Land at Pave Lane, Telford, Shropshire

Archaeological Evaluation Report

NGR:	SJ 76221 15993
Local Minerals Planning Authority:	Shropshire Council
PCAS Site code:	PLQE 16
PCAS Job No.:	1658
OASIS ref:	preconst3-248348

Prepared for

Mick George Ltd.

by A. Lane

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Non-Technical Summary

This document presents the results of a scheme of archaeological trial excavation trenching on land at Pave Lane, Telford, Shropshire. In conjunction with an archaeological desk-based assessment and geophysical survey, these results will inform a forthcoming application for mineral extraction.

The site lies on the southern edge of the village, occupying Muster Hill and the surrounding slopes north of Woodcote Hall. Geophysical survey identified a disperse collection of linear and discrete anomalies, including a potential enclosure towards the top of Muster Hill.

Trenches were positioned to investigate geophysical anomalies as well as magnetically quiet areas across the site. The majority of the linear features investigated are interpreted as former field boundaries as depicted on historic OS mapping, and a quarry / gravel pit backfilled in the mid 20th century. The presence of an enclosure on Muster hill was confirmed, but is only be tentatively dated to the Romano-British period, based on small quantities of pottery recovered from topsoil around the relevant trenches and on environmental evidence.

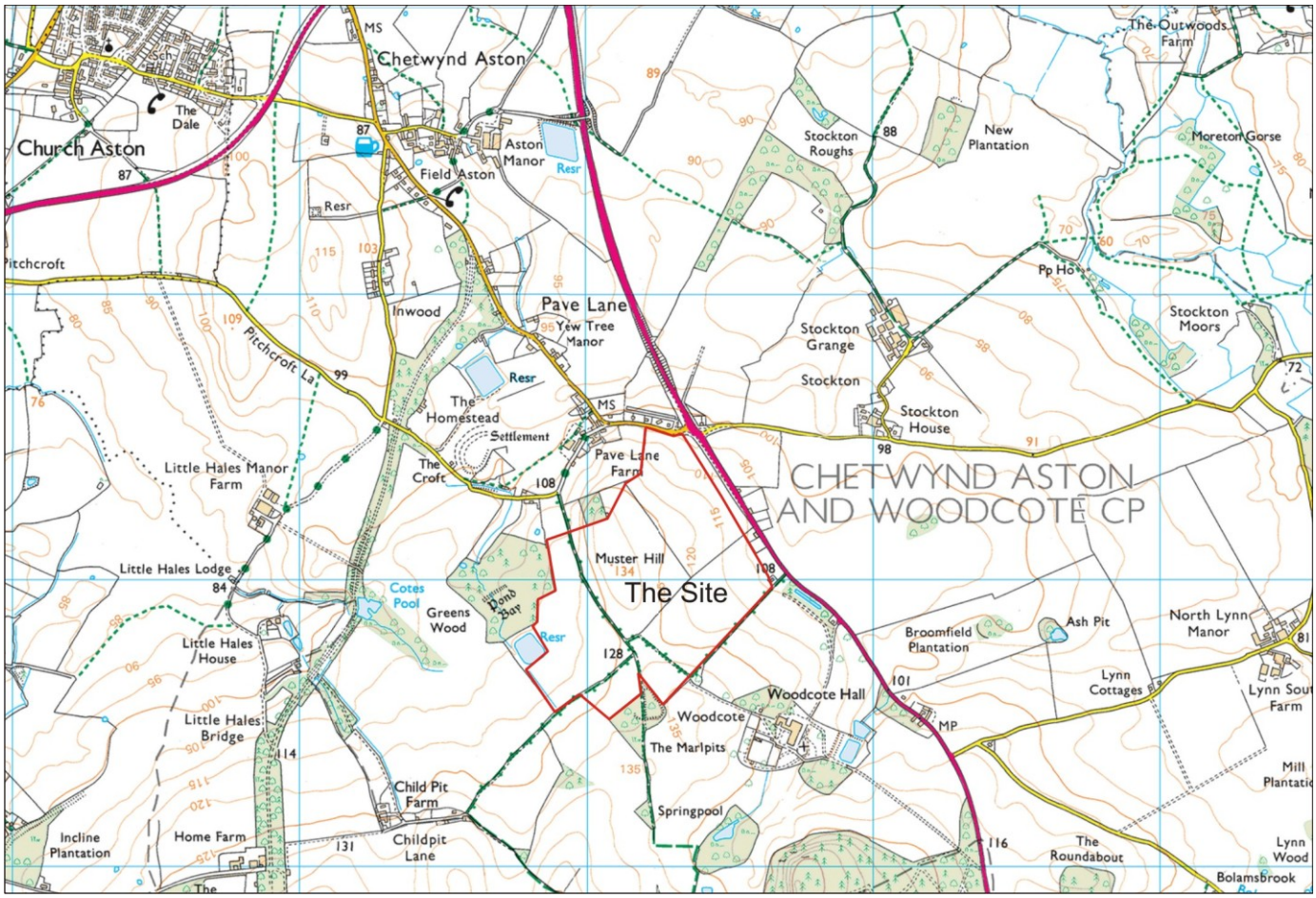


Figure 1: Site location at scale 1:25,000. Site indicated in red. (OS mapping © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. PCAS licence no. 100049278).

1.0 Introduction

Pre-Construct Archaeological Services Ltd (PCAS) was commissioned by Mick George Ltd. to undertake an archaeological evaluation on agricultural land at Pave Lane, near Telford in Shropshire, to advise a planning application for mineral extraction at the site.

The Senior Archaeological Projects Officer for Shropshire Council recommended a program of work to investigate the potential for buried archaeological remains that would be impacted by the proposal. The site was subject to geophysical survey (Bunn, 2016), and trenches positioned to investigate the magnetic anomalies identified.

This document follows current best practice and national guidance, including:

- NPPF, National Planning Policy Framework, 2012;
- CIfA Code of Conduct (2014 as revised);
- CIfA Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations (2014);
- Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE v1.1, English Heritage 2009)

2.0 Site Location and Description (Fig. 1)

Pave Lane is a hamlet in the parish of Chetwynd Aston in the Telford and Wrekin district of Shropshire. The hamlet is a cluster of houses along a road also called Pave Lane, lying on the west side of the A41, approximately 3km south of Newport. The centre of Telford lies c.8km to the southwest, although the suburb of Donnington and Muxton lie c.5km in this direction. Chetwynd Aston lies less than 1km to the north.

