

Proposed enlargement of Coldharbour Lane Roundabout, Aylesford, Kent

Results of an archaeological trench
evaluation December 2020

Quality Management

Job No	CS096347		
Project	Coldharbour Lane Roundabout		
Location	Kent		
Title	Results of archaeological trench evaluation		
Document Ref	CLDHBR-CAP-EXX-00-RP-Z-0103	Issue / Revision	01
Originator	AC Archaeology Document No. ACW1171/4/0		
Date	15/12/2020		
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Revision Status / History

Rev	Date	Issue / Purpose/ Comment	Prepared	Checked	Authorised
	15/12/20	First Issue	V Simmonds	Peter Cox	Kim Still

PROPOSED ENLARGEMENT OF COLDHARBOUR ROUNDABOUT, AYLESFORD, KENT

(Centred on NGR 572785, 157740)

Results of an archaeological trench evaluation

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PROPOSED ENLARGEMENT OF COLDHARBOUR ROUNDABOUT, AYLESFORD, KENT:

Results of an archaeological trench evaluation

(Centred on NGR 572785, 157740)

Summary

An archaeological trench evaluation was undertaken by AC archaeology Ltd during November 2020 on land at the junction of Coldharbour Lane and the A20 London Road, Aylesford, Kent. The works were in advance of the proposed enlargement of the existing Coldharbour roundabout. The evaluation comprised the machine excavation of eight trenches totaling c.150m in length with each 1.5m wide. These were positioned to provide representative coverage of the development area. A consistent profile of topsoil and natural subsoil was recorded across the site. No archaeological cut features or deposits were present in the trenches and no artefacts were recovered.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 An archaeological trench evaluation was undertaken by AC archaeology Ltd during November 2020, in advance of works involving the enlargement of the existing Coldharbour roundabout on the junction with Coldharbour Lane and the A20 London Road (NGR 572785, 157740; Fig.1). The work was undertaken in accordance with a Project Design prepared by AC archaeology Ltd (Capita 2020). The investigation was commissioned by Capita on behalf of Kent County Council.
- 1.2 The proposed development area lies immediately north of the A20 and west of Coldharbour Lane, parallel to the existing carriageways and located in the southeast corner of an area of uncultivated land (Fig. 1). It covers approximately 0.54 hectares of land to the southeast of the Royal British Legion Village. Along the south and east boundaries there is abundant shrub growth. The site is level along its eastern extent, gradually sloping to the west and northwest and lies at c.26m OD (above Ordnance Datum).
- 1.3 The overlying soil is described as deep/intermediate, sand to sandy loam, derived from sandstone and gypsum (*My Soil*, accessed 16/11/2020). Generally, the underlying solid geology comprises limestone of the Hythe Formation formed during the Cretaceous period, 112 to 125 Ma. There are superficial deposits comprising Head – Clay, Silt, Sand and Gravel formed up to 3 Ma during the Quaternary period outcropping to the south, southeast and northeast. Head is a poorly sorted and poorly stratified, angular rock debris and/or clayey hillwash and soil creep, mantling a hill slope and deposited by solifluction and gelifluction processes. Solifluction is the slow viscous downslope flow of waterlogged soil and other unsorted and unsaturated superficial deposits. The term *gelifluction* is restricted to slow flow of fluidized superficial deposits during the thawing of seasonally frozen ground. The flow is initiated by meltwater from thawing ice lenses. A polymictic deposit comprising gravel, sand,

silt, and clay depending on upslope source and distance from the source. Locally with lenses of silt, clay or peat and organic material (*BGS iGeology*, accessed 16/11/2020).

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 The development area has been the subject of an Historic Environment Assessment which identified no heritage assets on the site (Capita 2019). However, the development area does lie on the edge of Preston Park, the designated parkland associated with Preston Hall, a Jacobean-style country house built during the mid-19th century. Palaeolithic artefacts including stone axes have been found in the area of Preston Hall during gravel extraction operations in the early 20th century, the closest to the roundabout enlargement area some 800m to the northwest.

