

M5 Junction 25
Capacity Improvements
Taunton
Somerset

Archaeological Monitoring and
Recording Report

April 2017



**M5 Junction 25
Capacity Improvements
Taunton
Somerset**

for

C1 project code: C1/AMR/17/MJT

Somerset County Council

REPORT

Prepared by Clare Randall, Archaeological Officer
Date 5/04/17

Approved by Cheryl Green, Post-excavation Manager

Signed

Date 6/04/17

Issue 01

ARCHAEOLOGICAL DETAILS

Client project/scheme ref.	N/A
Planning Application ref.	N/A
Local Planning Authority	N/A
Scheduled Monument Consent ref.	N/A
Historic Environment Record ref.	37526
Collecting Museum	South West Heritage Trust
Museum accession code	TTNCM 26/2017
OASIS reference	contexto1-279445

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Summary

Context One Heritage & Archaeology (C1) carried out archaeological monitoring and recording during geotechnical test pitting in advance of capacity improvement works on Junction 25 of the M5 at Taunton in Somerset (the 'Site'). The project was commissioned by the Economic & Community Infrastructure Department at Somerset County Council (SCC).

The monitoring and recording was requested by Somerset County Council on the advice of the county Historic Environment Service, South West Heritage Trust, due to the Site's proximity to a number of important heritage assets including evidence from the Neolithic, Bronze Age, Iron Age, Roman, Early medieval, Post-Medieval and Modern periods.

Despite this potential, no archaeological features, deposits or finds were observed during the excavation of the test pits. Geophysical survey in the area covered by the test pits has previously indicated anomalies which may represent further archaeological features, but these did not coincide with the location of the test pits. Whilst the anomalies may still relate to archaeological features, monitoring of these test pits has demonstrated that archaeological deposits are less likely to survive in areas which did not produce geophysical anomalies.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Context One Heritage & Archaeology (C1) carried out archaeological monitoring and recording during geotechnical test pitting in advance of capacity improvement works on Junction 25 of the M5 at Taunton in Somerset (the 'Site') (**Figure 1**). The project was commissioned by the Economic & Community Infrastructure Department at Somerset County Council (SCC).
- 1.2 The monitoring and recording was requested by SCC on the advice of the county Historic Environment Service (HES), South West Heritage Trust (SWHT), due to the Site's proximity to a number of important heritage assets.
- 1.3 The programme of archaeological works comprised four elements: the production of a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) which set out the project strategy; archaeological monitoring and recording; post-excavation and report production (this document); and archive preparation and deposition.
- 1.4 The requirement follows advice by Central Government as set out in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF) (DCLG 2012).

2. The Site

- 2.1 The Site (centred on NGR ST 25467 24462) covers an area of c. 1,475 square metres and comprised 23 geotechnical trial pits (19 of which required archaeological monitoring and recording) and 10 boreholes (**Figure 1**). The trial pits were excavated over four fields immediately adjacent to the M5 motorway at Junction 25, near Henlade, and immediately adjacent to the Taunton Gateway Park and Ride (**Figure 1**). The Site is bounded to the south by open pasture and is largely situated on undulating ground, which rises to a height of c. 13m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) and falls to c. 10m aOD. The recorded solid geology is Mercia Mudstone Group, Mudstone and Halite Stone, and the recorded drift geology is alluvial clay with bands of silt, sand and gravel (BGS 2017).
- 2.2 The Somerset Historic Environment Record (HER) records several significant heritage assets within the environs of the Site. An archaeological excavation was undertaken by C1 (**HER PRN: 28214**) in 2007-8 immediately to the north of the site at Cambria Farm (now Taunton Gateway Park and Ride). The excavation revealed activity spanning the Neolithic to modern periods. The most significant features included Bronze Age and Iron Age roundhouses and 30 Roman burials. A possible Roman building across the Black Brook was indicated by a concentration of Roman material in the south-west corner of the excavation area (**HER PRN: 28221**). A proposed industrial park immediately to the south, which includes the area subject to this investigation, has been the focus of a desk-based assessment and geophysical survey in 2015, also by C1 (**HER PRN: 36108**). Numerous anomalies thought to be archaeological in origin, were recorded during the survey and these may well relate to further Prehistoric and Roman activity. The desk-based assessment further identified former field divisions and the location of a temporary WWII heavy anti-aircraft battery emplacement (**HER PRN: 44598**) and GL radar site (**HER PRN: 22513**).

