# LAND AT HITCHCOCK'S BUSINESS PARK (EAST) UFFCULME MID DEVON DEVON

Results of an Archaeological Evaluation



South West Archaeology Ltd. report no. 171027



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# Land at Hitchcock's Business Park (East), Uffculme, Mid Devon, Devon Results of an Archaeological Evaluation

By P. Webb Report Version: FINAL 27<sup>th</sup> October 2017

Work undertaken by SWARCH for Richard Persey of Richard Persey and Maria Estates Ltd (the Client)

### Summary

This report presents the results of an archaeological evaluation carried out by South West Archaeology Ltd. for land at Hitchcock's Business Park (east), Uffculme, Mid Devon, Devon. The site is located in an area of known archaeological potential with prehistoric and Roman activity identified in the immediate vicinity.

The evaluation at Hitchcock's Business Park identified a total of 16 features, all post-medieval or modern in date and relating to land drainage and services. Of these, three ditches are all roughly aligned with the existing field boundaries, and whilst they may represent removed boundaries, they are more likely to represent larger scale drainage reflecting the former 'moorland' nature of the fields indicated on the tithe award.

None of the features produced dating evidence, but the character of the fills and their association with the existing field system would suggest that they are all post-medieval in date.

Given the results of the archaeological evaluation the archaeological potential for the site is low and it is not recommended that any further archaeological investigations are undertaken in relation to this site.



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# **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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### 1.0 Introduction

**LOCATION:** LAND AT HITCHCOCK'S BUSINESS PARK

PARISH: UFFCULME
DISTRICT: MID DEVON
COUNTY: DEVON

 NGR:
 ST 05188 12386

 PLANNING NO.
 17/01298/MFUL

 HE OFFICER REF.
 ARCH/DM/ND/31433A

**SWARCH** REF. UHE17

# 1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) was commissioned by Richard Persey of Richard Persey and Maria Estates Ltd (the Client) to undertake an archaeological evaluation on Land at Hitchcock's Business Park (East), Uffculme, Devon, in advance of proposed development of the land. This work was undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (Boyd 2017) drawn up in consultation with Stephen Reed of Devon County Historic Environment Team (DCHET) and in line with best practice and CIfA guidelines.

### 1.2 TOPOGRAPHICAL AND GEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The site is located approximately 1.5km south-west of Uffculme, at the north-eastern end of the Hitchcock's Business Park, to the south-east of the M5 and B3181, and north of River Culm. The site comprises a single field on a plateau towards the summit of a south-east facing slope at an altitude of c.90m AOD (see Figure 1). The soils of this area are reddish fine loamy or fine silty over clayey permeable soils of the Whimple 3 Association bordering the permeable fine and coarse loamy permeable soils of the Wigton Moor Association (SSEW 1983). These overlie the mudstone of the Aylesbeare Mudstone Group (BGS 2017).

### 1.3 HISTORICAL & ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Hitchcock's Business Park is located adjacent to Hitchcock's Farm at the southern edge of the parish of Halberton, in the hundred of Halberton and deanery of Tiverton. The farm is depicted and labelled on the 1802 Ordnance Survey surveyors draft map, and the 1840 Halberton tithe award records it as a homestead owned and occupied by William Parkhouse, the fields being under a mix of orchard and pasture. The site is located to the north-east of land associated with the farm; on land owned and occupied in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by William Wood, the fields being under arable cultivation and named *Moor Close* suggesting that the ground has historically been open waste. The site lies within a landscape of known prehistoric and Romano-British activity. Neolithic and Bronze Age flint has been recovered from fields to the west of the site, geophysical survey identifying evidence for a prehistoric ring ditch (Northamptonshire Archaeology 2012); prehistoric and Romano-British activity were also identified during archaeological investigations to the west (Steinmetzer 2008). Bridwell registered park and garden is located to the north-east of the site; the route of the former Culm Valley Light Railway on the adjacent side of the Uffculme Road.

