COCK HILL FARM
TROWBRIDGE
WILTSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGCIAL EVALUATION

NGR: ST 8460 5920 (CENTRED)

Report No. 984

July 2014

ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSULTANCY, MANAGEMENT & FIELD SERVICES

1st Floor, Shaftesbury Centre, Percy Street, Swindon, Wilts. SN2 2AZ Tel: 01793 525993 Email: admin@foundations.co.uk

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Quality Assurance
This Document has been Prepared and Checked in accordance with AMS's Quality Procedures (BS EN ISO 9001: 2008)
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GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Archaeology

For the purposes of this project archaeology is taken to mean the study of past human societies through their material remains from prehistoric times through to the modern era. No rigid upper date limit has been set, but AD 1900 is used as a general cut off point

HER

Historic Environment Record.

Medieval

The period between the Norman Conquest (AD 1066) and *c.* AD 1500.

Modern

There is debate in archaeology about when then modern period commences, but 1900 is a useful start point.

Natural

In archaeological terms this refers to the undisturbed natural geology of a site.

NGR

National Grid Reference from the Ordnance Survey Grid.

OD

Ordnance Datum; used to express a given height above sea level.

OS

Ordnance Survey.

Post-Medieval

Refers to the period from *c.* AD 1500 to AD 1900.

Prehistoric

In Britain this term is generally used for any of the traditionally defined periods such as Palaeolithic (*c.* 480,000-12,000 BC), Mesolithic (*c.* 12,000-4000 BC), Neolithic (c. 4,000-2,500), Bronze Age (*c.* 2500-600 BC) and Iron Age (*c.* 800 BC – AD 43).

Romano-British

Term used to describe the fusion of indigenous late Iron Age traditions with the invasive Roman culture. Traditionally dated between AD 43 and AD 410.

Saxon

Term used to describe the period between the end of Roman Britain *c.* AD 410 and the Norman Conquest (AD 1066).

SUMMARY

Between 17th and 23rd July 2014 Foundations Archaeology undertook an archaeological evaluation at Cock Hill Farm, Trowbridge, Wiltshire (NGR: ST 8460 5920 - centred). The project was commissioned by Richard Cosker of RCC Town Planning Consultancy on behalf of Gaiger Bros. Ltd.

The evaluation revealed no archaeological finds or features that pre-dated the later Post-medieval period. The only features present in the evaluation trenches were ceramic or stone land drains. The trenches were targeted on anomalies identified by a geophysical survey, but no archaeological features were present in the locations of the anomalies. The only finds to be recovered came from the ploughsoil and were all dated to the later Post-medieval period.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This report presents the findings of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by Foundations Archaeology between 17th and 23rd July 2014 at Cock Hill Farm, Trowbridge, Wiltshire (NGR: ST 8460 5920 - centred). The project was commissioned by Richard Cosker of RCC Town Planning Consultancy on behalf of Gaiger Bros. Ltd.

1.2 The project was conducted in accordance with the approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by Foundations Archaeology (2014), IfA *Standards and Guidance on Archaeological Evaluation* (2008), *Standards for Field Evaluation and Assessment in Wiltshire* (CAS 1995) and MoRPHE issued by English Heritage (2006).

1.3 The code of conduct of the Institute for Archaeologists was adhered to throughout.

2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

2.1 Planning permission is being sought to create a new photovoltaic scheme at the site.

2.2 The site is located in an arable field to the north of the town of Trowbridge in the County of Wiltshire (Figure 1), at NGR: ST 8460 5920 (centred), and covers an area of approximately 42 ha. The site's topography is mostly flat, but generally slopes from 49m (OD) at the western site boundary towards the northern and eastern boundaries, which are at 41m (OD). The Kennet and Avon Canal borders the site in the north. The Trowbridge to Bradford-on-Avon road (A363) lies to the west of the site and a Wessex Water sewage treatment plant is to the south. Lady Down Farm is located to the east of the site with the River Biss 200m to the east. The underlying geology is Kellaways Formation of sandy, mudstone (http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html).

2.3 An archaeological assessment undertaken by Foundations Archaeology in 2014 identified that the site is of overall low archaeological potential for the Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, Neolithic, Bronze Age, Roman and Saxon periods, although any finds or features of these dates would be considered of moderate-high significance. However, it was noted that the identified potential may be due more to a low-level of earlier archaeological investigation, rather than to any actual lack of activity. The site was assessed as having a moderate potential for Medieval activity, although it was observed that this was likely to be restricted to agricultural activity. Agricultural remains dating to this period were assessed as having relatively low significance. The site contained high potential for Post-medieval activity in the form of agricultural features and field boundaries. These are likely to have survived as buried features and be considered to have generally low significance.