The site lies on the south side of Pave Lane, comprising of six fields currently under arable cultivation. At the time of the site visit in February 2016 the majority of the site had been tilled with a very young crop growing. The total area of the site is approximately 50 hectares, four larger fields which make up the majority of the site and two smaller fields in the southwest corner of the site. There are several access roads around the site.

The approximate central NGR of the Site is SJ 76221 15993.

3.0 Topography and Geology

The bedrock geology of the east side of the site is Kidderminster Formation interbedded sandstone and conglomerate. To the west the bedrock geology changes to Enville Member sandstone, with areas of subordinate conglomerate, siltstone and mudstone also recorded. There are no recorded overlying drift deposits (http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html).

The predominant soil type identified in the vicinity of the proposed development comprises freely draining, slightly acid sandy soils (Magic.co.uk).

The site lies on higher ground to the south of the hamlet. There is a ridge running approximately N-S through the centre of the site, called Muster Hill, with levels to the east falling gently to a rolling landscape and to the west more sharply, with a flatter landscape beyond. The highest point on the site is recorded as approximately 134m OD, with levels along the eastern edge of the site around 105-110m OS, and 115m on the western boundary.

4.0 Planning Background

The site is proposed as the location for a new quarry, with plans currently under preparation for submission to the local mineral planning authority. The Senior Archaeological Projects Officer for Shropshire Council was consulted and advised that as the archaeological potential of the site was unknown a program of archaeological investigation works was necessary to inform the application.

This requirement is consistent with current planning policy, the National Planning Policy Framework (2012), which states:

In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. ... Where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation (Paragraph 128, NPPF, 2012).

An archaeological desk-based assessment, geophysical survey and a settings assessment were prepared to inform the fieldwork and results of this scheme of evaluation trenching and the planning application. Trenches were positioned to investigate the magnetic anomalies and the areas identified in the DBA has having the highest archaeological potential. The results will be used to inform any further investigative works, the application and any required mitigation associated with the proposals.

5.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

An archaeological desk-based assessment collating the known archaeological and historical monuments and records for a study area of 1km from the site was produced in spring 2016 (Evans, 2016). The assessment included the results of a separate geophysical survey (Bunn, 2016). This is a summary of the assessment:

A little over 300m to the northwest of the site are the Scheduled remains of an Iron Age Farmstead adjacent to The Croft, Pave Lane (List entry ID 1020275). The monument includes the earthwork and buried remains of an enclosed farmstead surrounded by concentric rings of earthwork banks and ditches, with excavations of the site revealing a causeway approaching the site from the southwest towards what was probably the main entrance where a cobbled surface was revealed. There are few other prehistoric monuments recorded within 2km of the site, but in the wider area there are a number of areas of cropmarks that are thought to represent prehistoric activity.

The only possible Roman dated monument in the area is the projected line of a Roman road from Watling Street towards Newport, and it is suggested that Pave Lane to the north of the site follows the line of this road. If this line is continued, the Roman road could run through the northeast corner of the site, however no evidence of such a feature is observed on any of the aerial photographs seen during the assessment, and the geophysical survey revealed no anomalies in this area that might indicate a road or track. The only evidence for this to date is a reference of the 1884 OS map which labels this as a Roman road.

There are no recorded Saxon dated monuments within 1km of the site. The area of the proposed development and wider study area has historically lain within the chapelry of Woodcote which emerged as a settlement in the Anglo-Saxon Period. By the time of the Domesday Survey of 1086 Woodcote was a small settlement consisting of nine households (1 Villager, 3 smallholders, 3 freemen and 2 ploughmen). The first part of the place name of Chetwynd Aston is thought to derive from the Old English personal name Ceatta and (ge)wind, meaning winding ascent of a man called Ceatta. Aston is also thought to derive from Old English, meaning east farmstead (it is likely that there was a link with the settlement

to the northwest of Newport, also called Chetwynd). There is no entry for Chetwynd Aston in the Domesday Book; any farmstead or settlement here may have been included in the records for Woodcote.

There is little evidence of medieval activity in the vicinity of the site as recorded on the Shropshire Historic Environment Record. There is a probably moated manor site to the north Chetwynd Aston (HER ref: 01729).

Muster Hill is named as this is said to be where Humphrey Cotes of Woodcote mustered the men of the manor prior to joining the army of Henry Tudor on route to the Battle of Bosworth in 1485.

Woodcote is likely to have been the primary settlement in the area, and is mentioned in a number of medieval documents. The manor appears to have been held by the de Cote Family from the early medieval period, although references to this are rare, however this may be the same family that built the standing Woodcote Hall. Woodcote Hall and its associated buildings lies is a hollow at the base of the south facing slope. The chapel at Woodcote Hall dates from the 12th century (List entry ID 1292305), and may have stood at the heart of the medieval village, however the Hall and park were established sometime in the early post-medieval period. The majority of Woodcote Hall dates from 1875, but elements of the 18th and 17th century house that previously stood here are incorporated into the building (List entry ID 1351992). It is not clear when the grounds around Woodcote Hall were defined, but documentary evidence suggests it had been established by the mid 18th century. A tree lined avenue formed the main approach to the hall from the northeast by the mid 18th century from the road towards Pave Lane, a route which is largely followed by the modern driveway.

To the west of the site lies the northern avenue of Lilleshall Park, a post-medieval park associated with the early 19th century house that lies c1.5km southwest of the site, accessed via the Golden Gates in Pave Lane.

Pave Lane Farmhouse dates from the 18th century (List entry ID 1033338), and may have been the first occupation of the hamlet. The tithe award for the area dated 1842 records Muster Hill as being under arable cultivation. The 1851 Bagshaw Directory for Shropshire lists Pave Lane as:

a hamlet on the turnpike road, where the Lilleshall Company have a depot for coal, which is brought by canal from the extensive collieries of the Duke of Sutherland which are leased by the Lilleshall Company. The town of Newport of almost wholly supplied by the coal brought hither, which is of a very superior quality and varies in price from 6s.3d to 10s.10d per ton.

John James, Farmer, Pave Lane
Walter Mancell, Maltster and vict. Fox and Duck, Pave Lane
William Mancell, vict. Horse and Jockey, Pave Lane

The Lilleshall Company had been founded in 1802 a large engineering company which included mining and steel production in its operations. The early OS mapping does not record the location of this depot, however the guidepost on the turnpike road which was later replaced by the A41 is shown towards the northeast corner of the site, where a smithy lay at the cross roads. Mapping indicates the historic road curved round this corner of the site, rather than the abrupt junction that exists today, therefore the remains of this road and associated activity may survive buried in the woodland which now occupies this corner of the site.

