Northamptonshire Archaeology

An archaeological trial trench evaluation on land at Raveley Road, Woodwalton Cambridgeshire

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QUALITY CONTROL

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OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS	**OASIS No: 133526**	
Project name	Woodwalton Sewage Treatment Works	
Short description	Northamptonshire Archaeology undertook an archaeological trial trench evaluation on land at Raveley Road, Woodwalton in advance of the construction of a sewage treatments works and associated access. No archaeological features were encountered and no artefacts were collected during the course of the evaluation.	
Project type	Trial excavation	
Site status	Rural	
Previous work	None	
Current Land use	Arable	
Future work	No	
Monument type/ period	n/a	
Significant finds	n/a	
PROJECT LOCATION		
County	Cambridgeshire	
Site address	Raveley Road, Woodwalton	
Study area	0.22 ha	
OS Easting & Northing	TL 224 807	
Height OD	40m	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA)	
Project brief originator	Cambridgeshire County Council	
Project Design originator	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Director/Supervisor	Ed Taylor	
Project Manager	Jim Brown	
Sponsor or funding body	Anglian Water	
PROJECT DATE		
Start date/end date	7/8/12-8/8/12	
ARCHIVES	Location ECB 3822	Content (eg pottery, animal bone etc)
Physical	n/a	n/a
Paper	Northamptonshire Archaeology	Site records, photographic, drawings
Digital	Northamptonshire Archaeology	Mapinfo GIS data, photographs
BIBLIOGRAPHY	Unpublished client report (NA report)	
Title	Archaeological trial trench evaluation on land at the proposed sewage treatment works, Raveley Road, Woodwalton, Cambridgeshire	
Serial title & volume	Northamptonshire Archaeology report 12/155	
Author(s)	Ed Taylor	
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AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION ON LAND AT RAVELEY ROAD, WOODWALTON CAMBRIDGESHIRE AUGUST 2012

Abstract

Northamptonshire Archaeology undertook an archaeological trial trench evaluation on land at Raveley Road, Woodwalton in advance of the construction of a Sewage treatments works and associated access. No archaeological features were encountered and no artefacts were collected during the course of the evaluation.

1 INTRODUCTION

An archaeological trial trench evaluation was undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology in August 2012 prior to the construction of a sewage treatment works and associated access on land at Raveley Road, Woodwalton, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 224 807 ; Fig 1).

The work was commissioned by Anglian Water in response to a brief for archaeological evaluation issued by Cambridgeshire County Council's Historic Environment Team (CCCHET; Thomas 2012). The investigation followed an approved specification prepared by Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA 2012) and adhered to the procedural document MoRPHE issued by English Heritage (EH 2006). All works were carried out in accordance with the IfA's *Code of Conduct* (2010) and *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (2008) and *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003).

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Location and topography

The proposed development area is situated to the east of the historic village of Woodwalton in the district of Huntingdonshire, Cambridgeshire. The site is located in the corner of an arable field with an access road running parallel to a public footpath and opening onto Raveley Road which bounds the site to the west. To the north and east the site is bounded by hedge and ditch and to the south by open fields.

