

**LAND AT STRATFORD ROAD,  
HONEYBOURNE,  
WORCESTERSHIRE.**

**NGR: SP 1198 4455**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION**



Trench 15 Looking South

May 2021  
Report No. 1421



**ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSULTANCY, MANAGEMENT & FIELD SERVICES**

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Trench 4 Looking South

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**Quality Assurance**

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## SUMMARY

Between 20<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup> April 2021 Foundations Archaeology undertook an archaeological evaluation on land at Stratford Road, Honeybourne, Worcestershire (NGR: SP 1198 4455). The project was commissioned by Ben Stephenson of BSA Heritage on behalf of Owl Homes Ltd.

The works comprised the excavation of 15 archaeological evaluation trenches, subsequent to geophysical survey, within the area of proposed housing and related disturbance.

Evaluation trenching indicated that the site is likely to have low archaeological potential. However, a single abraded sherd of probable late Iron Age/early Roman pottery was recovered from the subsoil of Trench 8. No further significant archaeological finds, features or deposits were present within the evaluated trenches.

Modern disturbance was present along the southwestern edge of the site, within Trenches 1, 11, 13 and 15.

## 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 between 20th & 21st April 2021 on land at Stratford Road, Honeybourne, Worcestershire (NGR: SP 1198 4455). The project was commissioned by Ben Stephenson of BSA Heritage on behalf of Owl Homes Ltd.
- 1.2 The evaluation was conducted in accordance with an approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI), prepared by Foundations Archaeology (2021) and the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluation* (2014).
- 1.3 The CIfA code of conduct was adhered to throughout.

## 2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Outline planning permission has been granted for the construction of residential units, infrastructure, landscaping and related development on land at Stratford Road, Honeybourne (Planning Reference **20/01124/OUT**).
- 2.2 The site is defined by the railway line to the north with fields beyond, by properties west of Stratford Road to the east and by properties and gardens off Harvard Avenue to the south west. New residences and public open space have recently been constructed/created north west of the site. The site is broadly flat at a height of around 51m AOD, with a slight slope from northeast to southwest.
- 2.3 The proposed development was subject to an Archaeology and Heritage Assessment by BSA Heritage in May 2020. The results of this assessment are summarised below for ease.
  - 2.3.1 The earliest record located within the study area relates to an area of Head superficial geology east of Stratford Road and the site which has been assessed to have higher potential for Palaeolithic or Early Stone Age deposits as part of a county-wide assessment (HER 56936). No such archaeology has actually been revealed and any deposits of this period are likely to lie at considerable depth. A further area assessed to have higher Palaeolithic potential lies north of Cow Honeybourne.
  - 2.3.2 The most useful HER records relate to recent archaeological investigations within the settlement, most often ahead of or during new residential development. Investigations in 2011 west of the settlement's main north to south road and more than 400 metres south west of the site revealed remains of Iron Age date, interpreted as indicating settlement by a crossing of the River Isbourne (HERs 46054 & 47987). More recently, investigations east of the main road found one possible Iron Age ditch (HER 70355).

- 2.3.3 The above investigations also found Roman remains, including more ditches and post-holes east of the main road (HER 70355). This is perhaps unsurprising given that the road itself is the Roman Ryknild or Buckle Street (HER 30300). Recent investigation in the south of Honeybourne revealed a stretch of metalled road and flanking ditches, albeit west of the Modern route (HER 66927). The crossing of the River Isbourne may have been an important location in prehistory and Ryknild Street maybe a Prehistoric route re-used by the Romans. A secondary Roman route has also been suggested running west from Rynild Street (HER 30628).
- 2.3.4 However, away from the crossing of the river, archaeological investigations suggest agriculture rather than occupation. HERs 46641 and 67041 west of Ryknild Street identified a possible enclosure and small number of Roman ditches interpreted as parts of a field system. Archaeological fieldwork south of the village which revealed a stretch of Ryknild Street found nothing else of significance, as did recent investigation north of the centre and immediately west of the site (HERs 47420 & 46073). This latter work only recorded the remains of Medieval ridge and furrow, indicative of agricultural use of the land in that period and small amounts of Roman pottery which were likely brought to the site by later manuring. Other than records for the churches and settlement at Honeybourne as well as extensive ridge and furrow observed on aerial photographs, the HER records little of Medieval date. HER 2831 records the likely site of shrunken settlement south of St. Ecgwin's Church; which is of late 13<sup>th</sup> century and later date, several hundred metres south of the site.
- 2.3.5 The report concluded that site is likely to have been farmland on the edge of the village for a millennium given the known presence of ridge and furrow post-war. Cultivation will have disturbed any sub-surface remains and vestiges of ridge and furrow are of no special interest.
- 2.4 A geophysical survey by Sumo Geophysics Ltd (July 2020) was also undertaken across the site. The survey did not indicate any anomalies of potential archaeological significance. The remains of an old pond, visible as such on historic OS maps, plus a drain were detected in the north of the site. A former path and possible underground service runs along the eastern boundary of the site, while the remaining responses relate to areas of ferrous disturbance.
- 2.5 The underlying geology is recorded as *Blue Lias Formation and Charmouth Mudstone Formation (undifferentiated)* – *Mudstone* with no superficial geological deposits present (BGS Online viewer).
- 2.6 The site therefore contained the potential for evidence of Medieval or later activity. This did not prejudice the works against the recovery of data relating to other periods.