The geophysical survey (Bunn, 2016, Fig 2&3) recorded only a small number of magnetic anomalies that are thought to have archaeological potential. Possible linear features lie in areas 2, 4 and 5 of the survey, and variation indicative of ridge and furrow was identified atop Muster Hill and in area 6. See trenching plan for results.

Figure 2: Pave Lane, Shropshire trenching plan, based on greyscale geophysics (Bunn, 2016). 1:4000 @ A3

| or | 25mx2m trench location (yellow denotes trench with archaeological features

Summary of results:
Trench 2: x 1 ditch, probably post-medieval field boundary
Trench 12: post-medieval / early modern quarry pit
Trench 17: x2 ditches, undated. possible Roman enclosure
Trench 18: x1 ditch, part of possible Roman enclosure (Trench 17)
Trench 26: x1 ditch, probable furrow. Undated
Trench 45: possible pit (natural?)

>2 nT < -2

200m
1:4000

SITE BOUNDARY

Fig. 1: Greyscale images of processed data

Figure 3: Pave Lane, Shropshire trenching plan, based on interpretive geophysics (Bunn, 2016). 1:4000 @ A3

| or | 25mx2m trench location (yellow denotes trench with archaeological features

Summary of results:
Trench 2: x 1 ditch, probably post-medieval field boundary
Trench 12: post-medieval / early modern quarry pit
Trench 17: x2 ditches, undated. possible Roman enclosure
Trench 18: x1 ditch, part of possible Roman enclosure (Trench 17)
Trench 26: x1 ditch, probable furrow. Undated
Trench 45: possible pit (natural?)

6.0 Methodology (Fig.2&3)

The evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (Lane, 2016) approved by the Senior Archaeological Projects Officer for Shropshire County Council.

Fifty evaluation trenches, each measuring 25mx2m, were excavated across the site. Trenches were generally aligned either N-S or E-W. The trench positions were based on the geo-referenced geophysics results (Bunn, 2016), and aimed to investigate those magnetic anomalies that were identified and magnetically "quiet" areas of the site. Trenches were located using GPS accurate to 0.03m.

All trenches were opened using a tracked CAT 320e fitted with a wide, smooth bladed bucket, under archaeological supervision. Machine excavation ceased at the first archaeologically significant layer or the natural geology. Trenches were cleaned by hand, with all encountered archaeological features defined and sample excavated.

Where identified, archaeological features were examined sufficiently to determine their date, character and survival condition and then recorded by measured plan (1:100) and section drawings (1:20), incorporating Ordnance Survey datum heights surveyed in using GPS.

A written record of each significant stratigraphic horizon and archaeological feature was made on standard PCAS context recording forms. These were supplemented by a narrative account in the form of a site diary.

A digital photographic record was maintained during the course of the archaeological intervention. A selection of the plates are reproduced within this report.

All artefacts were treated in accordance with UKIC guidelines, *First Aid for Finds* (Watkinson & Neale 1998). All artefacts encountered during the groundworks were retrieved and returned to PCAS offices for cleaning, marking and in-house assessment and subsequent dispatch to external specialists. Pottery and ceramic building material was submitted to Stephanie Rátkai for identification and assessment, environmental samples were processed and assessment by Durham University Archaeological Services.

Archaeological fieldwork was undertaken by M. Rowe, between 26/4/16 – 17/5/16.

7.0 Results (Fig. 4-6)

7.1 Negative trenches

Forty-four of the investigated trenches were proved to be negative of any cut features. These trenches are: 1, 3 – 11, 13 – 16, 19 – 25, 27 – 44, 46 – 50. The sequence of deposits recorded in these trenches is largely consistent; the natural geology of sand and gravel encountered beneath a thin layer of subsoil (<0.05m thick) and modern ploughsoil (<0.35m thick), although little to no subsoil was noted in the trenches towards the top of Muster Hill.

A small amount of pottery and ceramic building material was recovered from the topsoil in the vicinity of these negative trenches. Trench 16 was positioned to investigate the corner of a 3-sided linear anomaly, but was void of any cut features. From the topsoil of Trench 16 at the top of Muster Hill in Field A4 three sherds of pottery were recovered; a sherd of Severn Valley ware, and a sherd of a gritty oxidised fabric, both dating from the late 1st – early 2nd century AD early Roman period. The third sherd was from a post-medieval jar. From the topsoil of Trench 20 to the south of Trench 16 was a slightly larger assemblage of four fragments of ceramic building material, three of which could be identified as post-medieval brick or tile. A single sherd of coarseware pottery of a similar date was recovered from the topsoil of Trench 24, towards the southeast boundary of Field A4. Trench 27, lying on the east facing slope of Muster Hill, yielded three sherds of pottery from the topsoil; one

identified as possibly Roman, one as a post-medieval jar rim, and the third too small for secure identification.

7.2 Positive trenches

The six remaining trenches contained archaeological features.

Trench 2:

Trench 2 lay on a N-S towards the northwest corner of the site in area A1 at the base of the sharp west facing slope of Muster Hill. The trench targeted a gap in a geophysical linear anomaly.

It contained a single cut feature, a ditch [204] on a c. NE-SW alignment. The ditch was broad and shallow with diffuse edges. This ditch corresponds with the projected line of the magnetic anomaly identified on the geophysics, and when compared to historic mapping the linear feature corresponds with a field boundary identified on historic mapping from the 1846 Tithe map of Woodcote, which appears to have been removed in the late 1950's. A single sherd of Creamware pottery dated as late post-medieval in date was recovered from the silty sand which comprised the single fill of this ditch, which would support the identification of this feature as the post-medieval field boundary.

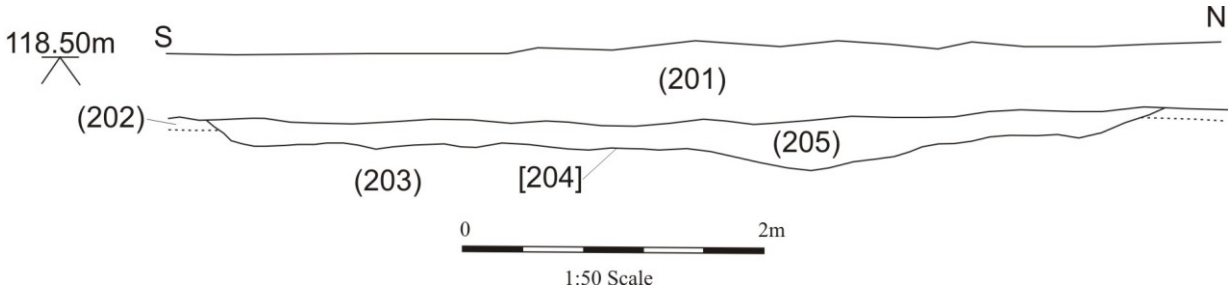


Figure 4: East facing section of ditch [204]. 1:50

Trench 12:

Trench 12 lay on an E-W alignment in area A3 towards the southern tip of the site. It investigated an area of disturbance identified as a magnetic anomaly.