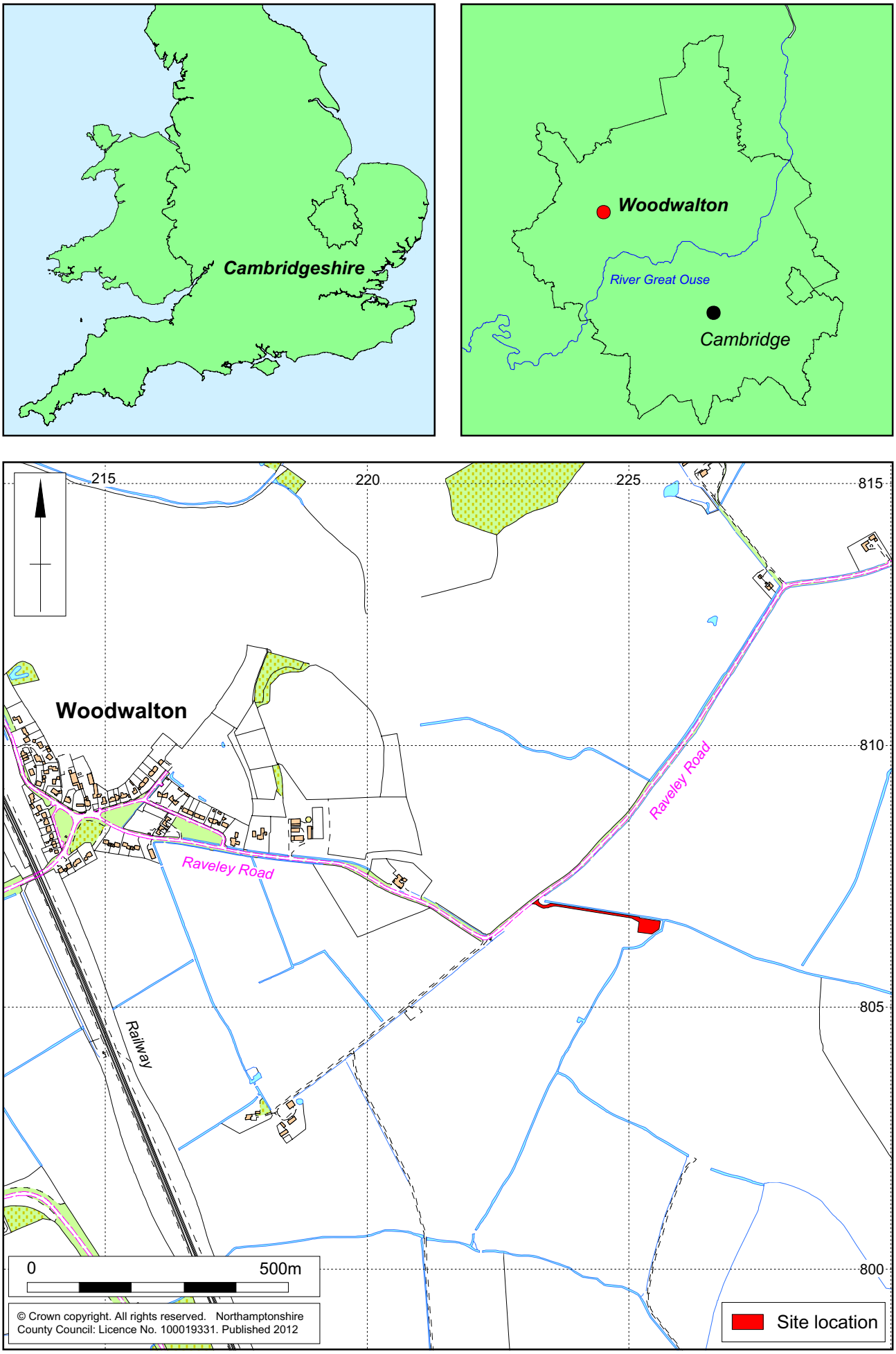
The underlying geology is mapped as Mudstone of the Oxford Clay Formation and the site lies between 30m and 40m aOD (BGS 2012).

2.2 Historical background

A search of the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (CHER) list a number of entries within a 1km radius of the proposed development area but none within its bounds.