2.4 A geophysical survey of the site undertaken by Archaeological Services WYAS (2014) between 23rd April and 2nd May 2014 identified three anomalies of archaeological potential, X, Y and Z (Figure 2).

2.5 As a consequence of this archaeological potential, the County Archaeological Officer requested a programme of field evaluation prior to determination of the application.

3 AIMS

3.1 The aims of the archaeological evaluation were to gather high quality data from the direct observation of archaeological deposits in order to establish the nature, extent, preservation and potential of any surviving archaeological remains, as well as to make recommendations for management of the resource, including further archaeological works if necessary. In turn, this would allow reasonable planning decisions to be taken regarding the archaeological provision for the areas affected by the proposed development.

3.2 These aims were achieved through pursuit of the following objectives:

i) to define and identify the nature of archaeological deposits on site, and date these where possible;

ii) to attempt to characterise the nature and preservation of the archaeological sequence and recover as much information as possible about the spatial patterning and extent of any features present on the site;

iii) to recover a well dated stratigraphic sequence that will attempt to determine the complexity of the horizontal and vertical stratigraphy present, and to recover coherent artefact, ecofact and environmental samples;

iv) to determine the potential of the site to provide palaeoenvironmental and/or economic evidence and the forms in which such evidence may be present.

v) to define any research priorities that may be relevant should further field investigation be required.

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 A total of eight 50m by 1.60m trenches, targeted on the anomalies identified by the geophysical survey were excavated across the proposed development site, as shown in Figure 2. The non-significant overburden was removed to the underlying natural deposit. This was achieved through the use of a 360º mechanical excavator, equipped with a toothless grading bucket. Spoil tips were visually inspected for finds.

4.2 All excavation and recording work was undertaken in accordance with the WSI and the Foundations Archaeology Technical Manual 3: Excavation Manual.

5 RESULTS

5.1 The natural substrate was a mottled orange-grey, compact, plastic clay, which occurred between 0.19m and 0.26m below the Modern ground surface. The

natural substrate was then sealed by a mid-grey-brown, plastic clay-silt ploughsoil. This stratigraphic sequence was present in all eight trenches.

5.2 At the base of the ploughsoil, there were occasional fragments of CBM and charcoal. Magnesium oxide was also present in quantity.

5.3 A geotech pit was dug in the northwest end of Trench 1 to a depth of 0.80m below the Modern ground surface to test the natural geology. The upper 0.25 - 0.30m of the natural substrate in the geotech pit had been disturbed by root action from the planting of crops, but beneath this area the deposit was undisturbed and there was no boundary or interface between the disturbed and undisturbed areas within the natural substrate.

5.4 The trenches targeted on anomalies identified by the geophysical survey did not yield any archaeological features at the locations of the anomalies. The only features present were either stone or ceramic land drains, which had been cut through the natural substrate. These were aligned either southwest-northwest or west-east, following the slope of the land. No other features with archaeological potential were identified in any of the trenches.

5.5 The ploughsoil contained occasional fragments of CBM and blue-willow pattern china. No finds from any earlier archaeological period were recovered from the site.

6 DISCUSSION

6.1 The only buried features present within the evaluation were land drains. The anomalies identified by the geophysical survey appear to be variations in the underlying geology or destroyed features that survive as 'shadows' within the ploughsoil. The stray finds to be recovered came from the ploughsoil and they were all dated to the later Post-medieval/Modern periods. In conclusion, the evaluation recovered no finds or features that pre-dated the later part of the Post-medieval period.

6.2 The archive is currently held at the offices of Foundations Archaeology, but will be deposited with Devizes Museum in due course. A short note will be submitted for publication in the relevant local archaeological journal and an OASIS form will also be submitted to ADS.

7 REFERENCES

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8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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APPENDIX 1: Stratigraphic Data

CXT	L(m)	W(m)	D(m)	DESCRIPTION	CUTS/LATER THAN	CUT BY/EARLIER THAN
				Trench 1: 50.04 m by 1.60 m		
101	50.04	1.60	0.26	Ploughsoil: mid-grey-brown, plastic, clay-silt	natural	n/a
				Trench 2: 49.40 m by 1.54 m		
201	49.40	1.43	0.23	Ploughsoil: mid-grey-brown, plastic, clay-silt	natural	n/a
				Trench 3: 49.40 m by 1.53 m		
301	49.40	1.53	0.22	Ploughsoil: mid-grey-brown, plastic, clay-silt	natural	n/a
				Trench 4: 50.70 m by 1.55 m		
401	50.70	1.55	0.19	Ploughsoil: mid-grey-brown, plastic, clay-silt	natural	n/a
				Trench 5: 50.35 m by 1.50 m		
501	50.35	1.50	0.26	Ploughsoil: mid-grey-brown, plastic, clay-silt	natural	n/a
				Trench 6: 49.65 m by 1.50 m		
601	49.65	1.50	0.25	Ploughsoil: mid-grey-brown, plastic, clay-silt	natural	n/a
				Trench 7: 49.98 m by 1.55 m		
701	49.98	1.55	0.23	Ploughsoil: mid-grey-brown, plastic, clay-silt	natural	n/a

