



Land adjacent

# Bungalow Farm

Murcot Road, Childswickham, Worcestershire

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Archaeological recording

SP 07168 38986

WSM 66621

Site code: MRC15

OASIS ID: 110archa1-221765

Sean Cook BA (Hons) ACIfA

Illustrations by Jill Atherton MCIfA

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one ten archaeology

6 Elm Close, Pebworth, Stratford upon Avon, Warwickshire., CV37 8XL

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Front cover; overall view of plot 1 from the north-west

## SUMMARY

Archaeological recording was carried out on land at adjacent Bungalow Farm, Childswickham, Broadway, Worcs. during May and June 2015 in connection with the erection of three detached dwellings.

Historic mapping (OS 1885 & 1902) shows the site as formerly part of a larger open east-west rectangular field occupying an area to the north-west of the village where until recently there has been little or no development. The field has subsequently been sub-divided following the construction of Bungalow Farm to the north and an agricultural shed to the south.

The area around the site is characterized by medieval cultivation as evidenced by an extensive pattern of medieval ridge and furrow still visible within the fields either side of Murcot Road.

No archaeological deposits were observed during the excavation, instead a sequence of three stratified homogenous layers were recorded across the site. The earliest of these was a natural substrate comprising a geology of sandy-clay. This was in turn overlain by a layer of relict subsoil which was sealed by the existing topsoil. The site was relatively flat, but the variation in the thickness of the subsoil layer, ranging between 0.25-0.50m in depth within each trench is perhaps an indication that the site was also formerly cultivated with ridge and furrow. The absence of any archaeological deposits and a lack of finds would suggest little human activity within the study site apart from that associated with agriculture.



Fig. 1; site location (circled in red)

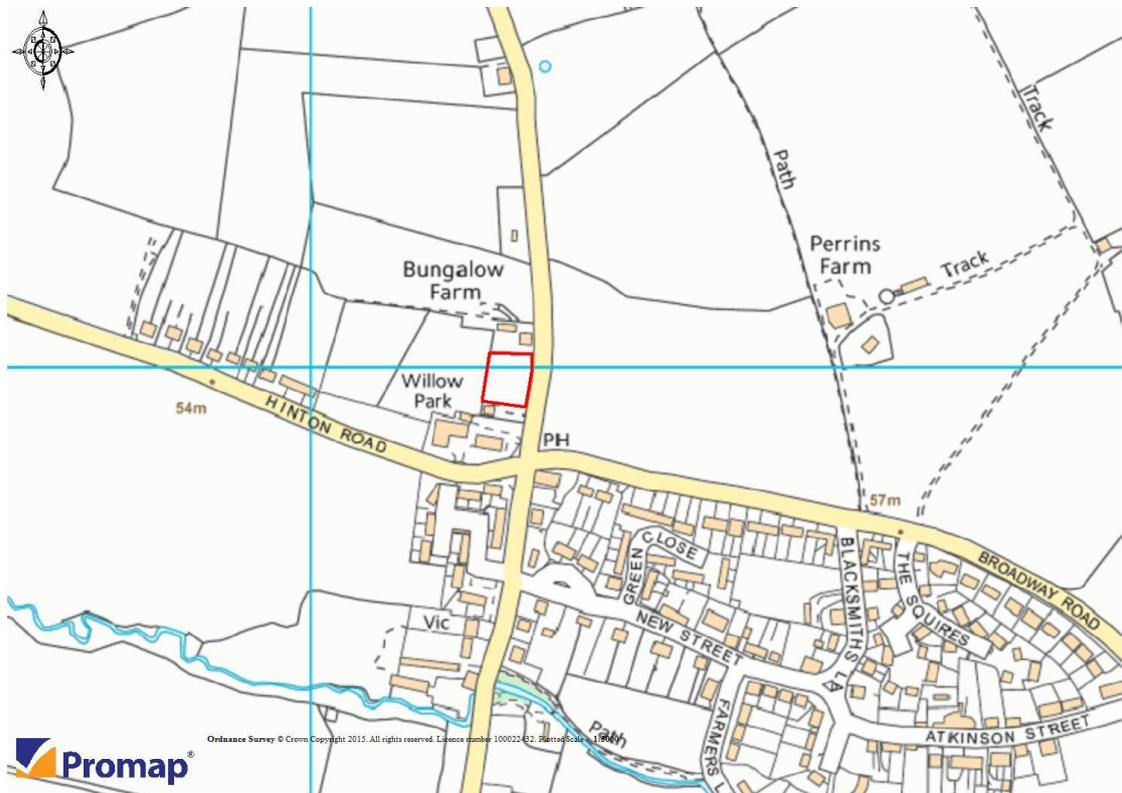


Fig. 2; area of study (site outlined in red)

