

**LAND AT COMMON FARM,
WROUGHTON,
SWINDON,
WILTSHIRE.**

NGR: 413739.182077

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

July 2015
Report No. 1070



ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSULTANCY, MANAGEMENT & FIELD SERVICES

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Quality Assurance

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SUMMARY

In March and April 2015 Foundations Archaeology undertook a programme of archaeological evaluation on land at Common Farm, Wroughton, Wiltshire (NGR: 413739.182077). The project was commissioned by Steve Cains of Public Power Solutions Ltd.

The evaluation comprised the excavation and recording of Fifty-one trenches within the area of a proposed solar farm. However, due to the presence of a medium pressure gas pipe-line only forty-eight trenches were excavated.

The archaeological works identified two features in Trench 25. These comprised a possible pit or posthole and a ditch, both of which were undated.

No archaeological features, finds or deposits were present within any of the other evaluation trenches. In light of this, the archaeological potential within the area of the proposed solar farm is considered low.

GLOSSARY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Archaeology

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

CBM

Ceramic Building Material.

Medieval

The period between AD 1066 and AD 1500.

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. (AOD Above Ordnance Datum).

OS

Ordnance Survey.

Post-medieval

The period between AD 1500 and AD 1900.

Prehistoric

The period prior to the Roman invasion of AD 43, traditionally sub divided into; *Palaeolithic* – c. 500,000 BC to c. 12,000 BC; *Mesolithic* – c. 12,000 BC to c. 4,500 BC; *Neolithic* – c. 4,500 BC to c. 2,000 BC; *Bronze Age* – c. 2,000 BC to c. 800 BC; *Iron Age* – c. 800 BC to AD 43.

Roman

The period traditionally dated AD 43 until AD 410.

Saxon

The period between AD 410 and AD 1066.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report presents the findings of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by Foundations Archaeology during March and April 2015 on land at Common Farm, Wroughton, Wiltshire (NGR: 413739.182077). The project was commissioned by Steve Cains of Public Power Solutions Ltd.
- 1.2 The project related to an approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI), prepared by Foundations Archaeology (2015) and was conducted in accordance with CIfA *Standards and Guidance on Archaeological Evaluation* (2014) as well as *Standards for Field Evaluation and Assessment in Wiltshire* (CAS 1995).
- 1.3 The code of conduct of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists was adhered to throughout.

2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The proposed development involved the construction of an 8MW solar farm with a temporary compound for cabins and car parking.
- 2.2 The site is located to the north of Wroughton, to the east of the B4005 and to the south of the M4. At the time of the fieldwork the site comprised farmland laid to pasture. The underlying geology is recorded as Ampthill Clay Formation and Kimmeridge Clay formation (undifferentiated) – Mudstone (BGS – online viewer).
- 2.3 A desk-based assessment, prepared by Foundations Archaeology (2014), concluded that the site had high potential for Medieval and Post-medieval archaeology, moderate to high potential for Prehistoric archaeology, moderate potential for Roman archaeology and low potential for Saxon archaeology.
- 2.4 A geophysical survey undertaken by Archaeological Surveys Limited in February 2015 revealed a number of features across the site which were potentially of archaeological significance.
- 2.5 As a result of its identified archaeological potential, the County Archaeologist 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 provide sufficient information 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 will 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 specific 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 features present on the site;

iii) to recover a well dated stratigraphic sequence which 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 Forty-eight 50m by 2.0m trenches, were excavated within the proposed development area, as shown in Figure 1. Proposed trenches 24, 26 and 35 were not excavated as they crossed the route of a medium pressure gas pipeline.

4.2 Non-significant overburden was removed to the top of natural substrates. This was achieved through the use of a mechanical excavator with a toothless grading bucket, under constant archaeological supervision. Thereafter cleaning and excavation was conducted by hand.

4.3 All archaeological deposits and features were subjected to appropriate levels of investigation. Where excavation was required for the satisfactory assessment of archaeological deposits, a minimum 20% sample of all linear features was excavated and a minimum 50% sample of all non-linear features was excavated.

4.4 Each excavation context was excavated, wherever possible, in such a way as to produce at least one representative cross-section of the deposit.

4.5 Decisions about the relative value of archaeological deposits and features were made in consultation with the County Archaeological Service.

