



YORK ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

SITE	27 Bootham Row, York		
CLIENT NAME	Aspect 4 Limited		
YAT PROJECT #	6069	YAT REPORT #	2018/95
MUSEUM ACCESSION #	N/A	GRID REFERENCE	SE 60081 52340
PLANNING REFERENCE #	18/00376/FULM	AAI OPS NOTICE #	N/A

INTRODUCTION

A watching brief on geotechnical ground works was undertaken by York Archaeological Trust on behalf of Aspect 4 Limited on the 9th of July at 27 Bootham Row, York, NGR SE 60081 52340 (Figure 1). The objective of the watching brief was to record the sequence of archaeological deposits within the works.

METHODOLOGY

The geotechnical interventions were carried out by Dunelm Geotechnical & Environmental. There was a possibility of five window sample boreholes (WS) going to a depth of 5m below ground level (BGL), and one cable percussion borehole going to a depth of 20m BGL (Figure 1). Due to the lack of visibility within cable percussion boreholes to determine stratified deposits this intervention was not monitored. Also the widow sample boreholes were placed on all sides of the cable percussion.

Due to time constraints and difficulty of breaking out the top of the window sample boreholes only three were fully completed, these were WS1, WS3 & WS5 (Figure 1). The top of WS4 was broken out but hit a service and was repaired and closed at 0.4m.

The sleeves for the window samples were opened on site in metre intervals, and recorded on a proforma recording sheet, with a measured sketch and soil descriptions of distinct deposits. Also digital photographs were taken of each half metre interval.

RESULTS

The three window samples were assigned numbers relating to their designation, therefore WS3 would have context numbers 300 onwards. These were then phased into four general distinct bands of activity, and will be described in this report at the phase level. For full context descriptions please refer to the context table (Table 1). Each window sample borehole had the top 1.2m hand dug in an opening roughly 0.3m by 0.3m.

WS1

Phase 1 – This phase consisted of firm sandy clays that slowly interfaced to a clean clay, interpreted as relating to natural glacial deposits. This deposit was encountered at 3.30m BGL.

Phase 2 – This consists of heavily mottled grey and orange clays overlaid by a band of alluvial sand. It could be the start of natural clays and sands with weathering causing the mottling effect, but could possibly relate to terracing and re-deposited natural from the Roman period but with no finds related to the phase this is difficult to determine. This deposit was first encountered at 2.5m BGL.

Phase 3 – This is a broad phase that relates to general horticultural activity within the area, made of three distinct contexts that could range from the early medieval period to the 18-19th century. Due to lack of dating evidence this can't be broken into more accurate phases. It is distinguished by dark silty clays and clayey silt, with fewer inclusions than the deposits above and far less ceramic building material (CBM). This sequence was encountered at 0.8m BGL.

Phase 4 – This phase relates to 19th and 20th century make-up for modern ground surface. It consisted of three distinct contexts, consisting mostly of silts with a high frequency of CBM and mortar, capped by a layer of tarmac roughly 0.1m deep that was the ground level for the carpark.

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WS2

Phase 4 – As this borehole was only opened to a depth of 0.4m only the most modern phase was encountered. This consisted of the modern tarmac of the current carpark on top of concrete that surrounded a ceramic waste pipe for the adjacent building, this was repaired and backfilled.

WS3

Phase 1 – This consisted of gravelly clays that transitioned to a clean clay, and was formed of three distinct contexts. These relate to natural glacial deposits and were encountered at 3.4m BGL.

Phase 2 – This phase consists of band of alluvial sand laid over heavily mottled orange, grey and brown clay. It has been interpreted as possibly being related to terracing from the Roman period with possibility of the clay being re-deposited natural. It could also be heavily weathered natural causing the mottling effect. As no finds were recovered this is difficult to distinguish. This phase was first encountered at 3.4m BGL.

Phase 3 – This broad phase consists of three distinct contexts, and has been related to general horticultural activity from the early medieval period through to the 18th – 19th century. As no datable evidence was recovered, accurately splitting this phase into medieval and post medieval is not possible. This phase is distinguished by dark clayey silts and sandy silts, that are moister than other deposits. They also contain far fewer inclusions than the deposits above, distinctly far less frequent CMB and mortar. This phase was encountered at 0.6m BGL.