3. Archaeological aims and research objectives

- 3.1 The principal aims of the archaeological monitoring were to:
 - identify, investigate and record all significant buried archaeological deposits revealed on the site during groundworks;
 - determine the character of the archaeological remains, where present;
 - recover environmental information, which may provide further information relating to the local historic environment of the area;
 - provide sufficient information to enable further mitigation strategies to be determined, where appropriate

3.2 The research objectives were to:

- determine whether there is any evidence specifically relating to the nearby multi-phase site of Cambria Farm
- determine whether there is any evidence of a wider prehistoric or Roman landscape within the environs of the Site

4. Methodology

- 4.1 A total of 19 geotechnical test pits were excavated by a machine fitted with a toothless grading bucket. These were all positioned in respect to the potential future locations of service roads, and a random distribution in the fields to the south-east of the M5. A further four test pits were excavated by hand in the current area of the Park and Ride.
- 4.2 All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with the *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* issued by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) (December 2014) and in accordance with the *Somerset County Council Heritage Service Archaeological Handbook* (2011). C1 adhered to the *Code of Conduct* of the CIfA (1985, rev. 2000, 2014), and *Regulations for Professional Conduct* (CIfA, 2014, rev. 2015) at all times.
- 4.3 An archaeologist was on Site to monitor all specified groundworks with the aim of identifying and recording any archaeological features/deposits present. In the event, the four hand excavated test pits, and four of the machine excavated test pits did not warrant archaeological monitoring as they were situated in areas of known disturbance, made-up ground, or which had previously been subject to archaeological excavation.
- 4.4 Core details of the deposit sequence across the Site were recorded on C1 *pro-forma* profile forms in digital format using iPad mini tablets. Spoil was examined for the retrieval of artefacts. A photographic record of the monitoring and recording was carried out, and involved the sole use of digital images. The photographic record also included working shots to illustrate more generally the nature of the archaeological operation mounted. Context numbers are referred to in this document in standard terms e.g. (7-100), with the prefix relating to the recorder.

5. Results

- 5.1 Archaeological monitoring and recording was undertaken during the excavation of a total of 15 geotechnical test pits (**Figure 1**). Full descriptions of deposits are included in **Appendix 1**.
- 5.2 No archaeological features or deposits were noted in any of the test pits. In all cases a topsoil of brown, reddish brown or red, generally silty clays, between 0.2-0.68m deep, overlay a subsoil of red, dark red or reddish brown or grey clays, some with silt, generally measuring between 0.28 and 0.5m deep, but in one case 1.43m deep. The subsoil in all test pits was situated over pinkish or reddish grey, greenish grey, or blue grey natural clay deposits with variable amounts of silt, or less frequently, gravel. A summary of the contents of each test pit, with the depths of deposits is given in **Table 1**, with detailed context information in **Appendix 1**.

Table 1. Summary of deposits

TEST PIT	CONTEXT	IDENTIFICATION	DESCRIPTION	DEPTH	PLATE
P01	(3-100)	Topsoil	Brown loamy clay	0.42	Plate 1
	(3-101)	Subsoil	Dark red clay	1.43	
	(3-102)	Natural	Greenish grey clay	>2.00	
TP02	(3-200)	Topsoil	Brown loamy clay	0.38	Plate 2
	(3-201)	Subsoil	Dark red clay	0.78	
	(3-202)	Natural	Light greenish grey clay	>2.00	
TP03	(3-300)	Made ground	Brick and concrete rubble	0.68	Plate 3
	(3-301)	Subsoil	Red clay	0.45	
	(3-302)	Natural	Light greenish grey clay	>2.00	
TP04	(7-400)	Topsoil	Red silty clay	0.3	Plate 4

