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**Land at Glebe Farm, Bourne Road,  
Lower Strensham, Worcestershire**

**Archaeological Evaluation**

**by Jamie Williams**

**Site Code: SSF20/25**

**(SO 9019 4126)**

# **Land at Glebe Farm, Bourne Road, Lower Strensham, Worcestershire**

**An Archaeological Evaluation  
for Armour Heritage Ltd**

By Jamie Williams

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code SSF 20/25

**February 2020**

## Summary

**Site name:** Land at Glebe Farm, Bourne Road, Lower Strensham, Worcestershire

**Grid reference:** SO 9019 4126

**Site activity:** Archaeological Evaluation

**Date and duration of project:** 18th - 19th February 2020

**Project coordinator:** Tim Dawson

**Site supervisor:** Jamie Williams

**Site code:** SSF 20/25

**HER Event No.** WSM72758.

**Area of site:** c. 18ha

**Summary of results:** Twelve trenches were excavated to target anomalies identified in a magnetic geophysical survey. The only features revealed were furrows. No archaeological deposits were found.

**Location and reference of archive:** The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Museums Worcestershire in due course.

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[www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp](http://www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp).*

Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 28.02.20 Steve Preston ✓ 28.02.20
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# Land at Glebe Farm, Bourne Road, Lower Strensham, Worcestershire An Archaeological Evaluation

by Jamie Williams

**Report 20/25**

## **Introduction**

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out on land at Glebe Farm for an eastern extension of Solar PV, at Bourne Road, Lower Strensham, Worcestershire, WR8 9BT (SO 9019 4126) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Ms Sue Farr, of Armour Heritage Ltd, Foghamshire Timber Yard, Foghamshire Lane, Trudoxhill, Frome, Somerset, BA11 5DG.

Planning permission (19/01680/FUL) has been granted by Wychavon District Council for an extension of the existing Solar PV on land west of Glebe Farm and its associated infrastructure. The application is subject to conditions (1 and 2) requiring a programme of archaeological investigation on the site. This is in accordance with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2019), and the District Council's policies on archaeology.

Adjacent areas were subject to magnetic geophysical survey and archaeological evaluation before development commenced in 2018, with a similar survey conducted over this extension area, of approximately 18ha, which revealed only anomalies interpreted as corresponding to modern features and agricultural furrows, with a few weak anomalies of uncertain interpretation. Evaluation by means of trial trenching was also required in order to investigate the anomalies recorded by the geophysical survey. The field investigation was carried out to a specification (Farr 2020) approved by Mr Aidan Smyth, Archaeology and Planning Advisor for the District Council. The fieldwork was undertaken by Jamie Williams and Beth Tucker, on 18th and 19th February 2020, and the site code is SSF 20/25. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Museums Worcestershire in due course. The HER event number is WSM72758.

## **Location, topography and geology**

The site comprised *c.* 18ha of agricultural land located adjacent to Bourne Road, 14.5km from Worcester (Fig. 1). The site lies on a gentle north-facing slope at a height of 15m above Ordnance Datum (OD) in the north and 23m aOD in the south-east, adjacent to Bourne Road. The site is located between the River Avon and the River Severn valleys, with the River Avon 670m to the east. The route of the M5 Motorway is *c.* 1km to the west. The

underlying geology is recorded as Charmouth Formation Mudstone (Lower Lias Clay) with no superficial deposits mapped (BGS Geoindex; BGS 1993).

## **Archaeological background**

There are no designated heritage assets recorded within the site. An archaeological desk-based assessment has been compiled for this part of the development (Farr 2019), an update of a previous assessment for the Phase I development. The desk-based assessment suggested a moderate to low potential for archaeological deposits on the site, and a geophysical survey (Ingénieur *et al* 2020; WSM72462) was undertaken prior to this archaeological evaluation. Previous evaluation to the west covering 56ha (Davey 2018) identified the presence of former field boundaries, but no archaeological deposits were identified at the location of magnetic anomalies.