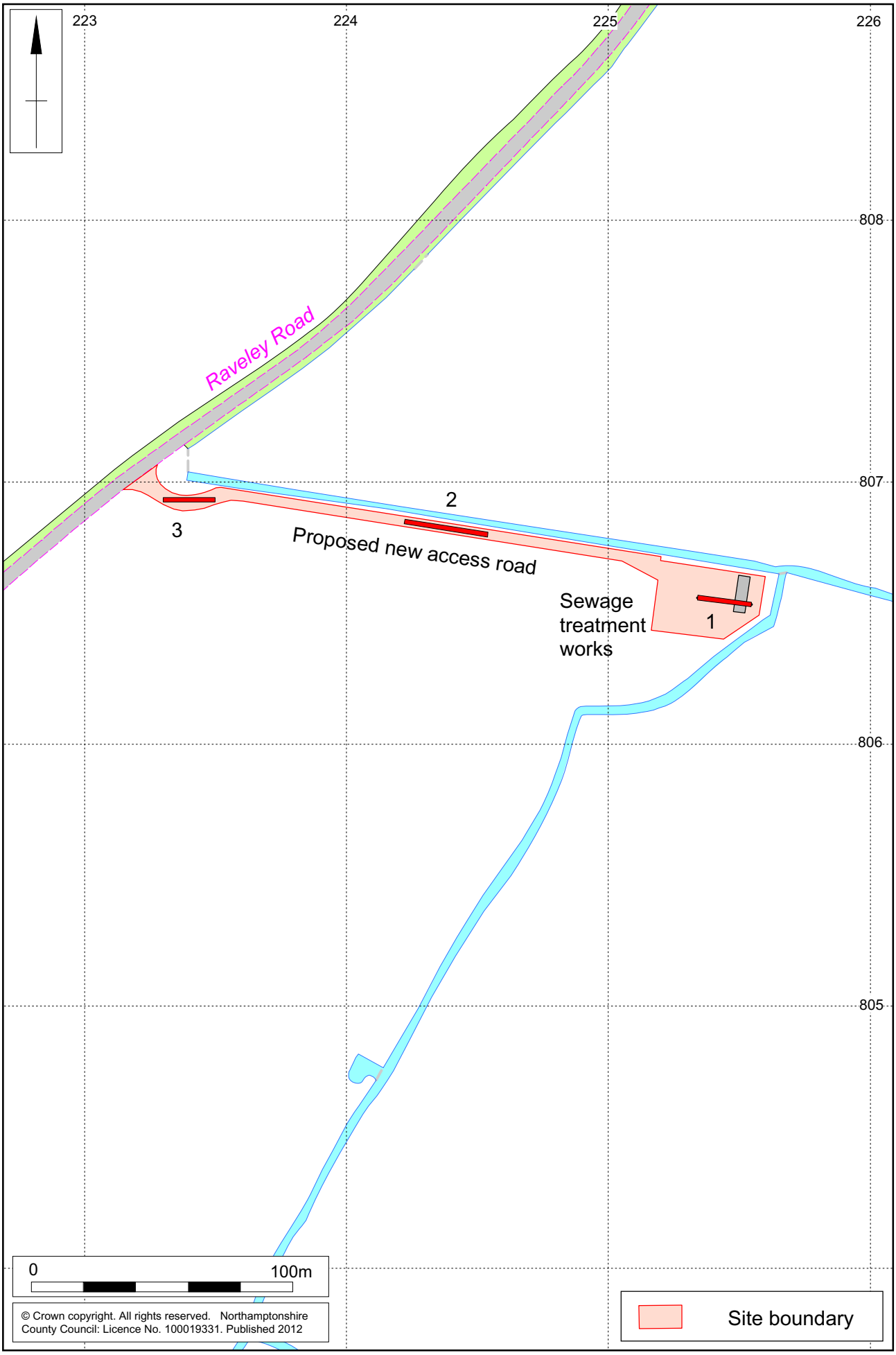
Finds of Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age flints have been made approximately 1km to the north of the site (HER 02057, 01922 and 02845) and approximately 500m to the south (HER 07711).

Iron Age kiln bars and pottery and Roman refuse pits were discovered at Grange Farm, 840m to the north of the site, during the 1940s (HER 01842 and 01842A).



Scale 1:10,000

Site location Fig 1



Scale 1:2000 (A4)

Trench location plan Fig 2

In 1886 a Roman coin hoard was found 765m to the south-west of the site (HER 00683).

The well preserved moated site at Woodwalton (HER 01029, SAM 27185) lay towards the south-eastern limit of the medieval settlement. It may have formed part of the manor of Woodwalton which was held by Hugh de Bolbec from 1086, and granted to the Abbey of Ramsey in 1134.

3 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The principal aim of archaeological evaluation was to quantify the quality and extent of the archaeological resource and inform further decisions regarding the archaeological mitigation strategy for the site. It aimed to gather sufficient information to generate a reliable predictive model of the extent, character, date, state of preservation and depth of burial for important archaeological remains within the application area. The regional research agendas set out in Glazebrook (1997), Brown and Glazebrook (2000) and Medleycott (2011) were considered during the course of the evaluation.

The specific objectives of the trial trenching programme were:

- To determine or confirm the nature and character of any remains present;
- To determine or confirm the date or date range of any remains, by means of artefactual or other evidence;
- To determine or confirm the extent of any remains;
- To determine the condition and state of preservation of any remains;
- To determine the degree of complexity of the horizontal and/or vertical stratigraphy present;
- To determine or confirm the likely range, quality and quantity of any artefactual evidence present;
- To determine the potential of the site to provide palaeo-environmental and/or economic evidence and the forms in which such evidence may be present;
- To provide the basis for the design of a mitigation strategy.

