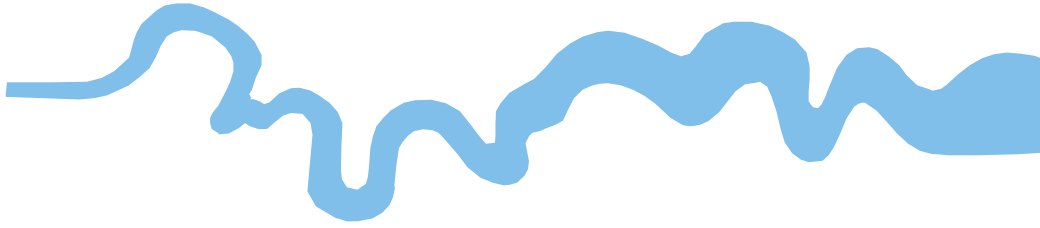


**T V A S**



**NORTH MIDLANDS**

**Land west of Pye Green Road,  
Cannock, Staffordshire**

**Archaeological Evaluation**

**by Helen Daniel and Beth Tucker**

**Site Code: PGC21/276**

**(SJ 9848 1315 and SJ 9858 1332)**

# **Land West of Pye Green Road, Cannock, Staffordshire**

**An Archaeological Evaluation  
for Bellway West Midlands**

by Helen Daniel and Beth Tucker

TVAS (North Midlands)

Site Code PGC21/276

**January 2022**

## Summary

**Site name:** Land west of Pye Green Road, Cannock, Staffordshire

**Grid reference:** SJ 9848 1315 and SJ 9858 1332

**Site activity:** Archaeological evaluation

**Date and duration of project:** 17th to 18th January 2022

**Project coordinator:** Helen Daniel

**Site supervisor:** Helen Daniel

**Site code:** PGC 21/276

**Area of site:** c. 1.92ha and 0.25ha

**Summary of results:** The archaeological evaluation successfully excavated fourteen trenches with only two ditches and a possible gully identified in trenches 3 and 13, other possible features investigated being natural. A piece of modern glass was recovered from the ditch and possible gully in trench 3, no finds were recovered from the shallow ditch in trench 13 and so the feature is undatable. A single tiny scrap of what might be Iron Age pottery was clearly redeposited in a deposit overlying the modern ditch. These results, combined with previous investigations, suggest that the site has negligible archaeological potential.

**Location and reference of archive:** The archive is presently held at TVAS North Midlands, Stoke-on-Trent and will be deposited at the Potteries Museum and Art Gallery 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 ✓ 31.01.22
	Steve Preston ✓ 31.01.22

# Land west of Pye Green Road, Cannock, Staffordshire An Archaeological Evaluation

by Helen Daniel and Beth Tucker

Report 21/276

## Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out on two parcels of land west of Pye Green Road, Cannock, Staffordshire (SJ 9848 1315 and SJ 9858 1332) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Paul Gajos of GHC Archaeology & Heritage Ltd. on behalf of Bellway West Midlands, 1 Centurion Way, Wilnecote, Tamworth, B77 5PN.

Planning permission has been granted (CH/19/421) from Cannock Chase Council to develop the site for residential housing with associated infrastructure. The planning permission is subject to a condition (11) requiring a programme of archaeological investigation. 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. The field investigation was carried out to a Written Scheme of Investigation (Gajos 2021) approved by Mr Shane Kelleher, County Archaeologist at Staffordshire County Council, who advises the District Council on matters relating to archaeology. The fieldwork was undertaken by Helen Daniel and Beth Tucker on 17th and 18th January 2022 and the site code is PGC 21/276. The archive is presently held at TVAS North Midlands, Stoke-on-Trent and will be deposited at the Potteries Museum and Art Gallery in due course.

