

**Archaeological watching brief  
at The Spinney,  
Strensham Road,  
Strensham,  
Worcestershire**

Martin Cook BA MCIfA

25th March 2016

WSM 36086

Oasis ref martinco1-246691

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# **Archaeological watching brief at The Spinney, Strensham Road, Strensham, Worcestershire**

## **Introduction**

An archaeological watching brief was carried out at The Spinney, Strensham Road, Strensham, Worcestershire (SO 8900 4024; Fig 1) at the request of Keith Griffiths, the client. This work was undertaken in compliance with a written scheme of investigation provided by Martin Cook BA MCifA, based upon a brief from Mike Glyde to the local planning authority (planning reference W/06/1150). The written scheme of investigation was approved by Mike Glyde of Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service (site code TSS/08, event number WSM 36086).

The archaeological watching brief was to comprise documentary research, observation of excavations, a single day for uninterrupted access (if necessary) and a report.

For various reasons this project took place over a protracted period of time.

## **Summary**

An archaeological watching brief was carried out at The Spinney, Strensham Road, Strensham, Worcestershire. The project identified no significant archaeological deposits.

A summary will be published in West Midlands Archaeology and a copy of the report submitted to the OASIS database.

## **The documentary material**

### **Historic mapping**

The earliest available mapping on which the site's location could be identified is the Hill Croome tithe map of 1838 (Fig 2.1). The land parcel within which the modern site falls was known as Little Limekiln Piece. The Ordnance Survey map of 1885 (Fig 2.1) shows the modern site occupying the southern half of the former Little Limekiln Piece, the land use indicated as orchard. The Ordnance Survey map of 1923 (Fig 2.2) shows no significant differences.

### **The Worcestershire Historic Environment Record**

#### *The site itself*

The site is included within WSM 1258, a 'catch-all' number for the Strensham Terrace Complex, this being an area around Upper Strensham which includes important river terrace deposits including terraces 4 and 5 and the Strensham meander of the River Avon, dating to c 200,000bp.

#### *Adjacent to the site*

There are a number of landscape components or monuments nearby or adjacent to the site. In date order these are:

Prehistoric 10000-701bc

WSM 11817

Flint found in excavations for a pipeline comprising one possible, imported end scraper

Roman 2nd and 4th century AD

WSM 32368

An area of Roman activity located south of Wooshill, comprising a small concentration of unspecified finds.

WSM 32367 200 to 399AD

A possible farmstead, near North Glebe Farm, comprising unspecified and unquantified finds by metal detectorists, led them to suggest a small farmstead

WSM 32410 200 to 399AD  
Metal detecting finds, near North Glebe Farm, Hill Croome

WSM 32374 2nd to the 4th century  
Metal detecting finds, South of Wooshill, Strensham found by metal detectorist.

Medieval  
WSM 05870 part late 14th century and 16th century  
Glebe Farm, a listed building (Gd II), of 'L' plan comprising timber frame and brick with stone and brick stacks.

WSM 07828 1066 to 1539  
St Mary's Church

WSM 32560 1066 to 1539  
Deserted medieval village/shrunken medieval village (possible site of)

WSM 27877 1540 to 2050  
Pieced brickwork barn at Wooshill Farm

WSM 06729 1425 to 2050  
Dovecote south-west of farmhouse, Glebe Farm. Probable medieval dovecote: square, half timbered with cruck construction at gable ends, brick infill and lantern.

Post medieval  
WSM 27878  
Plain post-medieval brick barn at Wooshill Farm

### **Commentary**

The proposed development lies within an area of archaeological significance with prehistoric, Romano-British and medieval remains in the vicinity. To date, two Romano-British farmsteads have been located within 500m of the development area, while a deserted medieval lies with 250m. Flint finds indicative of prehistoric activity have also been found in the area. A number of medieval and post-medieval buildings lie in the vicinity.

## **The fieldwork**

### **General**

Fieldwork took place between the 8th May 2008 and the 16th February 2016. It comprised monitoring of the excavations. No significant archaeological features were identified. Sections were recorded at various positions in the footings trenches, with records (drawing, written description and photographs) made as appropriate. A full description of the contexts is given in Appendix 1. Contexts are described in summary form below.