The trenches were positioned using a Leica System 1200 GPS and were excavated, under continuous archaeological supervision, using a 180° mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.2m wide, flat toothless bucket. The topsoil and subsoil were stacked separately and adjacent to the trenches. Mechanical excavation proceeded to the top of the archaeological deposits or to the natural substrate where no archaeology was encountered.

Archaeological excavation and recording followed the guidelines outlined in NA's *Archaeological Fieldwork Manual* (2011). Trenches containing possible archaeological remains were cleaned by hand, sufficient to define the features. Each feature or deposit was given a unique number consisting of the trench number and an individual context number (eg 102, Trench 1, context 2). The details of each context were recorded on pro-forma sheets. The trenches were planned (scale 1:50) and section drawings were made at an appropriate scale (1:10 or 1:20) where necessary. Levels, which were related to Ordnance Datum, were taken on the trenches at appropriate points, on section datum and on all major features. Trench locations were related to the Ordnance Survey National Grid. A photographic record was made of the excavation,

using 35mm black and white negative and colour slide film, supplemented by digital images.

The spoil heaps were scanned with a metal detector to ensure maximum finds retrieval. The archive will be prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Museums and Galleries Commission (MGC 1992).

All procedures complied with Northamptonshire County Council Health and Safety provisions and Northamptonshire Archaeology's Health and Safety at Work Guidelines.

Trench 1, looking north-west Fig 3

4 THE RECORDED EVIDENCE

The evaluation comprised three trenches located within the proposed development area; two were 20m long (Trenches 1 and 3) and one was 30m long (Trench 2), (Fig 2).

The natural substrate across the site comprised pale brown-grey clay with frequent chalk flecking and angular flint nodules. In places there were patches of pale grey-blue mottled clay and dark brown-orange sands. This was overlain by a mid brown clay subsoil, 0.15m-0.20m thick, which contained frequent gravel inclusions. The topsoil comprised a dark brown clay loam, 0.20m-0.30m thick, with occasional small rounded stone inclusions. The topsoil was thickest in Trench 2, which given its proximity to the field boundary, may represent an accumulation of ditch clearance upcast.

Possible archaeological features were tested by hand excavation in Trenches 1 and 2 and were found to be either a tree-throw pit (Robinson 1992) or variations in the natural substrate.

No archaeological deposits or artefacts were present within the investigation area.

Trench 2, looking north-west Fig 4

Trench 3, looking north-west Fig 5

Trench 2, the typical stratigraphic sequence Fig 6

5 CONCLUSIONS

No archaeological remains were encountered during the course of the evaluation. The artefact content of the plough soil was accordingly sparse, comprising a few small fragments of ceramic field drain which were not retained.

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APPENDIX: CONTEXT INDEX BY TRENCH

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
1	**20m x 1.2m NW-SE**	**TL 225 522**	**39.5m aOD**	**0.40m, 39.10m aOD**
Context	***Context type***	***Description***	***Dimensions***	***Artefacts/Samples***
101	Topsoil	Dark grey-brown clay loam	0.20m thick	Fragment of ceramic field drain
102	Subsoil	Mid brown silty clay	0.20m thick	-
103	Natural	Mid brown sandy clay and ironstone. Patches of darker grey clay	-	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
2	**30m x 1.2m NW-SE**	**TL 224 807**	**40.03m aOD**	**0.50m, 39.53m aOD**
Context	***Context type***	***Description***	***Dimensions***	***Artefacts/Samples***
201	Topsoil	Dark grey-brown clay loam	0.30m thick	Fragment of ceramic field drain
202	Subsoil	Mid brown silty clay	0.15m-0.20m thick	-
203	Natural	Light brown-yellow clay and ironstone with chalk and flint inclusions. Darker brown sandy patches	-	-
204	Fill of 205	Mid brown clay with dark grey mottling	0.20m thick	-
205	Tree throw	Crescent-shaped. Gradual sloping sides, uneven base	1.10m wide, 0.20m deep,>1m long	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
3	**20m x 1.2m NW-SE**	**TL 223 807**	**40.15m aOD**	**0.50m, 39.65m aOD**
Context	***Context type***	***Description***	***Dimensions***	***Artefacts/Samples***
301	Topsoil	Dark grey-brown clay loam	0.30m thick	-
302	Subsoil	Mid brown silty clay	0.20m thick	-
303	Natural	Light brown-yellow silty clay and ironstone	-	-

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