

Archaeological Field Evaluation

On behalf of

Ben Jones Esq

Concerning

Land at Grove Farm

Gypsy Lane

Llanfoist

Abergavenny

Monmouthshire

July 2016



Report Specification:

Compilation:

Katherine Crooks BA

Artwork:

Holly Litherland BA

Editing:

George Children MA MCI^fA

Final Edit & Approval:

Neil Shurety Dip.M G M Inst M

Report Ref:

BA1632GFLA

Grid Reference:

NGR: SO 29025 12865

OS Licence No:

100055758

Date:

July 2016

Cover: View looking north-northwest across the site

General Enquiries: E: ask@borderarchaeology.com | T: [01568 610101](tel:01568610101)

Border Archaeology Regional Offices

Bristol

Trelawney House, Surrey Street,
Bristol, BS2 8PS
T: 0117 3878 921

Leeds

No 1 Leeds, 26 Whitehall Road,
Leeds, LS12 1BE
T: 0113 3570390

Leominster (Administration)

Chapel Walk, Burgess Street,
Leominster, HR6 8DE
T: 01568 610101

London

23 Hanover Square, London, W1S 1JB
T: 020 3714 9345

Milton Keynes

Luminous House, 300 South Row,
Milton Keynes, MK9 2FR
T: 01908 933765

Newport

Merlin House, No1 Langstone Business Park,
Newport, NP18 2HJ
T: 01633 415339

Winchester

Basepoint Business Centre, Winnal Valley Road,
Winchester, SO23 0LD
T: 01962 832777

[Bristol](#) | [Leeds](#) | [Leominster](#) | [London](#) | [Milton Keynes](#) | [Newport](#) | [Winchester](#)

Contents:

1	Introduction.....	1
2	Methodology.....	2
3	Results.....	2
4	References.....	4
5	Appendix 1: Trench descriptions.....	5
5.1	Trench 1.....	5
5.2	Trench 2.....	7
5.3	Trench 3.....	9
5.4	Trench 4.....	11
5.5	Trench 5.....	13
5.6	Trench 6.....	15
5.7	Trench 7.....	17
5.8	Trench 8.....	19
5.9	Trench 9.....	22
5.10	Trench 10.....	24
5.11	Trench 11.....	26

1 Introduction

Border Archaeology Ltd (BAL) was instructed by Ben Jones Esq to undertake a programme of Archaeological Field Evaluation (AFE) in connection with Land at Grove Farm Gypsy Lane Llanfoist Abergavenny Monmouthshire. The work was carried out with respect to a Written Scheme of Investigation (BAL 2016b) compiled by BAL and submitted to and agreed verbally by the Archaeological Planning Officer Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust Ltd following discussions as to the proposed layout plan.

The site comprises two pasture fields located to the W of Grove Farm which adjoin a large pond immediately to the W of the farm (figs. 1 & 2). A further field to the N of the fishpond was excluded from the evaluation as this area has been designated as a landscape buffer zone. The N part of the site lies at some 64m AOD sloping down to 52m AOD to the S.