The site lies in a general proximity of Strensham with this settlement having potential to have existed since the Anglo-Saxon period, with a record that it was given to Pershore Abbey during the time of King Coenwulf of Mercia (VCH 1924). In Lower Strensham, there is the Scheduled Monument of the 14th-century Strensham Castle (SAM1016939; WSM00287), a square moated earthwork with Medieval and Civil War occupation evidence. This lies adjacent to a later farmstead, the 18th-century Moat Farm, that is a Listed property (Grade II). There is also evidence of a deserted medieval settlement in eastern and north-western areas with floor tile, pottery and a small group of other finds, of 13th-14th century date (WSM07707 and WSM29612).

There is very limited prehistoric occupation evidence, though some evidence does exist further into the Avon river valley. Roman evidence is present in the form of cropmarks and unspecified stray finds in the HER, of 3rd century date (WSM06054 and WSM32371).

## **Objectives and methodology**

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological deposits within the area of development. Works were to be carried out in such a way as not to compromise the integrity of the deposits but sample them to gain information about the deposits.

Specifically, the aims of the fieldwork were to:

- ‘ground truth’ the results of the recently completed geophysical survey;
- clarify the presence/absence and extent of any buried archaeological remains within the site that may be impacted by development;
- identify, within the constraints of the evaluation, the date, character, condition and depth of any surviving remains within the site;

assess the degree of existing impacts to sub - surface horizons and to document the extent of archaeological survival of buried deposits; and to

produce a report which will present the results of the evaluation in such detail as to allow an informed decision to be made concerning the site's archaeological potential.

In total, twelve trenches were intended to be excavated, each 25m long and a width of 1.8m. All trenching was to be undertaken by a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless grading bucket under the archaeological supervision to the depth of formation, the surface of *in situ* subsoil/weathered natural or archaeological deposits, whichever is highest in the stratigraphic sequence. Where archaeological deposits were exposed, the stripped areas were to be hand cleaned and surveyed to produce a plan of the arrangement of archaeological features within the trenches across the site. All archaeological features were to be sufficiently sampled to characterise and date them. Discrete features were to be half sectioned, and slots excavated through linear features were to be a minimum of 1m in width. All spoil was to be examined for the recovery of artefacts. The trenches were arranged to test the results of the geophysical survey areas of impact and test blank areas to act as control zones.

## **Results**

All 12 trenches were dug as intended (Fig. 2). A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology (with the elevation above Ordnance Datum of the top of the natural) is given in Appendix 1. All trenching was excavated with a 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a bladed bucket. All trench spoilheaps were checked for finds and located with GPS Survey handheld unit.

### Trench 1 (Fig. 2, Pl. 1)

Trench 1 was aligned W - E and was 25.9m long and 0.28m deep. It was positioned in the southern field, to target the area of a proposed trackway. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.26m of topsoil and overlying natural geology, light grey-blue silt, with areas of grey blue alluvial clay. At 0.26m deep, there were two shallow furrows of agricultural origin cutting the natural deposit, though were undated with no finds recovered.

### Trench 2 (Figs 2 and 3, Pl. 2)

This trench was aligned N - S and was 25.1m long and 0.27m deep. This was positioned as Trench 1, to target a proposed trackway. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.27m of topsoil and overlying natural geology. At 0.27m deep, six shallow furrows of agricultural origin were noted, though were undated with no finds recovered.

#### Trench 3 (Fig. 2)

This trench was aligned SE - NW and was 25.1m long and 0.29m deep. This trench was location at the site of a new structure associated with the solar farm. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.29m of topsoil and overlying natural geology. At 0.29m deep, four shallow furrows of agricultural origin were noted, albeit they were undated.

#### Trench 4 (Fig. 2, Pl. 3)

This trench was aligned N - S and was 25.6m long and 0.29m deep. 0.29m of topsoil directly overlay the natural geology, which was of the same type as that observed in Trench 1. No archaeological features were present, but the trench contained remnants of furrows.

#### Trench 5 (Figs 2 and 3)

This trench was aligned N - S and was 24.6m long and 0.29m deep. The topsoil had a maximum thickness of 0.27m, and directly overlay the natural geology, which was of the same type as that observed in Trench 1. As observed in other trenches, a series of furrows ran through Trench 5.

#### Trench 6 (Fig. 2)

Trench 6 measured 25.6m in length, with a topsoil depth of 0.26m. It was aligned E - W. The underlying geology and presence of furrows are directly comparable to previous trenches.