Phase 4 – This phase is 19th and 20th century make-up of rubbly deposits for modern ground surface. It consists of three distinct contexts: two layers of sandy rubbly deposits with a high frequency of CBM and mortar, overlaid by tarmac making the current carpark surface roughly 50mm deep.

WS5

Phase 1 – This phase consists of firm orangey brown clay that becomes more reddish deeper with a gradual interface. This was interpreted as natural glacial deposits. It was encountered at 3.5m BGL.

Phase 2 - This phase consists of four distinct contexts, one band of sandy silt interpreted as an interface layer, with two layers of sand below that relate to alluvial deposits. These all seal in a heavily mottled orange, brown and grey clay. It has been interpreted as possibly re-deposited natural related to Roman terracing. It could also be heavily weathered natural clays. It was encountered at 2.2m BGL.

Phase 3 – This phase contains three distinct contexts that have been broadly related to general horticultural activity in the area from the early medieval period to the 18th – 19th century. Due to the interface context (506) to the alluvial sands below this could possibly show evidence of ploughing. It is distinguished from the other phases by the deposits being darker silts and clays with less inclusions. This was the only window sample that had datable evidence from context 504, that seems to be a small sherd of reddish unglazed medieval pottery, but could be residual and therefore

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does not accurately date the deposit. The phase was encountered at 0.6m BGL.

Phase 4 – This phase has three distinct contexts, a layer of tarmac making up the current carpark surface on top of concrete roughly 0.25m deep. This seals a make-up layer of sandy silt with very frequent CBM and mortar. There seems to be an interface and grading of these inclusions into the context below 503 within phase 3 that may relate to make-up deposits.

CONCLUSIONS

No significant archaeological deposits were encountered within the boreholes. The most interesting feature is the possible Roman terracing, although excavations within the area have not found this, but a possible Roman cobble road has been encountered in excavations along Bootham in multiple excavations at between 1.5m to 2m BGL. However, no excavations in close proximity have gone deep enough to encounter the possible terracing, therefore from this investigation with no datable evidence it is difficult to distinguish between natural and re-deposited natural. The other phases are consistent with excavations within the area in that they have a distinct similarity to deposits found in an evaluation by YAT in 2017 (G. Millward, 2017).

Many thanks to the client and groundwork contractor staff onsite for their co-operation and assistance during these works.

REFERENCES

Millward, G., 2017. *Archaeological Investigation on Land to the Rear of 27 Bootham, York*. York Archaeological Trust, 2017/54.

Context Number	Phase	Description
WS1		
100	4	Tarmac
101	4	Friable, dark grey, sandy silt. Frequent: CBM flecks to large fragments, mortar flecks, charcoal/ash. Moderate: small stones and pebbles.
102	4	Friable, greyish brown, clayey silt. Frequent: CBM flecks to large fragments, mortar flecks, charcoal/ash. Moderate: small stones and pebbles.
103	3	Friable, greyish brown, gritty silty clay. Frequent: mortar flecks. Moderate: CBM flecks to small fragments, charcoal flecks. Occasional: small stones.
104	3	Friable to firm, brown with small mottles of yellow, sandy clayey silt. Moderate: charcoal and mortar flecks. Occasional: CBM flecks and small stones.
105	3	Soft, dark brownish grey, slightly clayey gritty silt. Occasional: small stones and mortar flecks.
106	2	Soft, yellowish orange, sand.
107	2	Firm, mottled grey/orange, sandy clay. Occasional: small stones.