# 1.4 METHODOLOGY

The archaeological evaluation was conducted in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) (Boyd 2017) drawn up in consultation with Stephen Reed (DCHET) and in line with best practice. Seven trenches, each 1.5m wide and totalling c.225m in length, were laid out using hand tapes and opened by JCB with back actor to the depth of weathered natural using a toothless grading bucket. Exposed archaeological deposits were excavated by hand and in accordance with the WSI and CIfA guidelines.

The evaluation was designed to establish the presence or absence, extent, depth, character and date of any *in situ* archaeological deposits within the site to inform any further planning decisions. The archaeological evaluation took place between 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> October 2017

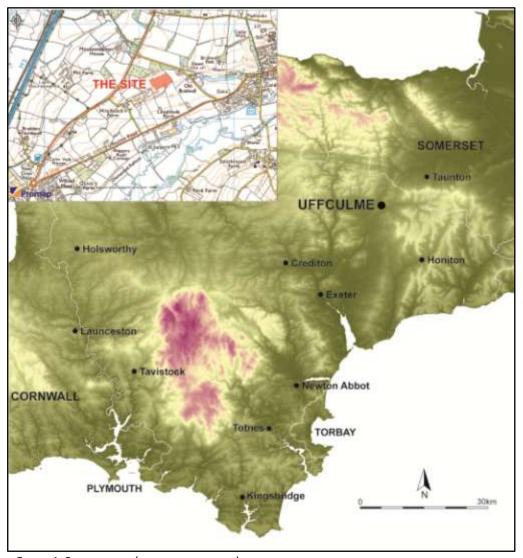


FIGURE 1: SITE LOCATION (THE SITE IS INDICATED).

### 2.0 RESULTS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

### 2.1 Introduction

The archaeological evaluation was carried out between  $16^{th}$  and  $17^{th}$  October 2017; and comprised the excavation of seven trenches, each 1.5m wide and totalling c.225m in length by JCB with back actor to the depth of weathered natural using a toothless grading bucket. The western portion of the site was not evaluated as the ground had been recently been cut-away and built-up to create a compound area. Exposed archaeological deposits were excavated by hand and in accordance with the WSI and CIfA guidelines.

A total of 16 features were identified in the seven evaluation trenches, including: three ditches; 10 land drains; and three modern utility features (Figure 2). What follows is a summary of each trench with finds noted where they occur; see Appendix 1 for detailed context descriptions; Appendix 2 for full finds concordance; and Appendix 3 for a set of baseline photographs.

### 2.2 DEPOSIT MODEL

The stratigraphy of the site was fairly consistent across the whole area. A friable mid brown-grey clay-silt topsoil overlay a mid red-grey plough horizon subsoil. This sealed mid yellow-red compact sand-clay weathered natural with stone banding. The thickness of these soils varied across the site from 0.40m in Trench #2 to 0.58m in Trench #4, with the greatest depth of material towards the south-east of the site.

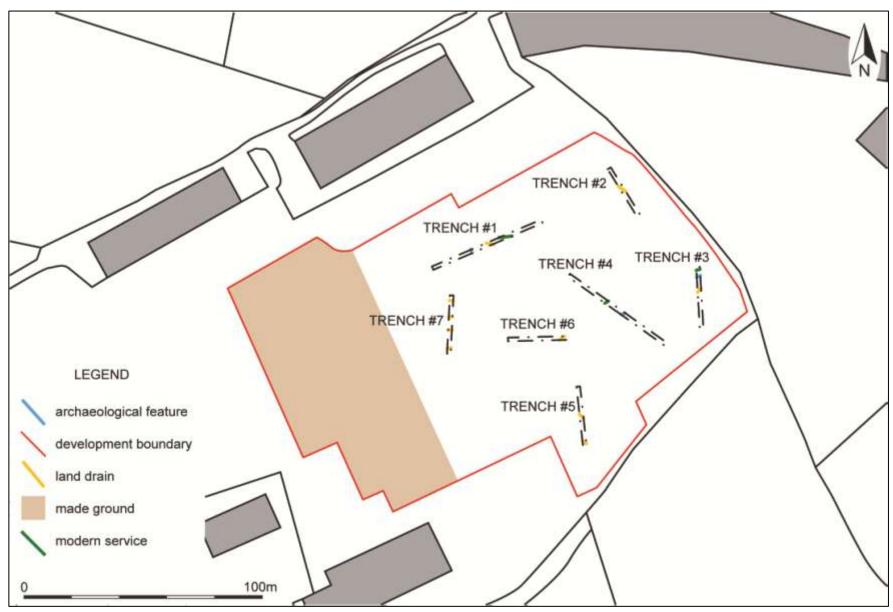


FIGURE 2: SITE PLAN SHOWING LOCATION OF THE TRENCHES AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL FEATURES.