4.6 All artefactual and ecofactual remains, whether stratified or not, were collected, bagged and labelled.

5 RESULTS

- 5.1. The site stratigraphy was largely uniform; consisting of the natural clays directly overlaid by ploughsoil. In trenches 16, 20, 30, 38 and 49, the natural clays were overlaid by pale-mid beige-grey clay-silt subsoil, which was overlaid by ploughsoil (Appendix 1). The height of the natural substrates varied slightly across the area and ranged from 101.72mAOD in Trench 13 to 104.24m AOD in Trench 34.
- 5.2. With the exception of Trench 25, all of the trenches were devoid of archaeological finds or features; apart from land drains and occasional plough scores.
- 5.3. Trench 25 contained a southeast-northwest orientated ditch [2502], which cut the natural clays and was sealed by ploughsoil (2501). The ditch was 1.9m wide by 0.32m deep and contained a soft-loose mid-grey clay-silt (2503) with occasional charcoal. The trench also contained a possible pit or posthole [2504], 0.55m in diameter by 0.12m deep, which was also sealed by the ploughsoil. The possible feature contained a soft-loose orange and grey mottled clay (2505) with frequent charcoal. A single sherd of highly abraded, undiagnostic ceramic was recovered from this fill. Due to its shallow depth and irregular shape, it is unclear if this feature represented an archaeological cut or a natural hollow with intrusive material.

6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1. The evaluation recorded a fairly uniform stratigraphy in which the natural clays were generally directly overlaid by ploughsoil. Subsoil was only present in five of the forty-eight excavated trenches, which suggests that the area had been subject to deep ploughing in the past. The top of the ploughsoil ranged from 101.80m to 104.67m AOD and the top of the natural substrates were encountered from 101.72m to 104.24m AOD.
- 6.2. Trench 25 was the only trench to contain archaeological features. These consisted of a ditch, possibly a defunct field boundary and a possible pit/posthole or natural hollow, which contained a single sherd of highly abraded and undated ceramic material. No other artefactual evidence was present within the evaluated area.
- 6.3. Due to the general paucity of archaeological features or finds, the archaeological potential within the area of the proposed solar farm is considered to be low.
- 6.4. The archive is currently held at the offices of Foundations Archaeology, but will be deposited in due course with Swindon Museum. A note regarding the evaluation results was published as part of an Environmental Statement Chapter for this site. A short note will be submitted for publication in the

relevant local archaeological journal and an OASIS form will also be submitted to ADS.

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8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Foundations Archaeology would like to thank Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger of Wiltshire Council and Steve Cains of Public Power Solutions Ltd for their help during the course of the project.

**APPENDIX 1:
THE STRATIGRAPHIC DATA**

Land at Common Farm, Wroughton, Wiltshire: Archaeological Evaluation

Context	L(m)	W(m)	D(m)	Description	Later than	Earlier than
				Trench 1: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = compact plastic yellow/beige-red brown clays at an average height of 102.19m AOD		
(101)	na	na	0.29	Ploughsoil; Mottled mid-red brown, moderately plastic clay-silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	na
				Trench 2: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = compact plastic yellow/beige-red brown clays at an average height of 101.84m AOD		
(201)	na	na	0.28	Ploughsoil; Mottled mid-red brown, moderately plastic clay-silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	na
				Trench 3: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = compact plastic yellow/beige-red brown clays at an average height of 102.15m AOD		
(301)	na	na	0.32	Ploughsoil; Mottled mid-red brown, moderately plastic clay-silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	na
				Trench 4: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = compact plastic yellow/beige-red brown clays at an average height of 102.02m AOD		
(401)	na	na	0.55	Ploughsoil; Dark grey/brown plastic clay silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	na
				Trench 5: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = Compact plastic yellow/beige-brown/dark grey clays at an average height of 101.76m AOD		
(501)	na	na	0.14	Ploughsoil; Dark grey/brown plastic clay silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	na
				Trench 6: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = Compact plastic yellow/brown/dark grey clays at an average height of 101.99m AOD		
(601)	na	na	0.41	Ploughsoil; Dark grey/brown plastic clay silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	na