## Location, topography and geology

The site is located in the northern suburbs of Cannock, 1.95km from the town centre. I (Fig. 1). The Bentley Brook runs 2km to the east of the site. The proposed area of development lies between 193m and 205m above Ordnance Datum, and currently comprises one larger slightly overgrown grass field which gently slopes downwards towards the south end of the area and another smaller parcel of grass land to the north which slopes eastwards towards Pye Green Road. The geology is mapped as Chester Formation sandstone and conglomerate (interbedded), with no overlying geological deposits mapped (BGS 2022). A geology of sand with pebbles and patches of clayey sand was observed in the trenches throughout the course of the works.

## **Archaeological background**

The archaeological background for the site and surrounding area has been outlined in an archaeological desk-based assessment which covered a 1km radius from the site (RPS 2019). This found that there is very little of archaeological significance recorded in the local area and so the site is considered to have low archaeological potential. No prehistoric activity has been recorded in the area and the Roman period is only represented by find spots of a coin, pottery sherds and a plaque (Gajos 2021). Medieval activity in the area includes a trackway, hollow-ways and earthwork banks with the most notable feature of archaeological interest being Chad's ditch, a degraded earthwork to the west of the site.

Previous archaeological work in the area immediately surrounding the site recorded no features or deposits of archaeological interest. Geophysical surveying revealed anomalies of possible archaeological origin, however, these were interpreted as geological during trial trenching (Gajos 2021). It has been suggested that any archaeological deposits that are present in the proposed area of development may have been disturbed by modern agriculture (RPS 2019).

## **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.

The specific research aims for this project were:

- to establish the spatial extent date, character, condition and significance of the archaeological activity in the proposed investigation area;
- to recover information relating to the nature/function of past human activity represented by the surviving archaeological remains and to place the site within its local, regional and national context as appropriate;
- to excavate and record identified archaeological features and deposits to an appropriate level;
- to assess the potential for survival of environmental evidence;
- to assess site formation processes and the effects they have had on the survival of archaeological deposits; and
- to undertake sufficient post-excavation assessment to confidently interpret identified archaeological features and analyse artefacts and environmental samples.

A total of fourteen trenches were proposed to be dug, each 30m long and 2m wide, positioned to give general coverage of the area of new development while avoiding the locations of previous trenches. A contingency of 500m was available to help identify, expose and effectively excavate any archaeological deposits or features which would have benefited from being further exposed to fulfill the aims outlined above. Topsoil and any other overburden were to be removed under constant archaeological supervision using a 360°-type machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket to either expose archaeological deposits or the natural geology of the site, whichever was encountered first. Any possible deposits of archaeological interest were to be cleaned, excavated and/or sampled by hand. Spoil heaps were to be monitored to aid in the recovery of finds. The field evaluation was to be undertaken in a way which would not compromise any archaeological deposits or features which would have merited preservation *in-situ* or a full excavation.

## **Results**

All fourteen trenches were successfully excavated as intended with the exception of trench 1 which had its alignment changed due to a road which had been built over the intended location (Fig. 2). The trenches ranged in length from 24.4m to 32.5m and varied in depth from 0.27m to 0.54m. All fourteen of the trenches were stripped down to the natural mid reddish-brown sand geology which contained frequent rounded pebbles and patches of light brownish-yellow clayey-sand. With the exception of trench 4, all of the trenches contained a dark brownish-black, clayey-sand subsoil overlain by a dark greyish-black, clayey-sand top soil. A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1. The excavated features, with dating evidence, are summarized in Appendix 2.

### Trench 1 (Fig. 2)

Trench 1 was aligned SE-NW and was 30.2m long and 0.52m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.39m of topsoil and 0.13m subsoil overlying the natural geology. No features of archaeological interest were observed in this trench, nor finds recovered.

### Trench 2 (Fig. 2)

Trench 2 was aligned close to E-W and was 29.1m long and 0.48m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.17m of topsoil and 0.28m subsoil overlying the natural geology. Three burnt-out tree holes were recorded in this trench, at 5.7m, 8.4m and 14.3m from the west end of the trench. No finds or deposits of archaeological interest were present in this trench.