#### Trench 7 (Fig. 2)

This trench measured 25.6m in length, aligned E - W and was excavated to a depth of 0.32m. The topsoil measured 0.29m in thickness, and three furrows were observed underlying this, and cutting the natural geology, which was the same as in previous trenches.

#### Trench 8 (Figs 2 and 3, Pl. 5)

This trench was aligned E - W and was 25.3m long and 0.30m deep. The natural geology observed in this trench was a mid grey-brown silty clay, underlying 0.28m of topsoil. Five furrows were present in Trench 8. This trench was locate over the only geophysical anomaly that was not interpreted by Ingénieur *et al.* (2020) as agricultural. Nothing could be observed that could account for this anomaly. More convincing geophysical anomalies on the adjacent area were also not visible in subsequent trenching (Davey 2018).

#### Trench 9 (Fig. 2, Pl. 6)

This trench was aligned N - S and was 25.1m long and 0.33m deep. 0.28m of topsoil overlay the same mid grey-brown silty clay as observed in Trench 8. Three furrows were present in this trench.

#### Trench 10 (Fig. 2)

This trench was aligned ENE - WSW and was 25.1m long with a depth of 0.32m deep. 0.28m of topsoil directly overlay the natural geology, which was of the same type as that observed in Trench 8.

#### Trench 11 (Fig. 2, Pl. 7)

This trench was aligned E - W and was 25.4m long and 0.32m deep. 0.29m of topsoil directly overlay the natural geology, which was of the same type as that observed in Trench 8. Nothing in this trench corresponded with any feature that might have given rise to an additional weak geophysical anomaly noted by the Wychavon District Council Archaeology and Planning Advisor who suggested that it could have been due to a temporary structure, possibly a sand bag emplacement from WWII. Similar features were identified near Droitwich and Kempsey (A Smyth pers. comm.).

#### Trench 12 (Figs 2 and 3, Pl. 8)

Trench 12 measured 25.5m in length, with a depth of 0.30m. 0.29m of topsoil overlay the natural geology, which was the same mid mottled grey-brown/yellow-brown clay-silt observed in Trench 1. Two furrows were present in Trench 12.

### **Conclusion**

Twelve evaluation trenches were opened in the intended locations. A consistent topsoil depth of c.0.3m was observed in all trenches, directly overlying the natural mudstone. No subsoil deposits were present, and the natural geology is consistent with that recorded in the British Geological Survey. Agricultural furrows were present in most of the trenches, but no other features of were observed. No cut features, horizons or finds of archaeological interest were present.