3. OBJECTIVES

3.1 The purpose of the evaluation was to establish whether there are any significant archaeological deposits at the site that might be affected by the development. The evaluation was to:

- ascertain the extent, depth below ground surface, depth of deposit, character, date, significance, and condition of any archaeological remains on site; to
- establish the extent to which previous development and/or other processes have affected archaeological deposits at the site; and
- establish the likely impact on archaeological deposits of the development.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 The evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (Capita, 2020), the Kent County Council specification for trial trenching Part B, and the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Field Evaluation* (revised December 2014). It comprised the machine excavation of eight trenches totaling c.150m in length, each 1.5m wide, amounting to a c 5% sample of the proposed construction area and positioned to provide a representative coverage across the development area (Fig. 1).

4.2 All trenches were located with a *Leica Net rover* GPS accurate to 1cm. Local amendments to the proposed trench positions were necessary due to the presence of thick undergrowth on the field verge. As dug positions are shown on Fig. 1. All soil removal was undertaken under the control and direction of the Site Archaeologist. Topsoil and overburden was removed by mechanical excavator in c.10cm spits, using a toothless bucket, and ceased at the level at which archaeological deposits or natural sub-strata was exposed.

4.3 Machine-excavated deposits and the exposed surface of each trench was scanned regularly for the presence of any artefacts. An exploratory trial pit into the natural substrata was excavated in each trench to explore the potential for deposits likely to contain Palaeolithic artefacts.

4.4 Each trench was recorded using the standard AC archaeology pro-forma recording system, comprising written, graphic, and photographic records, and in accordance with AC archaeology's *General Site Recording Manual, Version 2* (revised August 2012). Detailed sections and plans were produced at a scale of 1:20 or 1:200, while all site levels relate to Ordnance Datum.

5. RESULTS (Fig. 2; Plates 1 - 8)

5.1 Tabulated context descriptions by trench are included in Appendix 1. In general, the soil sequence revealed across the site comprised topsoil consisting of brownish-grey sandy loam and overlying a subsoil consisting of greyish yellow-red sandy silt to silty sand. The natural stratum comprised yellow and yellow-red clay, silt, sand, and gravels.

5.2 Trenches 1, 2 and 3, each contained a further subsoil representing a colluvial deposit (contexts 103, 203 & 303) and consisting of light brownish red, slightly clayey, silty fine sand. There were no apparent signs of reworking to suggest this is a placed deposit. This deposit is likely to be associated with an observed topographic feature consisting of a shallow valley that slopes down gradually to the northwest and southeast.

5.3 In addition to the above soil sequence, Trench 8 contained a partially exposed modern intrusive deposit (context 803), interpreted as being associated with the adjacent trunk road (Coldharbour Lane) construction works.

6. FINDS

6.1 No artefacts were recovered from either the trench surfaces or overlying soils, or from the trial pits excavated through the natural sub-stratum in each trench.

7. CONCLUSION

7.1 No evidence for any archaeological cut features or deposits was present in any of the trenches and no artefacts were recovered. In general, the deposits encountered are interpreted as being of geological and/or geomorphological origin.

7.2 The evaluation did not reveal the presence of gravel deposits likely to contain palaeolithic artefacts.

7.3 The evaluation has provided no evidence for archaeological interest in the site and the construction of the proposed roundabout is therefore considered to have no adverse effects on heritage assets.

