



Land off Down Hatherley Lane, Twigworth, Gloucestershire

Archaeological Evaluation Report

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Land off Down Hatherley Lane, Twigworth, Gloucestershire

Archaeological Evaluation Report

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Summary

From the 1st April to 2nd April 2019 Oxford Archaeology South (OA) carried out a trial trench evaluation on behalf of Pegasus Group on the site of proposed development. The site was located to the north of the village of Twigworth, and is bounded by Down Hatherley Lane to the north, the A38 to the west, residential properties to the east and Norton Garden Centre to the south. The site is centered on NGR SO 85263 22608.

In total, six evaluation trenches were laid out to target potential geophysical anomalies. The investigation uncovered no archaeological features.

Acknowledgements

Oxford Archaeology would like to thank Pegasus Group for commissioning this project. Thanks are also extended to Charles Parry of Gloucestershire County Council and Chris Morley of Pegasus Group for their advice and guidance.

The project was managed for Oxford Archaeology by Gerry Thacker. The fieldwork was directed by Ashley Strutt, who was supported by Diana Chard and Elizabeth Connelly. Survey and digitizing was carried out by Ashley Strutt, Matt Bradley and Magdalena Wachnik.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope of work

- 1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by Pegasus Group to undertake a trial trench evaluation at a site located to the south of Down Hatherley Lane, Twigworth, Gloucestershire.
- 1.1.2 The work was undertaken inform the Planning Authority in advance of a submission of a Planning Application. A specification for the work was agreed between by Charles Parry, the Gloucestershire County Archaeologist, and Chris Morley of Pegasus Group, and a written scheme of investigation was produced by OA detailing the Local Authority's requirements for work necessary to inform the planning process (OA 2019) This document outlines how OA implemented the specified requirements.

1.2 Location, topography and geology

- 1.2.1 The site lies to the north of the village of Twigworth, and is bounded by Down Hatherley Lane to the north, the A38 to the west, residential properties to the east and the Norton Garden Centre to the south. The site is centered on NGR SO 85263 22608 (Fig. 1).
- 1.2.2 The area of proposed development consists of a broadly rectangular plot of land currently used for arable farming.
- 1.2.3 The geology of the area is mapped as the Rugby Limestone Member comprising mudstone and limestone formed in the Jurassic period, around 191-201 million years ago. This is overlain by Cheltenham Sand and Gravel formed around 3 million years ago (BGS website).

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 Partial, ploughed-down ridge and furrow earthworks survive within the north, north-east and east of the site; there no longer appears to be any coherent association between these earthworks and any other aspects of the former historic field system. The earthworks would appear to have been more substantively eroded within the south-west and south of the site, probably the result of differential land-use and sustained modern deep-ploughing (Pegasus, forthcoming DBA).
- 1.3.2 A recent geophysical survey (Sumo 2019) revealed several parallel east-west linear anomalies within the site, interpreted as the remnants of ridge and furrow agriculture, and few discrete anomalies, considered unlikely to be of archaeological origin. No other archaeological remains are recorded within the Gloucestershire Historic Environmental Record (HER) as being located within, or within material proximity to the site (Pegasus, forthcoming DBA).
- 1.3.3 While there is presently no evidence to suggest the existence of any unknown remains within the site, Romano-British activity has been recorded more widely within the Twigworth environs. A recent phase of excavation within the village, around 1km to the south-west of the current site, revealed a Roman trackway defined by parallel ditches, a broadly contemporary field boundary ditch, and an inhuman burial.

Geophysical survey indicated a denser array of potentially late prehistoric/Roman features to the east of that site.

- 1.3.4 Further afield, around 1.4km to the south-east of the current site, investigations at Innsworth (also on Cheltenham Sand and Gravel) revealed extensive late prehistoric and Roman settlement, comprising roundhouses, trackways, enclosures, field systems, wells and waterholes. There was also evidence for late prehistoric settlement on the adjacent mudstone geology, where the Cheltenham Sand and Gravel was not present (G. Thacker pers comm).