### **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 would allow informed planning/mitigation decisions to be taken regarding the archaeological provision for the areas affected by the development.
- 3.2 These aims were achieved through pursuit of the following specific objectives:
- To determine, as far as reasonably practicable, the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains.
  - To assess vulnerability/sensitivity of any exposed remains.
  - To establish the ecofactual and environmental potential of archaeological deposits and features encountered.
  - To provide sufficient information on the archaeological potential of the site to enable the archaeological implications of the proposed development to be assessed, if appropriate.
  - To inform formulation of a strategy to avoid or mitigate impacts of the proposed development on surviving archaeological remains.
  - To produce a site archive for deposition with Museums Worcestershire.

### **4 METHODOLOGY**

- 4.1 The approved WSI stipulated the excavation of 1 x 50m and 14 x 30m long evaluation trenches, which represented an approximate 3% sample of the site. However, due to an overhead service and a public footpath the location of some of the trenches was amended slightly and Trench 15 was shortened. These amendments to the approved trenching scheme were agreed with BSA Heritage and the archaeological representative of Worcestershire County Council. The final trench locations are shown in Figure 2.
- 4.2 Non-significant overburden was removed, under constant archaeological supervision, to the top of archaeological remains or the underlying natural deposits, whichever was encountered first. This was achieved through use of a 360° mechanical excavator, equipped with a toothless grading bucket. Features and spoil tips were scanned for finds both visually and by metal detector.



- 4.3 Where potential archaeological features were present, these were subject to appropriate levels of investigation. All excavation and recording work was undertaken in accordance with the approved WSI and the Foundations Archaeology Technical Manual 3: Excavation Manual.

## 5 RESULTS

- 5.1 A full description of all contexts identified during the course of the fieldwork is presented in Appendix 1. A summary of the results is given below. All trench measurements are related to the base of the trench.
- 5.2 The natural substrates consisted of variable orange/brown/grey clays, with flint patches, which were present at an average depth of 0.40m (51.15m AOD) below the Modern ground. These were overlain by a mid grey/brown grey clay/silty clay subsoil, up to 0.25m thick, which was, in turn, sealed by a dark brown silty clay topsoil, up to 0.3m thick. The subsoil was entirely absent in Trench 15.
- 5.3 Visibility conditions on site were generally very good.
- 5.4 No archaeological features or deposits were present within the evaluated trenches. However, a single abraded sherd of probable late Iron Age/early Roman pottery was recovered from the subsoil of Trench 8.
- 5.5 Trenches 1, 11, 13 and 15 showed evidence of modern material within the topsoil and the southern end of the shortened Trench 15 had been cut away by modern hardstanding. Trench 15 did not contain any subsoil and therefore was likely to have been previously reduced down to the natural substrates.

## 6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 Evaluation trenching, subsequent to a geophysical survey, has indicated that the site is likely to have low archaeological potential. However, a single abraded sherd of probable late Iron Age/early Roman pottery was recovered from the subsoil of Trench 8. No further significant archaeological finds, features or deposits were present within the evaluated trenches.
- 6.2 Modern disturbance was present along the southwestern edge of the site, within Trenches 1, 11, 13 and 15.
- 6.3 The archive is currently held at the offices of Foundations Archaeology, but will be deposited in due course with Museums Worcestershire, under reference HER No. WSM77494. A digital report/archive will also be submitted to OASIS/ADS. A short note will be submitted for publication in the relevant local archaeological journal.