	(7-401)	Subsoil	Reddish grey silty clay	0.5	
	(7-402)	Natural	Greyish green clay	>1.00	
TP05	(3-500)	Topsoil	Very dark greyish brown loamy clay	0.28	Plate 5
	(3-501)	Subsoil	Reddish grey clay	0.42	
	(3-502)	Natural	Light greenish grey silty clay	>0.42	
TP06	(3-600)	Topsoil	Very dark greyish brown loamy clay	0.2	Plate 6
	(3-601)	Subsoil	Reddish grey clay	0.28	
	(3-602)	Natural	Pinkish grey clay	>0.48	
TP07	(7-700)	Topsoil	Reddish brown silty clay	0.3	Plate 7
	(7-701)	Subsoil	Red clay	0.5	
	(7-702)	Natural	Bluefish grey clay	>0.50	
TP10	(3-1000)	Topsoil	Brown loamy clay	0.28	Plate 8
	(3-1001)	Subsoil	Dark red clay	0.57	
	(3-1002)	Natural	Light greenish grey clay	>0.30	
TP11	(7-1100)	Topsoil	Red silty clay	0.3	Plate 9
	(7-1101)	Subsoil	Dark reddish brown silty clay	0.5	
	(7-1102)	Natural	Dark red sandy gravel	>0.70	
TP12	(7-1200)	Topsoil	Red silty clay	0.25	Plate 10
	(7-1201)	Subsoil	Dark reddish brown silty clay	0.3	
	(7-1202)	Natural	Dark red clay	>0.50	
TP14	(3-1400)	Topsoil	Brown loamy clay	0.34	Plate 11
	(3-1401)	Subsoil	Dark red clay	0.46	
	(3-1402)	Natural	Pinkish grey clay	>0.40	
TP15	(7-1500)	Topsoil	Reddish brown silty clay	0.3	Plate 12
	(7-1501)	Subsoil	Reddish brown silty clay	0.3	
	(7-1502)	Natural	Dark reddish brown sandy silty clay	>0.30	
TP16	(7-1600)	Topsoil	Red silty clay	0.3	Plate 13
	(7-1601)	Subsoil	Red silty clay	0.3	
	(7-1602)	Natural	Dark reddish brown silty clay	>0.50	
TP17	(7-1700)	Topsoil	Red silty clay	0.3	Plate 14
	(7-1701)	Subsoil	Reddish brown silty clay	0.5	
	(7-1702)	Natural	Reddish brown silty clay	>0.50	
TP18	(7-1800)	Topsoil	Dark red silty clay	0.3	Plate 15
	(7-1801)	Subsoil	Red sandy clay	0.5	
	(7-1802)	Natural	Red sandy clay	>0.50	

- 5.3 The drilling of the boreholes was also observed, but given the narrow diameter, not recorded. No archaeological deposits or finds were observed.

6. The finds

- 6.1 No archaeological artefacts were noted or collected during the monitoring programme.

7. Discussion and Conclusion

- 7.1 Despite the proximity of the Site to known archaeology which spread over an extensive area on the eastern side of the Site, no archaeological features, deposits or finds were observed during the excavation of the test pits. Geophysical survey in the area covered by the test pits (HER PRN: 36108) has previously indicated anomalies which may represent further archaeological features, but these did not coincide with the location of the test pits. Whilst the anomalies may still prove to relate to archaeological features, monitoring of these test pits has demonstrated that archaeological deposits are less likely to survive in areas which did not produce geophysical anomalies.

8. Archive

- 8.1 The NPPF requires that an archaeological archive arising from development works is made publicly accessible (para. 141). The archive comprises two parts: the paper/digital archive including site records and images; and the artefact/ecofact assemblage. In this case, no archaeological artefacts were recovered.

- 8.2 As no archaeological evidence was encountered, all relevant data has been incorporated into this report and the paper/digital archive will be stored on the C1 cloud storage server or discarded. A digital copy of the report will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service, via OASIS (On-line Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations – <http://oasis.ac.uk/england/>). Archive deposition will ordinarily be carried out within three months of final report completion.
- 8.3 A copy of this report will be provided to the client/agent and to the HES so that it can be included as part of the county Historic Environment Record.