#### Trench 3 (Figs 2 and 3; Pls 1 and 2)

Trench 3 was aligned NW-SE and was 30.8m long and 0.41m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.2m of topsoil and 0.21m subsoil overlying the natural geology. At 3.3m from the west-north-west end of the trench a ditch (2) and possible gully (3) were recorded on a north-south alignment. It is possible that the ditch and gully were both the same degraded feature, which had been greatly affected by rooting and water action. Ditch 2 was 1m wide and 0.32m deep, filled with a fill of reddish-brown sand with pebbles and some brownish-red mottling (53). Gully 3 was approximately 0.6m wide and 0.22m deep and filled with a reddish brown sand with yellowish-brown and brownish-red mottling, and 40% rounded pebbles (55). Capping over both 53 and 55, a further fill or layer 54 was 60% pebbles in a dark grey to black sand matrix and contained one scrap of fired clay or possibly Iron Age pottery and a piece of modern glass. A tree bole was recorded 8.7m from the WNW end of trench 3.

#### Trench 4 (Figs 2 and 3)

Trench 4 was aligned NW-SE and was 32.5m long and 0.38m deep at the south end and 1.06m deep at the north end. The stratigraphy at the south end of the trench consisted of 0.19m of topsoil and 0.19m subsoil overlying the natural geology. The stratigraphy from 24.1m until the north end of the trench consisted of 0.18m of topsoil, and 0.21m subsoil, above 0.31m of made ground/modern disturbance with patches of mid reddish-brown sand and 0.21m of modern disturbance overlying the natural geology. The modern disturbance contained wire and modern RAF crockery. No finds or features of archaeological interest were present.

#### Trench 5 (Fig. 2; Pl. 3)

Trench 5 was aligned NE-SW and was 24.4m long and 0.27m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.18m of topsoil and 0.09m subsoil overlying the natural geology. No archaeological finds or deposits were recovered or identified in this trench.

#### Trench 6 (Fig.2)

Trench 6 was aligned NE-SW and was 31.7m long and 0.4m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.2m of topsoil and 0.37m subsoil overlying the natural geology. No finds or features of archaeological interest were recovered or observed in this trench.

#### Trench 7 (Fig. 2)

Trench 7 was aligned W–E and was 31.1m long and 0.37m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.19m of topsoil and 0.18m subsoil overlying the natural geology. Five tree holes were recorded along the length of the trench but no features or finds of archaeological interest.

#### Trench 8 (Fig. 2)

Trench 8 was aligned close to E-W and was 26.8m long and 0.54m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.19m of topsoil and 0.33m subsoil overlying the natural geology. No archaeological finds or features were observed.

#### Trench 9 (Figs 2 and 3)

Trench 9 was 30.1m long, aligned NE-SW and was 0.19m long and 0.53m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.19m of topsoil and 0.3m subsoil overlying the natural geology. No finds or features of archaeological interest were recovered or observed in trench 9.

#### Trench 10 (Fig. 2)

Trench 10 was aligned NE-SW and was 29.8m long and 0.52m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.42m of topsoil and 0.1m subsoil overlying the natural geology. No finds or features of archaeological interest were recovered or observed in this trench.

#### Trench 11 (Fig. 2)

Trench 11 was aligned close to E-W and was 31.7m long and 0.4m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.29m of topsoil and 0.11m subsoil overlying the natural geology. No deposits or finds of archaeological interest were identified or recovered from this trench.

#### Trench 12 (Fig. 2)

Trench 12 was aligned close to N-S and was 29.0m long and 0.54m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.2m of topsoil and 0.22m subsoil overlying the natural geology. No finds or features of archaeological interest were recovered or observed in this trench.