### 2.3 TRENCH #1

Trench #1 was located towards the north-western corner of the site and measured 50m long on a north-east to south-west alignment; the topsoils were *c*.0.30m thick; and the subsoil 0.15m thick. No finds were recovered from this trench.

Three features (Figures 3, 4) were identified within this trench: one ditch; one land drain; and one modern utility. Ditch [103] was located towards the centre of the trench on an approximate north-west to south-east alignment, measuring 0.74m wide x 0.13m deep with moderate concave sides and flattish base. It contained a single fill: (104), yellow-grey soft silt-clay.

The remaining features all constituted modern activity comprising: a land drain and alkathene pipe. Both were situated towards the centre of the trench on approximate east to west alignments, the land drain measuring 0.60m wide with a re-deposited natural fill; the alkathene pipe cut into the topsoil.

### 2.4 Trench #2

Trench #2 was located in the north-east corner of the site and measured 23.5m long on a north-north-west to south-south-east alignment; the topsoils were *c*.0.30m thick; and the subsoil 0.10m thick. No finds were recovered from this trench.

A single land drain (Figure 3) was identified, located towards the centre of the trench on an approximate east to west alignment, measuring 0.60m wide. It contained an upper fill of redeposited natural.

### 2.5 TRENCH #3

Trench #3 was located in the south-east corner of the site and measured 26m long on a north-north-west to south-south-east alignment; the topsoils were *c*.0.34m thick; and the subsoil 0.10m thick. No finds were recovered from this trench.

Three features (Figures 3, 5) were identified within this trench: one ditch; one land drain; and one modern utility. Ditch [303] was located towards the northern end of the trench on an approximate north-east to south-west alignment, measuring 1.15m wide x 0.33m deep with steep to near vertical sides and flat base. It contained a single fill: (304), yellow-brown clay-silt.

The remaining features all constituted modern activity comprising: a land drain and a utility trench. The land drain was situated mid-way along the trench on an approximate north-east to south-west alignment, measuring 1.10m wide with a re-deposited natural fill. The modern utility trench was located at the northern end of the trench and followed the same alignment, measuring 0.50m wide.

