

Land at Opal Way  
Stone  
Staffordshire  
*Archaeological Evaluation*



for  
Pegasus Group

on behalf of  
Tungsten Properties Ltd

CA Project: MK0022  
CA Report: MK0022\_1

March 2019



# Land at Opal Way Stone Staffordshire

## Archaeological Evaluation

CA Project: MK0022  
CA Report: MK0022\_1



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## SUMMARY

<b>Project Name:</b>	Opal Way, Stone
<b>Location:</b>	Stone, Staffordshire
<b>NGR:</b>	390171 332104
<b>Type:</b>	Evaluation
<b>Date:</b>	4-5 March 2019
<b>Planning Reference:</b>	18/29716/FUL
<b>Location of Archive:</b>	The Potteries Museum and Art Gallery
<b>Accession Number:</b>	2019.LH.36
<b>Site Code:</b>	OPAL19

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in March 2019 at Opal Way, Stone. Five trenches were excavated within the footprint of the proposed development.

No archaeological finds, features or deposits were identified during the course of the evaluation, which correlates well with the known historical background of the site. Trenches 1 and 2 demonstrated disturbance to the overburden and levelling of the site, which is likely to have occurred in the modern period.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In March 2019 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation at Opal Way, Stone, Staffordshire (centred at NGR: 390171 332104; Fig. 1). The fieldwork was commissioned by Pegasus Group on behalf of Tungsten Properties Ltd.
- 1.2 Planning permission for industrial development with associated infrastructure at Opal Way Business Centre was granted by Staffordshire County Council (SCC, the local planning authority), conditional on a programme of archaeological work (18/29716/FUL).
- 1.3 The scope of archaeological work, which comprised five evaluation trenches, was defined in discussion between Chris Morley for Pegasus Group and Shane Kelleher (County Advisor, Staffordshire County Council).
- 1.4 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a detailed *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) produced by Pegasus Group (2019) and approved by Shane Kelleher, the Archaeological Advisor to SCC (SCCAA). The fieldwork also followed the *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (CIfA 2014).

### ***The site***

- 1.5 The proposed development area is approximately 1.6ha, and comprises open grassland bounded to the north by a sewage works, to the east by grassland, to the south by Opal Way and to the west by industrial units. The site lies at approximately 99m above ordnance Datum (aOD) and is broadly flat.
- 1.6 The underlying bedrock geology of the area is mapped as Mercia Mudstone of the Triassic Period with superficial deposits of Till formed in the Quaternary Period and Bosworth Clay (BGS 2019). The natural substrate was revealed on site as sandy silt.

## 2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 A Desk Based Assessment (DBA) was produced by CgMs Heritage (2018), which identified no evidence for archaeological remains of any period, either within the site

or in the immediate surrounding area. The DBA concluded that the site had a low potential for the presence of archaeological remains and that any archaeological remains which may be identified within the site would be of local interest at most.

### 3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 The objectives of the evaluation were to provide information about the archaeological resource within the site, including its presence/absence, character, extent, date, integrity, state of preservation and quality, in accordance the *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (ClfA 2014). This information will enable Staffordshire County Council to identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset, consider the impact of the proposed development upon it, and to avoid or minimise conflict between any heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the development proposal, in line with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (MHCLG 2019).

### 4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The fieldwork comprised the excavation of five trenches (30m by 1.8m), in the locations shown on the attached plan (Fig. 2). The trenches were targeted within the proposed footprint of new industrial units. The trenches were set out on OS National Grid (NGR) co-ordinates using Leica GPS and surveyed in accordance with CA Technical Manual 4 *Survey Manual*.
- 4.2 All trenches were excavated by mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless grading bucket. All machine excavation was undertaken under constant archaeological supervision to the top of the first significant archaeological horizon or the natural substrate, whichever was encountered first. Where archaeological deposits were encountered they were excavated by hand in accordance with CA *Technical Manual 1: Fieldwork Recording Manual*.
- 4.3 Deposits were assessed for their palaeoenvironmental potential in accordance with CA *Technical Manual 2: The Taking and Processing of Environmental and Other Samples from Archaeological Sites* and no deposits were identified that required sampling. No artefacts were recovered to be processed in accordance with *Technical Manual 3: Treatment of Finds Immediately after Excavation*.