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Context Number	Phase	Description
108	1	Firm, slightly greyish brownish yellow sandy clay. Occasional: small pebbles.
109	1	Firm, mottled grey/brown, clay. Occasional: small stones and pebbles.
WS2		
200	4	Tarmac
201	4	Concrete
202	4	Ceramic pipe, 6' interior diameter.
WS3		
300	4	Tarmac
301	4	Friable, dark grey, silty rubble. Frequent: CBM flecks to large fragments, mortar flecks, small stones. Moderate: charcoal flecks.
302	4	Loose, orangy yellow, silty sand. Moderate CBM flecks to medium fragments. Occasional: small stones.
303	3	Friable, dark brownish grey, clayey silt. Frequent: CBM flecks to small fragments, mortar flecks. Moderate: charcoal flecks, small stones.
304	3	Friable, dark greyish brown, clayey silt. Occasional: mortar, charcoal and CBM flecks.
305	3	Friable, greyish yellowish dark brown, sandy silt. Occasional: mortar and charcoal flecks.
306	2	Friable to soft, orangy yellow, sand grades to grey at interface.
307	2	Firm, mottled orange/grey/brown, clay. Occasional: small stones, charcoal flecks.
308	1	Firm, orangy greyish brown, gravelly clay. Frequent: sandstone flecks to small fragments.
309	1	Firm, orangy brown, slightly sandy clay. Occasional: small pebbles.
310	1	Firm, orangy dark brown, slightly sandy clay. Occasional: small pebbles.
WS5		
500	4	Tarmac
501	4	Concrete
502	4	Friable, light greyish brown, sandy silt. Frequent: CBM fleck to medium fragments, mortar flecks. Moderate: small stones and pebbles. Occasional: slate flecks to small fragments.
503	3	Friable to firm, dark greyish brown, silty clay. Frequent: CBM flecks to medium fragments, mortar flecks. Moderate: small pebbles.
504	3	Friable, brownish dark grey, clayey silt. Occasional: CBM flecks to small fragments, mortar and charcoal flecks.
505	3	Soft, dark grey, slightly sandy silt. Moderate: CBM flecks. Occasional: small stones and charcoal flecks.
506	2	Soft, yellowish grey, silt/sand. Occasional: small pebbles and stones, charcoal flecks
507	2	Soft, mottled yellow/grey, sand.
508	2	Soft, orangy yellow, sand.
509	2	Firm, mottled orange/brown/grey, clay. Occasional: small stones.

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Context Number	Phase	Description
510	1	Firm, orangy brown, slightly sandy clay.
511	1	Firm, reddish orange, slightly sandy clay.

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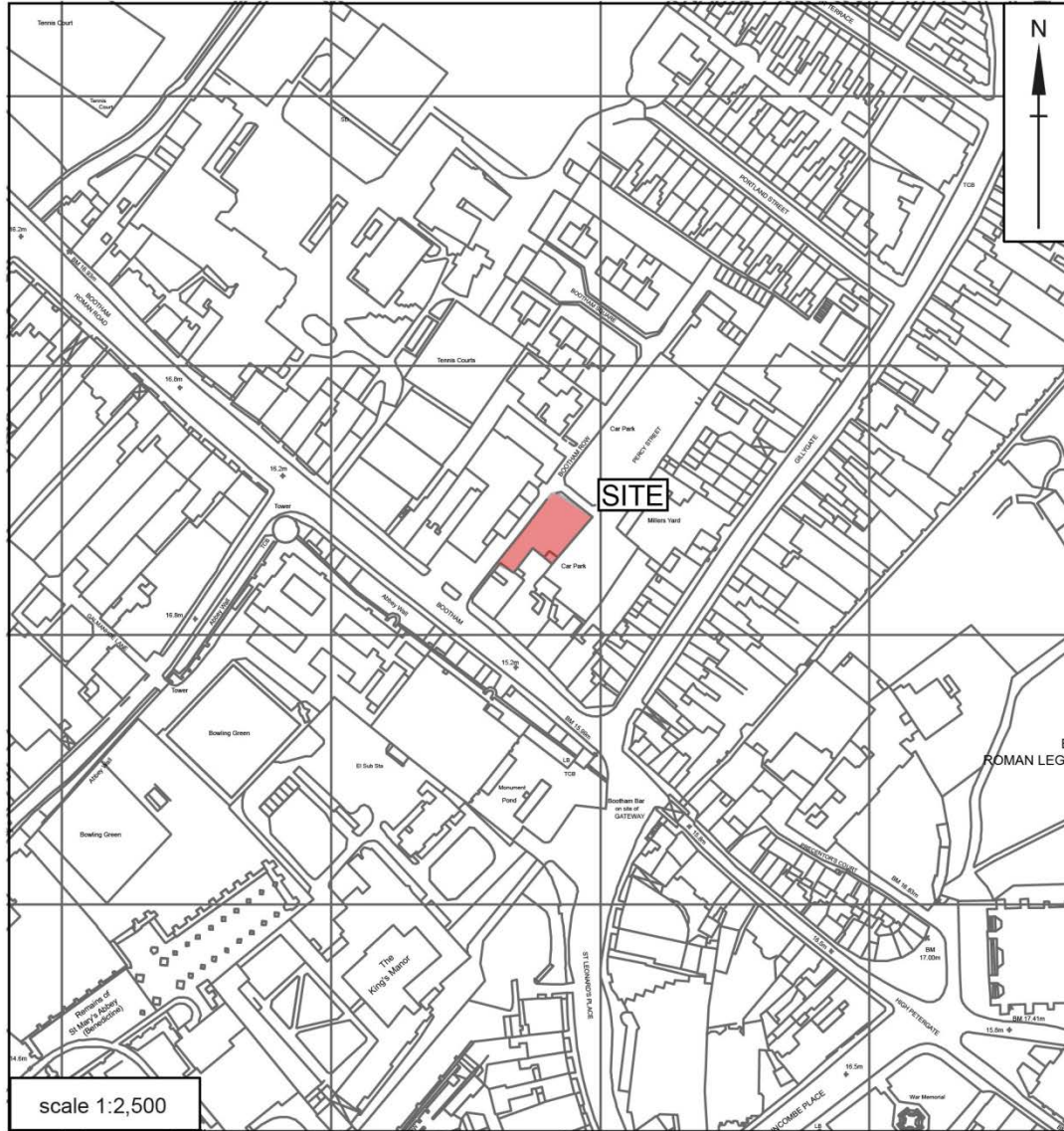