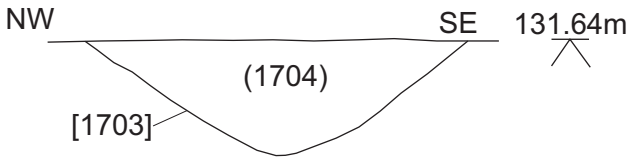
Upon excavation, and indicated by the geophysics, the trench exposed the eastern side of a large, irregular feature. This pit [1204] contained a significant number of 19th – early 20th century glass bottles, china fragments etc., in a matrix of redeposited soils. The artefacts being identified as modern were discarded on site, and the feature interpreted as a probable backfilled quarry pit. This is confirmed by comparing the feature position with historic mapping; the 1882 OS map of the site records the presence of a quarry pit in this location and an adjacent gravel pit is shown on the 1902OS map, and are shown consistently until the 1960 revised map indicating both the quarry and gravel pit were backfilled in the mid-late 1950's.

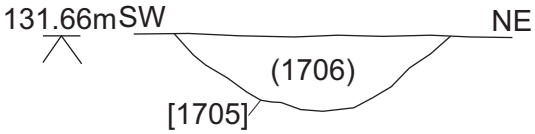
Trench 17:

Trench 17 was one of three trenches positioned to investigate linear anomalies suggestive of a three sided enclosure towards the summit of Muster Hill, and was aligned NNW-SSE to better intercept the anomalies. Adjacent Trench 16 which was also targeted on these linear anomalies proved to be negative of archaeological remains, although two sherds of Roman pottery and a single sherd of post-medieval pottery was recovered from the topsoil of Trench 16. Trench 18 to the south was positive (see below).

As targeted, Trench 17 exposed two ditches which together form the eastern corner of the enclosure. The ditches could be projected to intercept each other to the east of the trench, although the geophysics indicated the two ditches did not quite meet.

Figure 5: Trench 17 plan (1:100) and sections (1:20)





0 5m
1:100 Scale

0 1m
1:20 Scale

Ditches [1703] and [1705] had similar profiles of moderately sloping sides and narrow concave bases, and both contained single, similar silty sand deposit. These similarities and the proximity of the two is considered strong evidence they are contemporary, however no dating material was recovered from either ditch.

Environmental samples were taken from both ditches. Deposit (1704) from ditch [1703], the NE-SW arm of the enclosure, contained trace amounts of calcined bone, small quantities of charred wheat, some of which could be identified as spelt wheat, and hazel shell fragments. The sample from the NW-SE orientated ditch [1705] contained higher quantities of environmental remains, including common charcoal, charred heather twigs and a significant number of charred grains, mainly wheat including spelt wheat grains and chaff and a barley grain. Hazel shell fragments were also recovered from this deposit. Spelt wheat was introduced into England in the mid to late Bronze Age, but is commonly associated with late Iron Age and Romano-British sites. The chaff would suggest cereal processing in the vicinity of the site, and the hazelnut shell that wild food sources were being exploited alongside agriculture.

Two sherds of pottery identified as Roman (1^{st} – 4^{th} century AD) were recovered from the topsoil of this trench.

Trench 18:

Trench 18 was positioned over the southeast arm of a possible three sided enclosure identified on the geophysical survey atop Muster Hill. It lay on a NW-SE alignment.

The ditch [1804], corresponding with ditch [1703] was confirmed, maintaining the basic profile and single fill as recorded in Trench 17. No artefacts were recovered from this feature or the topsoil of the trench.

Trench 26:

Trench 26 lay on the east side of Muster Hill and on a N-S alignment. The area of the trench was recorded as magnetically “quiet” on the geophysical survey, although multiple linear anomalies aligned parallel to the field boundary to the east (interpreted as agricultural anomalies) were noted to the north and south of the trench location.

Trench 26 contained a single ditch [2604] on a c.NNW-SSE alignment. The ditch was relatively wide at 1.10m, but shallow. The feature roughly aligned with the agricultural anomalies described above, and although undated it is typical of a medieval / post medieval furrow. An environmental sample taken from the single fill of this ditch / furrow had low environmental potential, containing no charred remains and only traces amounts of coal, wood and modern chaff.

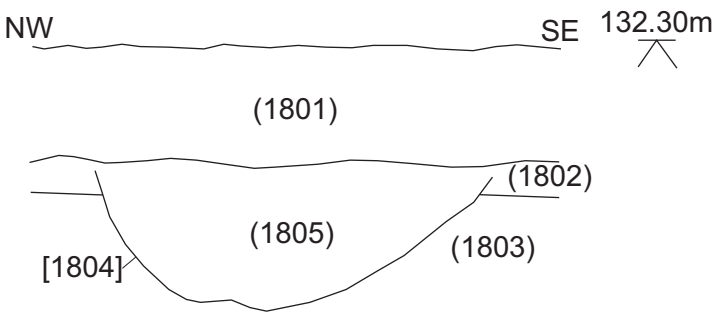
Three artefacts were recovered from the topsoil around Trench 26; two have been identified as probably Roman dated ceramic building material, while the third is identified as Malvernian pottery or building material and dating from the post-medieval period.

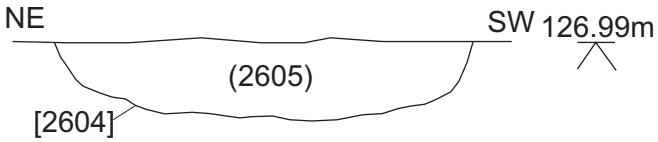
Trench 45:

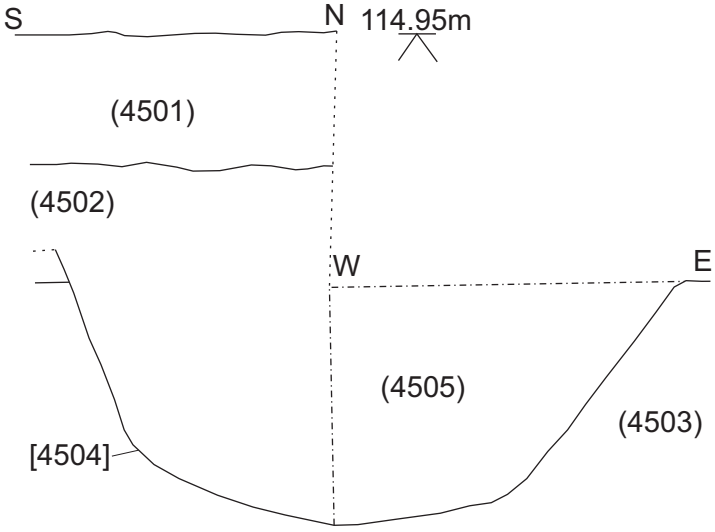
Trench 45 lay towards the southeast corner of the site in Area A6, in an area that was determined as void of magnetic anomalies of archaeological potential with some natural variation in the readings.