Land at Common Farm, Wroughton, Wiltshire: Archaeological Evaluation

				Trench 7: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = Compact plastic yellow/beige-brown/dark grey clays at an average height of 102.26m AOD		
(701)	na	na	0.45	Ploughsoil; Mottled mid-red brown, moderately plastic clay-silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	na
				Trench 8: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = Dark grey plastic clays at an average height of 102.16m AOD		
(801)	na	na	0.43	Ploughsoil; Mottled mid-red brown, moderately plastic clay-silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	na
				Trench 9: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = Dark grey plastic clays at an average height of 101.99m AOD		
(901)	na	na	0.39	Ploughsoil; Dark grey/brown plastic clay silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	na
				Trench 10: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = Dark grey plastic clays at an average height of 102.59m AOD		
(1001)	na	na	0.44	Ploughsoil; Dark grey/brown plastic clay silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	na
				Trench 11: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = Compact plastic yellow/beige-brown/pale and dark grey clays at an average height of 102.44m AOD		
(1101)	na	na	0.39	Ploughsoil; Dark grey/brown plastic clay silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	na
				Trench 12: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = Mid to dark grey plastic clays at an average height of 102.20m AOD		
(1201)	na	na	0.36	Ploughsoil; Dark grey/brown plastic clay silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	na

Land at Common Farm, Wroughton, Wiltshire: Archaeological Evaluation

				Trench 13: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = Light to mid grey plastic clays at an average height of 101.72m AOD		
(1301)	na	na	0.45	Ploughsoil; Dark grey/brown plastic clay silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	na
				Trench 14: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = Light to mid grey plastic clays at an average height of 101.77m AOD		
(1401)	na	na	0.42	Ploughsoil; Dark grey/brown plastic clay silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	na
				Trench 15: 50m long by 2.0m wide. Natural = Light to mid grey plastic clays at an average height of 102.06m AOD		
(1501)	na	na	0.30	Ploughsoil; Dark grey/brown plastic clay silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	na
				Trench 16: 50m long by 2.0m wide. Natural = Light to mid grey plastic clays at an average height of 102.45m AOD		
(1601)	na	na	0.28	Ploughsoil; Dark grey/brown plastic clay silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	(1602)	na
(1602)	na	na	0.20	Subsoil; Pale beige-grey clay silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	(1601)
				Trench 17: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = Light to mid grey plastic clays at an average height of 102.26m AOD		
(1701)	na	na	0.29	Ploughsoil; Dark grey/brown plastic clay silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	na
				Trench 18: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = Light to mid grey plastic clays at an average height of 102.03m AOD		
(1801)	na	na	0.25	Ploughsoil; Dark grey/brown plastic clay silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	na

Land at Common Farm, Wroughton, Wiltshire: Archaeological Evaluation

				Trench 19: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = Light to mid grey plastic clays at an average height of 102.16m AOD		
(1901)	na	na	0.35	Ploughsoil; Dark grey/brown plastic clay silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	na
				Trench 20: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = Light grey plastic clays at an average height of 102.90m AOD		
(2001)	na	na	0.23	Ploughsoil; Dark grey/brown plastic clay silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	(2002)	na
(2002)	na	na	0.29	Subsoil; Pale beige-grey clay silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	(2001)
				Trench 21: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = Light to mid grey plastic clays at an average height of 102.43m AOD		
(2101)	na	na	0.23	Ploughsoil; Dark grey/brown plastic clay silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	na
				Trench 22: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = Light to mid grey plastic clays at an average height of 102.47m AOD		
(2201)	na	na	0.24	Ploughsoil; Dark grey/brown plastic clay silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	na
				Trench 23: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = Light grey plastic clays at an average height of 103.13m AOD		
(2301)	na	na	0.25	Ploughsoil; Dark grey/brown plastic clay silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	na
				Trench 24: Not excavated		
				Trench 25: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = Compact plastic yellow/beige-red brown clays at an average height of 103.18m AOD		