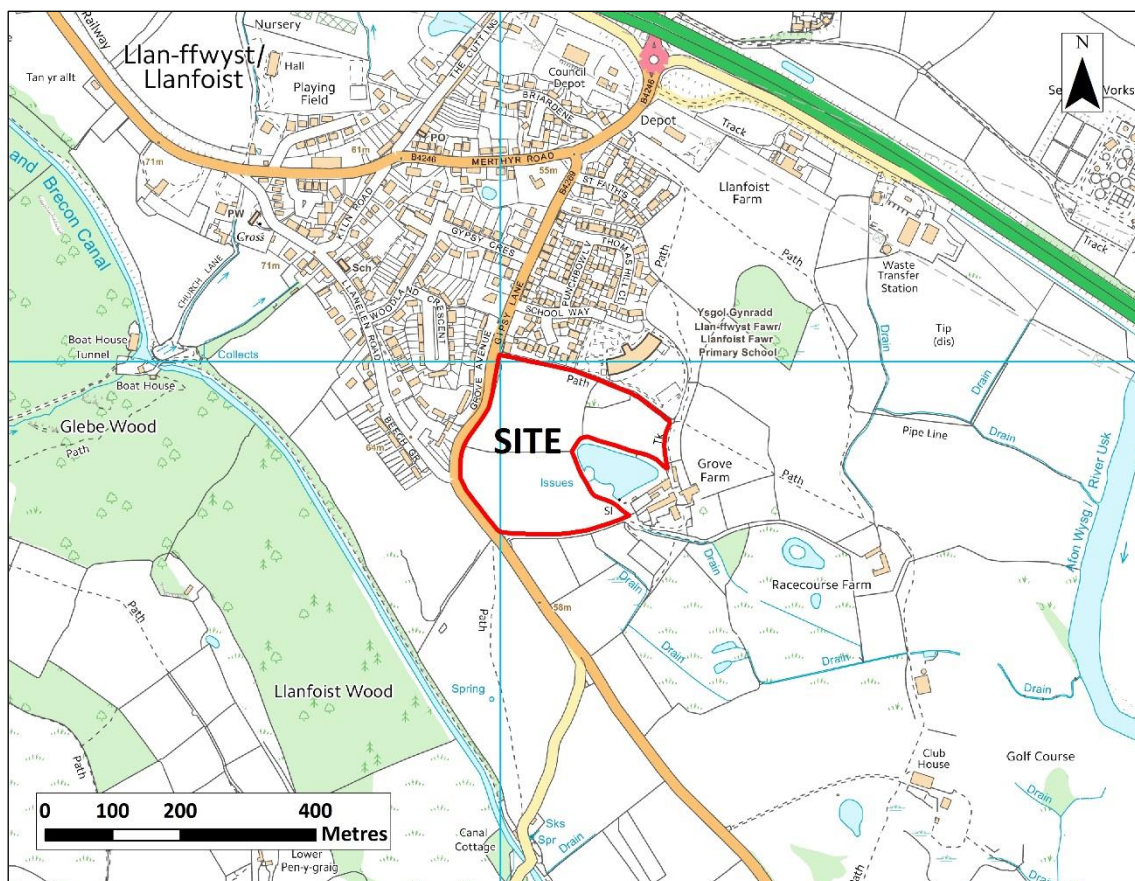


Fig. 1: Site location

Trench location was based on the results of an Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment (ADBA) previously undertaken by BAL (2016a), which identified the possibility of encountering deposits of medieval date, possibly associated with the large fishpond which lies to the E of the site and with the medieval manor house thought to have occupied the position of the existing 16th-century farmhouse.

2 Methodology

A total of 11 trenches (*fig. 2*) were opened by machine under archaeological supervision representing approximately 5% of the development area (equating to roughly 260 sq. m of trenching).

Three of the trenches measured 20m × 1.80m (Trenches 1, 2 & 8), two measured 15m × 1.80m (Trenches 5 & 9) and six measured 10m × 1.80m (Trenches 3, 4, 6, 7, 10 & 11) (*figs. 2 & 3*). Trench length varied in order to maximize overall archaeological coverage of the area and to target specific areas of potential.

Each trench was excavated by machine to natural deposits, following which a *sondage* was opened in each trench to confirm that natural geology had been attained.

3 Results

Despite the results of BA's ADBA, which suggested the possibility of encountering evidence of medieval settlement activity, no deposits or features of archaeological significance were encountered, with only topsoil, subsoil and natural deposits present (*Appendix 1*).

No indication of any features or deposits associated with water management was identified, with the exception of the marshy area around Trench 8, where a large number of land drains were revealed, at least one of which was of very recent date.

Of the three trenches (Trenches 4, 7 & 11) excavated close to the fishpond, none showed any evidence that this feature was originally more extensive; moreover, it did not appear that the land drains revealed in Trench 8 were aligned towards the pond.

Natural deposits varied across the site, with stony material present at a shallow depth in Trenches 1 (e.g. *Plate 1*), 3, 9 and 11 (e.g. *Plate 3*) and siltier deposits apparent in Trenches 4, 8, 6 and 10 (e.g. *Plate 4*). In Trenches 2, 5 and 7, the natural deposits were of mixed material (*Plates 2, 5 & 7*).

Trenches with siltier natural deposits generally appear to have lain on lower ground to the S of the site, suggesting that this material may have been deposited by natural processes.