A single possible pit [4504] was partially exposed towards the north end of the trench, with a steep sided profile and concave base and containing a single fill of slightly silty sand. The character of this pit indicated this may be natural in origin, however the environmental sample taken from this potential feature contained a modern glass fragment among the trace amounts of coal, clinker and occasional modern roots, possibly the result of bioturbation.

Figure 6: Sections of features in Trenches 18, 26 and 45. 1:20







1:20 Scale

8.0 Discussion and Conclusion

The majority of the identified remains concord with the results of the geophysical survey, and are the physical remains resulting from post-medieval agricultural and small scale quarrying. The evaluation has confirmed that some magnetic anomalies relate to existing field drains, such as in Trench 11. Other anomalies seen in the geophysics correspond with former field boundaries seen on historic mapping (Fig. 7).

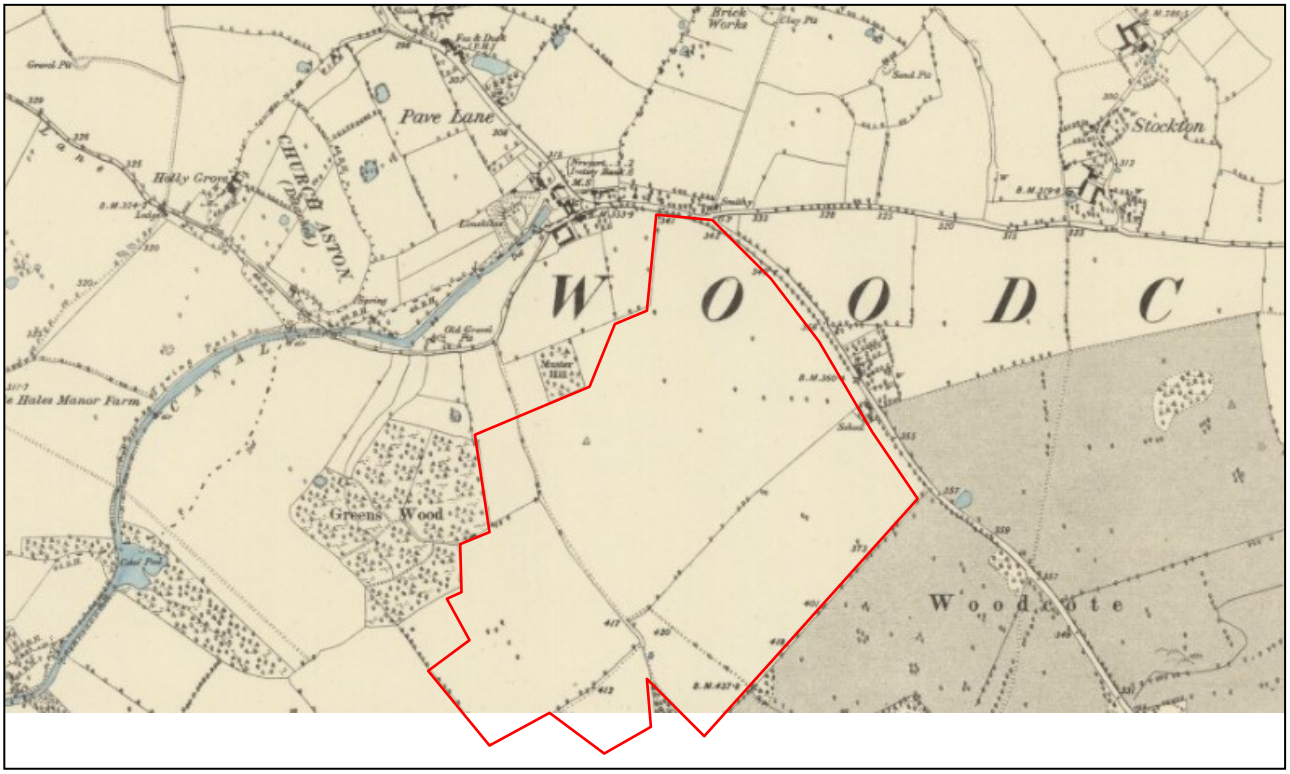


Figure 7: Extract from 1887 OS map, showing approximate outline of Site. Not to scale.

The geophysics indicated the presence of three linear anomalies towards the top of Muster Hill, forming an enclosure c.30m across and open to the southwest. Three trenches, 16 – 18, were positioned to investigate these anomalies. The ditches exposed in Trenches 17 & 18 corresponded with the geophysical anomalies; however no cut features were identified in Trench 16 which targeted the north corner of the enclosure. No artefacts were recovered from the exposed ditches in Trenches 17 & 18, but samples taken from both ditches contained evidence of domestic occupation in the vicinity, and the presence of spelt wheat in both samples and the recovered of small quantities of Roman dated pottery, with two sherds indicating a date of late 1st – second century AD. It is considered likely that these sherds originate from this enclosure or other possibly associated features in the vicinity. The position of the enclosure, close to the top of Muster Hill, gave relatively good visibility to the north, east and west (assuming current woodland removed).

This may indicate that the enclosure on the top of Muster Hill was contemporary with the scheduled Iron Age farmstead at The Croft (List entry ID 1020275) lying about 500m to the northwest of the enclosure, or with a previously unknown Roman site in the vicinity (but outside of the redline site boundary), but as the dating of the enclosure is based on less than a handful of pottery sherds from the topsoil any such interpretation is tentative.

The remainder of the trenches were devoid of any archaeological remains; a situation largely consistent with the results of geophysical survey. Features targeted by Trenches 28 – 29 and

36 – 37 were not identified, and the identified anomalies may therefore be the result of natural geological variation.

9.0 Effectiveness of Methodology

Intrusive evaluation was an appropriate method for gathering further information about the sites archaeological potential. The body of data produced by this evaluation is considered sufficient to inform the planning and development process.