Land at Common Farm, Wroughton, Wiltshire: Archaeological Evaluation

(2501)	na	na	0.35	Ploughsoil; Dark grey/brown plastic clay silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	na
[2502]	2.1+	1.9	0.32	Cut for southeast-northwest orientated linear [2502]. Rounded base with shallow, sloping sides. 0.32m deep by 1.9m wide.	natural	(2503)
(2503)	2.1+	1.10	0.33	Fill of linear [2502]. Soft/loose mid grey silt clay with occasional flecks of charcoal. No finds recovered.	[2502]	(2501)
[2504]	0.55	0.55	0.13	Cut for possible pit or posthole [2504]. Irregular base with medium sloping sides. 0.13m deep by 0.55m in diameter.	natural	(2505)
(2505)	0.55	0.55	0.13	Fill of possible pit or posthole [2504]. Soft/loose orange and grey mottled clay with frequent charcoal. One sherd of highly abraded ceramic recovered.	[2504]	(2501)
				Trench 26: Not excavated		
				Trench 27: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = Compact plastic yellow/beige-red brown clays at an average height of 101.87m AOD		
(2701)	na	na	0.50	Ploughsoil; Dark grey/brown plastic clay silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	na
				Trench 28: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = Compact plastic yellow/beige-red brown clays at an average height of 102.52m AOD		
(2801)	na	na	0.55	Ploughsoil; Mottled mid-red brown, moderately plastic clay-silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	na
				Trench 29: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = Compact plastic yellow/beige-brown/pale and dark grey clays at an average height of 102.91m AOD		
(2901)	na	na	0.48	Ploughsoil; Dark grey/brown plastic clay silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	na

Land at Common Farm, Wroughton, Wiltshire: Archaeological Evaluation

				Trench 30: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = Compact plastic yellow/beige-brown/pale and mid grey clays at an average height of 101.94m AOD		
(3001)	na	na	0.20	Ploughsoil; Dark grey/brown plastic clay silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	(3002)	na
(3002)	na	na	0.24	Subsoil; Mid beige-grey clay silt	natural	(3001)
				Trench 31: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = Compact plastic yellow/beige-red brown clays at an average height of 103.67m AOD		
(3101)	na	na	0.33	Ploughsoil; Mottled mid-red brown, moderately plastic clay-silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	na
				Trench 32: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = Light to mid grey plastic clays at an average height of 103.70m AOD		
(3201)	na	na	0.34	Ploughsoil; Dark grey/brown plastic clay silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	na
				Trench 33: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = Compact plastic yellow/beige-red brown clays at an average height of 103.08m AOD		
(3301)	na	na	0.40	Ploughsoil; Mid grey/brown plastic clay silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	na
				Trench 34: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = Light to mid grey/beige plastic clays at an average height of 104.24m AOD		
(3401)	na	na	0.35	Ploughsoil; Mid grey/brown plastic clay silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	na
				Trench 35: Not excavated		
				Trench 36: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = Light to mid grey/beige plastic clays at an average height of 104.19m AOD		