## 7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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## 8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Foundations Archaeology would like to thank Aidan Smyth, archaeology and planning advisor to Wychavon and Malvern Hills District Councils, Ben Stephenson of BSA Heritage and Lee Ellis of Owl Homes Ltd. for their help during the course of the project.

**APPENDIX 1: Stratigraphic Data**

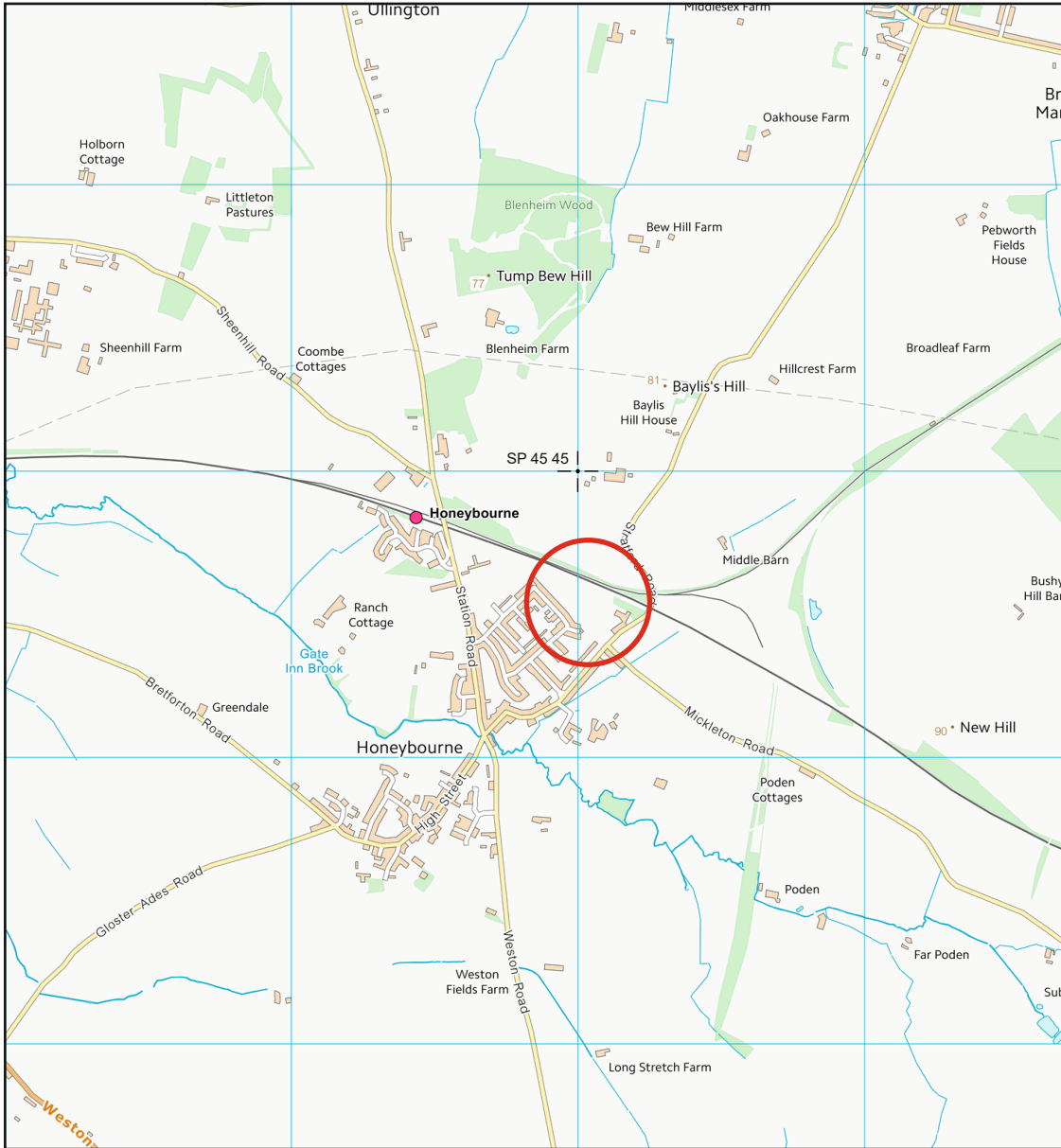
CXT	L(m)	W(m)	D(m)	DESCRIPTION	CUTS/LATER THAN	CUT BY/EARLIER THAN
				<b>TRENCH 1:</b> 29.8m long by 1.9m wide. <b>Natural</b> = yellow/grey/blue clay with flints. Present at average 50.24m AOD.		
101	n/a	n/a	0.1-0.15	Topsoil: dark grey silty clay, with frequent large stone inclusions, possibly imported material for hardstanding. Modern material noted throughout, but not retained. Similar stone inclusions to (1101), (1301) & (1501).	102	n/a
102	n/a	n/a	0.2-0.25	Subsoil: mid brown/orange brown clay/silt clay. No obvious charcoal or inclusions.	natural	101
				No archaeological features or finds were present within the trench.		
				<b>TRENCH 2:</b> 30.4m long by 1.9m wide. <b>Natural</b> = grey and orange mottled clay with rare flints. Present at average 50.51m AOD.		
201	n/a	n/a	0.25	Topsoil: dark brown silty clay, with rare flint inclusions. A single fragment of undiagnostic animal bone recovered (18g)	202	n/a
202	n/a	n/a	0.15	Subsoil: mid grey/brown grey clay/silty clay, rare flint inclusions.	natural	201
				No archaeological features or finds were present within the trench.		
				<b>TRENCH 3:</b> 30.8m long by 1.9m wide. <b>Natural</b> = grey and orange mottled clay with rare flints. Present at average 50.74m AOD.		
301	n/a	n/a	0.15	Topsoil: dark brown silty clay, with rare flint inclusions.	302	n/a
302	n/a	n/a	0.20	Subsoil: mid grey/brown grey clay/silty clay, rare flint inclusions.	natural	301
				No archaeological features or finds were present within the trench.		
				<b>TRENCH 4:</b> 30.4m long by 1.9m wide. <b>Natural</b> = grey and orange mottled clay with rare flints. Present at average 50.51m AOD.		
401	n/a	n/a	0.22	Topsoil: dark brown silty clay, with rare flint inclusions.	402	n/a
402	n/a	n/a	0.22	Subsoil: mid grey/brown grey clay/silty clay, rare flint inclusions.	natural	401
				No archaeological features or finds were present within the trench.		
				<b>TRENCH 5:</b> 48.8m long by 1.9m wide. <b>Natural</b> = grey and orange mottled clay with rare flints. Present at average 51.10m AOD.		
501	n/a	n/a	0.25	Topsoil: dark brown silty clay, with rare flint inclusions.	502	n/a
502	n/a	n/a	0.20	Subsoil: mid grey/brown grey clay/silty clay, rare flint inclusions.	natural	501
				No archaeological features or finds were present within the trench.		