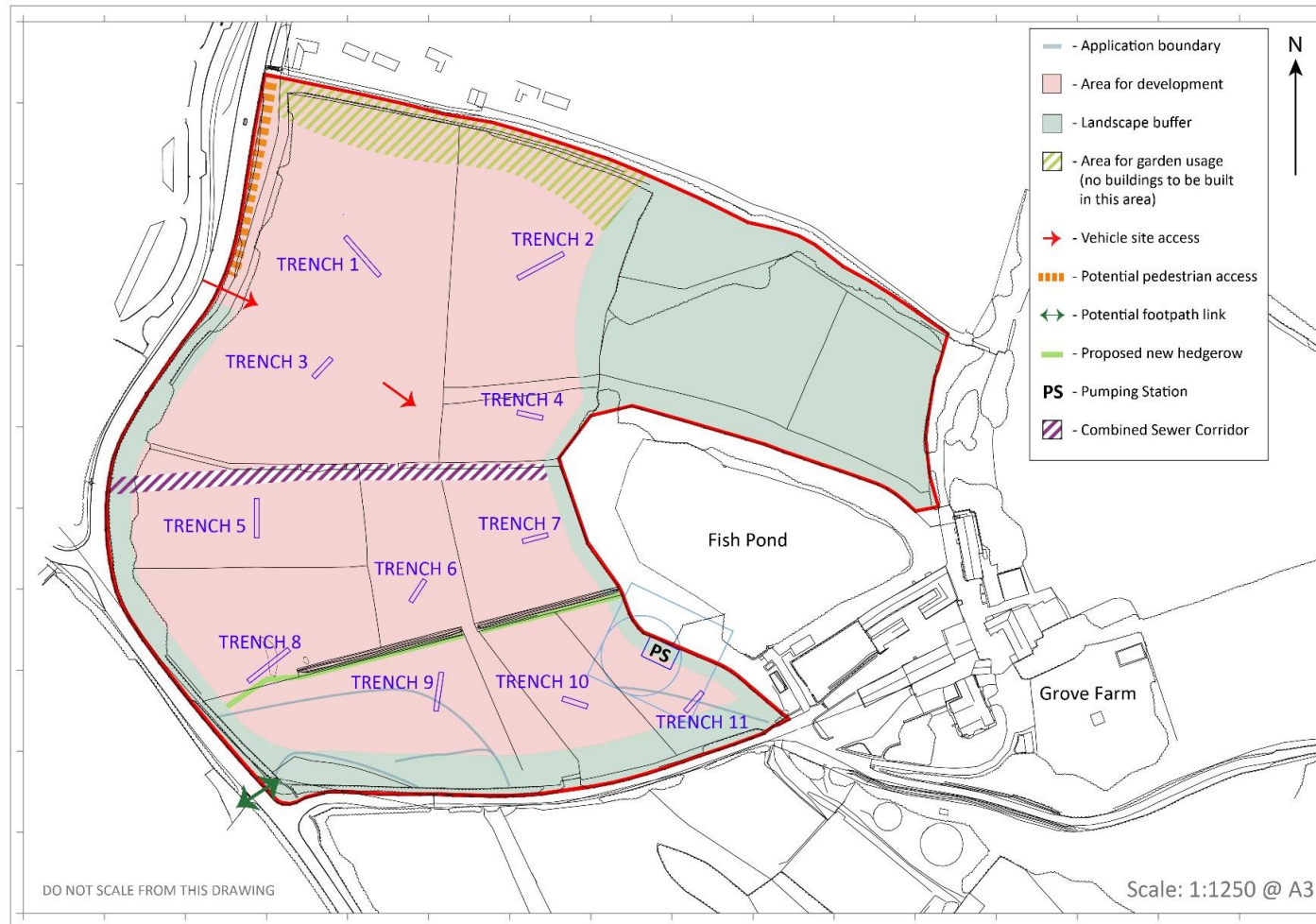


Fig. 2: Trench location plan

All pottery recovered from the topsoil was of post-medieval or later post-medieval date. The lack of evidence recovered for medieval activity suggests that this may have been concentrated in areas immediately around Grove Farm and neighbouring Racecourse Farm. The pattern of field boundaries has remained largely unchanged since at least the 1840s which may indicate that settlement patterns have also remained unaltered.

No evidence of pre-Roman and Roman date was encountered, reflecting the fact that no recorded evidence of prehistoric or Roman activity has been identified within the immediate vicinity of the site (BA 2016a).

4 References

Border Archaeology, 2016a, *Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment of Land at Grove Farm Gypsy Lane Llanfoist Abergavenny Monmouthshire*

Border Archaeology, 2016b, *Written Scheme of Investigation: Land at Grove Farm Gypsy Lane Llanfoist Abergavenny Monmouthshire*

5 Appendix 1: Trench descriptions

5.1 Trench 1

Trench 1 was aligned NW/SE and lay on the N part of the site; it measured 20m in length. No deposits of archaeological significance were observed in Trench 1. Pottery from the topsoil (100) was greatly abraded, suggesting that it may have been deposited in a plough soil. One sherd had traces of an internal glaze implying a date in the post-medieval period.