Land at Common Farm, Wroughton, Wiltshire: Archaeological Evaluation

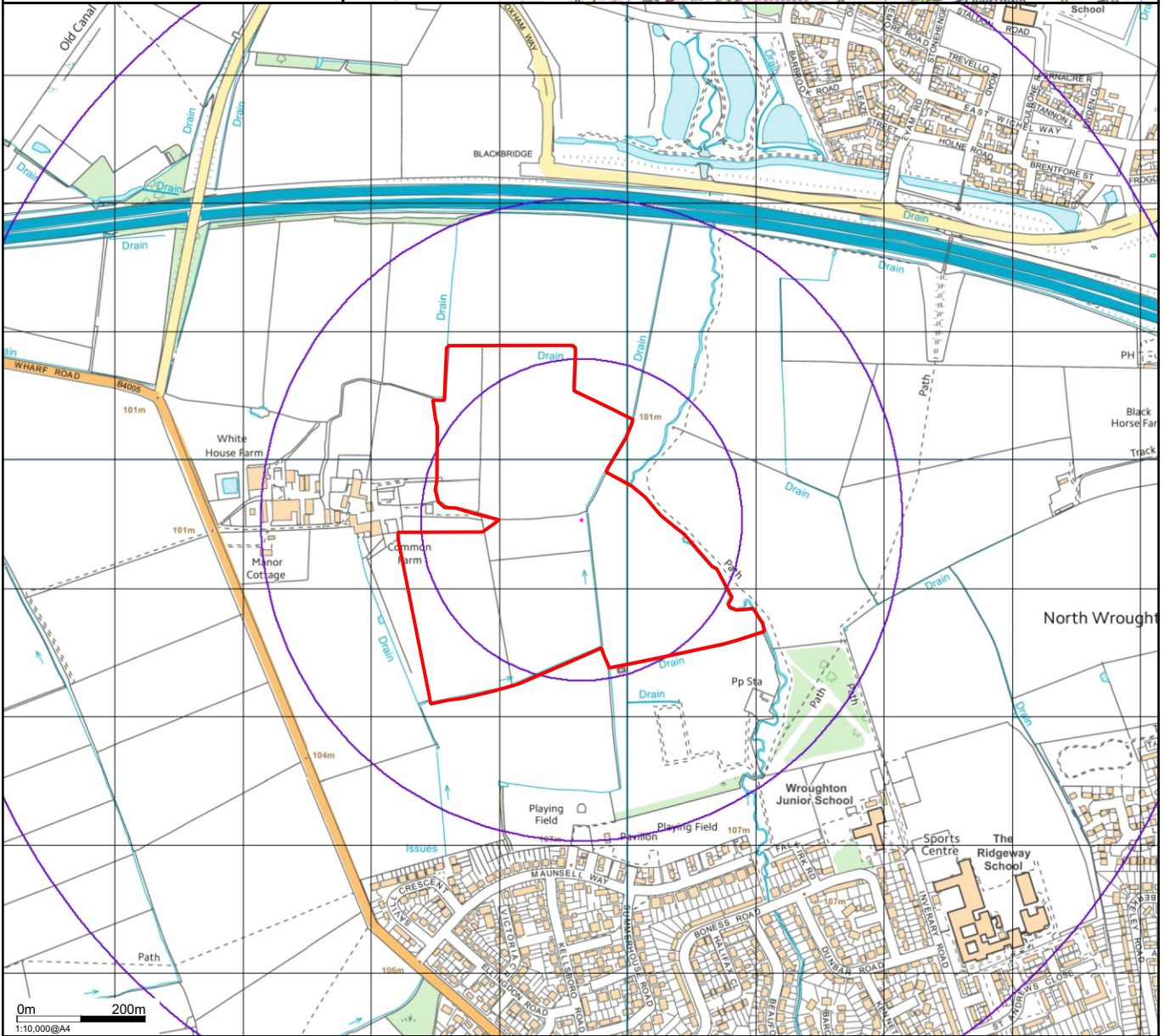
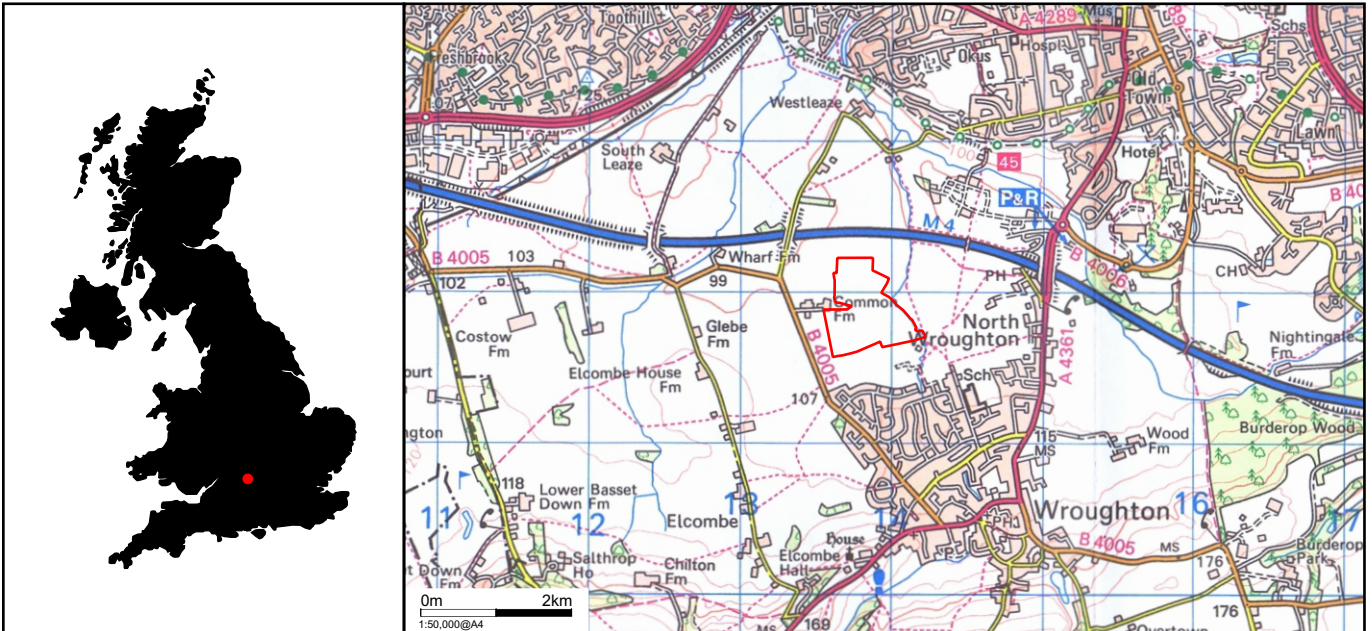
(3601)	na	na	0.42	Ploughsoil; Mid grey/brown plastic clay silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	na
				Trench 37: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = Compact plastic yellow/beige-red brown clays at an average height of 103.70m AOD		
(3701)	na	na	0.42	Ploughsoil; Mottled mid-red brown, moderately plastic clay-silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	na
				Trench 38: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = Light to mid grey plastic clays at an average height of 103.24m AOD		
(3801)	na	na	0.30	Ploughsoil; Dark grey/brown plastic clay silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	(3802)	na
(3802)	na	na	0.19	Subsoil; Mid beige-grey clay silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	(3801)
				Trench 39: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = Compact plastic yellow/beige-brown/light grey clays at an average height of 102.83m AOD		
(3901)	na	na	0.56	Ploughsoil; Dark grey/brown plastic clay silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	na
				Trench 40: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = Compact plastic yellow/beige-brown/light grey clays at an average height of 102.74m AOD		
(4001)	na	na	0.54	Ploughsoil; Dark grey/brown plastic clay silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	na
				Trench 41: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = Compact plastic yellow/beige-red brown clays at an average height of 102.75m AOD		
(4101)	na	na	0.58	Ploughsoil; Mid grey/brown plastic clay silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	na