The deposits across the site were very variable with the exception of the natural subsoil which was a grey-green, slightly sandy, tenacious clay.

### **Description**

#### *Section 1*

This was the shallowest section comprising a very thin, mid grey brown, slightly clayey sand (context 003; topsoil), overlying a mid grey orange sandy clay with common small rounded stones (context 004; subsoil).

#### *Section 2*

This consisted of a mid grey brown sandy clay loam (context 001; topsoil) overlying a grey-green slightly sandy tenacious clay (context 002; subsoil).

#### *Section 3*

In section 3, a deep, mid grey brown sandy clay loam (context 005; topsoil) overlay grey-green slightly sandy tenacious clay (context 006; natural subsoil).

#### *Section 4*

Finally, section 4 seemed to be the only section with a 'natural' sequence of deposits comprising a mid grey brown sandy clay (context 007; topsoil), overlying a mid grey orange sandy clay with occasional medium rounded stones (context 008; subsoil) which in turn overlay a grey-green, slightly sandy, tenacious clay (context 009; natural subsoil).

### **The finds**

There were no finds from the footings trenches.

### **Interpretation**

The almost complete absence of any 'natural' soil profile (topsoil succeeding subsoil in turn succeeding natural subsoil), except for section 4, suggests that the site has been heavily disturbed. It is described as Little Limekiln Piece on the Hill Croome tithe map of 1838 (Fig 2.1) and is shown as an orchard on the two available Ordnance Survey maps of 1885 and 1923 (Figs 2.1 and 2.2). No evidence was found for lime burning or associated activity on the site but the establishment of an orchard can be very destructive of archaeological deposits, requiring a hole about 5 feet deep (1.5m) for each tree and under-draining if, as at The Spinney, the natural subsoil is clay.

### **Depositional and post-depositional processes**

Such depositional and post-depositional processes as were evident on the site, or could be inferred from the nature of the deposits, have been discussed under **Interpretation** above.

### **Bibliography**

*<http://www.motherearthnews.com/organic-gardening>*

### **Acknowledgements**

The author would particularly like to thank Keith Griffiths, Mike Glyde, Emma Hancox and Adrian Scruby of Worcestershire Archives and Archaeology Service for their kind cooperation.

### **Archive**

The physical archive consists of:

- 9 Context sheets
- 2 Drawings
- 1 Hard copy of the report
- 1 Hard copy of the brief
- 1 Hard copy of the WSI

It will be deposited at Worcestershire County Museum, Hartlebury upon approval of the report.

The digital archive consists of:

- 1 Digital copy of the report (.doc format)
- 6 Illustrations (.bmp format)

Since this project produced no significant archaeological results it is considered that inclusion on the OASIS database will be sufficient and no submission will be made to the Archaeology Data Service.