9. Bibliography

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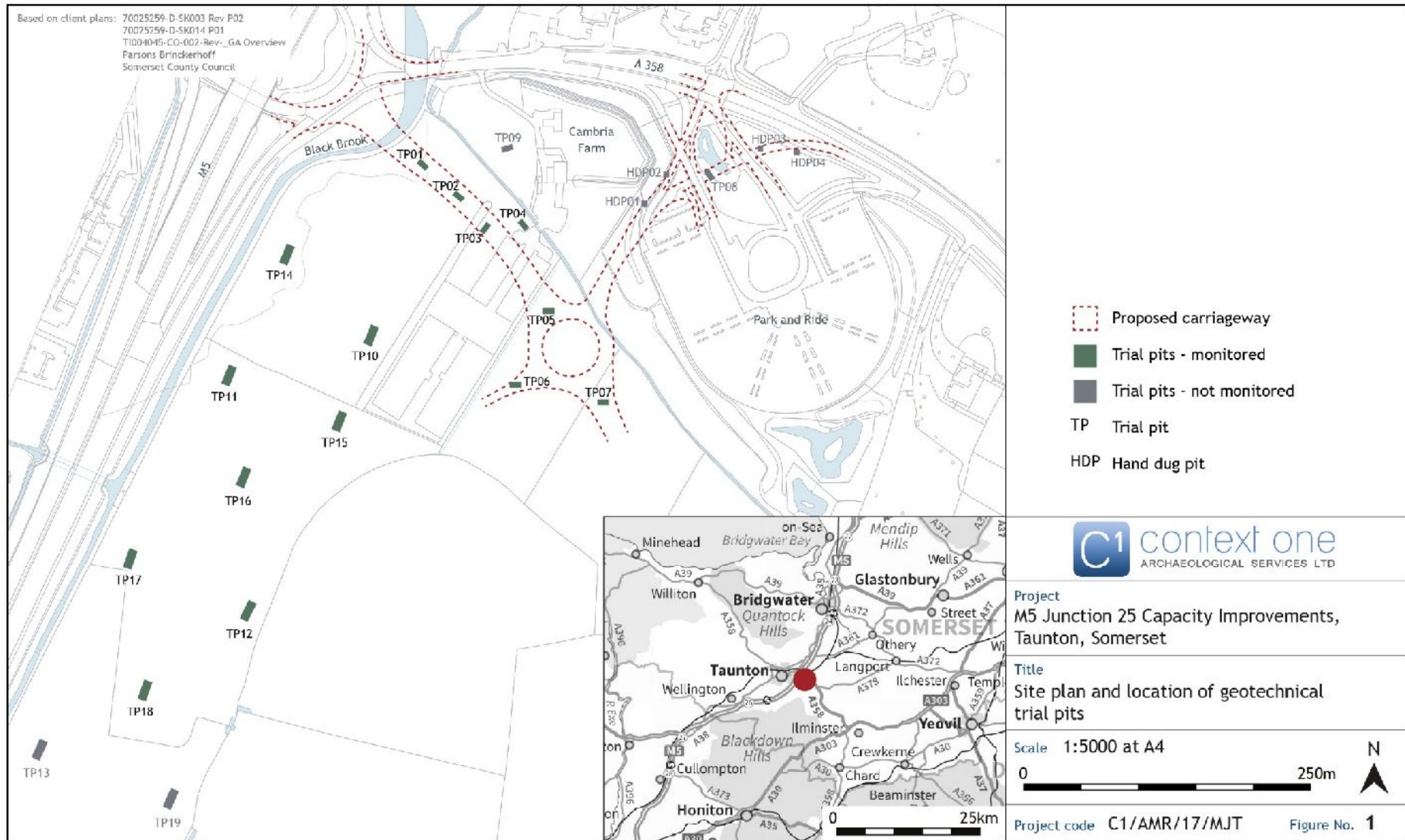


Figure 1. Site plan and location of geotechnical trial pits



Plate 1. TP 01 (Facing NE; 1m scale)



Plate 2. TP 02 (Facing E; 1m scale)



Plate 3. TP 03 (Facing E; 1m scale)



Plate 4. TP 04 (Facing N; 1m scale)



Plate 5. TP 05 (Facing E; 1m scale)



Plate 6. TP 06 (Facing N; 1m scale)



Plate 7. TP 07 (Facing W; 1m scales)



Plate 8. TP 10 (Facing N; 1m scale)



Plate 9. TP 11 (Facing NE; 1m scale)



Plate 10. TP 12 (Facing SW; 1m scale)



Plate 11. TP 14 (Facing S; 1m scale)



Plate 12. TP 15 (Facing SE; 1m scale)



Plate 13. TP 16 (Facing N; 1m scale)



