



JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

**AT**

**HINKSEY HEIGHTS NATURE PARK,**

**SOUTH HINKSEY, OXFORDSHIRE**

**NGR SP 50177 04498**

**NOVEMBER 2019**

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**OASIS No:**                                johnmoor1-372458  
**Site Code:**                                 SHHH19  
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Heritage Services with ID number 4199



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## **SUMMARY**

*John Moore Heritage Services carried out an archaeological watching brief at Hinksey Heights Nature Park, Oxfordshire (NGR SP 50177 04498). No archaeological deposits or features were encountered.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)**

The development site is located on land to the north-east of Hinksey Heights Golf Club and to the south-west of the A34 Southern Bypass Road. The south-east corner of the site is approximately 0.7km to north-west of the village of South Hinksey. One pond was located in the north of the site (SP 50110 04625) and one in the south (SP 50336 04403).

The site lies at approximately 63m to 65 aOD and the underlying geology is Oxford Clay Formation and West Walton Formation (undifferentiated). No superficial deposits are recorded. (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>).

### **1.2 Archaeological Background**

The area has potential for prehistoric and Romano-British activity. A Bronze Age ring ditch is situated c. 210m to the north of the site (HER 12587: SP 50000, 04900). Archaeological evidence indicative of an Iron Age to Romano-British settlement (HER 15935, 19536: SP 49040, 04240; SP 49900, 04000) was recorded during an evaluation (EOX468: SP 49637, 03959) centred c. 625m to the south-west of the site.

Archaeological evidence of medieval occupation is concentrated toward South Hinksey south-east of the site and include finds of medieval pottery, and the site of a medieval cruck framed building and medieval pits at South Hinksey (HER 6489, 9353, 16798: SP 50963, 04012; SP 50899, 04061; SP 51000, 04000).

Extant ridge and furrow earthworks suggest that the site lay within an open field system during the medieval period. The open field system within the study area had been enclosed by the 19<sup>th</sup> century and historic OS mapping illustrates that the site remained in agricultural use throughout the post-medieval period (OA 2019).

## **2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION**

The aims of the investigation as laid out in the Written Scheme of Investigation were as follows:

- To make a record of any significant archaeological remains revealed during the course of any operations that may disturb or destroy archaeological remains.

In particular:

- To record any evidence relating to the Prehistoric and Romano-British periods.