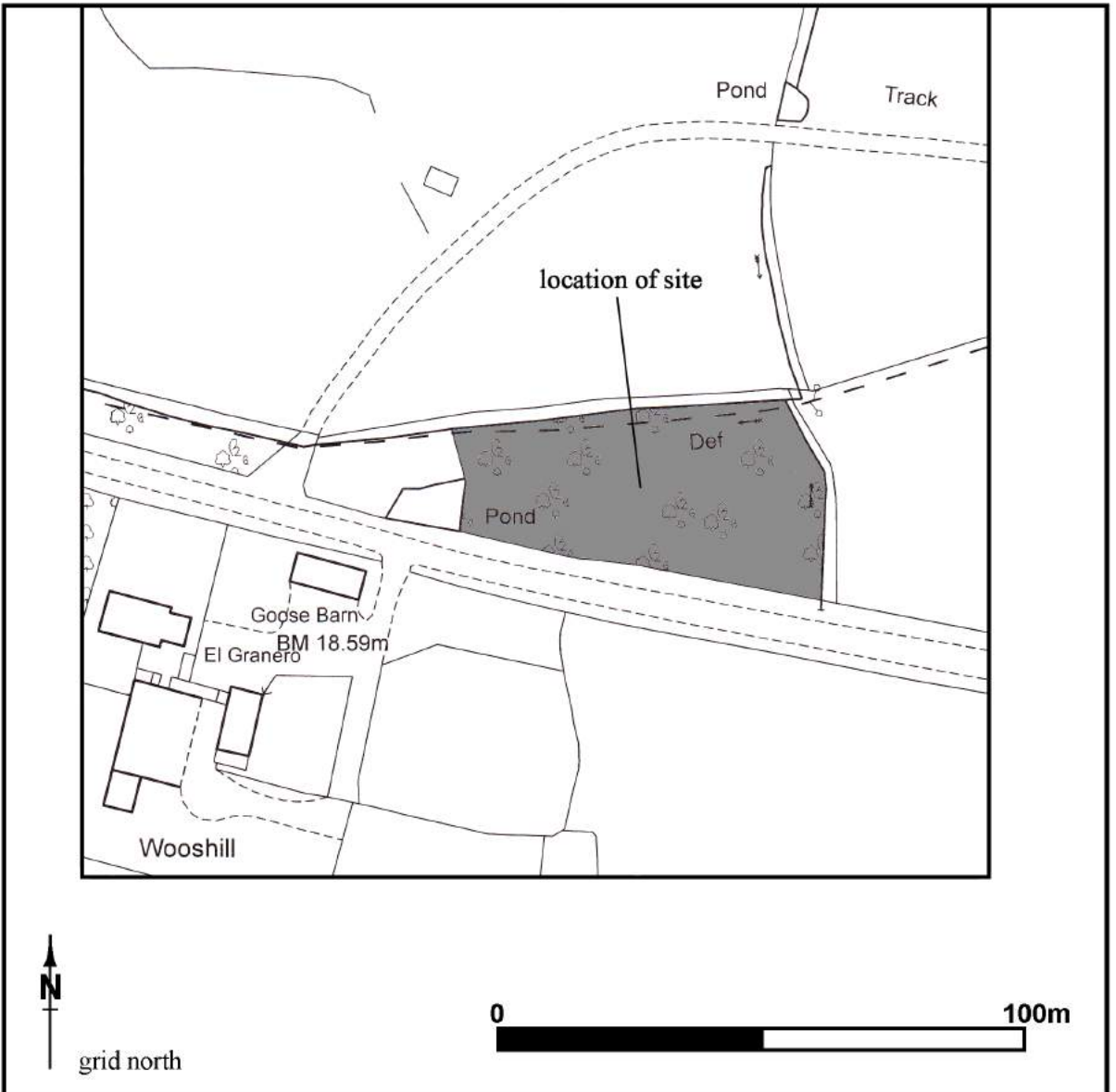
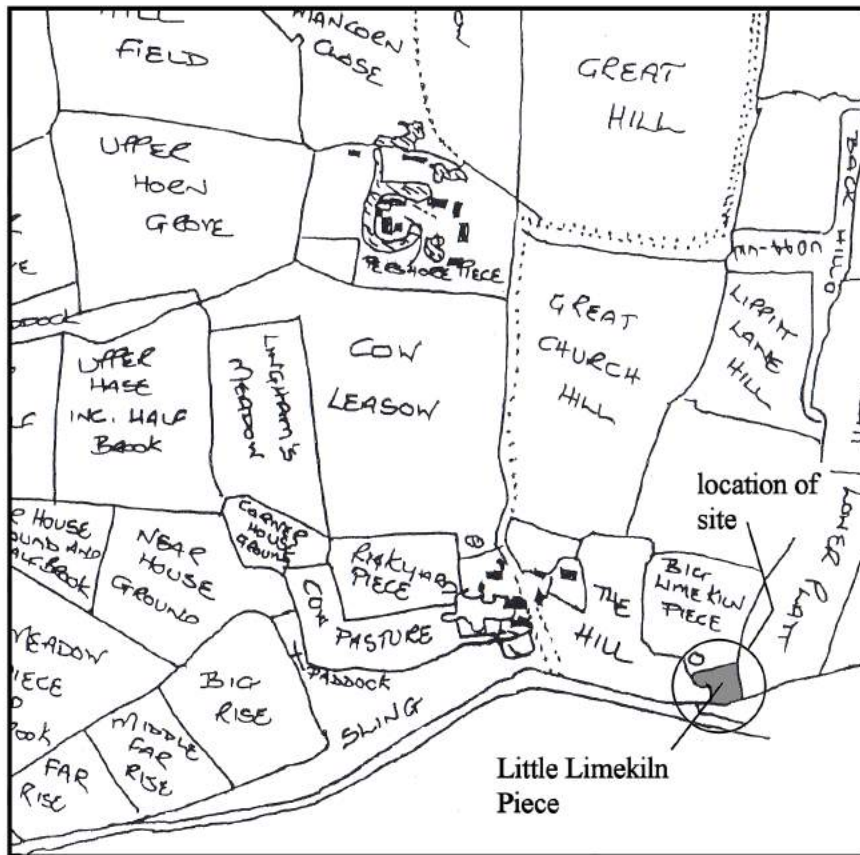