2 EVALUATION AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

2.1.1 The project aims and objectives were as follows:

- i. To determine or confirm the general nature of any remains which may survive.
- ii. To determine or confirm the approximate extent of any surviving remains.
- iii. To determine or confirm the approximate date or date range of any remains, by means of artefactual or other evidence.
- iv. To determine the condition and state of preservation of any remains.
- v. To determine the degree of complexity of any surviving horizontal or vertical stratigraphy.
- vi. To assess the associations and implications of any remains encountered with reference to the historic landscape.
- vii. To determine the potential of the site to provide palaeoenvironmental and/or economic evidence, and the forms in which such evidence may survive.
- viii. To determine the implications of any remains with reference to economy, status utility and social activity.
- ix. To determine or confirm the likely range, quality and quantity of the artefactual evidence present.
- x. To determine or confirm the nature of the geophysical anomalies uncovered during the recent survey.

2.2 Methodology

2.2.1 The evaluation comprised six trenches, each measuring 20m x 1.5m. These were laid out as indicated in Figure 2. Trench 1, was moved 4m to the north-west due to the proximity of buried services. The trenches were located to target geophysical anomalies, and test 'blank areas'. There was a 30m exclusion zone around a category A protected tree on the northern boundary of the site.

2.2.2 The trenches were laid out using a GPS with sub 50mm accuracy, except where minor adjustments were required due to ground conditions or site obstructions. Trench locations were scanned with a Cable Avoidance Tool (CAT) prior to, and during excavation.

2.2.3 The trenches were excavated using an appropriately powerful mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket under the direct supervision of an archaeologist. Spoil was stored adjacent to, but at a safe distance from the trench edges. The trenches and the up cast spoil was scanned with a metal detector.

2.2.4 Machining was carried out in spits down to the top of undisturbed natural geology.

2.2.5 The exposed surface was sufficiently cleaned to establish the presence/absence of any archaeological remains.

2.2.6 Upon the agreement with Charles Parry, County Archaeologist for Gloucestershire County Council, the trenches were backfilled.

- 2.2.7 All deposits were issued with a unique context number, and context recording was carried out in accordance with established best practice and the OA field manual.
- 2.2.8 Digital photographs were taken of the trenches and evaluation works in general.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction and presentation of results

- 3.1.1 The results of the evaluation are presented below and the full details of all trenches, with dimensions and depths of all deposits, can be found in Appendix A.
- 3.1.2 Context numbers reflect the trench numbers unless otherwise stated e.g. layer 102 is a layer within Trench 1, while layer 301 is a layer within Trench 3.

3.2 General soils and ground conditions

- 3.2.1 The soil sequence between all trenches was fairly uniform. The natural geology manifested as a mid-orange sandy silty clay with gravel inclusions and occasional irregular patches of clay. This was sealed by a mid orange-brown silty clay subsoil, a former plough soil, which in turn was overlain by the current dark brown plough soil (Plates 1-3).
- 3.2.2 Ground conditions throughout the evaluation were generally good, and the trenches remained relatively dry, although Trenches 1, 2 and 3 became wet due the gradual influx of ground water. Archaeological features were not present in any of the trenches, but would have been easily identified against the underlying natural geology.

3.3 General distribution of archaeological deposits

- 3.3.1 No archaeological features were found to be present within the trenches.

3.4 Finds and environmental summary

- 3.4.1 No artefactual evidence or sediments suitable for environmental samples were encountered.

4 DISCUSSION

4.1 Reliability of field investigation

- 4.1.1 The evaluation was carried out in generally good conditions which would have allowed any archaeological features, had they been present to be easily noted.

4.2 Evaluation objectives and results

- 4.2.1 In summary, the aims of the evaluation were to establish the presence or absence of any archaeological features or deposits and, if present, determine their character, date range and significance. No archaeological remains were identified during the evaluation works.

4.3 Interpretation

- 4.3.1 As discussed above, the site lies in an area of known archaeological activity within the later Iron Age and Romano-British periods. The absence of archaeological features and artefacts recorded during the evaluation works indicates that this activity has left no trace, or did not continue into the proposed development area.
- 4.3.2 The geophysical anomalies are likely to have derived from two sources. The discrete anomalies probably represent fragments of iron or burnt material within the topsoil and subsoil, whilst the linear anomalies represent the partially extant plough furrows although these were not cut to the level of the natural geology.