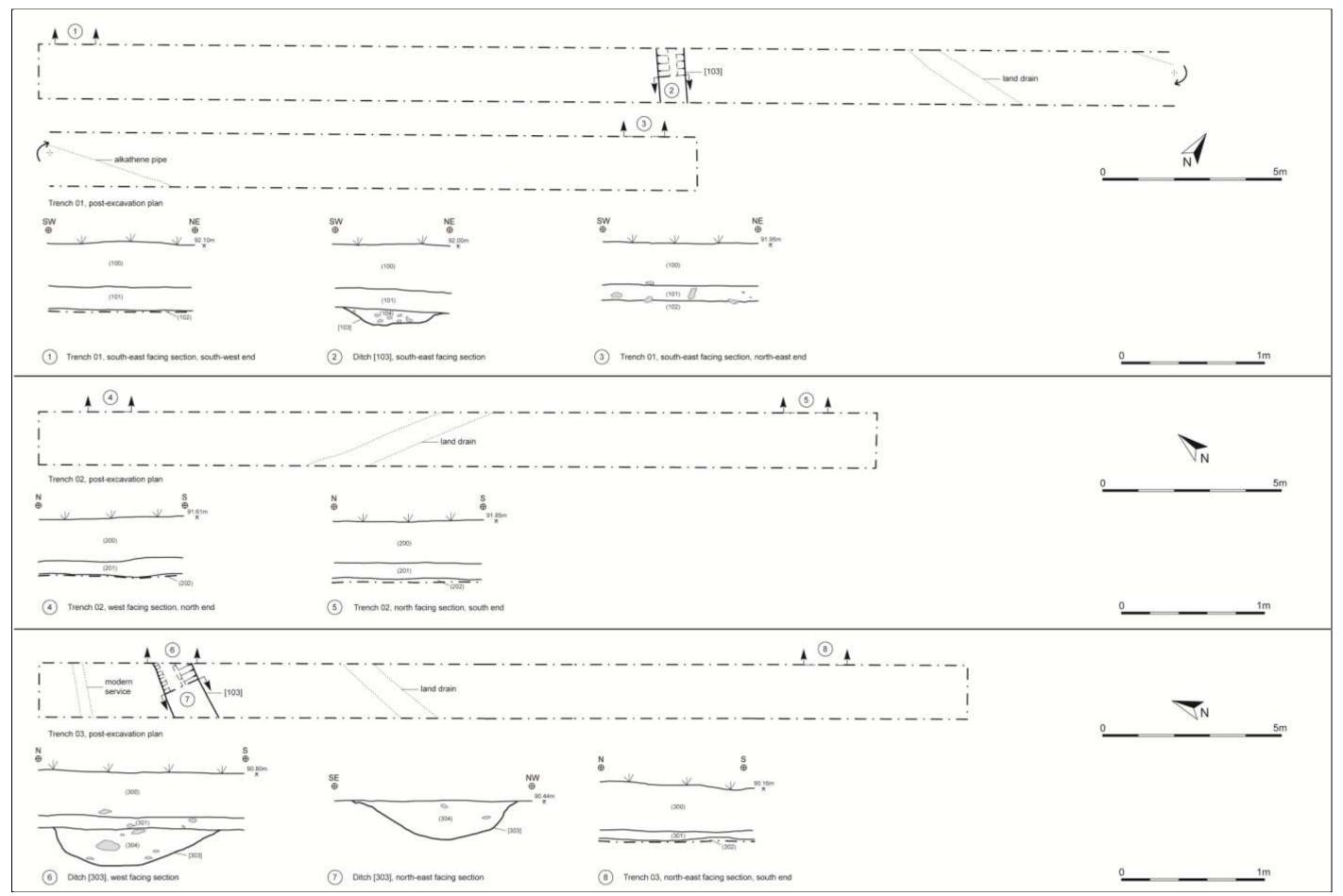


FIGURE 3: TRENCHES #1, #2 AND #3; PLANS AND SECTIONS. HEIGHTS AT AN ARBITRARY TBM OF 100.00 AOD.



FIGURE 4: DITCH [103], POST-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-WEST (1M SCALE).



FIGURE 5: DITCH [303], POST-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE EAST (1M SCALE).

### 2.6 Trench #4

Trench #4 was located centrally on the site, towards the southern boundary, and measured 50m long on a north-west to south-east alignment; the topsoil was up to 0.40m thick; and the subsoil 0.18m thick. A single sherd (<1g) of post-medieval white refined earthenware; and a fragment (85g) of wooden post were recovered from the topsoil of this trench.

Two features (Figures 6, 7) were identified within this trench: one ditch; and one modern utility. Ditch [403] was located towards the centre of the trench and orientated approximately east to west; it measured 0.70m wide x 0.15m deep with gradual-steep sloping sides and concave base. It contained a single fill: (404), a brown sand-clay.

The remaining feature was a modern utility trench, located towards the middle of the trench on an approximate east to west alignment; it measured 0.50m wide and contained a fill of redeposited natural.



FIGURE 6: DITCH [403], POST-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-EAST (1M SCALE).

### 2.7 TRENCH #5

Trench #5 was located at the south-western corner of the site and measured 25m long on a north to south alignment; the topsoil was up to 0.31m thick; and the subsoil 0.12m thick. No finds were recovered from this trench.

Two land drains (Figure 7) were identified within this trench, located towards the southern end of the trench on an approximate north-west to south-east alignment. Both measured 0.30m wide and contained re-deposited natural fills; the southern example was excavated to show a depth of 0.15m with vertical sides and flat base.