#### Trench 13 (Figs 2 and 3; Pl. 5)

Trench 13 was aligned NW-SE and was 28.1m long and 0.42m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.17m of topsoil and 0.25m subsoil overlying the natural geology. Two possible features were recorded in this trench, a



tree hole and a shallow ditch (1), respectively 5.7m and 15.5m from the NNW end of the trench. Ditch 1 was on an north–south alignment, 117m wide but just 0.11m deep, and its fill (52) contained no finds. No other features or finds of archaeological interest were recorded or obtained from this trench.

#### Trench 14 (Fig. 2; Pl. 6)

Trench 14 was aligned E-W and was 29.3m long and 0.52m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.38m of topsoil and 0.14m subsoil overlying the natural geology. No finds or features of archaeological interest were recovered or identified in this trench.

### **Finds**

A single tiny (2g) piece of fired clay, or possibly a very abraded sherd of Iron Age pottery, was found in deposit 54 overlying the modern ditch where it is clearly redeposited.

### **Conclusion**

All fourteen of the trenches were dug as intended, except that trench 1 was reorientated. The only features observed were a number of tree holes in trenches 2, 3, 7 and 13, a ditch and possible gully which contained modern glass in trench 3, an area of modern disturbance in trench 4 and a shallow undated ditch in trench 13. These results, combined with the previous investigations, suggest that the site has negligible archaeological potential.

### **References**

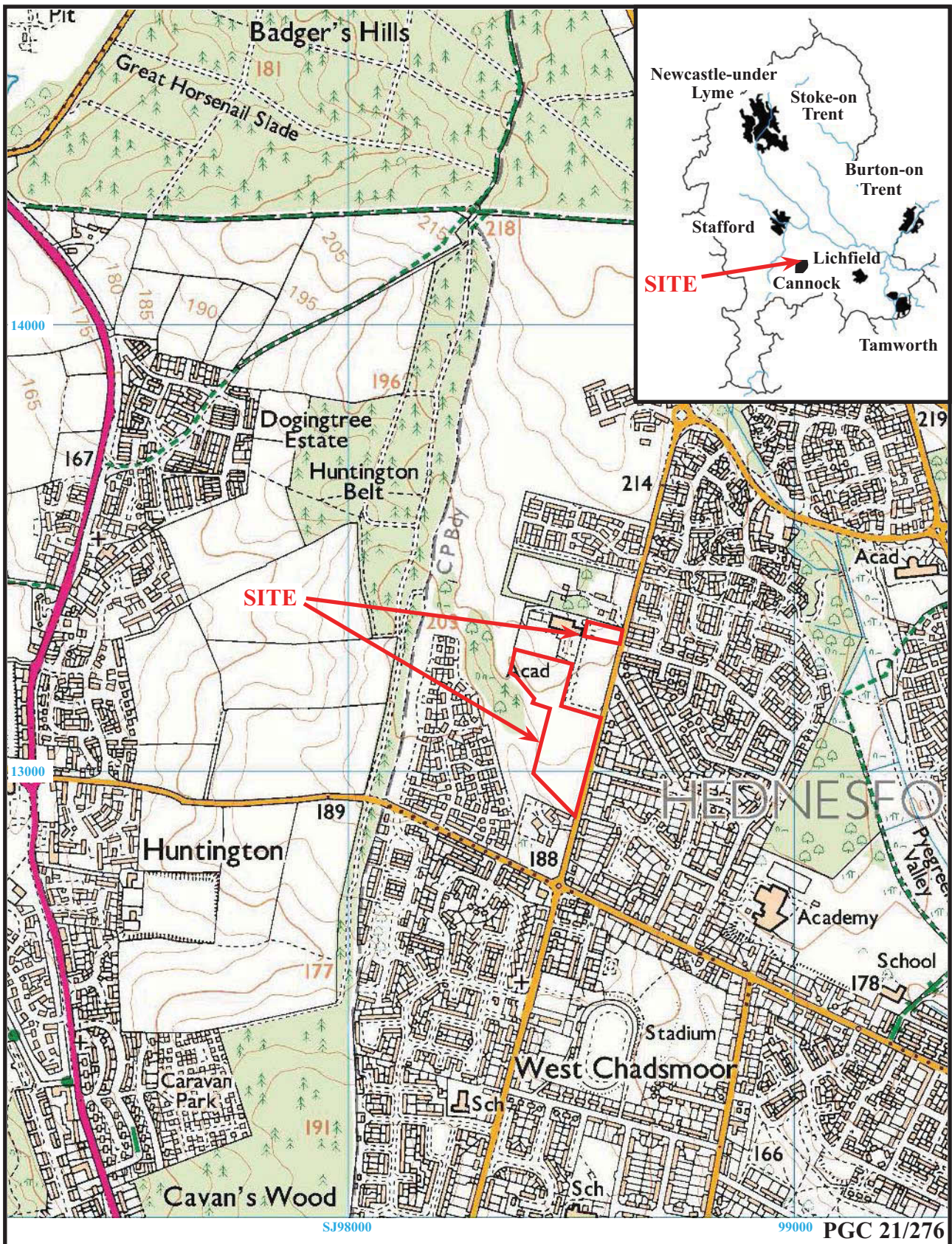
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**APPENDIX 1: Trench details**

