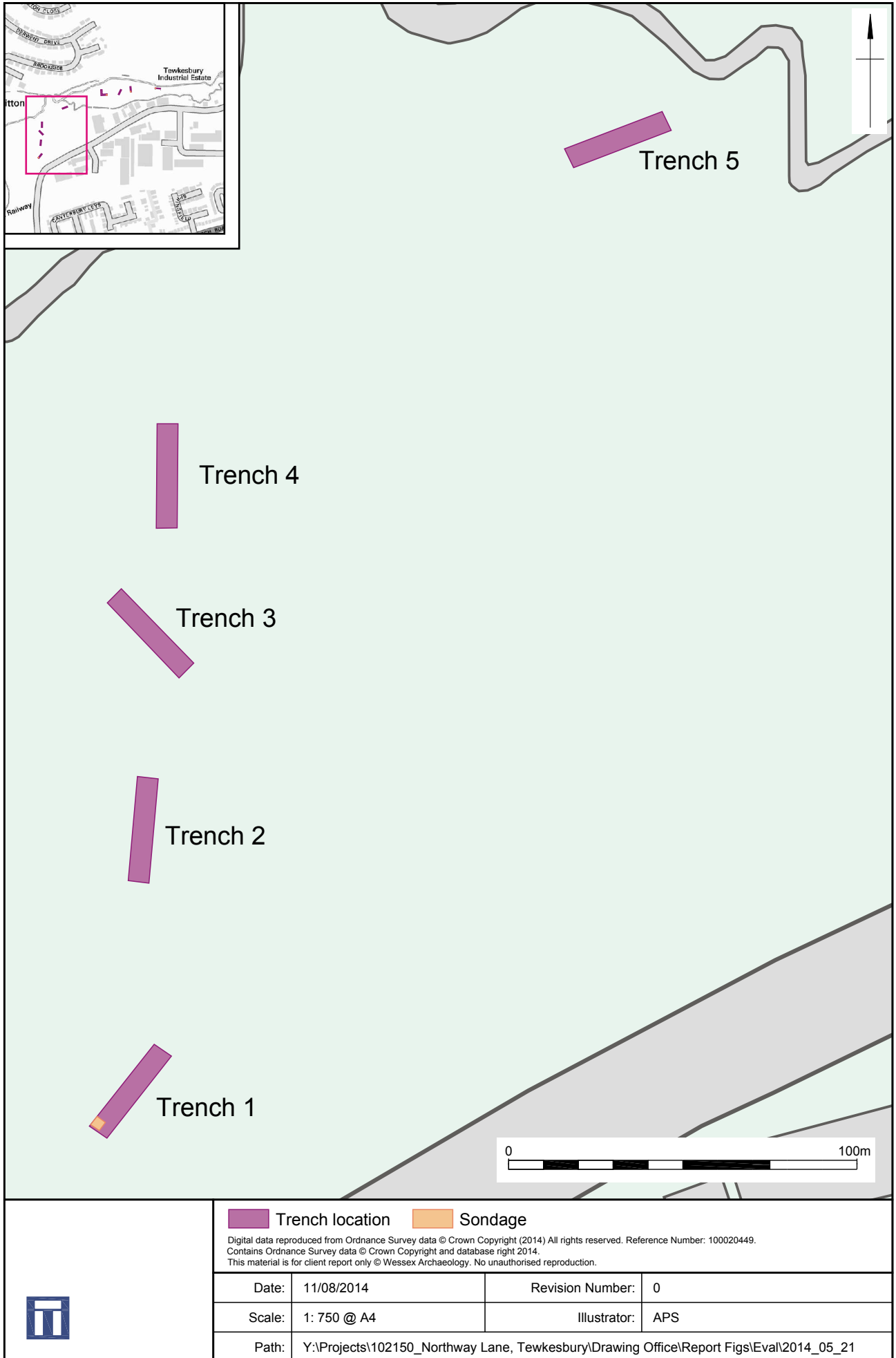
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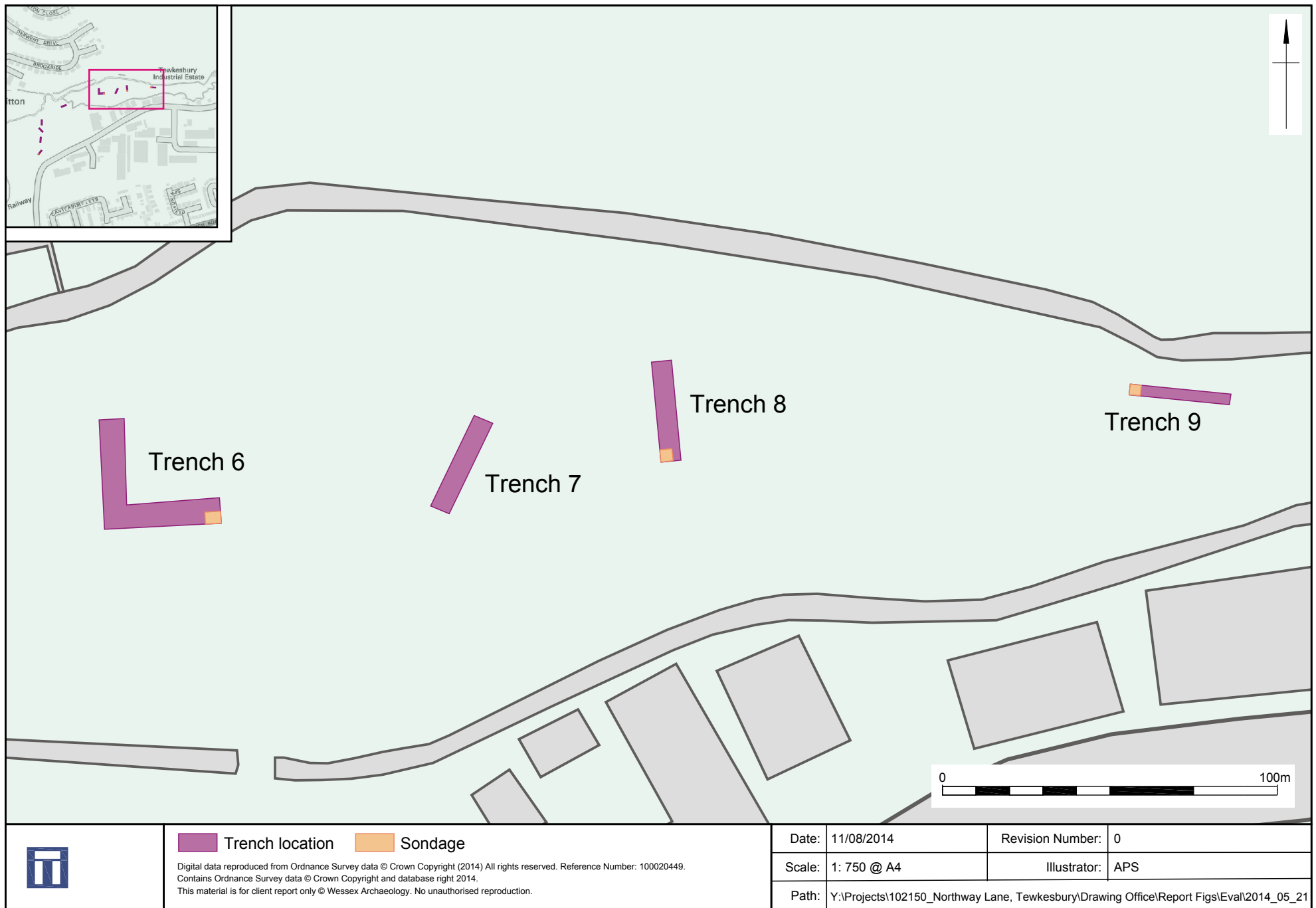
Site location and survey extents

Figure 1



Trenches 1-5

Figure 2



Trenches 6-9

Figure 3



Plate 1: Trench 2 showing natural clay deposit



Plate 2: Trench 9 showing sondage through the clay natural deposit



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Plate 3: Trench 8 showing representative section

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Wessex Archaeology Ltd registered office Portway House, Old Sarum Park, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP4 6EB
Tel: 01722 326867 Fax: 01722 337562 info@wessexarch.co.uk www.wessexarch.co.uk



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