Figure 1 Site Location

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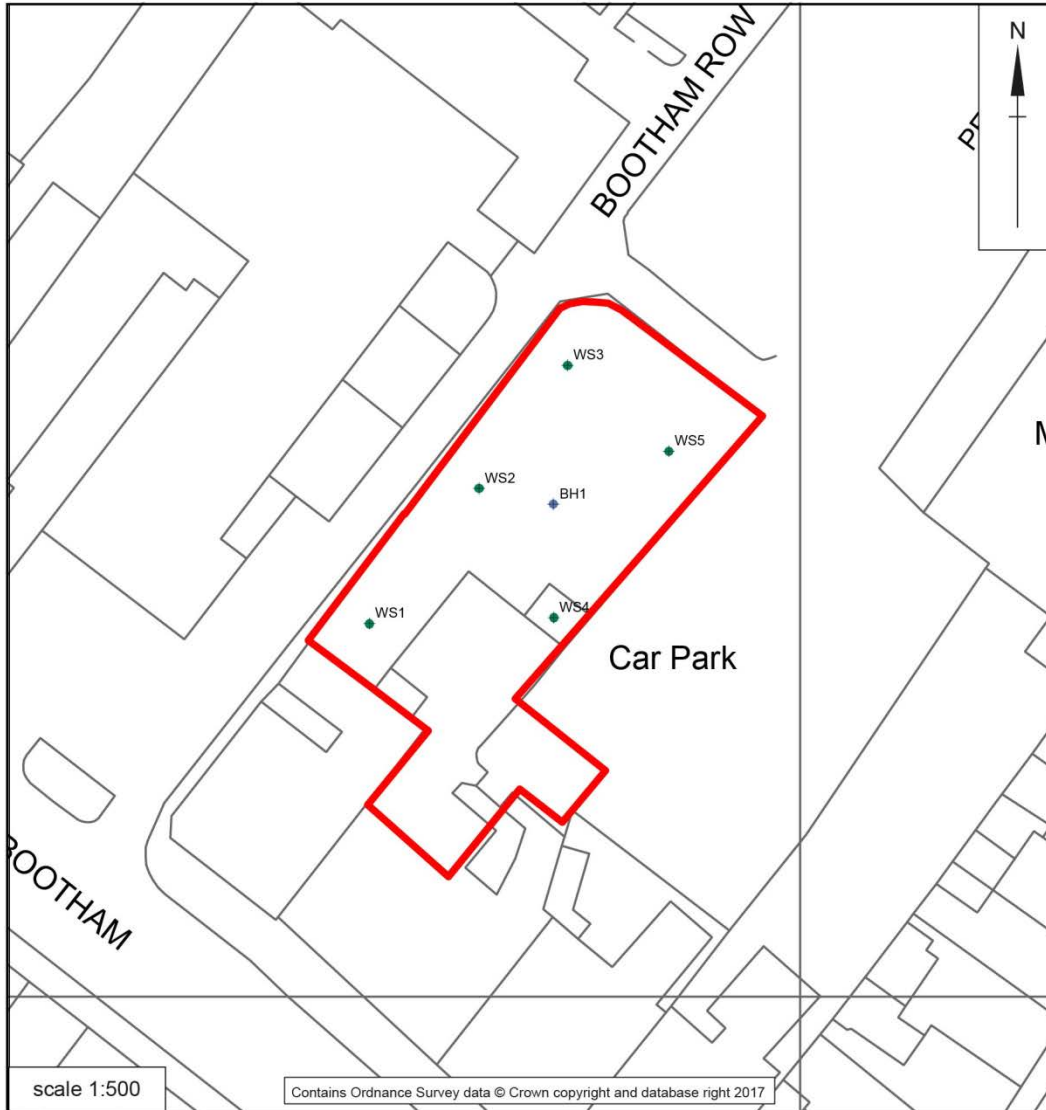