- 4.4 The archive from the evaluation is currently held by CA at their offices in Milton Keynes. Subject to the agreement of the legal landowner the archive will be deposited with The Potteries Museum and Art Gallery under accession number 2019.LH.36. A summary of information from this project, set out within Appendix B, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

## 5. RESULTS (FIGS 2-4)

- 5.1 This section provides a detailed account of the evaluation results; summaries of the recorded contexts are to be found in Appendix A.
- 5.2 A broadly similar stratigraphic sequence was identified across the site. The natural substrate, comprising friable, sandy silt was identified at between 0.3 and 0.65m below present ground level (bpgl). This was overlain by subsoil comprising mid-grey brown sandy silt, measuring 0.3m thick on average. This was in turn sealed by dark grey brown sandy silt topsoil averaging 0.3m thick.
- 5.3 No subsoil was present in trenches 1 and 5. Levelling layers of redeposited topsoil and natural substrate were recorded in trenches 1 and 2. No evidence of any archaeological activity or other ground disturbance was recorded within trenches 3 to 5.
- 5.4 No archaeological finds, features or deposits were identified in any of the five trenches. Modern disturbance in the overlying subsoil and topsoil deposits was identified in Trenches 1 and 2 (Figs. 2 & 4).

### ***Modern period (AD 1800 – present)***

#### ***Trench 1 (Figs 2 & 3)***

- 5.5 Located at the north-eastern end of the trench deposit 102 represents redeposited natural material probably associated with modern landscaping of the area. A geological test pit was recorded towards to southern end of the trench.

#### ***Trench 2 (Figs 2 & 3)***

- 5.6 A re-deposited layer of topsoil (200) sealed the naturally occurring topsoil layer (201) along the length of the trench. A mixed deposit with patches of natural substrate represent a levelling deposit derived from recent landscaping works.

## 6. DISCUSSION

- 6.1 No evidence of archaeological activity was identified during the evaluation. This correlates well with the results of the DBA, which identified no known historical activity within the site or local area.
- 6.2 The disturbance to the overlying deposits in trenches 1 and 2 is likely to be of modern origin and is probably associated with landscaping works undertaken during the construction of the wider business centre development or sewerage works. This did not impact on the natural substrate at any point.

## 7. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was led by Ralph Brown, assisted by Rachel Alexander and Adrian Arenas. The report was written by Harriet Farr. The illustrations were prepared by Esther Escudero. The archive has been compiled by Emily Evans, and prepared for deposition by Emily Evans. The project was managed for CA by Julian Newman.

## 8. REFERENCES

- BGS (British Geological Survey) 2019 *Geology of Britain Viewer* [http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geology\\_viewer\\_google/googleviewer.html](http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geology_viewer_google/googleviewer.html) Accessed 7 March 2019
- CIFA (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists) 2014 *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation*
- CgMs Heritage 2018 *Archaeological Desk Based Assessment: Opal Way, Stone, Staffordshire.*
- MHCLG (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government) 2019 *National Planning Policy Framework*
- Pegasus Group 2019 *Written Scheme of Investigation: Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation Opal Way, Stone, Staffordshire*