Item	Context No.	Matrix Phase	Type	Interpretation	Discussion	Finds					Comments
						Small Find	Pot	Bone	Misc.	Sample No.	
1	100		Deposit	Topsoil	Moderately compact but sandy and friable grey brown sandy silt with occasional small stones 0.20m thick trench wide. Above (101)	-	✓	-	-	-	-
2	101		Deposit	Subsoil	Hard grey brown layer largely composed of gravel, water rolled cobbles and sub-angular stones in matrix of sandy silt. Extends for 15m at the NW end of T1, not present at SE. >0.20m thick. Beneath (100) and above (102)	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	102		Deposit	Natural	Moderately compact but sandy friable material, mid-dark grey brown with orange patches, contained gravel and sub-rounded stones. Beneath (101), seen in SE 5m of trench only	-	-	-	-	-	Natural deposits



Plate 1: View SW of Trench 1

5.2 Trench 2

Trench 2 measured 20m in length and lay to the E of Trench 1. It was aligned NE/SW. No deposits of archaeological significance were present in Trench 2.

Item	Context No.	Matrix Phase	Type	Interpretation	Discussion	Finds					Comments
						Small Find	Pot	Bone	Misc.	Sample No.	
1	200		Deposit	Topsoil	Moderately compact but sandy and friable grey brown sandy silt; frequent stones; 0.16m thick trench wide. Above (201)	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	201		Deposit	Subsoil	Moderately compact reddish silt; frequent rounded stones; <0.50m thick trench wide. Beneath (200) and above (202). Deeper at SW end of trench, presumably hillwash	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	202		Deposit	Natural	Moderately compact red brown sandy silt; very frequent large stones; >0.40m deep trench wide Beneath (201).	-	-	-	-	-	Natural deposits



Plate 2: View SW of Trench 2

5.3 Trench 3

Trench 3 lay to the SE of Trench 1 and measured 10m in length. It was aligned NE/SW. No deposits of archaeological significance were observed in Trench 3.

Item	Context No.	Matrix Phase	Type	Interpretation	Discussion	Finds					Comments
						Small Find	Pot	Bone	Misc.	Sample No.	
1	300		Deposit	Topsoil	Moderately compact but sandy and friable grey brown sandy silt; frequent gravel and small stones; 0.17m thick trench wide. Above (301)	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	301		Deposit	Subsoil	Fairly compact mid brown sandy silt; frequent gravel, rounded medium sized rounded stone and sub-angular stone; 0.20m thick trench wide. Beneath (300) and above (302)	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	302		Deposit	Natural	Firm orange brown clay; sandstone inclusions; >0.05m deep trench wide.	-	-	-	-	-	Natural deposits



Plate 3: View SW of sondage into natural deposits in Trench 3

5.4 Trench 4

Trench 4 lay on the E side of the site; it was aligned WNW/ESE and measured 10m in length. Following consultation with the client, the trench was moved 2m to the N to avoid the course of the mains sewer. The alignment was also changed to avoid an equestrian jump which lay on the line of the trench. No archaeological deposits were apparent in the trench and there was no evidence, such as gleying, that the fishpond had extended as far to the W as the position of the trench.

Item	Context No.	Matrix Phase	Type	Interpretation	Discussion	Finds					Comments
						Small Find	Pot	Bone	Misc.	Sample No.	
1	400		Deposit	Topsoil	Moderately compact but sandy and friable grey brown sandy silt with occasional gravel and small stones; 0.12m thick trench wide. Above (401)	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	401		Deposit	Subsoil	Moderately compact mid brown silt clay – apparently clean; <0.30m thick trench wide. Beneath (400) and above (402).	-	-	-	-	-	No evidence for waterlogging
3	402		Deposit	Natural	Firm yellow brown sandy clay; occasional medium rounded stones; >0.80m thick trench wide. Beneath (401).	-	-	-	-	-	-



Plate 4: View NNE showing sample section in Trench 4

5.5 Trench 5

Trench 5 was aligned N/S and lay on the W part of the site. It measured 15m in length. No deposits of archaeological significance were observed in Trench 5. Pottery recovered from the topsoil included a sherd of North Devon Gravel Tempered Ware of late 17th -or 18th -century date and a fragment of Transfer Printed Ware dating to the late 18th century or later.