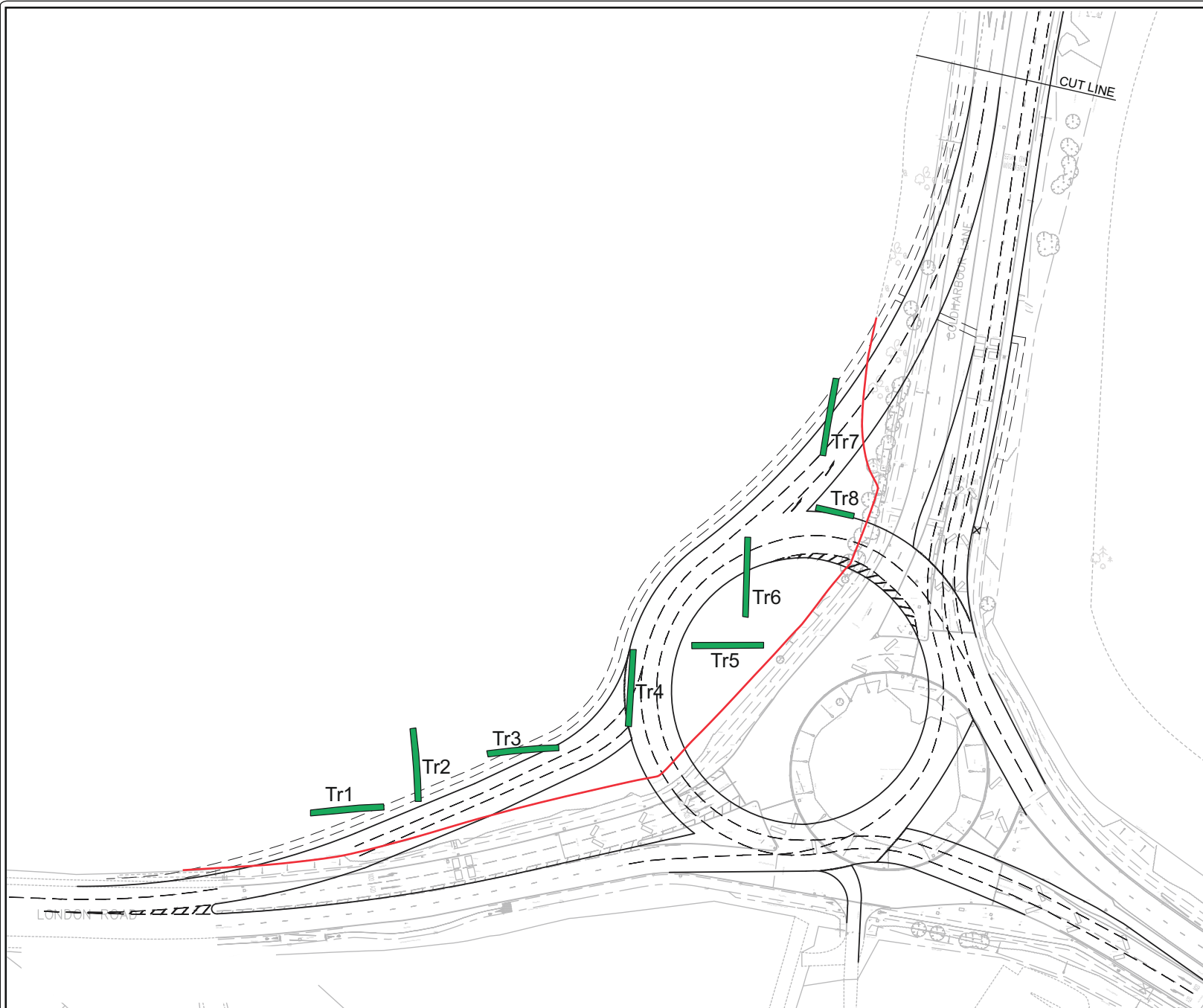
8. ARCHIVE

8.1 The paper and digital archive is currently held at the offices of AC archaeology Ltd, at Manor Farm Stables, Chicklade, Hindon, Wiltshire, SP3 5SU under the unique project code of **ACW1171**. It will be held until it is known if any further archaeological work on the site is required and then deposited with Maidstone Museum.