10.0 Project Archive

Following completion of the full report, a project archive (documentary and material), will be prepared at the offices of PCAS in accordance with the guidelines contained in *Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long Term Storage* (UKIC 1990), *Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections* (Museums and Galleries Commission 1992). The archive will be deposited with Shropshire Museums. A digital copy of this report will be uploaded to OASIS, where it will be accessible via the ADS website.

11.0 Acknowledgements

Pre-Construct Archaeological Services would like to thank Mick George Ltd. for this commission.

12.0 References

Bunn, D, 2016, *Archaeological Geophysical Survey: Land at Pave Lane, Telford, Shropshire.* Report by Pre-Construct Geophysics

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Websites:

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Appendix 1: Context Summary PLQE 16 Pave Lane Quarry, Shropshire

Trenches negative of any cut features:

1, 3 – 11, 13 – 16, 19 – 25, 27 – 44, 46 - 50

Trench 2

Context	Type / Relationship	Description	Finds / Dating
201	Layer	Mid red brown slightly sandy silty loam with frequent pebbles. ≤0.35m thick	Topsoil (ploughsoil) / Modern. Pottery x 1
202	Layer	Mid orange red brown silty sand with frequent pebbles. ≤0.10m thick	Subsoil
203	Layer	Mid ornage red brown sand matrix with frequent gravel	Natural geology
204	Cut	Cut of linear feature on c. NE-SW alignment. Diffuse edges but base clear. Broad shallow flat base. possible ditch or hollow way – eroded path. 6.20m wide; 0.30m deep.	
205	Fill of 204	Mid brown silty sand with frequent pebbles. Single fill of 204	Pottery x 1

Trench 12

Context	Type / Relationship	Description	Finds / Dating
1201	Layer	Mid red brown sandy silty loam with frequent gravels. ≤0.35m thick	Topsoil (ploughsoil) / Modern. Pottery x 1
1202	Layer	Mid orange red brown sandy silt with frequent gravels. ≤0.10m thick	Subsoil
1203	Layer	Mix of grey brown and yellow orange gravel and sand	Natural geology
1204	Cut	Cut of possible large pit / ditch, extending beyond LOE at west end of trench. Exposed east side steep with flattish base. >5m long; >2m wide; >0.5m deep	
1205	Fill of 1204	Dumped late 19th-early 20th century material (i.e. bottles and china – not retained on site) in redeposited soils. Single fill of 1204	Early modern

Trench 16

Context	Type / Relationship	Description	Finds / Dating
1601	Layer	Mid red brown sandy silty loam with frequent pebbles. ≤0.35m thick	Topsoil (ploughsoil) / Modern. Pottery x 3
1602	Layer	Mid grey brown gravel with occasional sandy lens'	Natural geology

Trench 17

Context	Type / Relationship	Description	Finds / Dating
1701	Layer	Mid red brown sandy silty loam with frequent pebbles. ≤0.35m thick	Topsoil (ploughsoil) / Modern. Pottery x 2
1702	Layer	Mid orange red brown gravel and sand mix.	Natural geology
1703	Cut	Cut of ditch on c. NE-SW alignment. Moderately steep sides and narrow concave base. >2m long; 1m wide; 0.3m deep	Undated
1704	Fill of 1703	Mid brown silty sand with frequent pebbles. Single fill of 1703.	Undated. ◊1
1705	Cut	Cut of ditch on c. NW-SE alignment. Moderately sloping sides and concave base. >2m long; 0.70m wide; 0.20m deep	Undated
1706	Fill of 1705	Mid slightly greyish brown silty sand with moderate pebbles. Single fill of 1705	Undated. ◊2

Trench 18

Context	Type / Relationship	Description	Finds / Dating
1701	Layer	Mid red brown sandy silty loam with frequent pebbles. ≤0.35m thick	Topsoil (ploughsoil) / Modern. Pottery x 2
1802	Layer	Mid orange red brown sandy silt with frequent pebbles. ≤0.10m thick	Subsoil
1803	Layer	Mid orange red brown gravel and sand mix.	Natural geology
1804	Cut	Cut of ditch on c.NE-SW alignment. Moderately steep sides with concave base. >2m long; 1m wide; 0.35m deep.	Undated
1805	Fill of 1804	Mid slightly greyish brown silty sand with occasional pebbles.	Undated

		Single fill of 1804	

Trench 20

Context	Type / Relationship	Description	Finds / Dating
2001	Layer	Mid red brown sandy silty loam with frequent pebbles. ≤0.35m thick	Topsoil (ploughsoil) / Modern. CBM x 5
2002	Layer	Mid orange red brown sandy silt with frequent gravels. ≤0.05m thick	Subsoil
2003	Layer	Mid orange red sand and gravel mix	Natural geology

Trench 24

Context	Type / Relationship	Description	Finds / Dating
2401	Layer	Mid red brown sandy silty loam with frequent pebbles. ≤0.30m thick	Topsoil (ploughsoil) / Modern. Pottery x 1
2402	Layer	Mid orange red brown sandy silt with frequent gravels. ≤0.05m thick	Subsoil
2403	Layer	Mid orange red sand and gravel mix with lens' of sand	Natural geology

Trench 26

Context	Type / Relationship	Description	Finds / Dating
2601	Layer	Mid red brown sandy silty loam with frequent gravels. ≤0.35m thick	Topsoil (ploughsoil) / Modern. Pottery x 1
2602	Layer	Mid orange red sandy silt with frequent gravels. ≤0.10m thick	Subsoil
2603	Layer	Mid yellow orange gravels with sand lens'	Natural geology
2604	Cut	Cut of ditch on c.NW-SE alignment. Moderately steep sides with broad flatish (shallow concave) base. Cut through very stony ground. >2m long; 1.10m wide; 0.20m deep	Undated
2605	Fill of 2604	Mid breown silty sand matrix with frequent pebbles c.50%	Undated. ◊3

Trench 27

Context	Type / Relationship	Description	Finds / Dating

2701	Layer	Mid red brown sandy silty loam with frequent pebbles. ≤0.35m thick	Topsoil (ploughsoil) / Modern. Pottery x 3
2702	Layer	Mid orange brown sandy silt with frequent pebbles. ≤0.05m thick	Subsoil
2703	Layer	Mid yellow orange sand and gravel mix	Natural geology

Trench 45

Context	Type / Relationship	Description	Finds / Dating
4501	Layer	Mid red brown sandy silty loam with frequent pebbles. ≤0.35m thick	Topsoil (ploughsoil) / Modern. Pottery x 1
4502	Layer	Mid orange brown sandy silt with frequent pebbles. ≤0.20m thick	Subsoil
4503	Layer	Mid orange red sand and gravel mix	Natural geology
4504	Cut	Sub round in plan extending beyond the LOE to the west. Steep sides with concave base. Diameter >0.80m; ≤0.30m deep	Undated.
4505	Fill of 4504	Mixed mid red grey brown slightly silty sand, with barely perceptible possible tip lines. Single fill of 4504	Undated. ◊4

Appendix 2: Pottery and CBM from PLQE 16

A small amount of pottery and ceramic building materials (CBM) was recovered from topsoil during trial trenching. The material was fragmentary and often abraded. The ceramic finds have been catalogued and the results can be seen in Table 1. I would like to thank Dr. Evans for his help in identifying the Roman material.