Land at Stratford Road, Honeybourne, Worcestershire: Archaeological Evaluation

CXT	L(m)	W(m)	D(m)	DESCRIPTION	CUTS/LATER THAN	CUT BY/EARLIER THAN
				<b>TRENCH 6:</b> 29.3m long by 1.9m wide. <b>Natural</b> = grey and orange mottled clay. Present at average 51.04m AOD.		
601	n/a	n/a	0.2	Topsoil: dark brown silty clay, with rare flint inclusions.	602	n/a
602	n/a	n/a	0.25	Subsoil: mid grey/brown grey clay/silty clay, rare flint inclusions.	natural	601
				No archaeological features or finds were present within the trench.		
				<b>TRENCH 7:</b> 29.2m long by 1.9m wide. <b>Natural</b> = grey and orange mottled clay with rare flints. Present at average 51.08m AOD.		
701	n/a	n/a	0.25	Topsoil: dark brown silty clay, with rare flint inclusions.	702	n/a
702	n/a	n/a	0.20	Subsoil: mid grey/brown grey clay/silty clay, rare flint inclusions.	natural	701
				No archaeological features or finds were present within the trench.		
				<b>TRENCH 8:</b> 30m long by 1.9m wide. <b>Natural</b> = orange clay. Present at average 51.64m AOD.		
801	n/a	n/a	0.17	Topsoil: dark brown silty clay, with rare flint inclusions.	802	n/a
802	n/a	n/a	0.17	Subsoil: mid grey/brown grey clay/silty clay, rare flint inclusions. A single heavily abraded sherd of probable late Iron Age/early Roman pottery (3g).	natural	801
				No archaeological features were present within the trench.		
				<b>TRENCH 9:</b> 29.2m long by 1.9m wide. <b>Natural</b> = mottled orange brown grey clay. Present at average 52.05m AOD.		
901	n/a	n/a	0.2	Topsoil: dark brown silty clay, with rare flint inclusions.	902	n/a
902	n/a	n/a	0.2	Subsoil: mid grey/brown grey clay/silty clay, rare flint inclusions.	natural	901
				No archaeological features or finds were present within the trench.		
				<b>TRENCH 10:</b> 30.5m long by 1.9m wide. <b>Natural</b> = mottled orange grey clay. Present at average 51.37m AOD.		
1001	n/a	n/a	0.2	Topsoil: dark brown silty clay, with rare flint inclusions.	1002	n/a
1002	n/a	n/a	0.2	Subsoil: mid grey/brown grey clay/silty clay, rare flint inclusions.	natural	1001
				No archaeological features or finds were present within the trench.		