9. REFERENCES

Capita 2019. '*Proposed enlargement of Coldharbour roundabout, Aylesford, Kent: Historic Environment Assessment, Centred on NGR 572785 157740*'. Unpublished document issued by Capita February 2019 ref CLDHBR-CAP-EXX-00-RP-Z-0034 revS3-PO1

Capita 2020. '*Proposed enlargement of Coldharbour roundabout, Aylesford, Kent: Project design for archaeological evaluation*'. Unpublished document issued by Capita January 2020 ref CLDHBR-CAP-EXX-00-RP-Z-0071



KEY

- Proposed
- - - Existing
- × Existing footpath crossing to be closed
- █ Proposed archaeological trench
- Site boundary

PROJECT

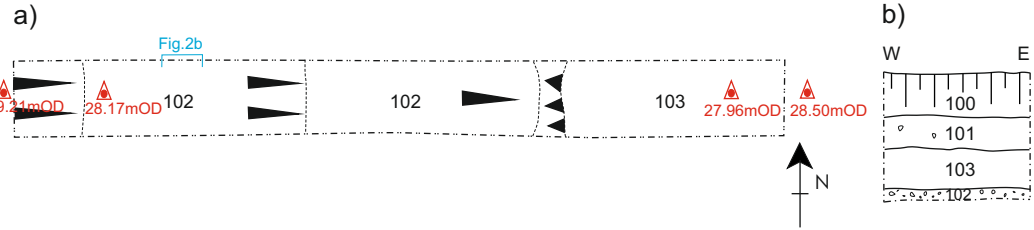