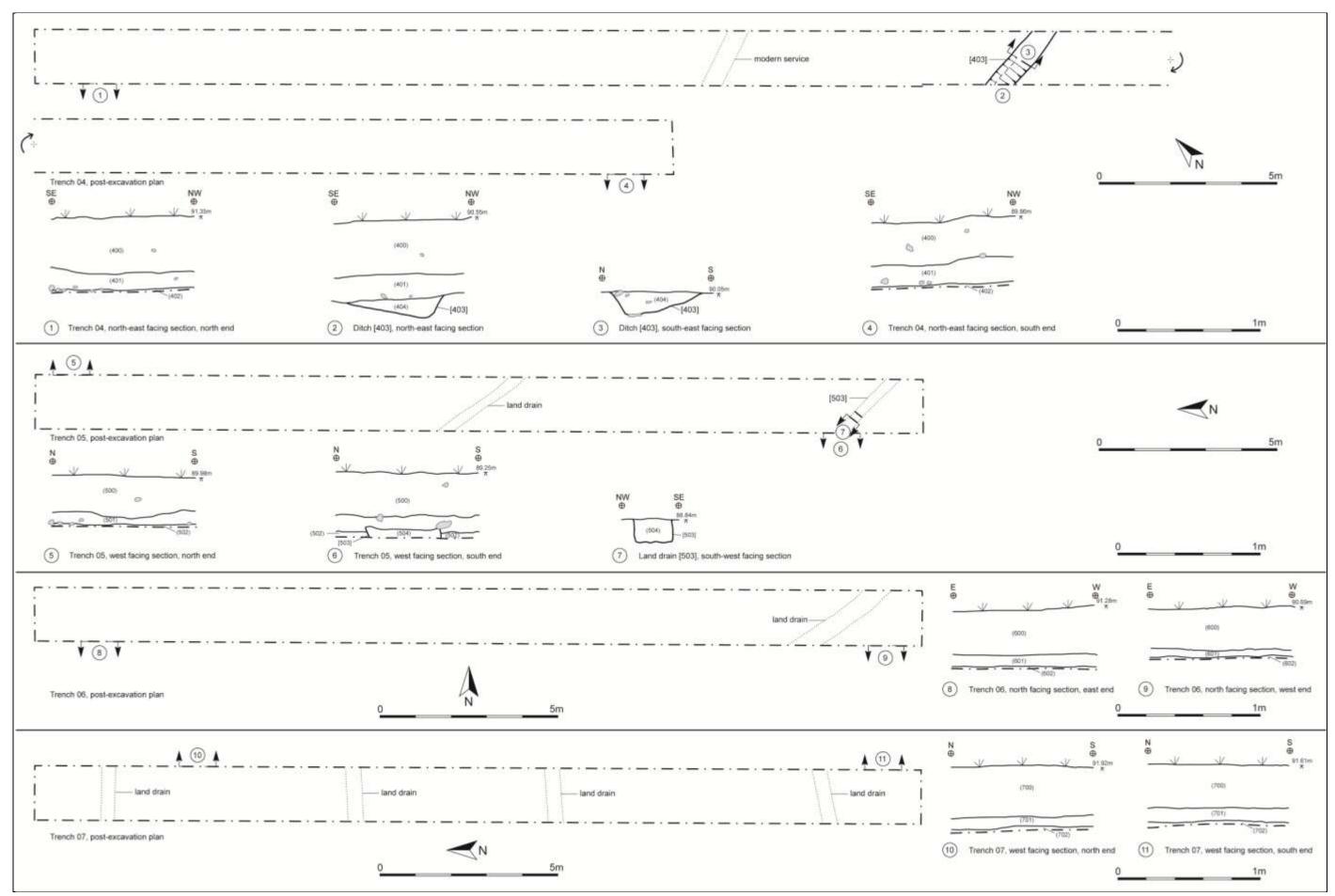


FIGURE 7: TRENCH #4, #5, #6, AND #7 PLANS AND SECTIONS. HEIGHTS AT AN ARBITRARY TBM OF 100.00M AOD.

### 2.8 Trench #6

Trench #6 was located towards the middle of the site and measured 25m long on an approximate east to west alignment; the topsoils were c.0.32m thick and the subsoil 0.08m thick. No finds were recovered from this trench.