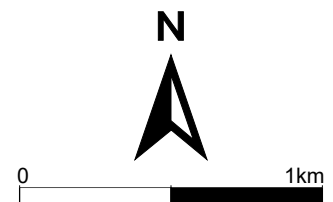
Land at Stratford Road, Honeybourne, Worcestershire: Archaeological Evaluation

CXT	L(m)	W(m)	D(m)	DESCRIPTION	CUTS/LATER THAN	CUT BY/EARLIER THAN
				<b>TRENCH 11:</b> 30m long by 1.9m wide. <b>Natural</b> = grey and orange mottled clay. Present at average 51.13m AOD.		
1101	n/a	n/a	0.25	Topsoil: dark brown silty clay, with rare flint inclusions. Large stone inclusions present in western 1m of the trench, similar in appearance to the stones identified in (101), (1301) & (1501).	1102	n/a
1102	n/a	n/a	0.20	Subsoil: mid grey/brown grey clay/silty clay, rare flint inclusions.	natural	1101
				No archaeological features or finds were present within the trench.		
				<b>TRENCH 12:</b> 31.3m long by 1.9m wide. <b>Natural</b> = orange clay with rare flints. Present at average 51.81m AOD.		
1201	n/a	n/a	0.25	Topsoil: dark brown silty clay, with rare flint inclusions.	1202	n/a
1202	n/a	n/a	0.20	Subsoil: mid grey/brown grey clay/silty clay, rare flint inclusions.	natural	1201
				No archaeological features or finds were present within the trench.		
				<b>TRENCH 13:</b> 30.1m long by 1.9m wide. <b>Natural</b> = orange clay and flints. Present at average 51.55m AOD.		
1301	n/a	n/a	0.10	Topsoil: dark brown silty clay, with rare flint inclusions. In the southeastern end of the trench the topsoil is mixed with frequent large stones similar to (101), (1101) & (1501), with the topsoil directly sealing the natural deposits.	1302	n/a
1302	40+	n/a	0.13	Subsoil: mid grey/brown grey clay/silty clay, rare flint inclusions. Only present for approximately 40m from the northwestern end of trench	natural	1301
				No archaeological features were present within the trench.		
				<b>TRENCH 14:</b> 30.7m long by 1.9m wide. <b>Natural</b> = orange clay and flints. Present at average 52.03m AOD.		
1401	n/a	n/a	0.1-0.25	Topsoil: dark brown silty clay, with rare flint inclusions. Topsoil deeper at the southern end of the trench.	1402	n/a
1402	n/a	n/a	0.25	Subsoil: mid grey/brown grey clay/silty clay, rare flint inclusions.	natural	1401
				No archaeological features or finds were present within the trench.		
				<b>TRENCH 15:</b> 7.1m long by 1.9m wide. <b>Natural</b> = grey clay. Present at average 51.32m AOD. Trench modified due to overhead services and public footpath.		
1501	6+	n/a	0.2-0.3	Topsoil: dark grey brown silty clay. Occasional to frequent stone inclusions similar to (101), (1101) & (1301). Not present at southern end of trench.	natural	1502
1502	1+	n/a	0.2	Concrete layer with a felt base lining. Only present at southern end of the trench.	1501, natural	
				No subsoil present within this trench. No archaeological features or finds were present within the trench.		



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**Site Code: SRH21**  
**Accession Code: WSM77494**



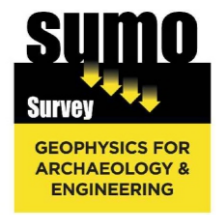
**FIGURE 1: Site Location**





### KEY

	Drain
	Former pond
	Magnetic disturbance
	Service
	Ferrous



Title: Magnetometer Survey - Interpretation	
Client: Rosconn Group	
Project: 17686 - Land at Stratford Road, Honeybourne, Worcestershire	
Scale: 0 metres 62.5 1:1250 @ A3	Fig No: 03

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Proposed Trench Location  
 Excavated Trench Location



**FIGURE 2: Proposed Trench Locations**