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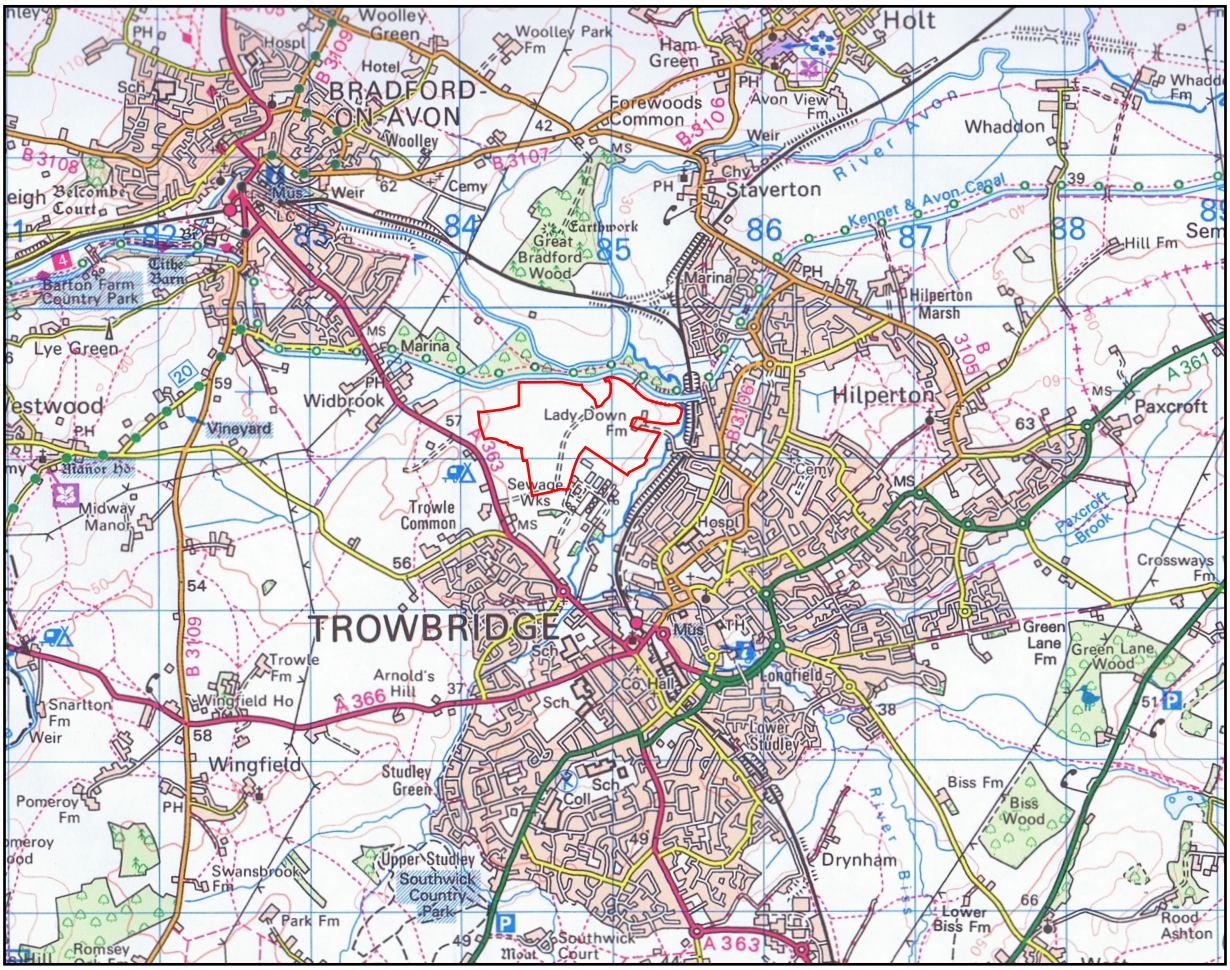