Fig 1: Location of site

Hill Croome tithe  
1838



not to scale

1885

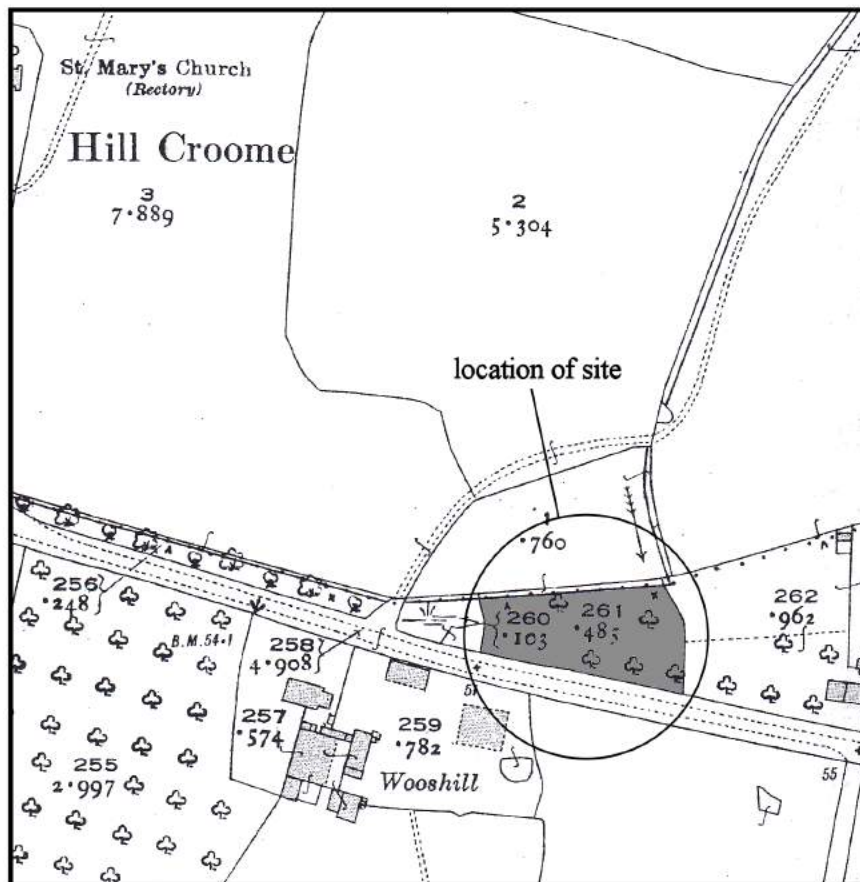


Fig 2.1: Historic mapping

1923