Some of the potsherds and CBM could be identified as Roman. Two sherds could be closely dated to the late first or early second century AD (pers. comm. Dr. Jerry Evans). The remaining material is probably all post-medieval. Despite work on numerous sites in northern Shropshire, the author has not seen similar fabrics to these and they are dated primarily by what they clearly are not (ie Roman or medieval) rather than by reference to comparanda. There is thus a certain degree of uncertainty. The fact that all but the post-medieval creamware sherd were from topsoil did not aid identification.

More generally, projects such as the Wroxeter Hinterland Survey (Buteux *et al* 2000, Rátkai 2000) have demonstrated the low use of pottery in rural Shropshire in the Roman and medieval periods. It is assumed that this is partly due to the dominance of pastoral farming and the absence of manuring scatters associated with crop-growing. This site appears to be consistent with this picture.

Ctxt	Type	Period	Qty	Wght	Form	Date	Comment
0205	Creamware	Post-medieval	1	1		c.1800	
1601	Severn Valley ware/oxidised ware	Roman	1	12	Segmental bowl rim sherd	LC1-eC2	
1601	Gritty oxidised bodysherd	Roman	1	1		LC1-eC2	
1601	?Post medieval coarseware	?Post-medieval	1	8	jar, straight neck, small bead rim		same fabric as bead rim from 2701
1701	Severn Valley ware	Roman	1	1		1st-4th c	
1701	Oxidised ware	Roman	1	2	jar rim	1st-4th c	
2001	CBM	Medieval/post-medieval	2	41	tile		Sandy oxidised fabric - too thin to be Roman
2001	CBM	Post-medieval	1	40	tile/brick		has the same yellow-white inclusions as sherds from1601 and 2701
2001	CBM	Post-medieval	1	40	tile/brick		very hard-fired, possibly from a hearth?
2001	Oxidised fired clay lump	?	1	12	?		
2401	?Post medieval coarseware	?Post-medieval	1	1	?		White inclusions as jar from 1601
2601	Malvernian CBM or pot	?	1	4	?		
2601	CBM	Roman?	1	5			
2601	CBM	Roman?	1	3			
2701	?Post medieval coarseware	?Post mediaeval	1	10	large bead rim		same fabric as jar from1601
2701	?Oxidised bodysherd	?Roman	1	20	?drain		
2701	Oxidised ware	too small for ID	1	1			

Table 1: Quantification of Ceramic finds

Buteux, S., Gaffney, V., White, R. and Van Leusen, M. 2000, Wroxeter hinterland project and geophysical survey at Wroxeter. Archaeol. Prospect., 7:69–80. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/229765455_Wroxeter_Hinterland_Project_and_geophysical_survey_at_Wroxeter

Rátkai, S. 2000 'Survey of the medieval and post-medieval pottery', unpublished report commissioned as part of the Wroxeter Hinterlands Project.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES
DURHAM UNIVERSITY

on behalf of
Pre-Construct Archaeological Services Ltd

Pave Lane Quarry
Telford
Shropshire

palaeoenvironmental assessment

report 4182
June 2016

Durham University

Contents

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1. Summary

The project

1.1 This report presents the results of palaeoenvironmental assessment of four bulk samples taken during archaeological works at Pave Lane Quarry, Telford, Shropshire.

1.2 The works were commissioned by Pre-Construct Archaeological Services Ltd (PCAS), and conducted by Archaeological Services Durham University.

Results

1.3 The sample finds included small fragments of animal bone and fired clay, suggesting the presence of domestic waste. The small charred plant macrofossil assemblages from two ditch fills were dominated by cereal remains and indicate spelt wheat and barley were used at the site. Two of the four samples contained no charred plant remains.

Recommendations

1.4 No further analysis is required for the plant macrofossils, however if additional work is undertaken at the site, other features with the potential to preserve palaeoenvironmental remains should be sampled and assessed. The results of this assessment should be added to any further palaeoenvironmental data produced.

1.5 The flots should be retained as part of the physical archive of the site. The residues were discarded following examination.

2. Project background

Location and background

2.1 Archaeological works were conducted by PCAS at Pave Lane Quarry, Telford, Shropshire. The site lies on the south side of Pave Lane, comprising of six fields under arable cultivation at the time of excavation. This report presents the results of palaeoenvironmental assessment of four bulk samples comprising a possible pit fill and three ditch fills, all of unknown origin. Some Romano-British pottery sherds were recovered from nearby plough soil and both Iron Age and Roman archaeological features have been identified in the local area.

Objective

2.2 The objective of the scheme of works was to assess the palaeoenvironmental potential of the samples, establish the presence of suitable radiocarbon dating material, and provide the client with appropriate recommendations.

Dates

2.3 Samples were received by Archaeological Services on 3rd June 2016. Assessment and report preparation was conducted between 7th and 14th June 2016.

Personnel

2.4 Assessment and report preparation was conducted by Dr Carrie Armstrong. Sample processing was by Carrie Armstrong and Stephanie Piper.

Archive

2.5 The site code is **PLQE16**, for **P**ave **L**ane **Q**uarry **E**valuation 20**16**. The flots and finds are currently held in the Palaeoenvironmental Laboratory at Archaeological Services Durham University awaiting collection. The charred plant remains will be retained at Archaeological Services Durham University.

3. Methods

3.1 The bulk samples were manually floated and sieved through a 500μm mesh. The residues were examined for shells, fruitstones, nutshells, charcoal, small bones, pottery, flint, glass and industrial residues, and were scanned using a magnet for ferrous fragments. The flots were examined at up to x60 magnification for charred and waterlogged botanical remains using a Leica MZ6 stereomicroscope. Identification of these was undertaken by comparison with modern reference material held in the Palaeoenvironmental Laboratory at Archaeological Services Durham University. Plant nomenclature follows Stace (2010). Habitat classifications follow Preston *et al.* (2002).