A single land drain (Figure 7) was identified within this trench, located at its eastern end on an approximate north-east to south-west alignment. It measured 0.50m wide with a re-deposited natural fill.

### 2.9 TRENCH #7

Trench #7 was located towards the north-western corner of the site on an approximate north to south alignment; the topsoils c.0.31-0.36m thick and the subsoil 0.10m thick. No finds were recovered from this trench.

Four land drains (Figure 7) were identified within this trench, located along its length on approximate east to west alignments, measuring 0.40m wide with re-deposited natural fills.

### 2.10 DISCUSSION

The evaluation at Hitchcock's Farm identified a total of 16 features, all likely dating to the post-medieval and modern periods and relating to drainage; but including a series of linear ditches (3). It is likely, however, that even these ditches also reflect drainage activity, though there is the possibility that they may represent historic field boundaries pre-dating the available historic mapping. None of the buried features produced dating evidence, but the character of the fills would suggest that the ditches are all post-medieval in date.

### 3.0 CONCLUSION

The evaluation at Hitchcock's Business Park identified a total of 16 features, all likely post-medieval or modern in date and relating to land drainage and modern service trenching.

The three ditches are all roughly aligned with the existing field boundaries, and whilst they may represent removed boundaries, they are more likely to represent larger scale drainage reflecting the former 'moorland' nature of the fields indicated by the tithe award. None of the features produced dating evidence, but the character of the fills and their association with the existing field system would suggest that they are all post-medieval or later in date.

Given the results of the archaeological evaluation the archaeological potential for the site is low and it is not recommended that any further archaeological investigations are undertaken in relation to this site.

# 4.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY & REFERENCES

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**Pelling, R. & Fisher, I.** 2012: A Geophysical Survey at Langlands Farm, near Willand, Devon. June 2012. Northamptonshire Archaeology

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# APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Context	Туре	Description	Relationships	Depth/thickness (m)	Spot date
		Trench #1			
(100)	Layer	TOPSOIL - mid brown-grey friable clay-silt with moderate rounded stone inclusions. Turf c.0.14m thick to top.	Overlies (101)	0.30m thick	Modern
(101)	Layer	SUBSOIL - mid red-grey friable clay-silt with frequent rounded stone inclusions. Plough horizon.	Overlain by (100); overlies (104)	0.10-0.15m thick	-
(102)	Layer	NATURAL - mid yellow-red compact sand-clay banded with stony gravel.	Cut by [103]	-	-
[103]	Cut	LINEAR DITCH. Orientated north-west to south-east. Measures c.0.74m wide x 0.13m deep with moderate concave sides and flattish base.  Filled by (104); cuts (102)		0.13m deep	-
(104)	Fill	FILL OF DITCH [103]. Light yellow-grey soft silt-clay with occasional sand and frequent rounded stone inclusions, particularly towards north end.	Overlain by (101); fill of [103]	0.13m thick	-
(105)	Layer	NATURAL - light yellow-brown friable silt-clay with frequent rounded stone and gravel inclusions. Measure between 0.30 and 0.80m wide x <0.07m deep. Series Overlain by (101) of bands stony bands within the natural.		Up to 0.07m thick	-
		Trench #2			
(200)	Layer	TOPSOIL - mid brown-grey friable clay-silt with moderate rounded stone inclusions. Turf c.0.14m thick to top.			Modern
(201)	Layer	SUBSOIL - mid red-grey friable clay-silt with frequent rounded stone inclusions.  Plough horizon.  Overlain by (200); overlies (202)		0.10m thick	-
(202)	Layer	NATURAL - mid yellow-red compact sand-clay banded with stony gravel.	Overlain by (201)	-	-
		Trench #3			
(300)	Layer	TOPSOIL - mid brown-grey friable clay-silt with moderate rounded stone inclusions. Turf c.0.14m thick to top.	Overlies (301)	0.34m thick	Modern
(301)	Layer	SUBSOIL - mid red-grey friable clay-silt with frequent rounded stone inclusions. Plough horizon.	Overlain by (300); overlies (304)	` ' I () ()6m-() 1()m thick	
(302)	Layer	NATURAL - mid yellow-red compact sand-clay banded with stony gravel.	Cut by [303]	-	-
[303]	Cut	LINEAR DITCH. Orientated north-east to south-west. Measures 1.15m wide x 0.33m deep with near vertical north-east slope with steep break of slope; steep south-west edge with concave break of slope; flat base.  Filled by (304); cuts (302)		0.33m deep	-
(304)	Fill	FILL OF DITCH [303]. Mid yellow-brown friable clay-silt with occasional rounded stone and charcoal flecks.	Overlain by (301); fill of [303]	0.33m thick	-
		Trench #4			