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	30.20	2.00	0.52	0–0.39m dark greyish-black clayey-sand top soil; 0.39-0.52m dark brownish-black clayey-sand subsoil; 0.52m+ mid reddish-brown sand with frequent pebble inclusions and patches of light brownish-yellow clayey-sand natural geology.
2	29.10	2.00	0.48	0–0.39m dark greyish-black clayey-sand top soil; 0.39-0.52m dark brownish-black clayey-sand subsoil; 0.52m+ mid reddish-brown sand with frequent pebble inclusions and patches of light brownish-yellow clayey-sand natural geology.
3	30.80	2.00	0.41	0–0.2m dark greyish-black clayey-sand top soil; 0.2-0.41m dark brownish-black clayey-sand subsoil; 0.41m+ mid reddish-brown sand with frequent pebble inclusions and patches of light brownish-yellow clayey-sand natural geology. Features: modern ditch (02) and possible modern gully (03). <b>[Pls 1 and 2]</b>
4	32.50	2.00	S: 0.38 N: 1.06	0–0.18/0.19m dark greyish-black clayey-sand top soil; 0.18/0.19-0.38/0.39m dark brownish-black clayey-sand subsoil; 0.39-0.7m dark greyish-brown clayey-sand with modern crockery, plastic, wire and patches of mid reddish-brown sand modern disturbance/made ground; 0.7-0.91m dark greyish-brown clayey-sand with modern crockery modern disturbance; 0.38/0.91m+ mid reddish-brown sand with frequent pebble inclusions and patches of light brownish-yellow clayey-sand natural geology.
5	24.40	2.00	0.27	0–0.18m dark greyish-black clayey-sand top soil; 0.18-0.27m dark brownish-black clayey-sand subsoil; 0.27m+ mid reddish-brown sand with frequent pebble inclusions and patches of light brownish-yellow clayey-sand natural geology. <b>[Pl. 3]</b>
6	31.70	2.00	0.40	0–0.2m dark greyish-black clayey-sand top soil; 0.2-0.37m dark brownish-black clayey-sand subsoil; 0.37m+ mid reddish-brown sand with frequent pebble inclusions and patches of light brownish-yellow clayey-sand natural geology.
7	31.10	2.00	0.37	0–0.19m dark greyish-black clayey-sand top soil; 0.19-0.37m dark brownish-black clayey-sand subsoil; 0.37m+ mid reddish-brown sand with frequent pebble inclusions and patches of light brownish-yellow clayey-sand natural geology.
8	26.80	2.00	0.54	0–0.19m dark greyish-black clayey-sand top soil; 0.19-0.52m dark brownish-black clayey-sand subsoil; 0.52m+ mid reddish-brown sand with frequent pebble inclusions and patches of light brownish-yellow clayey-sand natural geology.
9	30.10	2.00	0.53	0–0.19m dark greyish-black clayey-sand top soil; 0.19-0.49m dark brownish-black clayey-sand subsoil; 0.49m+ mid reddish-brown sand with frequent pebble inclusions and patches of light brownish-yellow clayey-sand natural geology.
10	29.80	2.00	0.52	0–0.42m dark greyish-black clayey-sand top soil; 0.42-0.52m dark brownish-black clayey-sand subsoil; 0.52m+ mid reddish-brown sand with frequent pebble inclusions and patches of light brownish-yellow clayey-sand natural geology.
11	31.70	2.00	0.40	0–0.29m dark greyish-black clayey-sand top soil; 0.29-0.4m dark brownish-black clayey-sand subsoil; 0.4m+ mid reddish-brown sand with frequent pebble inclusions and patches of light brownish-yellow clayey-sand natural geology.
12	29.00	2.00	0.54	0–0.2m dark greyish-black clayey-sand top soil; 0.2-0.42m dark brownish-black clayey-sand subsoil; 0.42m+ mid reddish-brown sand with frequent pebble inclusions and patches of light brownish-yellow clayey-sand natural geology. <b>[Pl. 4]</b>
13	28.10	2.00	0.42	0–0.17m dark greyish-black clayey-sand top soil; 0.17-0.42m dark brownish-black clayey-sand subsoil; 0.42m+ mid reddish-brown sand with frequent pebble inclusions and patches of light brownish-yellow clayey-sand natural geology. Ditch (1). <b>[Pl. 5]</b>
14	29.30	2.00	0.52	0–0.38m dark greyish-black clayey-sand top soil; 0.38-0.52m dark brownish-black clayey-sand subsoil; 0.52m+ mid reddish-brown sand with frequent pebble inclusions and patches of light brownish-yellow clayey-sand natural geology. <b>[Pl. 6]</b>