APPENDIX A TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench 1						
General description					Orientation	N-S
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of dark brown silty topsoil and mid orange-brown silty clay subsoil overlying natural geology of mid orange sandy silty clay with gravel inclusions.					Length (m)	20
					Width (m)	1.5
					Avg. depth (m)	0.44
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
100	Layer	-	0.26	Topsoil	-	-
101	Layer	-	0.19	Subsoil	-	-
102	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 2						
General description					Orientation	N-S
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of dark brown silty topsoil and mid orange-brown silty clay subsoil overlying natural geology of silty sandy clay with gravel inclusions.					Length (m)	20
					Width (m)	1.5
					Avg. depth (m)	0.46
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
200	Layer	-	0.26	Topsoil	-	-
201	Layer	-	0.21	Subsoil	-	-
202	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 3						
General description					Orientation	NE-SW
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of dark brown silty topsoil and mid orange-brown silty clay subsoil overlying natural geology of silty sandy clay with gravel inclusions.					Length (m)	20
					Width (m)	1.5
					Avg. depth (m)	0.57
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
300	Layer	-	0.27	Topsoil	-	-
301	Layer	-	0.31	Subsoil	-	-
302	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 4						
General description					Orientation	N-S
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of dark brown silty topsoil and mid orange-brown silty clay subsoil overlying natural geology of silty sandy with gravel inclusions.					Length (m)	20
					Width (m)	1.5
					Avg. depth (m)	0.44
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
400	Layer	-	0.36	Topsoil	-	-
401	Layer	-	0.11	Subsoil	-	-
402	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 5						
General description					Orientation	NE-SW
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of dark brown silty topsoil and mid orange-brown silty clay subsoil overlying natural geology of silty sandy with gravel inclusions.					Length (m)	20
					Width (m)	1.5
					Avg. depth (m)	0.53
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
500	Layer	-	0.26	Topsoil	-	-
501	Layer	-	0.30	Subsoil	-	-
502	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 6						
General description					Orientation	N-S
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of dark brown silt topsoil and mid orange-brown silty clay subsoil overlying natural geology of silty sand with gravel inclusions.					Length (m)	20
					Width (m)	1.5
					Avg. depth (m)	0.58
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
600	Layer	-	0.28	Topsoil	-	-
601	Layer	-	0.36	Subsoil	-	-
602	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