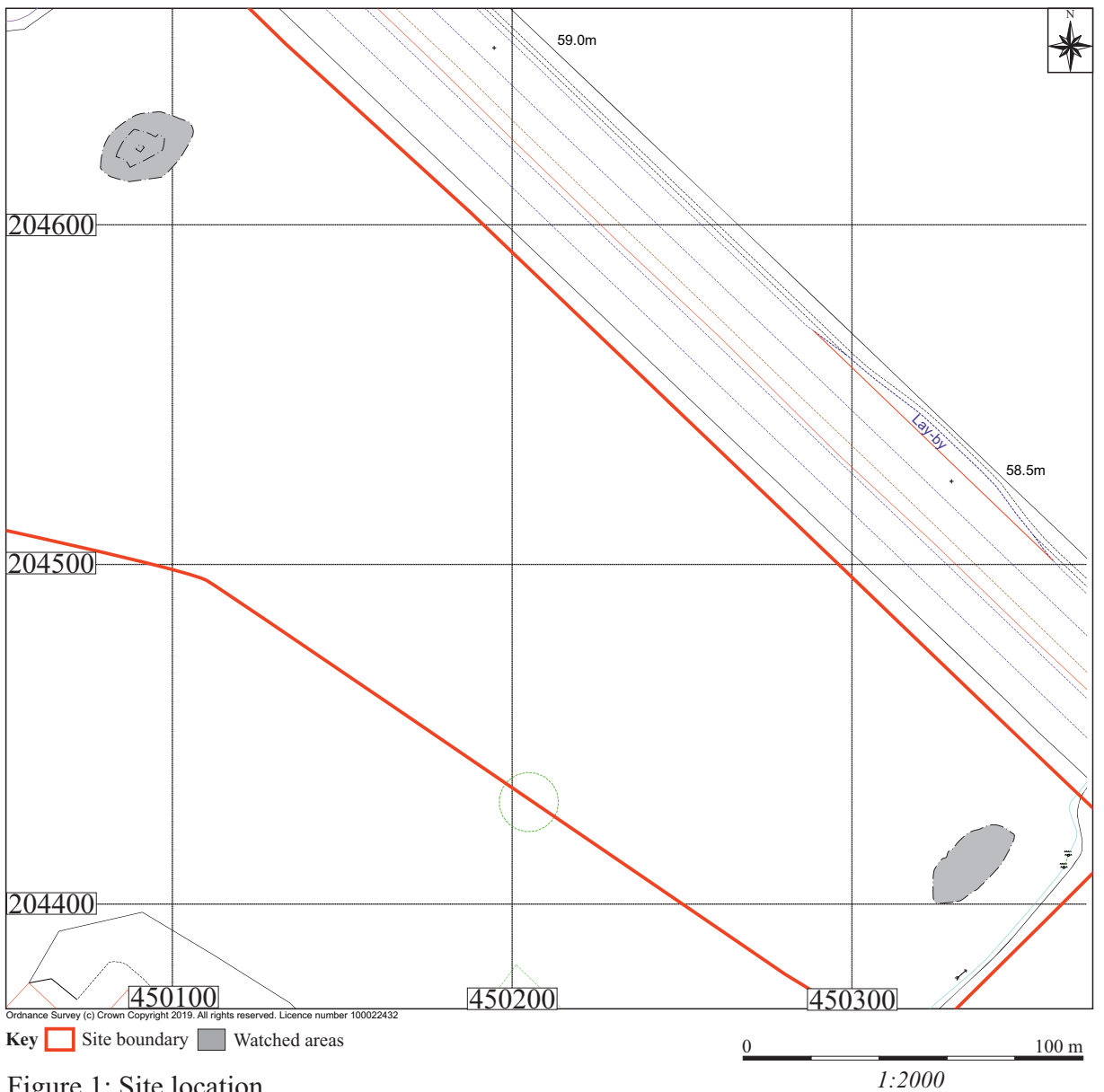
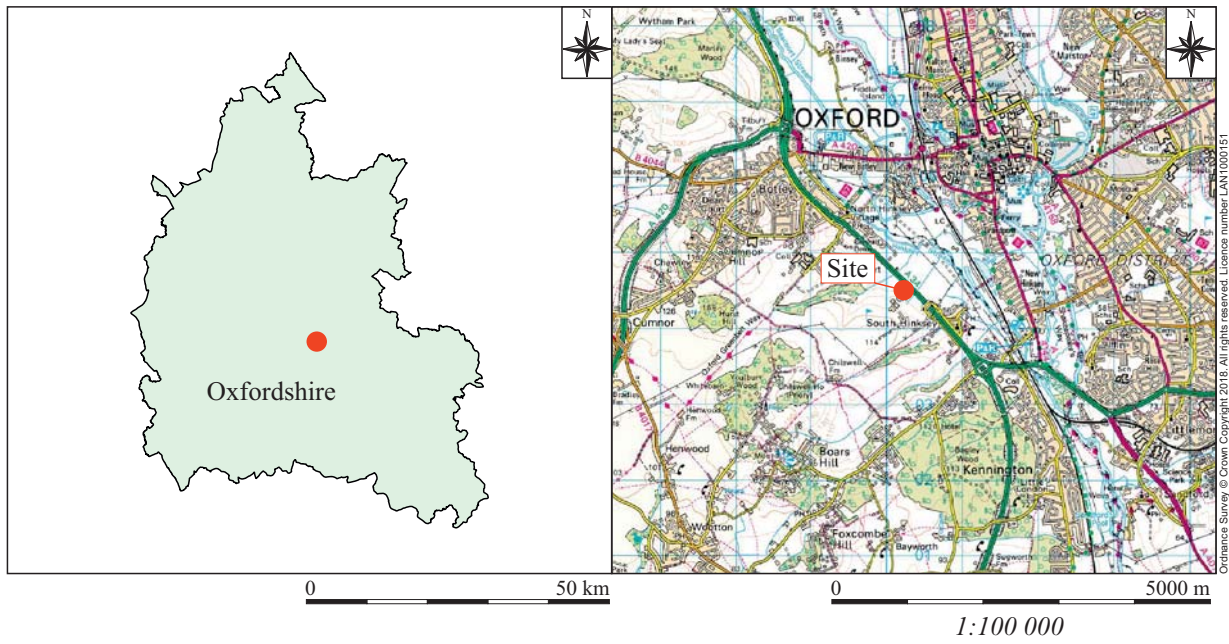


Figure 1: Site location

### 3 STRATEGY

#### 3.1 Research Design

John Moore Heritage Services carried out the work to a Written Scheme of Investigation agreed with Oxfordshire County Archaeological Services (OCAS).