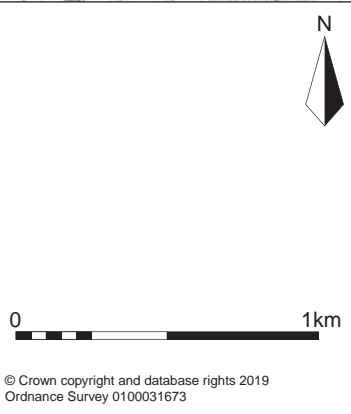
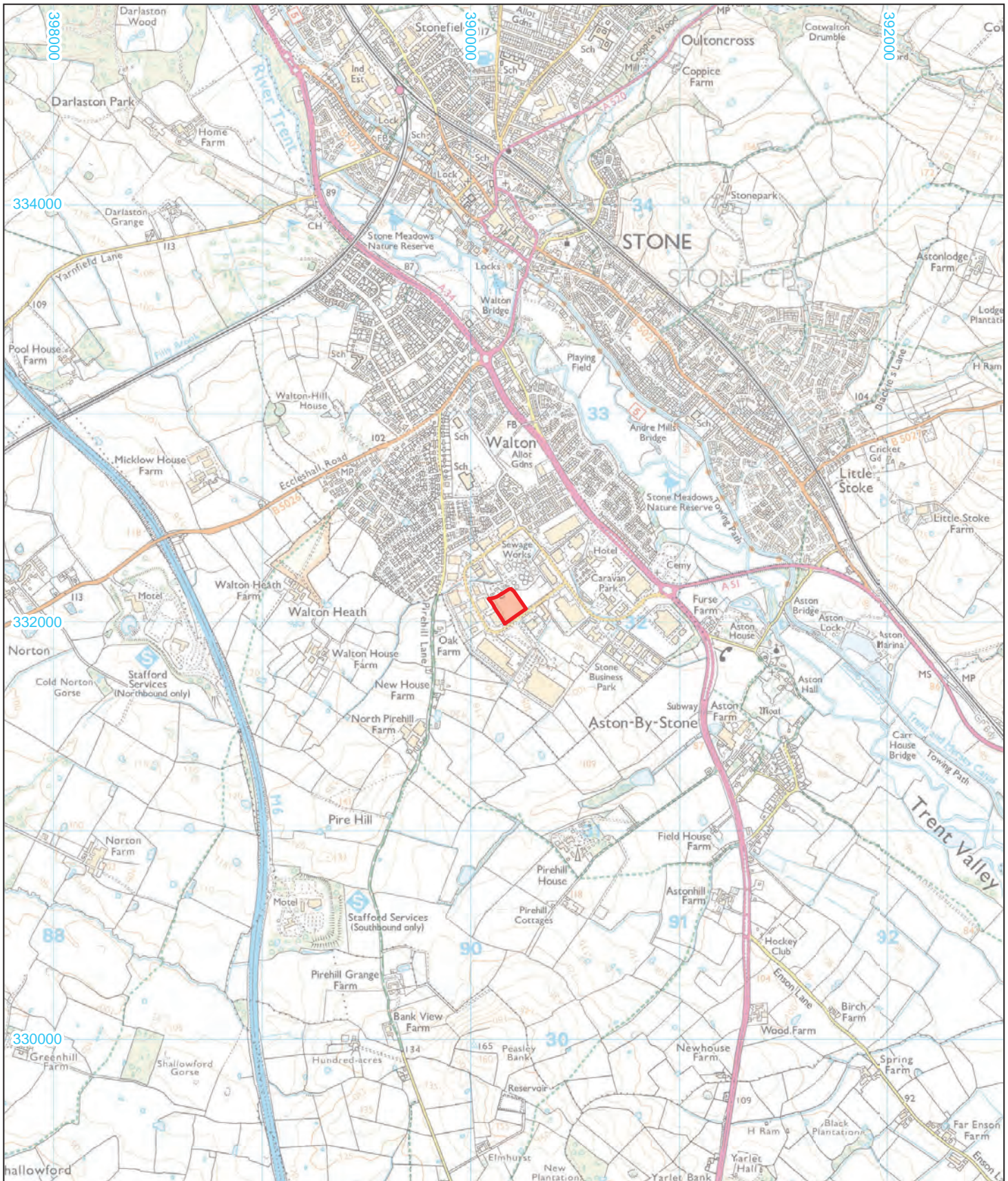


## APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench No.	Context No.	Type	Fill of	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	D (m)
1	100	Layer		Topsoil	Dark grey brown sandy silt. Loose, very occasional stones	50	1.8	0.25
1	101	Layer		Natural	Mid yellow-red clay silt, friable, occasional gravel	50	1.8	>0.33
1	102	Deposit		Redeposited Natural	Mid brown-red, friable silty sand, very occasional gravel. Only seen in northern half of trench	>15	1.8	0.25
2	200	Layer		Topsoil	Dark grey brown sandy silt. Loose, occasional small stones. Mixed with redeposited natural	50	1.8	0.3
2	201	Layer		Buried Topsoil	Dark grey brown sandy silt. Occasional rooting	50	1.8	0.2
2	202	Layer		Subsoil	Mid grey brown, sandy silt. Occasional rooting	50	1.8	0.15
2	203	Layer		Natural	Mid brown grey, sandy silt, occasional rooting, friable, varied sub-rounded stones	50	1.8	>0.05
3	300	Layer		Topsoil	Dark grey brown sandy silt. Friable, occasional stones	50	1.8	0.3
3	301	Layer		Subsoil	Mid grey brown, sandy silt, occasional rooting and small stones	50	1.8	0.3
3	302	Layer		Natural	Mid brown grey with red patches, sandy silt, occasional rooting, friable, varied sub-rounded stones	50	1.8	>0,04
4	400	Layer		Topsoil	Dark grey brown sandy silt. Friable, occasional stones and rooting	50	1.8	0.31
4	401	Layer		Subsoil	Mid grey brown sandy silt. Friable, occasional stones and rooting	50	1.8	0.31
4	402	Layer		Natural	Dark brown grey with orange patches, sandy silt, friable, occasional rooting and varied sub-rounded stones	50	1.8	>0.06
5	500	Layer		Topsoil	Dark grey brown sandy silt. Friable, occasional stones and rooting	50	1.8	0.36
5	501	Layer		Natural	Mid grey yellow with red patches, silty sand, friable, occasional small sub-rounded stones and gravel	50	1.8	>0.1

**APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM**

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		
Project Name	Land at Opal Way, Stone, Staffordshire	
Short description	<p>An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in March 2019 at Opal Way, Stone. Five trenches were excavated within the footprint of the proposed development.</p> <p>No archaeological finds, features or deposits were identified during the course of the evaluation, which correlates well with the known historical background of the site. Trenches 1 and 2 demonstrated disturbance to the overburden and levelling of the site, which is likely to have occurred in the modern period.</p>	
Project dates	4-5 March 2019	
Project type	Evaluation	
Previous work	None	
Future work	Unknown	
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>		
Site Location	Opal Way, Stone, Staffordshire	
Study area (M <sup>2</sup> /ha)		
Site co-ordinates	390171 332104	
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Brief originator	Pegasus Group	
Project Design (WSI) originator	Pegasus Group	
Project Manager	Julian Newman	
Project Supervisor	Ralph Brown	
<b>MONUMENT TYPE</b>		
<b>SIGNIFICANT FINDS</b>		
<b>PROJECT ARCHIVES</b>		
	Intended final location of archive (museum/Accession no.)	Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone etc)
Physical	N/A	N/A
Paper	The Potteries Museum and Art Gallery	Context sheets, matrices etc
Digital	The Potteries Museum and Art Gallery	Database, digital photos etc
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>		
<p>CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2019 <i>Opal Way, Stone, Staffordshire: Archaeological Evaluation</i>. CA typescript report <b>MK0022_1</b></p>		