Land at Common Farm, Wroughton, Wiltshire: Archaeological Evaluation

				Trench 42: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = Compact plastic yellow/beige-brown/pale and mid grey clays at an average height of 103.25m AOD		
(4201)	na	na	0.35	Ploughsoil; Dark grey/brown plastic clay silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	na
				Trench 43: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = Compact plastic yellow/beige-brown/pale and mid grey clays at an average height of 102.58m AOD		
(4301)	na	na	0.57	Ploughsoil; Dark grey/brown plastic clay silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	na
				Trench 44: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = Compact plastic yellow/beige-brown/pale and mid grey clays at an average height of 103.16m AOD		
(4401)	na	na	0.34	Ploughsoil; Dark grey/brown plastic clay silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	na
				Trench 45: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = Compact plastic yellow/beige-brown/pale and mid grey clays at an average height of 102.93m AOD		
(4501)	na	na	0.40	Ploughsoil; Dark grey/brown plastic clay silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	na
				Trench 46: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = Compact plastic yellow/beige-brown/pale and mid grey clays at an average height of 102.78m AOD		
(4601)	na	na	0.27	Ploughsoil; Dark grey/brown plastic clay silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	na
				Trench 47: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = Compact plastic yellow/beige-red brown clays at an average height of 103.22m AOD		

Land at Common Farm, Wroughton, Wiltshire: Archaeological Evaluation

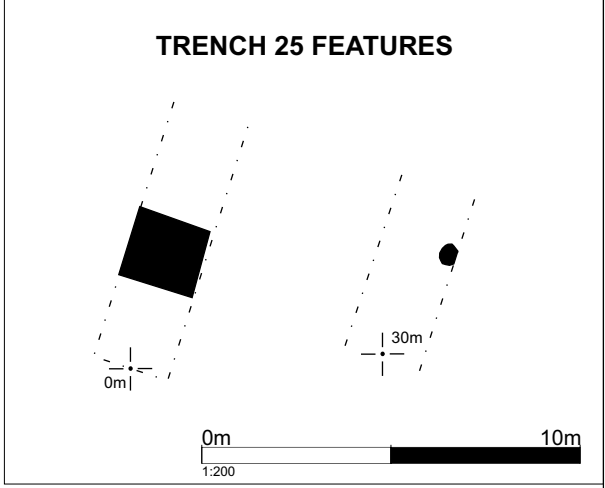
(4701)	na	na	0.34	Ploughsoil; Dark grey/brown plastic clay silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	na
				Trench 48: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = Compact plastic yellow/beige-brown/pale and mid grey clays at an average height of 103.37m AOD		
(4801)	na	na	0.37	Ploughsoil; Dark grey/brown plastic clay silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	na
				Trench 49: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = Compact plastic yellow/beige-brown/pale and mid grey clays at an average height of 102.96m AOD		
(4901)	na	na	0.11	Ploughsoil; Dark grey/brown plastic clay silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	(4902)	na
(4902)	na	na	0.55	Subsoil; Mid beige-brown clay silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	(4901)
				Trench 50: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = Compact plastic beige-brown/mid grey clays at an average height of 103.00m AOD		
(5001)	na	na	0.25	Ploughsoil; Dark grey/brown plastic clay silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	na
				Trench 51: 50m long by 2.1m wide. Natural = Light to mid grey plastic clays at an average height of 102.38m AOD		
(5101)			0.35	Ploughsoil; Dark grey/brown plastic clay silt, no inclusions or charcoal present	natural	na