APPENDIX B BIBLIOGRAPHY

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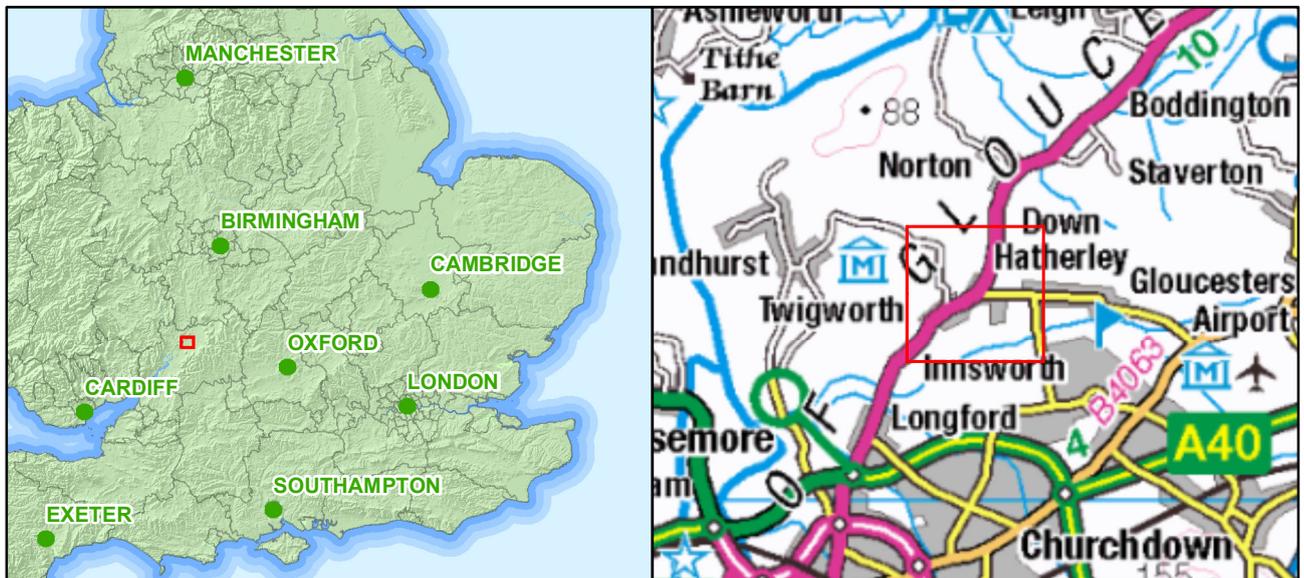
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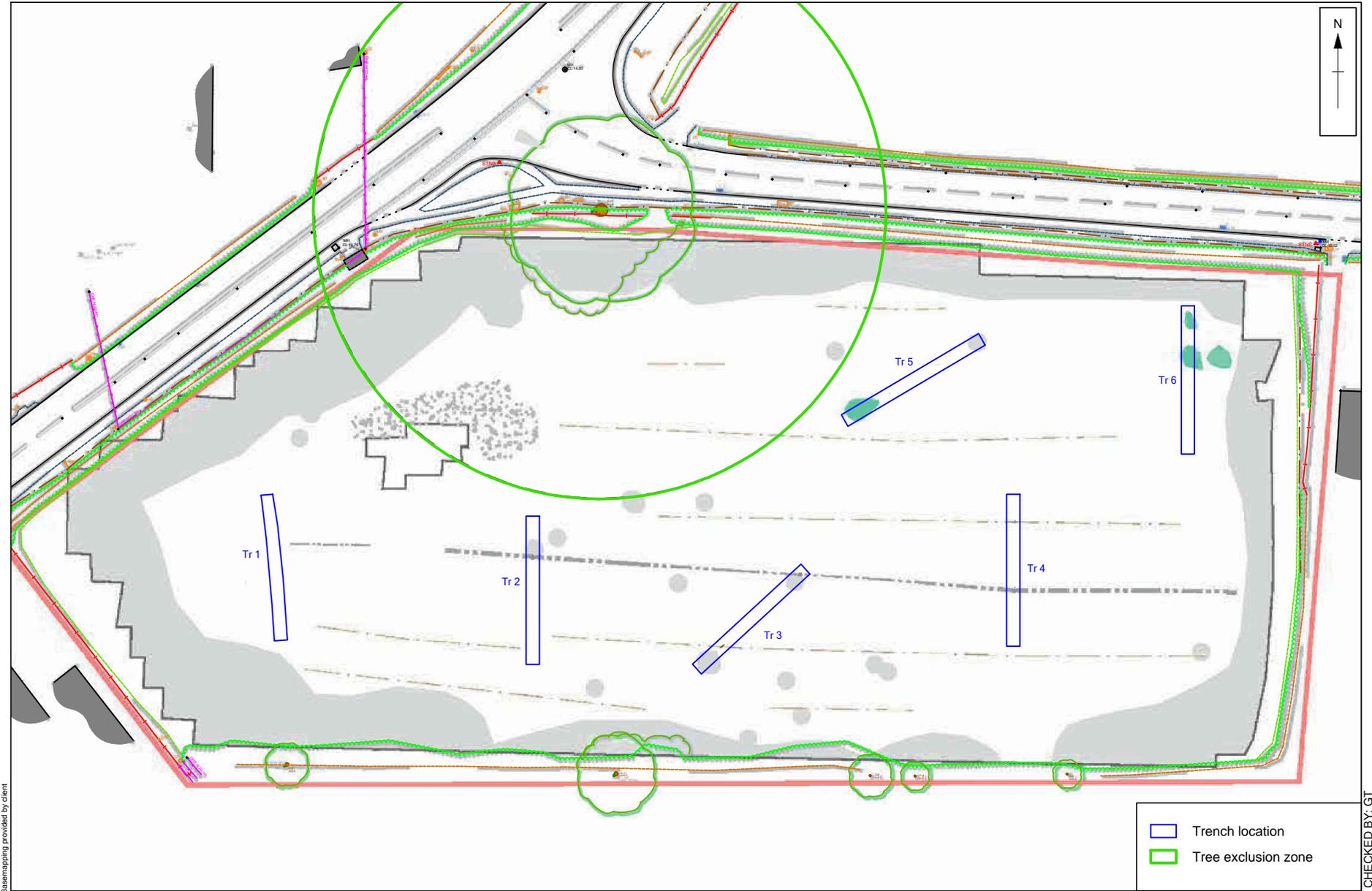
APPENDIX C**SITE SUMMARY DETAILS**