## APPENDIX 2: Feature details

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill (s)</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Dating evidence</i>
3	1	52	Ditch	Undated	-
3	2	53	Ditch	Modern	Modern glass
13	3	54	Gully	Modern	Modern glass



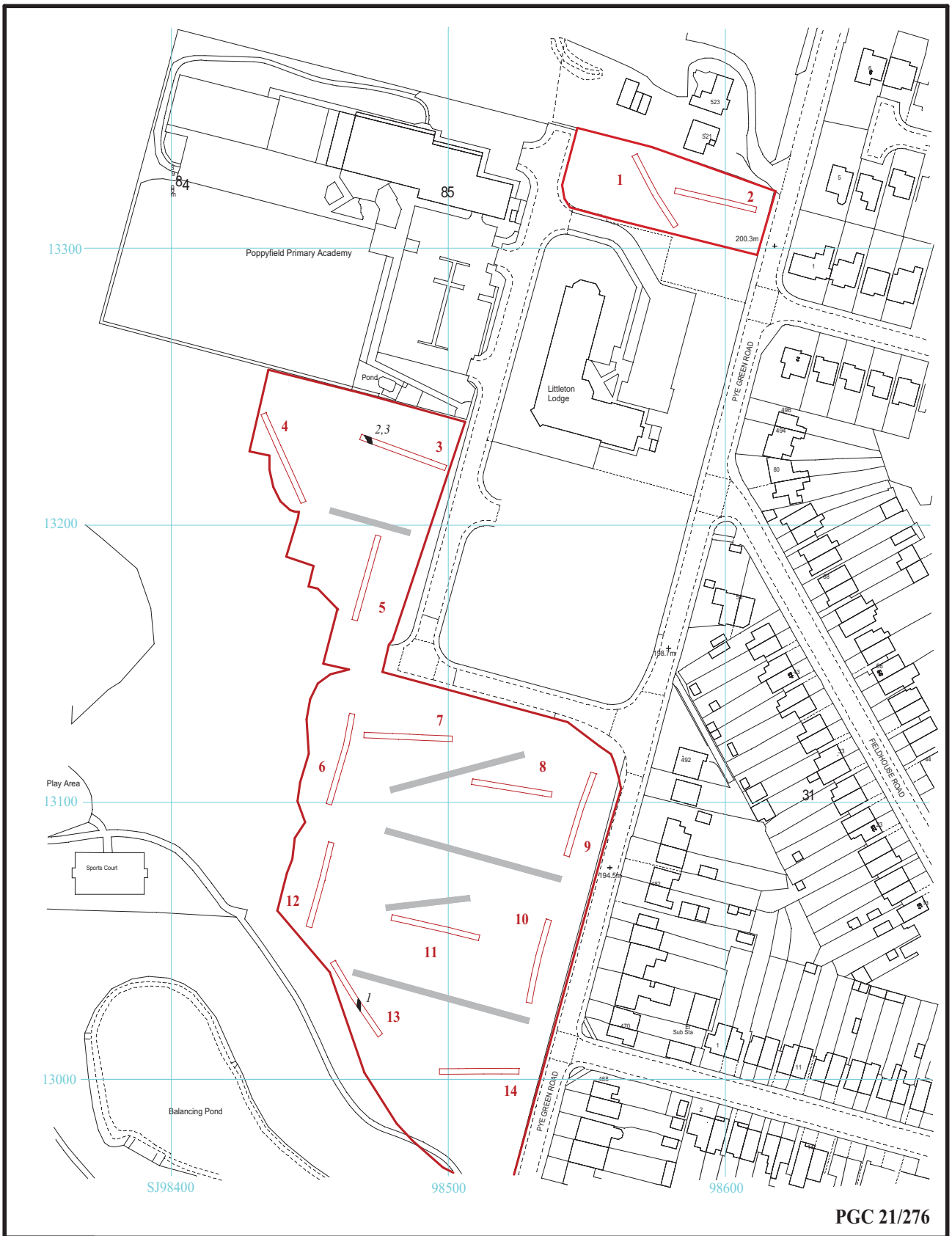
**Land west of Pye Green Road, Cannock,  
Staffordshire, 2022**

**Archaeological Evaluation**

Figure 1. Location of site within Cannock and Staffordshire.