Plate 14. TP 17 (Facing SW; 1m scale)



Plate 15. TP 18 (Facing N; 1m scale)

Appendix 1: Context summary

CONTEXT NO.	PERIOD	TYPE	DESCRIPTION	EARLIER THAN	CONTEMP. WITH	LATER THAN	LENGTH	WIDTH/DIAMETER	THICKNESS/DEPTH (m)
TP 01									
(3-100)	Modern	Layer	Topsoil - 7.5 YR 4/2 Soft brown loamy clay	NA		(3-101)	2	0.6	0.42
(3-101)	Modern	Layer	Subsoil - 2.5 YR 3/6 Firm dark red clay	(3-100)		(3-102)	2	0.6	1.43
(3-102)	Geological	Layer	Natural - 10 BG 6/1 Cemented greenish grey clay	(3-101)		NA	2	0.6	>2.00
TP 02									
(3-200)	Modern	Layer	Topsoil - 7.5 YR 4/2 Soft brown loamy clay	NA		(3-201)	2	0.6	0.38
(3-201)	Modern	Layer	Subsoil - 2.5 YR 6/6 Firm dark red clay	(3-200)		(3-202)	2	0.6	0.78
(3-202)	Geological	Layer	Natural - 5 BG 7/1 Cemented light greenish grey clay	(3-201)		NA	2	0.6	>2.00
TP 03									
(3-300)	Modern	Layer	Made ground - friable mixed brick and concrete rubble	NA		(3-301)	2	0.6	0.68
(3-301)	Modern	Layer	Subsoil - 2.5 YR 5/6 Soft red clay	(3-300)		(3-302)	2	0.6	0.45
(3-302)	Geological	Layer	Natural - 10 G 7/1 Cemented light greenish grey clay	(3-301)		NA	2	0.6	>2.00
TP 04									
(7-400)	Modern	Layer	Topsoil - 2.5 YR 4/6 Friable red silty clay with occasional limestone <0.10mm	NA		(7-401)	2	0.7	0.3
(7-401)	Modern	Layer	Subsoil - 2.5 YR 5/1 Firm reddish grey silty clay with occasional charcoal	(7-400)		(7-402)	2	0.7	0.5
(7-402)	Geological	Layer	Natural - Gley 1 Soft greyish green clay	(7-401)		NA	2	0.7	>1.00
TP 05									
(3-500)	Modern	Layer	Topsoil - 10 YR 3/2 Soft very dark greyish brown loamy clay	NA		(3-501)	2	0.6	0.28
(3-501)	Modern	Layer	Subsoil - 5 YR 5/2 Soft reddish grey clay	(3-500)		(3-502)	2	0.6	0.42
(3-502)	Geological	Layer	Natural - 10 B 8/1 Cemented light greenish grey silty clay	(3-501)		NA	2	0.6	>0.42
TP 06									
(3-600)	Modern	Layer	Topsoil - 10 YR 3/2 Soft very dark greyish brown loamy clay	NA		(3-601)	2	0.6	0.2
(3-601)	Modern	Layer	Subsoil - 5 YR 5/2 Soft reddish grey clay	(3-600)		(3-602)	2	0.6	0.28
(3-602)	Geological	Layer	Natural -7.5 YR 5/2 Compacted pinkish grey clay	(3-601)		NA	2	0.6	>0.48