The recording was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2014).

#### 3.2 Methodology

Standard John Moore Heritage Services techniques were employed throughout, involving the completion of a written record for each deposit encountered. A photographic record was also produced.

The topsoil was removed from both ponds. Pond 1 was then reduced down to natural in the central portion, with the sides being graded up to allow for newt access. A small *c.*2m<sup>2</sup> area of pond 1 was not stripped, this was to contain the water, which filled a test pit in that location, and which would have flooded the area had it been removed. After the topsoil strip for Pond 2 a sondage was excavated at the deepest part of the pond, to the maximum 1.5m depth. This showed entirely colluvial deposits, and it was decided to reduce the central portion to the top of this deposit, which would form the shallowest portion of the pond, with the two deeper areas and the graded up sides to be excavated without archaeological supervision.

The resultant spoil from the works was visually scanned, especially for finds relating to the prehistoric and Romano-British periods

### 4 RESULTS (Figure 2, Plates 1 & 2)

All deposits and features were assigned individual context numbers. Context numbers without brackets indicate features i.e. pit cuts, numbers in ( ) show feature fills or deposits of material, while numbers in bold indicate structural features.

The deepest deposit encountered was (4), a compact, light yellow grey clay, with occasional moderately sized, sub rounded stone inclusions. The natural (4) was only encountered within Pond 1. Above, and visible as patches within (4), was a colluvial deposit (3). This was a loose, mid-to-light brown yellow, silty sand, over 0.75m thick in Pond 2, and 0.2m thick within pond 1. Deposit (3) contained moderate amounts of sub-rounded stone inclusions. Above (3) was subsoil (2), this was a friable-to-compact, mid-to-light yellow brown silty clay, 0.28m thick, with occasional sub-angular flint inclusions. Above (2) was the topsoil (1), this was very waterlogged, soft, mid-to-dark grey brown, clay silt, 0.22m thick, with occasional to moderate amounts of small sub angular stone inclusions.