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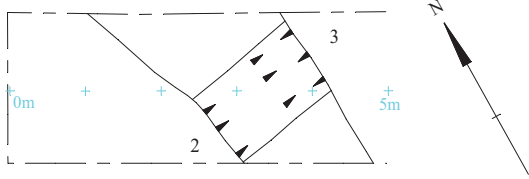


**Land west of Pye Green Road, Cannock,  
Staffordshire, 2022  
Archaeological Evaluation**

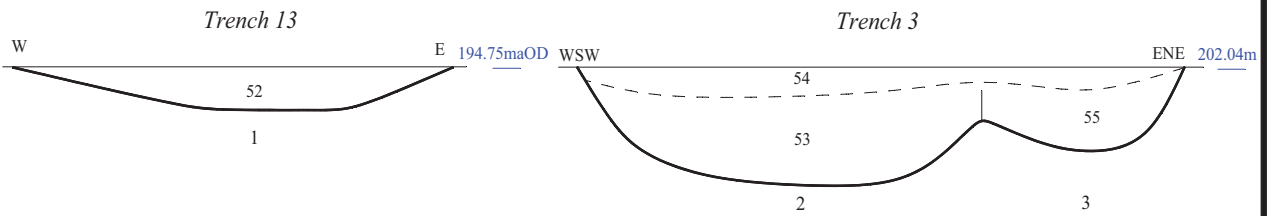
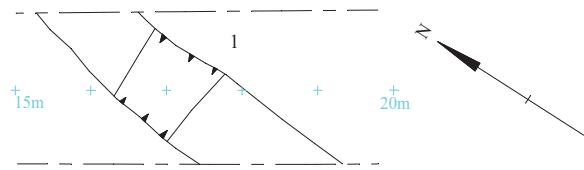
Figure 2. Location of trenches, with features and compared to previous archaeological trench locations.