3.2 Selected charcoal fragments were identified, in order to provide material suitable for radiocarbon dating. The transverse, radial and tangential sections were examined at up to x600 magnification using a Leica DMLM microscope. Identifications were assisted by the descriptions of Schweingruber (1990) and Hather (2000), and modern reference material held in the Palaeoenvironmental Laboratory at Archaeological Services Durham University.

3.3 The works were undertaken in accordance with the palaeoenvironmental research aims and objectives outlined in the regional archaeological research framework (Watt 2011).

4. Results

4.1 A single glass fragment was recovered from pit fill [4505] and a pot fragment from ditch fill [1706]. Small quantities of fired clay were also noted from these fills. Traces of calcined and unburnt bone were noted in several of the samples. A small number of uncharred seeds were present in the four samples, however the presence of roots and uncharred straw indicate that these are likely to comprise modern intrusive material.

4.2 Ditch fills [1704] and [1706] produced small charred assemblages including charcoal fragments and plant macrofossils. Ditch fill [2605] and pit fill [4505] produced no charred plant remains, with only a few tiny fragments of charcoal present in [4505], unidentifiable to species. The charred plant macrofossil assemblages mostly comprised cereal grains, and included a small number of wheat grains from ditch fill [1706] with a single barley grain also recovered from this context. Two indeterminate cereal grains were present in ditch fill [1704]. Spelt wheat glume bases were noted from both ditch fills [1704] and [1706]. Small fragments of hazel nutshell were also recovered from these ditch fills.

4.3 A few fragments of alder roundwood charcoal were noted in ditch fill [1704] and charcoal from both alder and a member of the cherries family (*Prunus* sp) were observed in ditch fill [1706]. Charred heather twigs were also present in both of these ditch fills.

4.4 Material suitable for radiocarbon dating is available for two of the samples, ditch fills [1704] and [1706]. The results are presented in Appendix 1.

5. Discussion

5.1 Small charred plant macrofossil assemblages dominated by cereal grains along with small quantities of charcoal, animal bone and fired clay indicates the presence of domestic waste. The assemblages containing charred plant remains suggest wheat and barley were the main crops used at the site. The presence of spelt wheat glume bases in both ditch fills [1704] and [1706] confirms the presence of spelt wheat at the site. While barley dates from the Neolithic to the present, spelt wheat first appears in England during the middle to late Bronze Age (Greig 1991), and is more commonly associated with Iron Age and Romano-British sites. The occurrence of spelt wheat chaff may indicate crop processing at or near to the site.

5.2 Eight of the wheat grains from ditch fill [1706] were observed as sprouted. While sprouting spelt wheat forming malt was often used as part of the brewing process in Roman Britain (Van der Veen 1992), the minor proportion of sprouted grains in the assemblage indicates that this is an unlikely explanation. Such a small quantity of sprouted grain is more likely to reflect a crop that has begun to germinate due to damp conditions, for example as a consequence of a wet summer or unsuitable storage conditions.

5.3 Charred fragments of hazel nutshell suggest wild-gathered foods were also utilised at the site, although their presence in low numbers possibly reflects a minor use of this particular food source.

6. Recommendations

6.1 No further analysis is required for the plant macrofossils, however if additional work is undertaken at the site, other features with the potential to preserve palaeoenvironmental remains should be sampled and assessed. The results of this assessment should be added to any further palaeoenvironmental data produced.

6.2 The flots should be retained as part of the physical archive of the site. The residues were discarded following examination.

7. Sources

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Schweingruber, F H, 1990 *Microscopic wood anatomy*. Birmensdorf

Stace, C, 2010 *New Flora of the British Isles*. Cambridge

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Watt, S, 2011 *The Archaeology of the West Midlands: A framework for research.* Oxford

Appendix 1: Data from palaeoenvironmental assessment

Sample		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
Context		**1704**	**1706**	**2605**	**4505**
Feature number		**1703**	**1705**	**2604**	**4504**
Feature		**Ditch**	**Ditch**	**Ditch**	**Pit**
Material available for radiocarbon dating		✓	✓	-	-
Volume processed (l)		21.5	15	20	21
Volume of flot (ml)		70	90	30	10
Residue contents					
Bone (calcined)	indet. frags	-	(+)	-	-
Bone (unburnt)	indet. frags	-	(+)	-	-
Fired clay		-	(+)	-	(+)
Glass (number of fragments)		-	-	-	1
Pot (number of fragments)		-	1	-	-
Flot matrix					
Bone (calcined)	indet. frags	(+)	-	-	-
Bone (unburnt)	indet. frags	-	-	-	(+)
Charcoal		++	+++	-	(+)
Clinker / cinder		-	(+)	-	(+)
Coal / coal shale		-	(+)	(+)	(+)
Earthworm egg case		-	+	-	-
Heather twigs (charred)		(+)	++	-	-
Insect / beetle		+	(+)	(+)	+
Roots (modern)		++	(+)	++	++
Straw / chaff (modern)		-	(+)	(+)	-
Uncharred seeds		(+)	(+)	+	+
Wood		-	-	(+)	-
Charred remains (total count)					
(c) Cerealia indeterminate	grain	2	28	-	-
(c) *Hordeum* sp (Barley species)	grain	-	1	-	-
(c) *Triticum spelta* (Spelt Wheat)	glume base	1	4	-	-
(c) *Triticum* sp (Wheat species)	glume base	1	-	-	-
(c) *Triticum* sp (Wheat species)	grain	-	28	-	-
(t) *Corylus avellana* (Hazel)	nutshell frag.	1	3	-	-
Identified charcoal (✓presence)					
Alnus glutinosa (Alder)		✓	✓	-	-
Prunus sp (Cherries-blackthorn, wild and bird cherry)		-	✓	-	-

[c-cultivated; t-tree/shrub. (+): trace; +: rare; ++: occasional; +++: common; ++++: abundant]

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

Evaluation on lane at Pave Lane, Chetwynd Aston, Shropshire - Pre-Construct Archaeological Services Ltd

OASIS ID - preconst3-248348

Versions				
View	Version	Completed by	Email	Date
View 1	1	Alison Lane	alison@pre-construct.co.uk	14 April 2016
View 2	2	Alison Lane	alison@pre-construct.co.uk	26 July 2016

Completed sections in current version				
Details	Location	Creators	Archive	Publications
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	1/1

Validated sections in current version				
Details	Location	Creators	Archive	Publications
No	No	No	No	0/1

File submission and form progress			
Grey literature report submitted?	No	Grey literature report filename/s	
Boundary file submitted?	No	Boundary filename	
HER signed off?		NMR signed off?	