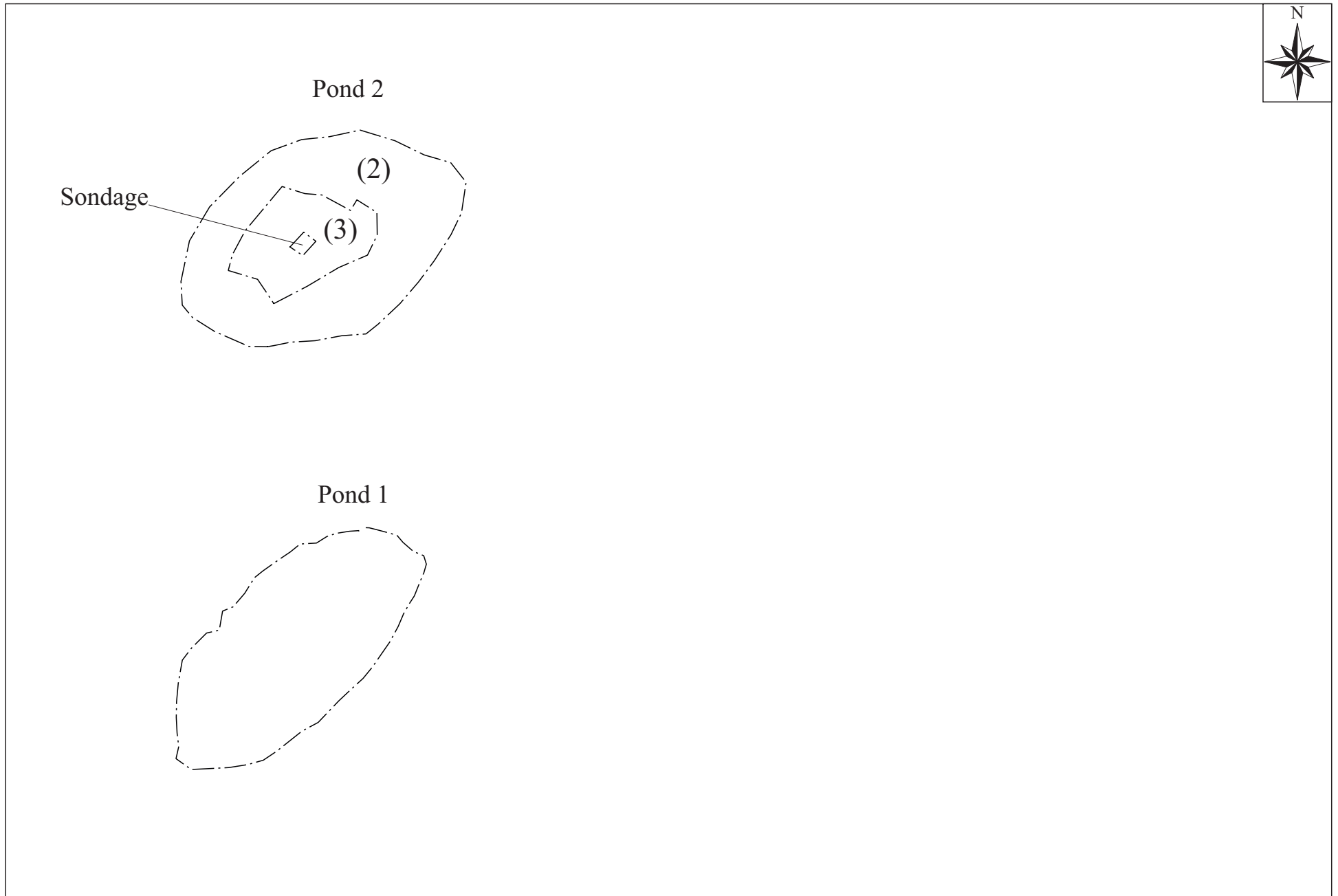


Figure 2: Plans of individual ponds



Plate 1: Pond 1 looking south



Plate 2: Pond 2 looking northeast

Reliability of Results

The monitored work was undertaken in wet conditions with excellent cooperation from site staff, ensuring that the archaeological investigation could be undertaken without impediment.



## **5 DISCUSSION**

No archaeological finds, features or deposits were observed during works undertaken at Hinksey Heights. The natural was not reached within Pond 2, meaning that it is possible that archaeology does exist within the footprint of it, however the central sondage through colluvial material to the deepest formation level of the pond showed that archaeology, if present, would be at a greater depth than that disturbed by the pond.

## **6 BIBLIOGRAPHY**

British Geological Survey <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2014 *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*

**APPENDIX 1: OASIS REPORT FORM****OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England****OASIS ID: johnmoor1-372458****Project details**

Project name	Hinksey Heights Nature Park
Short description of the project	John Moore Heritage Services carried out an archaeological watching brief at Hinksey Heights Nature Park, Oxfordshire (NGR SP 50177 04498). No Archaeological deposits or features were encountered.
Project dates	Start: 28-10-2019 End: 30-10-2019
Previous/future work	Yes / No
Any associated project reference codes	SHHH 19 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	4199 - Contracting Unit No.
Type of project	Recording project
Current Land use	Grassland Heathland 2 - Undisturbed Grassland
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Environmental (unspecified schedule)

**Project location**

Country	England
Site location	OXFORDSHIRE VALE OF WHITE HORSE SOUTH HINKSEY Hinksey Heights Nature Park
Postcode	OX1 5AB
Study area	0 Square metres
Site coordinates	SP 50177 04498 51.736485498284 -1.273279906951 51 44 11 N 001 16 23 W Point

**Project creators**

Name of Organisation	John Moore Heritage Services
Project brief originator	Newt Conservation Partnership
Project design originator	John Moore
Project director/manager	John Moore
Project supervisor	Natasha Djukic
Project supervisor	Steffan Klemenic

**Project archives**

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Physical Archive Exists?	No physical archive
Digital Archive recipient	John Moore Heritage Services
Digital Archive ID	4199
Digital Contents	Stratigraphic,Survey,other
Digital Media available	'GIS','Images raster / digital photography','Images vector','Survey','Text'
Paper Archive recipient	'No paper archive'
Paper Contents	None

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Entered by	Steffan Klemenic (admin@jmheritageservices.co.uk)
Entered on	4 November 2019

## Appendix 2. Primary Records



Grid Squares //	Area/Trench <del>South Pond</del>	Context Type Layers	Site Code SHHH19	Context (1)
--------------------	--------------------------------------	------------------------	---------------------	----------------

Add. Sheets //	Plan Nos.	Section Nos.	Matrix Location
-------------------	-----------	--------------	-----------------

Photographs Slide B&W  
106-6336 → 7 &

**DEPOSIT**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1 Compaction	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2 Colour
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3 Composition	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4 Inclusions
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5 Thickness	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 6 Extent
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 7 Comments	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 8 Method and Conditions	