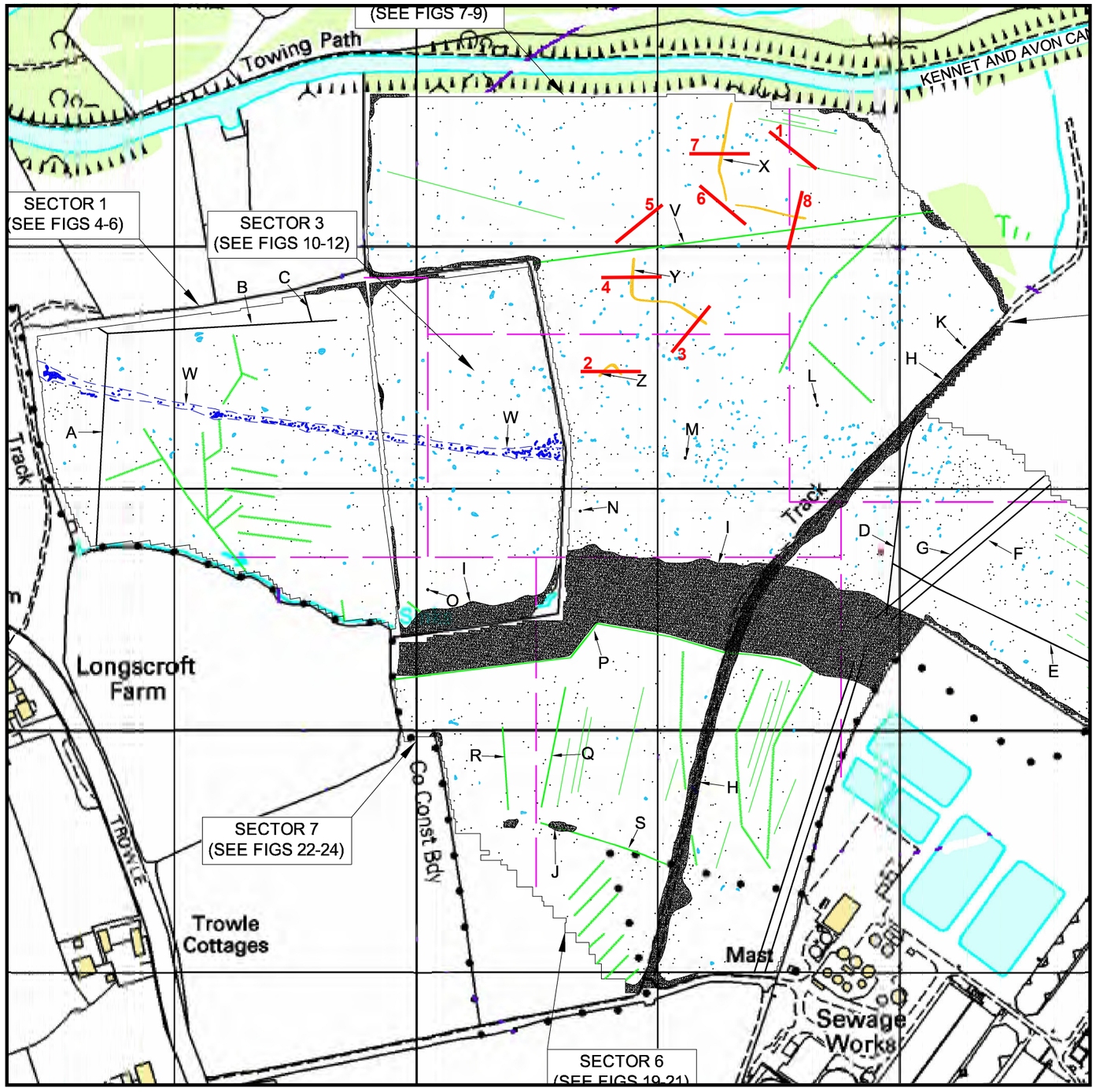
Site Code: CHF14
Accession Code:

N

0m 2km

1:50,000@A4

FIGURE 1: Site Location



TYPE OF ANOMALY		INTERPRETATION
•	DIPOLAR ISOLATED	FERROUS MATERIAL
—	DIPOLAR LINEAR	SERVICE PIPE
	MAGNETIC DISTURBANCE	FERROUS MATERIAL
	LINEAR TREND	FIELD DRAIN
	LINEAR TREND	RIDGE AND FURROW
	LINEAR TREND	AGRICULTURAL
	NEGATIVE LINEAR	AGRICULTURAL? / UNKNOWN?
	MAGNETIC ENHANCEMENT	GEOLOGY
	LINEAR	FORMER TRACKWAY?

Site Code: CHF14
Accession Code:

N

Evaluation Trench

0m 200m

1:4000@A3

FIGURE 2: Trench Locations