### **References**

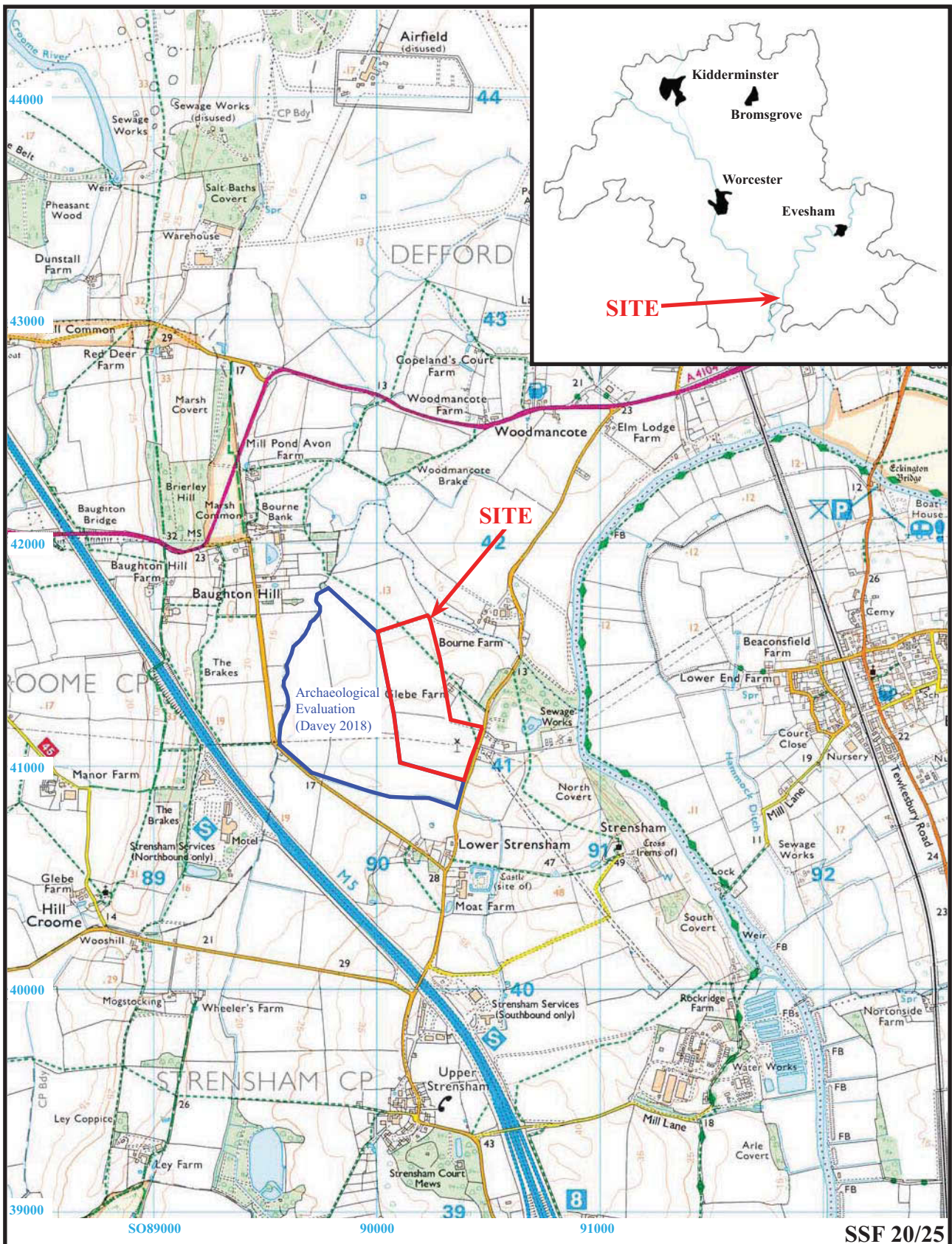
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**APPENDIX 1: Trench details**