Site name:	Land of Down Hatherley Lane, Twigworth, Gloucestershire
Site code:	OATWDH19
Grid Reference	SO 85263 22608
Type:	Evaluation
Date and duration:	1st-2nd April 2019
Area of Site	11,170m ²
Location of archive:	The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Gloucester Museum in due course, under the following accession number: TBC.
Summary of Results:	During the 1st April and 2nd April 2019 Oxford Archaeology South undertook a trial trench evaluation at Land of Down Hatherley lane, Twigworth, Gloucestershire. Six trenches were opened targeting potential geophysical anomalies. No archaeological features were present.



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Figure 1: Site location



Survey Data supplied by :
Ashley Strutt, Oxford Archaeology

Figure 2: Trench locations with geophysics



Plate 1: Trench 5 as viewed from the south-east end

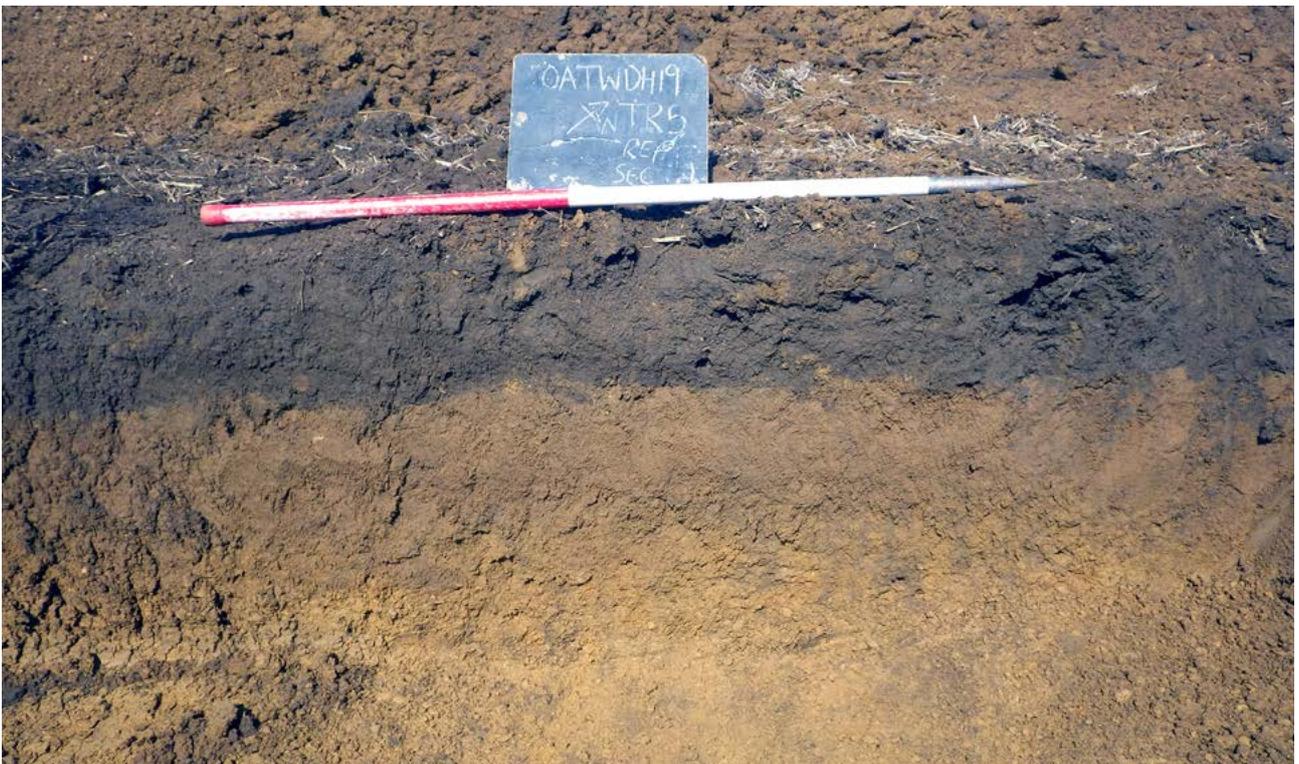


Plate 2: Representative section of Trench 5 facing south-east



Plate 3: Trench 1 as viewed from the north end



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