**Description**

1) friable 2) Mid-dark greyish brown  
 3) clayey silt - pretty waterlogged 4) occasional moderate amount of small sub-angular stone inclusions 5) 0.22m. 6) L:→ N:→  
 7) Covered by grass. ↳ ACROSS SITE  
 8) Excavated by bladed machine bucket, under archaeological supervision, during element conditions

**CUT**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1 Shape in plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2 Corners
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3 Dimensions/Depth	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5 Sides
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4 Break of slope-top	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 7 Base
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 6 Break of slope-base	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 8 Orientation	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 9 Inclination of axis	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 11 Fill Nos.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 10 Truncation	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 12 Sketch profile	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 13 Other comments	

**Stratigraphic matrix**

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
This context is		(1)		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(2)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Initials & Date**  
28-10-19  
ND

**Checked by & Date**

Interpretation: Internal  External  Structural  Other (specify)

**Discussion**  
topsoil

**Context same as:**  **Finds**

Levels on plan <input type="checkbox"/> sheet	none	pot	bone	glass	metal	CBM	wood	leather	burntmat.
Highest	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lowest	Other finds (specify)								

Environmental Samples Nos.  Finds sample (BM) Nos.

Small finds Nos. Finds sieving: on-site  off-site  metal detecting: in situ  on-site  off-site

Checked Interpretation

Provisional Period  Group  Initials & Date

Grid Squares	Area/Trench <del>South Point</del>	Context Type Layers	Site Code SHHH19	Context (2)
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Add. Sheets	Plan Nos.	Section Nos.	Matrix Location
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Photographs Slide B&W

DEPOSIT

1 Compaction	2 Colour
3 Composition	4 Inclusions
5 Thickness	6 Extent
7 Comments	
8 Method and Conditions	

Description 1) friable - compact 2) Mid-light yellowish brown 3) silty clay 4) occasional sub-angular flint inclusions. 5) 0-28m

a) L → W → ACROSS SITE

7)

8) excavated by blowed bucket, under archaeologist supervision, during drier conditions

CUT

1 Shape in plan	2 Corners
3 Dimensions/Depth	5 Sides
4 Break of slope-top	7 Base
6 Break of slope-base	
8 Orientation	
9 Inclination of axis	11 Fill Nos.
10 Truncation	
12 Sketch profile	
13 Other comments	

Stratigraphic matrix

		(1)		
This context is		(2)		

Initials & Date  
28-10-19.  
ND

Checked by & Date

Interpretation: Internal External Structural Other (specify)

Discussion

Subsoil

Context same as:

Levels on plan	sheet	none	pot	bone	glass	metal	CBM	wood	leather	burntmat.
Highest		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lowest		Other finds (specify)								

Environmental Samples Nos.

Finds sample (BM) Nos.

Small finds Nos.

Finds sieving: on-site  off-site  metal detecting: in situ  on-site  off-site

Checked Interpretation

Provisional Period

Group

Initials & Date





Grid Squares //	Area/Trench <del>S117</del> Pond	Context Type Layer	Site Code S1111119	Context (4)
--------------------	-------------------------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------	----------------

Add. Sheets //	Plan Nos.	Section Nos.	Matrix Location →
-------------------	-----------	--------------	----------------------

Photographs Slide B&W	DEPOSIT
Description 1) compact 2) light yellowish grey 3) clay 4) acc-moderate sub-rounded stone inclusions. 5) 6) L:→ W:→	1 Compaction 2 Colour 3 Composition 4 Inclusions 5 Thickness 6 Extent 7 Comments 8 Method and Conditions

7) 8) Excavated by toothless bucket, supervised by archaeologist during adverse conditions.	CUT
	1 Shape in plan 2 Corners 3 Dimensions/Depth 5 Sides 4 Break of slope-top 7 Base 6 Break of slope-base 8 Orientation 9 Inclination of axis 11 Fill Nos. 10 Truncation 12 Sketch profile 13 Other comments

Stratigraphic matrix	Initials & Date
[ ] [ ] (3) [ ] [ ] This context is (4) [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]	28-10-19 ND
	Checked by & Date

Interpretation: Internal (External) Structural Other (specify)

Discussion  
NATURAL

Context same as:	Finds
Levels on plan [ ] sheet Highest Lowest	none pot bone glass metal CBM wood leather burntmat. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Other finds (specify)

Environmental Samples Nos. Finds sample (BM) Nos.

Small finds Nos. Finds sieving: on-site [ ] off-site [ ] metal detecting: in situ [ ] on-site [ ] off-site [ ]

Checked Interpretation

Provisional Period Group Initials & Date