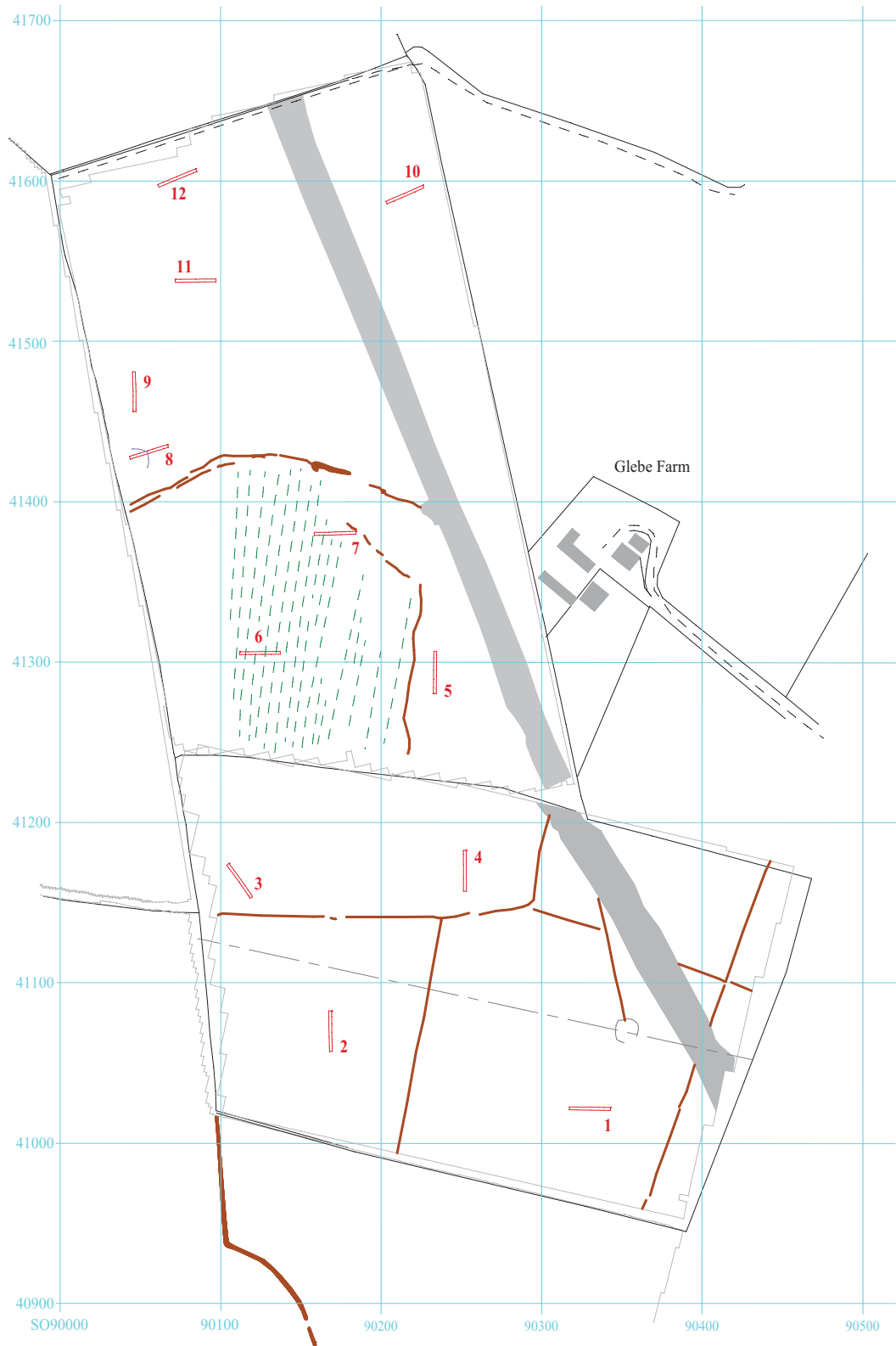
<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Top of natural (m AOD)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	25.9	1.8	0.28	23.48	0–0.26m grey-yellow brown clayey silt (topsoil), 0.26m+–light grey-blue clay silt natural with grey-blue alluvium. Parallel furrows. <b>[PI. 1]</b>
2	25.1	1.8	0.27	21.62	0–0.25m topsoil, 0.25m+ light blue grey clay natural. Furrows. <b>[PI. 2]</b>
3	25.1	1.8	0.29	20.59	0–0.26m topsoil, 0.26m+ natural geology. Furrows.
4	25.6	1.8	0.29	21.50	0–0.26m topsoil, 0.26m+ natural geology. Furrows. <b>[PI. 3]</b>
5	26.4	1.8	0.29	19.40	0–0.27m topsoil, 0.27m+ natural geology. Furrows.
6	25.6	1.8	0.26	19.24	0–0.26m topsoil, 0.26m+ natural geology. Furrows. <b>[PI. 4]</b>
7	25.6	1.8	0.32	17.20	0–0.29m topsoil, 0.29m+ natural geology. Furrows.
8	25.3	1.8	0.30	14.86	0–0.28m topsoil, 0.28m+ light grey brown silty clay natural geology. Furrows. <b>[PI. 5]</b>
9	25.1	1.8	0.33	14.91	0–0.28m topsoil, 0.28m+ natural geology. Furrows. <b>[PI. 6]</b>
10	25.1	1.8	0.32	14.35	0–0.26m topsoil, 0.26m+ light grey brown silty clay natural geology.
11	25.4	1.8	0.32	15.27	0–0.26m topsoil, 0.26m+ light grey-blue clay natural geology. <b>[PI. 7]</b>
12	25.5	1.8	0.30	13.74	0–0.27m topsoil, 0.27m+ natural geology. <b>[PI. 8]</b>



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Figure 1. Location of site in relation to Strensham and within Worcestershire.