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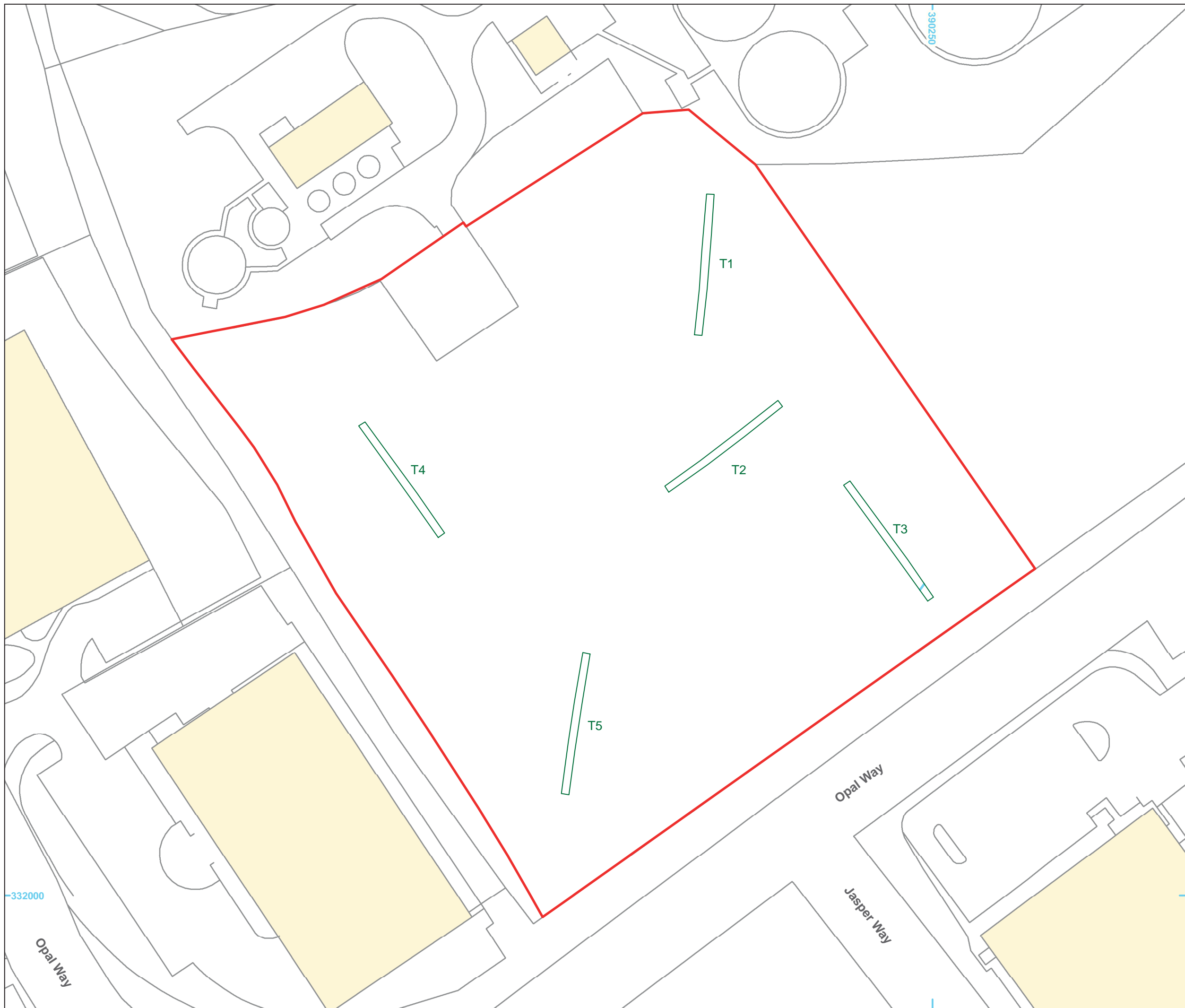
**PROJECT TITLE**  
Opal Way, Stone, Staffordshire

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**FIGURE TITLE**  
Site location plan

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<b>DRAWN BY</b>	EE	<b>PROJECT NO.</b>	MK0022	<b>FIGURE NO.</b>
<b>CHECKED BY</b>	DJB	<b>DATE</b>	14/03/2019	<b>1</b>
<b>APPROVED BY</b>	JN	<b>SCALE@A4</b>	1:25,000	



- Site boundary
- Evaluation trench
- Field drain

0 1:750 25m

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PROJECT TITLE  
Opal Way, Stone, Staffordshire

FIGURE TITLE  
Trench location plan

DRAWN BY	EE	PROJECT NO.	MK0022	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	DJB	DATE	14/03/2019	2
APPROVED BY	JN	SCALE@A3	1:750	



Trench 1, looking south (1m scales)



Trench 2, looking south-west (1m scales)



Trench 1, representative section, looking east (1m scale)



Trench 2, representative section, looking north-west (1m scale)



Trench 3, looking south-east (1m scales)



Trench 4, looking north-west (1m scales)



Trench 5, looking south-west (1m scales)


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PROJECT TITLE  
 Opal Way, Stone, Staffordshire

FIGURE TITLE  
**Trenches 3, 4 and 5, photographs**

DRAWN BY	EE	PROJECT NO.	MK0022	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	DJB	DATE	14/03/2019	
APPROVED BY	JN	SCALE	@A3	<b>4</b>

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