Item	Context No.	Matrix Phase	Type	Interpretation	Discussion	Finds					Comments
						Small Find	Pot	Bone	Misc.	Sample No.	
1	500	-	Deposit	Topsoil	Moderately compact but sandy and friable grey brown sandy silt; occasional small stones; <0.12m thick trench wide. Above (501)	-	✓	-	-	-	-
2	501	-	Deposit	Subsoil	Moderately firm though friable material, mid brown sandy silt; frequent angular and sub-angular and rounded stone; <0.35m thick trench wide. Beneath (500) and above (502)	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	502	-	Deposit	Natural	Firm pink brown coarse silty sand; frequent medium to small rounded stone; >0.25m thick trench wide. Beneath (501)	-	-	-	-	-	Natural deposits-pinker than subsoil



Plate 5: View S of Trench 5

5.6 Trench 6

Trench 6 was located centrally within the southern part of the site and measured 10m in length. The trench was aligned NE/SW. No deposits of archaeological significance were observed in Trench 6.

Item	Context No.	Matrix Phase	Type	Interpretation	Discussion	Finds					Comments
						Small Find	Pot	Bone	Misc.	Sample No.	
1	600		Deposit	Topsoil	Moderately compact but sandy and friable grey brown sandy silt; frequent small/large sandstone; 0.20m thick trench wide. Above (601)	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	601		Deposit	Subsoil	Moderately compact mid red brown silty sand; frequent sandstone; 0.30m thick trench wide. Below (600) and above (602).	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	602		Deposit	Natural	Moderately compact light red brown sandy silt; occasional very large angular stones; >0.20m deep trench wide. Beneath (601)	-	-	-	-	-	Natural deposits



Plate 6: View NW of sondage in Trench 6

5.7 Trench 7

Trench 7 was aligned WSW/ESE and measured 10m in length. The ENE end lay some 28m from the edge of the fishpond but no deposits associated with the pond were present in the trench.

Item	Context No.	Matrix Phase	Type	Interpretation	Discussion	Finds					Comments
						Small Find	Pot	Bone	Misc.	Sample No.	
1	700		Deposit	Topsoil	Moderately compact but sandy and friable loam; moderate small stones 0.20m thick trench wide. Above (701)	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	701		Deposit	Subsoil	Moderately compact mid orange brown sandy silt; moderate small rounded stones <0.50m thick trench wide. Below (700) and above (702).	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	702		Deposit	Natural	Firm/hard orange brown sandy clay; very frequent medium sized rounded stones >0.50m thick trench wide. Beneath (701).	-	-	-	-	-	Natural deposits



Plate 7: View E of Trench 7

5.8 Trench 8

Trench 8 was aligned NE/SW and lay in the SW part of the site; it measured 20m in length. The SW end of this trench was moved to the S (*fig. 2*) to avoid damage to a tree. No deposits of archaeological significance were observed in Trench 8; a number of land drains forming part of a network of underdrainage were present, presumably in order to drain the bog or spring present on this part of the site.

Item	Context No.	Matrix Phase	Type	Interpretation	Discussion	Finds					Comments
						Small Find	Pot	Bone	Misc.	Sample No.	
1	800		Deposit	Topsoil	Moderately compact brown/black (waterlogged) silty sand; occasional stones. 0.25m thick trench wide; above (803), (805), (807) and (809).	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	801		Deposit	Natural	Firm pink brown sandy silt; very frequent small to medium stones >0.20m thick trench wide.	-	-	-	-	-	No subsoil in Trench 8
3	802		Cut	Land drain	Linear; aligned NE/SW; >1.5m long x 0.20m wide. Not excavated and depth not established. Cut (801) filled by (803)	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	803		Fill	Fill of land drain	Loosely compacted medium rounded stones (>50%) in a matrix of mid pink brown silt clay. Fill of [802], below (800).	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	804		Cut	Land drain	Linear; aligned NNW/SSE; >2m long x 0.20m wide. Not excavated (inserted by present landowner). Cut (801) and filled by (805)	-	-	-	-	-	-
6	805		Fill	Fill of land drain	Small angular gravel and blue plastic pipe (inserted by present landowner). Apparently below (800) but almost certainly cut this deposit with the topsoil reinstated post-insertion. Fill of [804]	-	-	-	-	-	-
7	806		Cut	Land drain	Linear; aligned NW/SE >4.5m long x 0.20m wide. Not excavated. Cut (801), filled by (807).	-	-	-	-	-	-