(400)	Layer	TOPSOIL - mid brown-grey friable clay-silt with moderate rounded stone inclusions. Turf c.0.10m thick to top.  Overlies (401)		0.30-0.40m thick	Modern
(401)	Layer	SUBSOIL - mid red-grey friable clay-silt with frequent rounded stone inclusions. Plough horizon.	Overlain by (400); overlies (404)	0.14-0.18m thick	-
(402)	Layer	NATURAL - red clay with occasional rounded and sub-rounded stones. With gritty and sandy areas towards the southern end of the trench; where the colour becomes more brown and less clayey.	Cut by [403]	-	-
[403]	Cut	LINEAR DITCH. Orientated approximately east to west. Measures 0.70m wide x 0.10-0.15m deep with steep north side and gradual south side; with concave base.	Filled by (404); cuts (402)	0.10-0.15m deep	-
(404)	Fill	FILL OF DITCH [403]. Light brown friable sand-clay with rare stone inclusions.	Overlain by (401); fill of [403]	0.10-0.15m thick	-
		Trench #5			
(500)	Layer	TOPSOIL - mid brown-grey friable clay-silt with moderate rounded stone inclusions. Turf c.0.14m thick to top.	Overlies (501)	0.25-0.31m thick	Modern
(501)	Layer	SUBSOIL - mid red-grey friable clay-silt with frequent rounded stone inclusions. Plough horizon.	Overlain by (500); overlies (504)	0.05-0.12m thick	-
(502)	Layer	NATURAL - mid red-brown compact gritty silt-clay with occasional stone nclusions.  Cut by [503]		-	-
[503]	Cut	LINEAR FIELD DRAIN. Orientated north-west to south-east. Measures 0.30m wide x 0.15m deep with vertical sides and flat base.	Filled by (504); cuts (502)	0.15m deep	-
(504)	Fill	FILL OF FIELD DRAIN [503]. Mid red-brown soft-compacted clay. Re-deposited natural.  Overlain by (501); fill of [503]		0.15m thick	-
		Trench #6			
(600)	Layer	TOPSOIL - mid brown-grey friable clay-silt with moderate rounded stone inclusions. Turf c.0.10m thick to top.	Overlies (601)	0.28m-0.32m thick	Modern
(601)	Layer	SUBSOIL - mid red-grey friable clay-silt with frequent rounded stone inclusions. Plough horizon.	Overlain by (600); overlies (602)	0.04m-0.08m thick	-
(602)	Layer	NATURAL - brown-red clay with gritty/stony areas.	Overlain by (601)	-	-
		Trench #7			
(700)	Layer	TOPSOIL - mid brown-grey friable clay-silt with moderate rounded stone inclusions. Turf c.0.13m thick to top.	Overlies (701)	Overlies (701) 0.31m-0.36m thick	
(701)	Layer	SUBSOIL - mid red-grey friable clay-silt with frequent rounded stone inclusions. Plough horizon.	Overlain by (700); overlies (702)	c.0.10m thick	-
(702)	Layer	NATURAL - mid red-brown compact gritty silt-clay with occasional stone inclusions.	Overlain by (701)	-	-

# **APPENDIX 2: FINDS CONCORDANCE**

		POTTERY			OTHER			DATE
Context	Notes	Sherds	Wgt. (g)	Notes	Frags.	Wgt. (g)	Notes	
(400)		1	<1	White refined earthenware, body	1	85	Wood	Post- medieval

# **APPENDIX 3: EVALUATION SUPPORTING PHOTOGRAPHS**



Trench #1 post-excavation; viewed from the south-west (1m & 2m scales).