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Site Code: WPV14ev
Accession Code:

FIGURE 1: Site Location



Abstraction and interpretation of magnetometer anomalies

- Positive linear anomaly - possible ditch-like feature
- Negative linear anomaly - material of low magnetic susceptibility
- Positive linear anomaly - possible land drain
- Discrete positive response - possible pit-like feature
- Positive anomaly - magnetically enhanced material
- Positive anomaly - possible palaeochannel
- Zone of numerous discrete positive responses - of possible natural origin
- Magnetic debris - spread of magnetically thermoremanent/ferrous material
- Magnetic disturbance from ferrous material
- Strong multiple dipolar linear anomaly - pipeline / cable / service
- Strong dipolar anomaly - ferrous object

Site Code: WPV14ev
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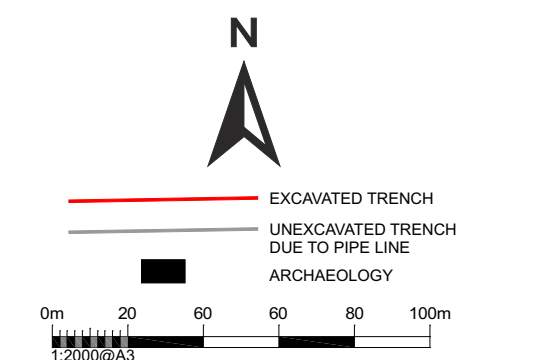
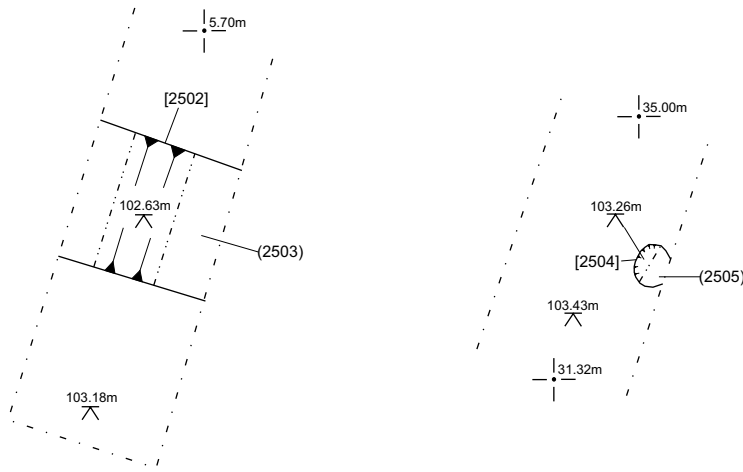
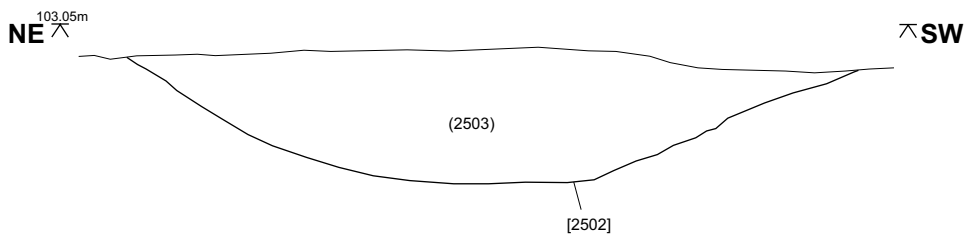


Figure 2: Plan Showing Excavated Trenches



NORTHWEST FACING SECTION [2502]



NORTHWEST FACING SECTION [2504]