TP 07									
(7-700)	Modern	Layer	Topsoil - 2.5 YR 4/3 Firm dark reddish brown silty clay	NA		(7-701)	1.5	0.7	0.3
(7-701)	Modern	Layer	Subsoil - 2.5 YR 4/6 Soft red clay	(7-700)		(7-702)	1.5	0.7	0.5
(7-702)	Geological	Layer	Natural - Gley 2 5/1 Firm bluefish grey clay	(7-701)		NA	1.5	0.7	>0.50
TP 10									
(3-1000)	Modern	Layer	Topsoil-7.5 YR 4/2 Soft brown loamy clay	NA		(3-1001)	2	0.6	0.28
(3-1001)	Modern	Layer	Subsoil - 2.5 YR 3/6 Firm dark red clay	(3-1000)		(3-1002)	2	0.6	0.57
(3-1002)	Geological	Layer	Natural - 10 B 7/1 Cemented light greenish grey clay	(3-1001)		NA	2	0.6	>0.30
TP 11									
(7-1100)	Modern	Layer	Topsoil - 2.5 YR 4/6 Friable red silty clay with infrequent sandstone <0.10mm	NA		(7-1101)	2	0.7	0.3
(7-1101)	Modern	Layer	Subsoil - 2.5 YR 3/4 Friable dark reddish brown silty clay with frequent sandstone gravel	(7-1100)		(7-1102)	2	0.7	0.5
(7-1102)	Geological	Layer	Natural - 2.5 YR Friable dark red sandy gravel with sandstone fragments <0.20mm	(7-1101)		NA	2	0.7	>0.70
TP 12									
(7-1200)	Modern	Layer	Topsoil - 2.5 YR 4/6 Friable red silty clay with occasional angular sandstone <0.20mm and occasional angular gravel	NA		(7-1201)	2	2	0.25
(7-1201)	Modern	Layer	Subsoil - 2.5 YR 3/4 Friable dark reddish brown silty clay with frequent sandstone fragments <0.20mm	(7-1200)		(7-1202)	2	2	0.3
(7-1202)	Geological	Layer	Natural - 2.5 YR 3/6 Friable dark red clay with frequent angular sandstone fragments <0.10mm	(7-1201)		NA	2	2	>0.50
TP 14									
(3-1400)	Modern	Layer	Topsoil-7.5 YR 4/2 Soft brown loamy clay	NA		(3-1401)	2	0.6	0.34
(3-1401)	Modern	Layer	Subsoil- 2.5 YR 3/6 Firm dark red clay	(3-1400)		(3-1402)	2	0.6	0.46
(3-1402)	Geological	Layer	Natural -7.5 YR 7/2 Cemented pinkish grey clay	(3-1401)		NA	2	0.6	>0.40
TP 15									
(7-1500)	Modern	Layer	Topsoil - 2.5 YR 5/4 Friable reddish brown silty clay with frequent angular sandstone gravel <0.15mm	NA		(7-1501)	2	0.7	0.3
(7-1501)	Modern	Layer	Subsoil- 2.5 YR Friable reddish brown silty clay with frequent angular sandstone gravel <0.10mm	(7-1500)		(7-1502)	2	0.7	0.3
(7-1502)	Geological	Layer	Natural - 2.5 YR 3/6 Friable dark reddish brown sandy silty clay with frequent angular sandstone fragments <0.20mm	(7-1501)		NA	2	0.7	>0.30

TP 16									
(7-1600)	Modern	Layer	Topsoil- 2.5 YR Friable red silty clay with occasional angular sandstone gravel <0.20mm	NA		(7-1601)	2	0.7	0.3
(7-1601)	Modern	Layer	Subsoil- 2.5 YR Friable red silty clay with frequent angular sandstone gravel <0.20mm	(7-1600)		(7-1602)	2	0.7	0.3
(7-1602)	Geological	Layer	Natural - 2.5 YR 3/4 Firm dark reddish brown silty clay with frequent sandstone gravel <0.10mm	(7-1601)		NA	2	0.7	>0.50
TP 17									
(7-1700)	Modern	Layer	Topsoil - 2.5 YR 4/6 Friable red silty clay with frequent angular sandstone <0.20mm	NA		(7-1701)	2	0.7	0.3
(7-1701)	Modern	Layer	Subsoil - 2.5 YR 4/3 Friable reddish brown silty clay with white gravel and charcoal	(7-1700)		(7-1702)	2	0.7	0.5
(7-1702)	Geological	Layer	Natural - 2.5 YR 4/4 Friable reddish brown silty clay with moderate angular sandstone <0.20mm	(7-1701)		NA	2	0.7	>0.50
TP 18									
(7-1800)	Modern	Layer	Topsoil - 2.5 YR 3/6 Friable dark red silty clay with occasional sandstone fragments <0.10mm	NA		(7-1801)	2	0.7	0.3
(7-1801)	Modern	Layer	Subsoil - 2.5 YR 4/6 Firm red sandy clay	(7-1800)		(7-1802)	2	0.7	0.5
(7-1802)	Geological	Layer	Subsoil - 2.5 YR 4/6 Firm red sandy clay	(7-1801)		NA	2	0.7	>0.50

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