Coldharbour Roundabout, Kent

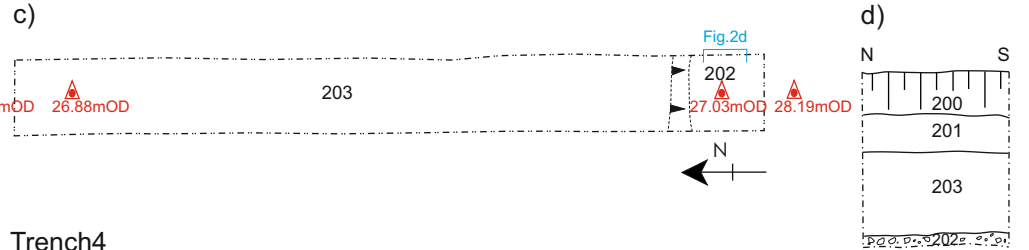
TITLE

Fig.1: Trench layout

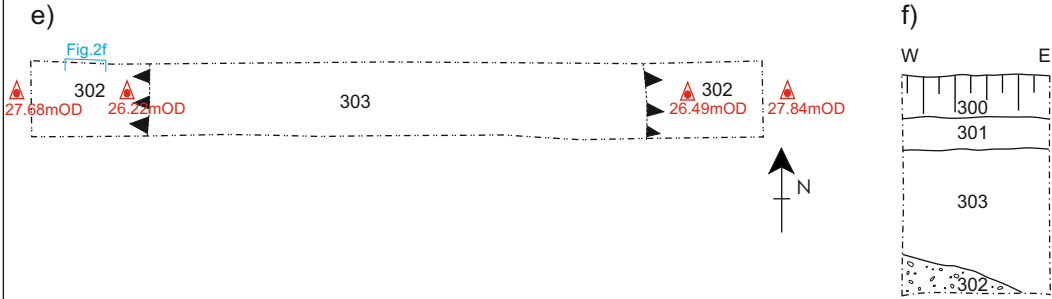
Trench 1



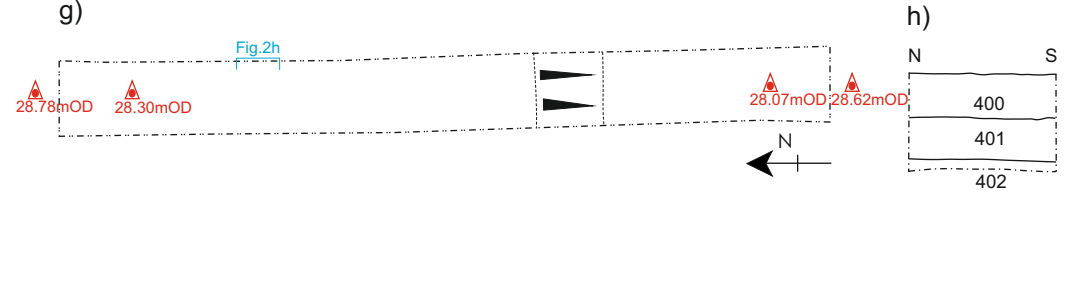
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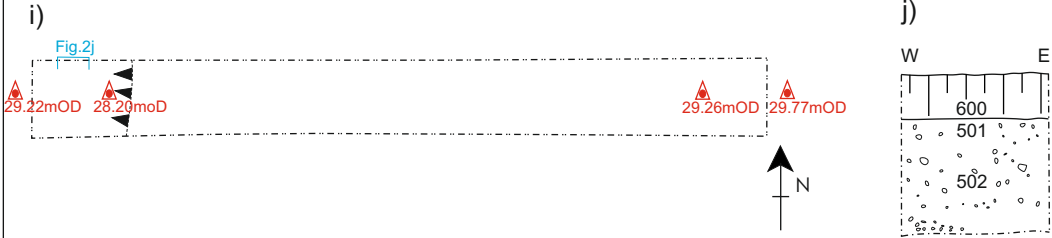
Trench 3



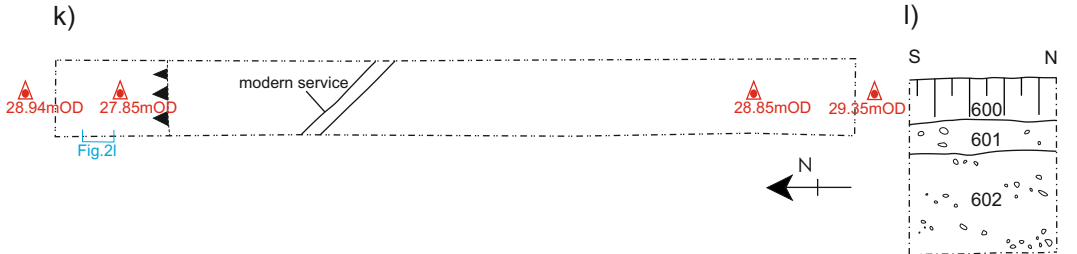
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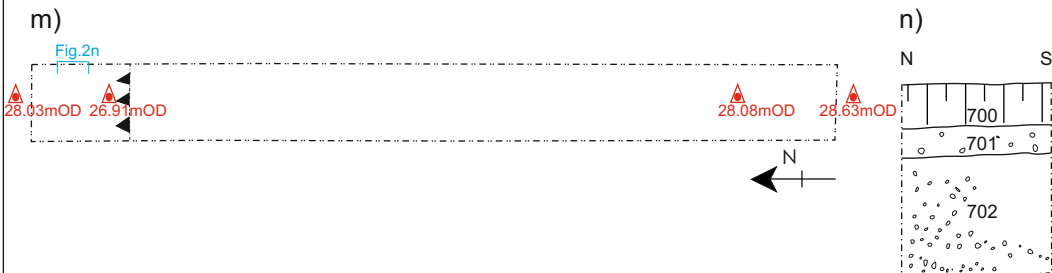
Trench 5



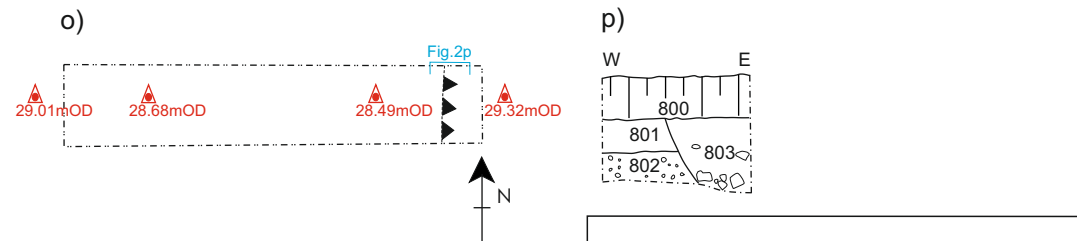
Trench 6



Trench 7



Trench 8



PROJECT
Coldharbour Roundabout, Kent

TITLE
Fig. 2: Plan and section drawings

SELECTED PLATES:



Plate 1: Site overview, existing roundabout in the background



Plate 3: South-facing section at east end of Trench 8. Scale = 1m



Plate 2: Overview of Trench 8, Coldharbour Lane in the background. Scale = 2x1m



Plate 4: Overview of Trench 5, existing roundabout in background. Scale = 2x1m



Plate 5: East-facing section at north end of Trench 6. Scale = 1m



Plate 6: Overview of Trench 4. Scale = 2x1m

Plate 8: Overview of Trench 1, view from east. Scale = 2x1m



Plate 7: Overview of Trench 3, sondages at east and west ends. Scale = 2x1m



APPENDIX 1: TABULATED CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS BY TRENCH

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Trench 1		Length 21m	Width 1.5m	Alignment W-E
Context	Description	Thickness (mm)	Interpretation	
100	Brownish grey sandy loam	300	Topsoil	
101	Reddish grey-brown sandy silt with infrequent gravel	200-300	Subsoil	
102	Yellow and yellow-red sand and gravel	>100	Natural	
103	Light brownish red slightly clayey, silty fine sand	>300	Colluvium/hillwash	

Trench 2		Length 20.5m	Width 1.5m	Alignment N-S
Context	Description	Thickness (mm)	Interpretation	
200	Brownish grey sandy loam	300	Topsoil	
201	Reddish grey-brown sandy silt with infrequent gravel	250-300	Subsoil	
202	Yellow and yellow-red sand and gravel	>100	Natural	
203	Light brownish red slightly clayey, silty fine sand	>600	Colluvium/hillwash	

Trench 3		Length 20m	Width 1.5m	Alignment W-E
Context	Description	Thickness (mm)	Interpretation	
300	Brownish grey sandy loam	300	Topsoil	
301	Reddish grey-brown sandy silt with infrequent gravel	250-300	Subsoil	
302	Yellow and yellow-red sand and gravel	>250	Natural	
303	Light brownish red slightly clayey, silty fine sand	>1000	Colluvium/hillwash	

Trench 4		Length 21m	Width 1.5m	Alignment N-S
Context	Description	Thickness (mm)	Interpretation	
400	Brownish grey sandy loam	300	Topsoil	
401	Greyish yellow-red sandy silt with gravel	200-300	Subsoil	
402	Yellow and yellow-red sand and gravel	>100	Natural	

Trench 5		Length 20m	Width 1.5m	Alignment W-E
Context	Description	Thickness (mm)	Interpretation	
500	Brownish grey sandy loam	300	Topsoil	
501	Greyish yellow-red sandy silt with gravel	200-300	Subsoil	
502	Yellow and yellow-red sand and gravel	>500	Natural	

Trench 6		Length 22m	Width 1.5m	Alignment N-S
Context	Description	Thickness (mm)	Interpretation	
600	Brownish grey sandy loam	300	Topsoil	
601	Greyish yellow-red sandy silt with gravel	150-300	Subsoil	
602	Yellow and yellow-red sand and gravel	>700	Natural	

APPENDIX 1: TABULATED CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS BY TRENCH

Trench 7		Length 22m	Width 1.5m	Alignment N-S
Context	Description	Thickness (mm)	Interpretation	
700	Brownish grey sandy loam	300	Topsoil	
701	Greyish yellow-red silty sand with gravel	200	Subsoil	
702	Yellow-red sand and gravel	>800	Natural	

Trench 8		Length 10.7m	Width 1.5m	Alignment W-E
Context	Description	Thickness (mm)	Interpretation	
800	Brownish grey sandy loam	300	Topsoil	
801	Greyish yellow-red sandy silt with gravel	100-250	Subsoil	
802	Yellow and yellow-red sand and gravel	>200	Natural	
803	Brownish-grey sandy clayey silt with gravel and cobbles	>500	Modern dumping	