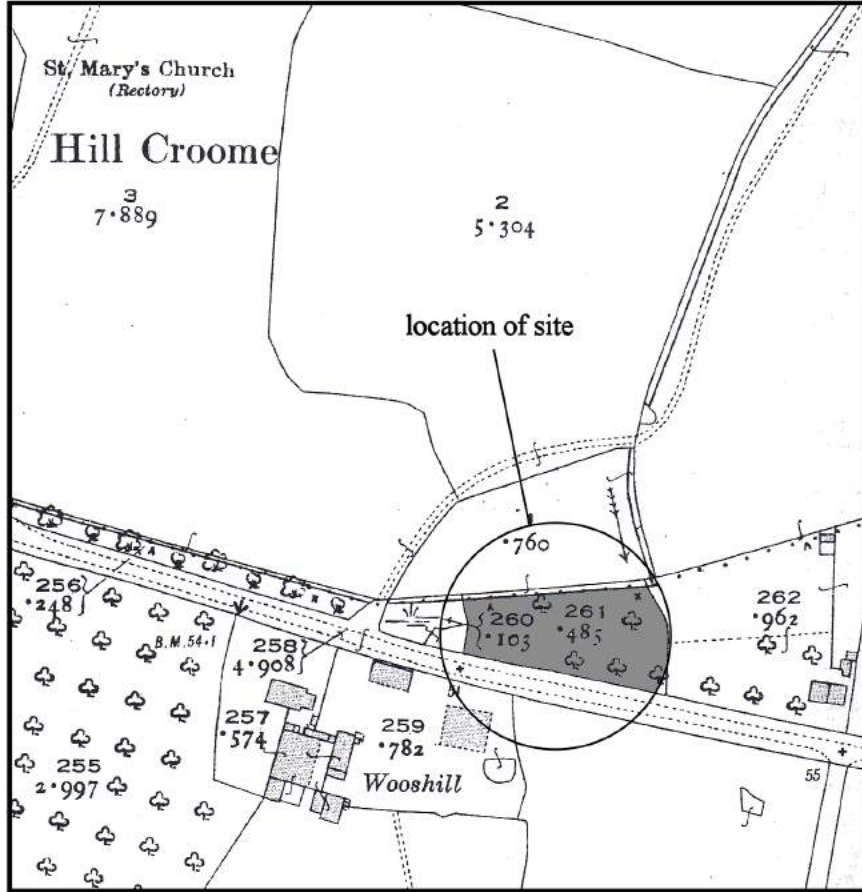


Fig 2.2: Historic mapping

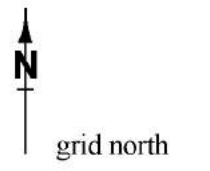
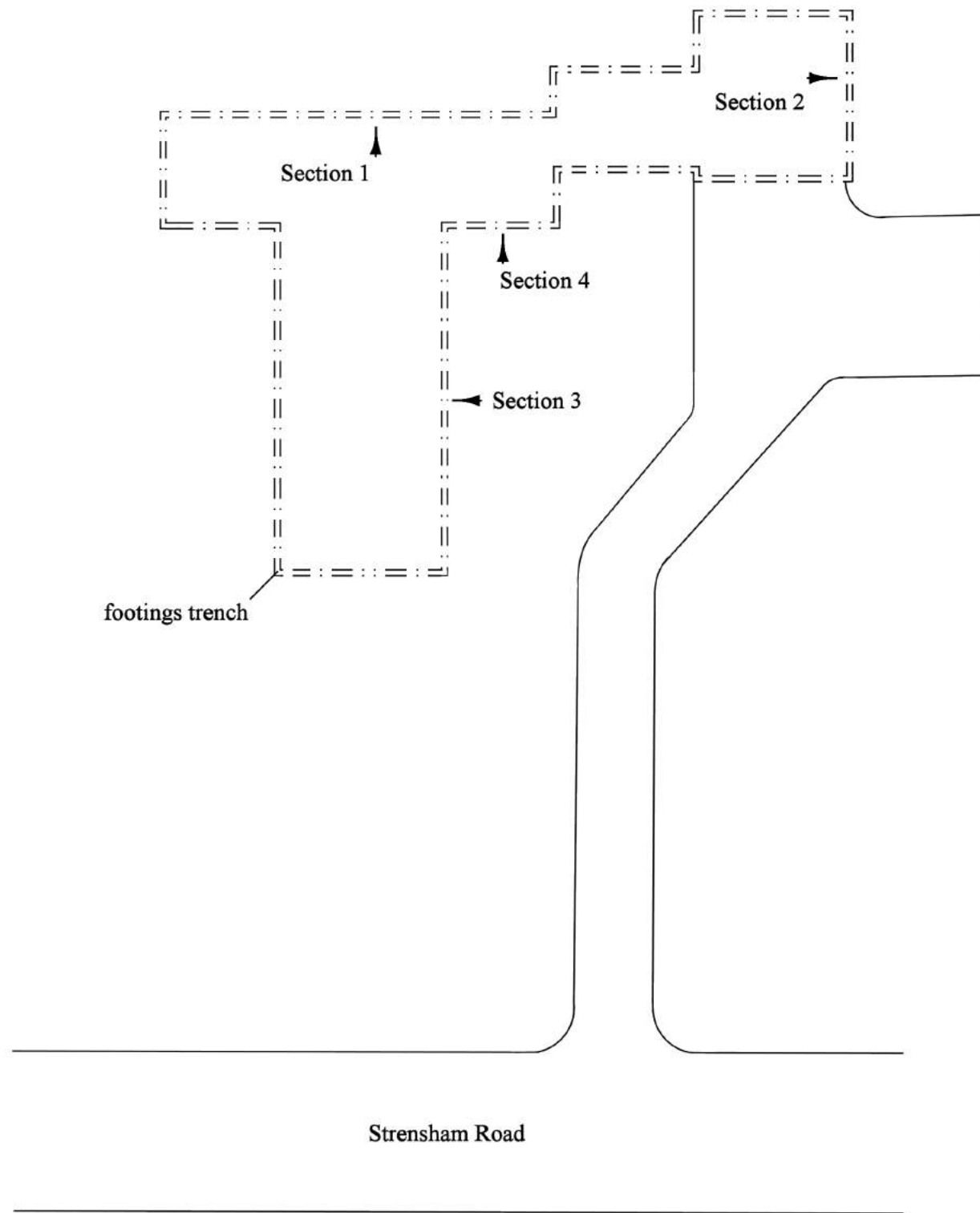