Figure 2 Location of works

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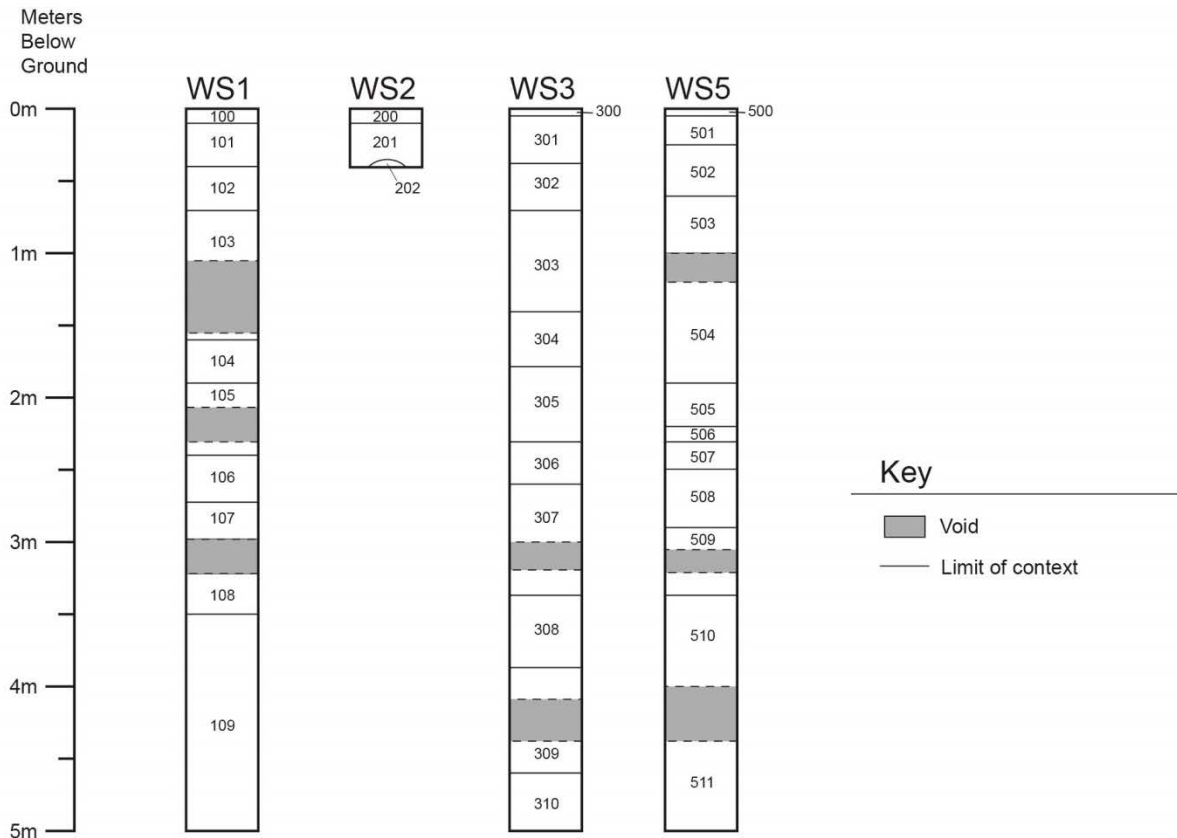