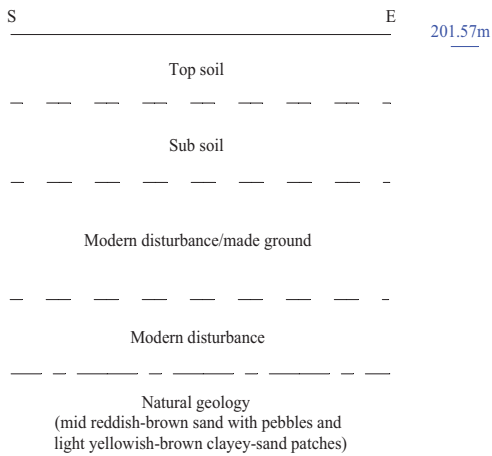
Trench 3



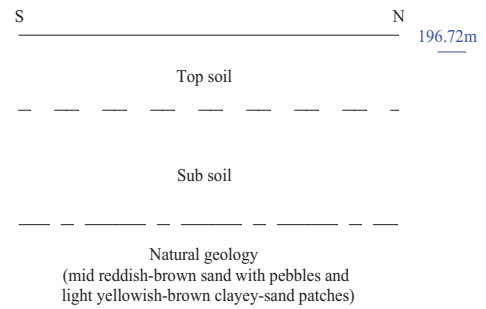
Trench 13



Trench 4 (north end)



Trench 9



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**Land west of Pye Green Road, Cannock  
Staffordshire, 2022  
Archaeological Evaluation**

Figure 3. Detail of trenches and sections.





Plate 1. Trench 3, looking South East, Scales: 2m and 1m.



Plate 2. Trench 3, ditches 2 and 3, looking North, Scales: 1m and 0.3m.

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**Land west of Pye Green Road, Cannock,  
Staffordshire, 2022  
Archaeological Evaluation  
Plates 1 and 2.**





Plate 3. Trench 5, looking North, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.3m.



Plate 4. Trench 12, looking North East, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.3m.

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**Land west of Pye Green Road, Cannock,  
Staffordshire, 2022  
Archaeological Evaluation  
Plates 3 and 4.**

**T V A S**  
  
**NORTH MIDLANDS**





Plate 5. Trench 13, ditch 1, looking North West, Scales: 1m and 0.1m.



Plate 6. Trench 14, looking East, Scales: 2m and 1m.

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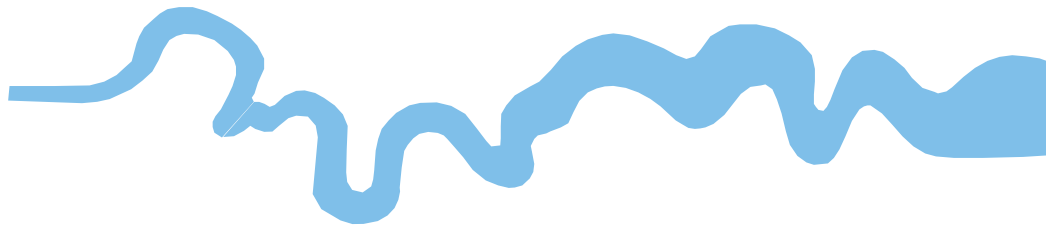
Land west of Pye Green Road, Cannock,  
Staffordshire, 2022  
Archaeological Evaluation  
Plates 5 and 6.



## 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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