Fig 3.1: Location of recorded sections and photographs



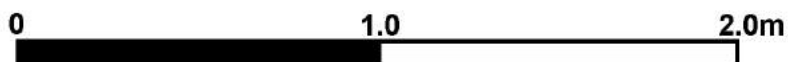
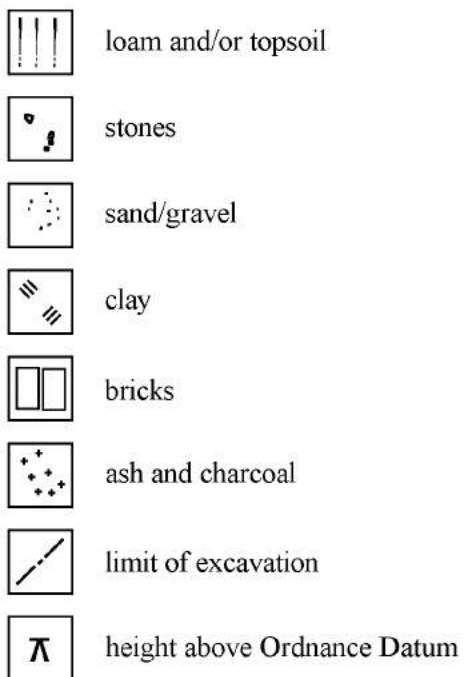
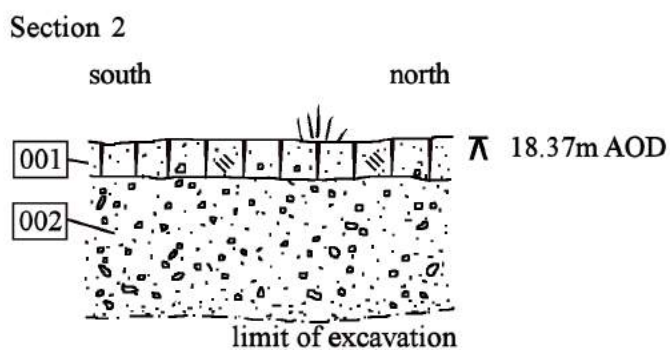
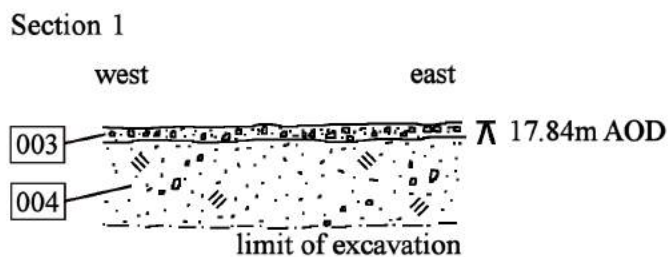
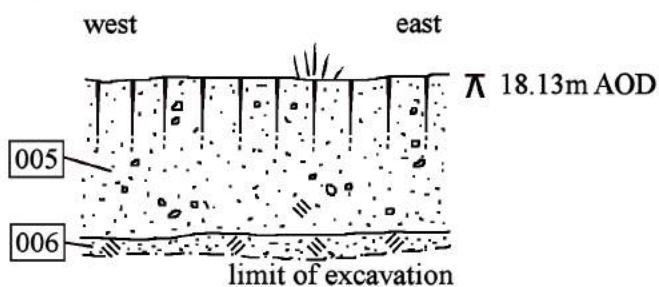
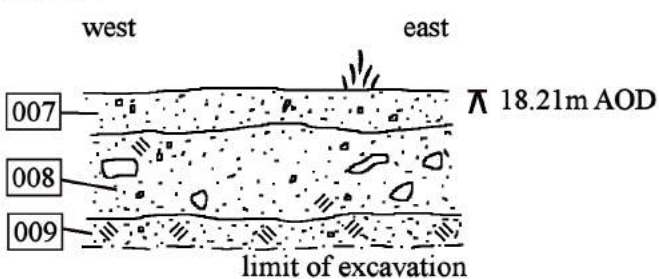