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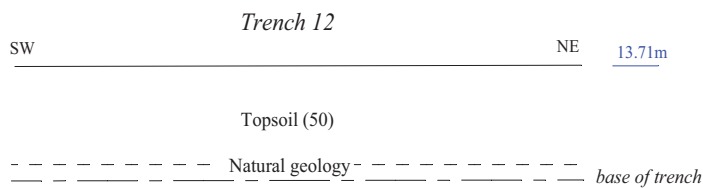
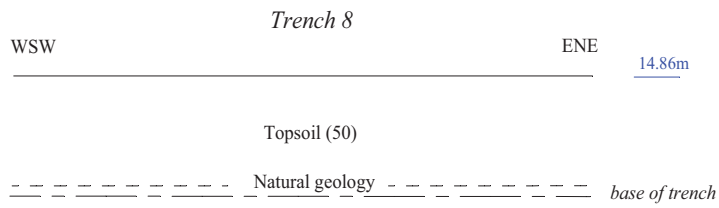
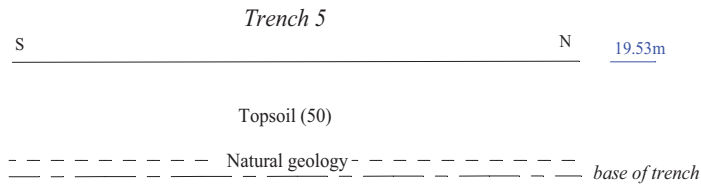
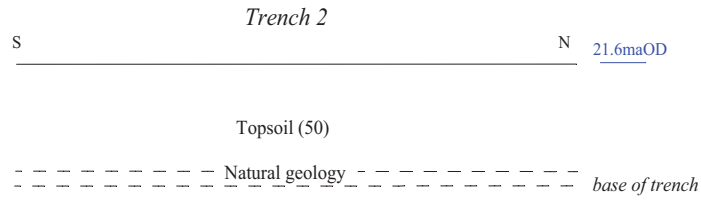
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Figure 2. Location of trenches, in relation to geophysical anomalies.



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Figure 3. Representative sections.



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Plate 1. Trench 1, looking South-east.  
Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.2m.



Plate 2. Trench 2, looking North-east.  
Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.2m.



Plate 3. Trench 4, looking North-east.  
Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.2m.



Plate 4. Trench 6, looking East.  
Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.2m.

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Plates 1 to 4.

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Plate 5. Trench 8, looking west. Scales 2m, 1m and 0.2m.



Plate 6. Trench 9, looking north. Scales 2m, 1m and 0.2m.



Plate 7. Trench 11, looking east. Scales 2m, 1m and 0.2m.



Plate 8. Trench 12, looking north-east. Scales 2m, 1m and 0.2m.

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Plates 5 to 8.**

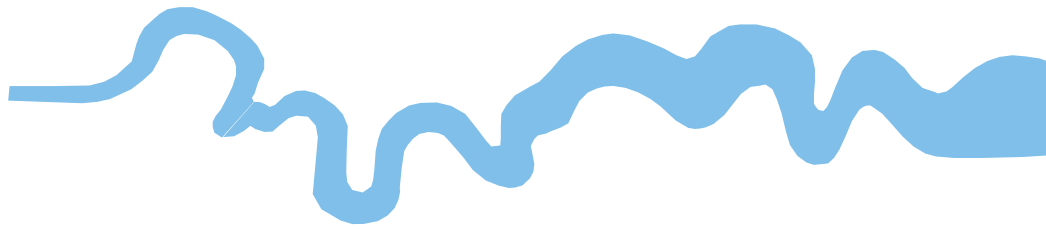
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## TIME CHART

	Calendar Years
Modern _____	AD 1901
Victorian _____	AD 1837
Post Medieval _____	AD 1500
Medieval _____	AD 1066
Saxon _____	AD 410
Roman _____	AD 43 AD 0 BC
Iron Age _____	750 BC
Bronze Age: Late _____	1300 BC
Bronze Age: Middle _____	1700 BC
Bronze Age: Early _____	2100 BC
Neolithic: Late .....	3300 BC
Neolithic: Early .....	4300 BC
Mesolithic: Late .....	6000 BC
Mesolithic: Early .....	10000 BC
Palaeolithic: Upper .....	30000 BC
Palaeolithic: Middle .....	70000 BC
Palaeolithic: Lower .....	2,000,000 BC







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