DITCH [103] SOUTH-EAST FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-EAST (1 M SCALE).



DITCH [103] POST-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-WEST (1M SCALE).



EXAMPLE OF STONY BAND WITHIN TRENCH #1; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-EAST (1M SCALE).



EXAMPLE OF STONY BAND WITHIN TRENCH #1; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-EAST (1M SCALE).



Trench #1 representative south-east facing section, north-east end; viewed from the south-east (1m scale).



TRENCH #1 REPRESENTATIVE SOUTH-EAST FACING SECTION, SOUTH-WEST END; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-EAST (1M SCALE).



Trench #2 post-excavation; viewed from the south-east (1m & 2m scales).



TRENCH #2, SHOWING ROOT DISTURBANCE AND LAND DRAINSS; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-EAST (1M SCALE).



Trench #2 representative south-west facing section, south-east end; viewed from the south-west (1m scale).



Trench #2 representative south-west facing section, north-west end; viewed from the south-west (1m scale).



Trench #3 post-excavation; viewed from the north (1m & 2m scales).



DITCH [303] WEST FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE WEST (1M SCALE).



Trench #3 representative west facing section, south end; viewed from the west (1m scale).



Trench #4 post-excavation; viewed from the north-west (1m & 2m scales).



DITCH [403] POST-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE WEST (1M SCALE).



DITCH [403] NORTH-EAST FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-EAST (1M SCALE).



Trench #4 representative north-east facing section, south-east end; viewed from the north-east (1m scale).



TRENCH #4 REPRESENTATIVE NORTH-EAST FACING SECTION, NORTH-WEST END; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-EAST (1M SCALE).



Trench #5 post-excavation; viewed from the north (1m & 2m scales).



LAND DRAIN [503], POST-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-WEST (1M SCALE).



Trench #5 representative west facing section, south end; viewed from the west (1m scale).



TRENCH #5 REPRESENTATIVE WEST FACING SECTION, NORTH END; VIEWED FROM THE WEST (1M SCALE).



Trench #6 post-excavation; viewed from the east (1m & 2m scales).



TRENCH #6 REPRESENTATIVE NORTH FACING SECTION, EAST END; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH (1M SCALE).



TRENCH #6 REPRESENTATIVE NORTH FACING SECTION, WEST END; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH (1M SCALE).



Trench #7 post-excavation; viewed from the south (1m & 2m scales).



Trench #7 representative west facing section, south end; viewed from the west (1m scale).



TRENCH #7 REPRESENTATIVE WEST FACING SECTION, NORTH END; VIEWED FROM THE WEST (1M SCALE).



GENERAL SITE VIEW SHOWING STONED AREA FROM NORTH-WEST CORNER; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-WEST (NO SCALE).



GENERAL SITE VIEW SHOWING STONED AREA; VIEWED FROM THE WEST (NO SCALE).



GENERAL SITE VIEW SHOWING STONED AREA FROM NORTH-EAST CORNER; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH (NO SCALE).



GENERAL SITE VIEW SHOWING STONED AREA FROM SOUTH-EAST CORNER; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-EAST (1M SCALE).



GENERAL SITE VIEW SHOWING BUNDS TO THE STONED AREA; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-EAST (1M SCALE).



GENERAL SITE VIEW SHOWING TRENCHES #1 AND #7; VIEWED FROM THE WEST (NO SCALE).



GENERAL SITE VIEW SHOWING TRENCHES #4, #5, AND #6; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-WEST (NO SCALE).



GENERAL SITE VIEW FROM SOUTH-EAST CORNER; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH (NO SCALE).



GENERAL SITE VIEW FROM THE SOUTH-EAST CORNER; VIEWED FROM THE EAST (NO SCALE).



GENERAL SITE VIEW FROM THE SOUTH-EAST CORNER; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-EAST (NO SCALE).



VIEW OF SOUTHERN SITE BOUNDARY IN SOUTH-EAST CORNER; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH (1M SCALE).



VIEW ALONG SOUTHERN HEDGEBANK BOUNDARY; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-EAST (1M SCALE).



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