Fig 3.2: Sections

Section 3



Section 4











-  loam and/or topsoil
-  stones
-  sand/gravel
-  clay
-  bricks
-  ash and charcoal
-  limit of excavation
-  height above Ordnance Datum



Fig 3.3: Sections



Fig 4: Section 2; scale is 0.5m

## Appendix 1: List of the contexts

<b>Context number</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
001	Mid grey brown sandy clay loam	Topsoil
002	Grey-green slightly sandy tenacious clay	Subsoil
003	Very thin, mid grey brown, slightly clayey sand	Topsoil
004	Mid grey orange sandy clay with common small rounded stones	Subsoil
005	Deep, mid grey brown sandy clay loam	Topsoil
006	Grey-green slightly sandy tenacious clay	Natural subsoil
007	Mid grey brown sandy clay	Topsoil
008	Mid grey orange sandy clay with occasional medium rounded stones	Subsoil
009	Grey-green slightly sandy tenacious clay	Natural subsoil

**Appendix 2: The OASIS form**

# OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

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## Printable version

**OASIS ID: martinco1-246691**

### Project details

Project name	The Spinney Strensham
Short description of the project	Watching brief at The Spinney Strensham
Project dates	Start: 08-05-2008 End: 25-03-2016
Previous/future work	Not known / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	W/06/1150 - Planning Application No.
Any associated project reference codes	WSM 36086 - HER event no.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Local Authority Designated Archaeological Area
Current Land use	Other 15 - Other
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF

### Project location

Country	England
Site location	WORCESTERSHIRE WYCHAVON STRENSHAM The Spinney Strensham
Study area	3000 Square metres
Site coordinates	SO 8900 4024 52.060011654243 -2.160461904198 52 03 36 N 002 09 37 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 18m Max: 18m

### Project creators

Name of Organisation	Martin Cook BA MCIfA
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Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	Martin Cook BA MCIfA
Project director/manager	Martin Cook BA MCIfA
Project supervisor	Martin Cook BA MCIfA
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer

### Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	ADS
Digital Contents	"none"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography", "Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Worcestershire County Museum
Paper Contents	"none"
Paper Media available	"Report"

### Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Archaeological watching brief at The Spinney, Strensham Road, Strensham, Worcestershire
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Cook, M.
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## OASIS:

Please e-mail [Historic England](#) for OASIS help and advice

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