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scale 1:50

Figure 3 Borehole profiles

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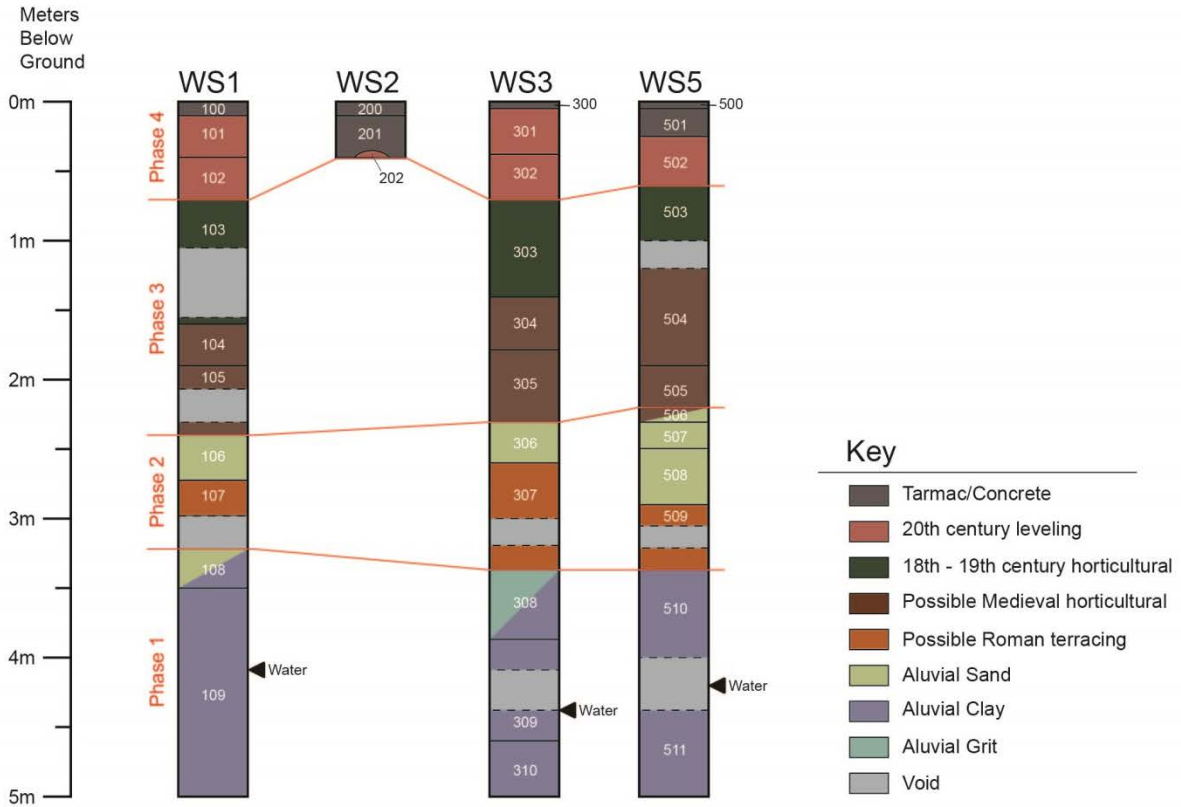


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scale 1:50

Figure 4 Borehole deposit and phase profiles

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Plate 1 Area pre-excitation, looking south-west



Plate 2 Window sample 3, opening

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Plate 3 Window sample 3, hand dug soil



Plate 4 Window sample 3, 1m – 1.5m

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Plate 5 Window sample 3, 1.5m – 2m



Plate 3 Window sample 3, 2m – 2.5m

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Plate 3 Window sample 3, 2.5m – 3m



Plate 3 Window sample 3, 3m – 3.5m

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Plate 3 Window sample 3, 3.5m - 4m



Plate 3 Window sample 3, 4m – 4.5m

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Plate 3 Window sample 3, 4.5m – 5m

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