Item	Context No.	Matrix Phase	Type	Interpretation	Discussion	Finds					Comments
						Small Find	Pot	Bone	Misc.	Sample No.	
8	807		Fill	Fill of land drain	Loosely compacted medium rounded stones (>50%) in a matrix of mid pink brown silt clay. Fill of [806], below (800).	-	-	-	-	-	-
9	808		Cut	Land drain	Linear; aligned NE/SW; connects to [806]; >1.20m long x 0.20m wide; not excavated. Filled by (809); cut (801)	-	-	-	-	-	-
10	809		Fill	Fill of land drain	Loosely compacted medium rounded stones (>50%) in a matrix of mid pink brown silt clay. Fill of [808], below (800).	-	-	-	-	-	-



Plate 8: Detail of stone-filled land drains [806] and [808]

5.9 Trench 9

Trench 9 measured 15m in length and was aligned NNE/SSW. It lay within the southern part of the site. No deposits of archaeological significance were observed in Trench 9.

Item	Context No.	Matrix Phase	Type	Interpretation	Discussion	Finds					Comments
						Small Find	Pot	Bone	Misc.	Sample No.	
1	900		Deposit	Topsoil	Moderately compact but sandy and friable mid to dark grey brown silt sand; frequent large stone; 0.08m thick trench wide. Above (901)	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	901		Deposit	Subsoil	Moderately compact silty sand, mid brown; orange flecks and frequent angular and sub-angular small to medium stones; 0.20m thick trench wide. Below (900) and above (902)	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	902		Deposit	Natural	Mid red brown silt sand; very frequent small to large angular, sub-angular and rounded stones; >0.24m thick trench wide. Beneath (900)	-	-	-	-	-	Natural deposits



Plate 9: View NNE of Trench 9

5.10 Trench 10

Trench 10 was located in the SE part of the site. It was aligned NW/SE and measured 10m in length. The thicker topsoil may be a result of the very recent clearance of part of the pond and re-deposition of material. Despite the silty nature of the natural deposit, there was no evidence for waterlogging or gleying to suggest that the trench lay in an area formerly occupied by the pond. No deposits of archaeological significance were observed in Trench 10.

Item	Context No.	Matrix Phase	Type	Interpretation	Discussion	Finds					Comments
						Small Find	Pot	Bone	Misc.	Sample No.	
1	1000		Deposit	Topsoil	Moderately compact but sandy and friable grey brown sandy silt; occasional small stones; 0.30m thick trench wide. Above (1001).	-	-	-	-	-	Deposit contained modern glass & whitewashed brick rubble.
2	1001		Deposit	Subsoil	Fairly compact red brown silt; moderate to frequent medium sized rounded stone and gravel; 0.20m thick trench wide. Beneath (1000) and above (1002)	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	1002		Deposit	Natural	Firm mid red brown red/yellow silt clay, paler to base of trench, very clean; >0.90m thick trench wide.	-	-	-	-	-	Natural deposits



Plate 10: View N of sondage at SE end of Trench 10

5.11 Trench 11

Trench 11 lay in the SE corner of the site; it was aligned NE/SW and was 10m in length. No archaeological deposits were apparent in the trench and there was no evidence, such as gleying, that the fishpond had extended SW to the position of the trench.

Item	Context No.	Matrix Phase	Type	Interpretation	Discussion	Finds					Comments
						Small Find	Pot	Bone	Misc.	Sample No.	
1	1100		Deposit	Topsoil	Moderately compact but sandy and friable mid to dark grey brown silt sand; frequent small stones; 0.13m thick trench wide. Above (1101).	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	1101		Deposit	Subsoil	Moderately compact mid brown silt clay; very frequent small stones; 0.12m thick trench wide. Beneath (1100) and above (1102).	-	-	-	-	-	No evidence for waterlogging
3	1102		Deposit	Natural	Firm yellow brown sandy clay with occasional medium rounded stones >0.40m thick at trench wide. Beneath (1101).	-	-	-	-	-	Natural deposits at SW end of trench
4	1103		Deposit	Natural	Firm pink brown silt sand with very frequent rounded and sub-angular stone	-	-	-	-	-	Natural deposits at NE end of trench



Plate 11: View NW showing natural stony deposit at NE end of Trench 11

Report Title		Report Ref	
Archaeological Field Evaluation: Land at Grove Farm Gypsy Lane Llanfoist Abergavenny Monmouthshire		BA1632GFLA	
Report written by	Katherine Crooks BA		
Reported edited by	George Children MA MCI fA		
Issue No.	Status	Date	Approved for issue
1	Final	July 2016	Neil Shurety Dip. M G M Inst M