## INTRODUCTION

### *Location and scope of works (Figs. 1 & 2)*

This document sets out the results of archaeological recording 'watching brief' on land at adjacent Bungalow Farm, Childswickham, Broadway, Worcs. during May and June 2015. There is no agent is Ain Designs Ltd. The proposed development comprises the erection of three detached dwellings. The programme of archaeological work is required as a condition of planning permission granted in respect of an application (Ref: W/14/2753) to Wychavon District Council and will be undertaken in accordance with a recommendation for a watching brief by Worcestershire County Council Historic Environment & Archaeology Service (Glyde, M., Jan., 2015). The proposed development is of relatively small scale, but is located in an area of archaeological potential. Well preserved medieval ridge and furrow lies opposite the site (though this development will have no physical effect on them), and more significantly a major Romano British farmstead/villa complex is located a short distance to the east of the application area. The full extent of this site is unknown and the potential for additional Romano British or prehistoric remains is such that a programme of archaeological works would be required as a condition of planning consent.

### *Geology and topography*

Childswickham is situated within the flat open landscape of the Vale of Evesham, between the Bredon and Cotswold Hills, two miles from Broadway. It is an area predominantly of market gardening, arable and pasture land, with surrounding fields defined by hedgerows. Being on the edge of the North Cotswolds it has a mixture of building styles, from Cotswold limestone to red brick, to the more traditional Worcestershire black and white half-timber and thatch. The earliest buildings are timber framed with wattle and daub and Cotswold limestone.

The development site is represented by a roughly rectangular plot of land situated adjacent to the south side of Bungalow Farm and straddling the west side of Murcot Lane. The land is currently grass and lies at approx. 55m AOD.

The site lies at a height of about 57-8m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) and the underlying geology comprises Head Gravel; limestone gravel, stoney clay and sand (BGS, 2000). This was confirmed during excavation.

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The name Childswickham is believed to have derived from 'Child', the young son of a nobleman, 'wick', a clearing in the wood and 'ham', short for hamlet. Its history can be traced back to Roman times as coins and pottery of this era were found in fields on the old Roman road from Worcester to London which came through the village. The 15th century spire of the original Norman church, St Mary the Virgin, is a local landmark and can be seen for several miles

An HER search was carried out within a 500m radius of the site. The proposed development site lies on the northern outskirts of the village of Childswickham, which is situated in the Vale of Evesham. The historic settlement pattern in this part of Worcestershire is nucleated. Modern housing development in Childswickham has been achieved mainly through infill, particularly on former orchard sites. The Historic Farmsteads Project has identified three historic farmsteads and three out-farms in the search area. There are 11 historic buildings, of which seven are listed (three Grade II\* and four Grade II).

Cropmarks have revealed possible trackways and an enclosure of unknown date to the north of Old Well Cottages (WSM01866 & 36039). East of the proposed development site, on the other side of Murcot Lane, are meadows which exhibit well-preserved ridge and furrow patterns (WSM39556, 39557 & 39558). Beyond these meadows is Perrins Farm, where features ranging in date from the Early Bronze Age to the medieval period (WSM33743) were revealed on the route of a new water main in 2001. Ridge and furrow features are also known to the west of the site (WSM24134, 24135, 24136) and again to the south of Hinton Road (WSM24133 & 24132). Field walking, excavation and geophysical surveys produced evidence of Iron Age occupation and substantial Roman remains, including stone buildings indicative of a high-status site appropriate to that of a villa. Various unstratified metal finds have included Roman coins and medieval items, notably in the south western part of the search area, though their apparent distribution is no doubt associated with the predominance of ploughed land there.

## RESULTS (Figs. 3-7)

### *Method and nature of the excavation*

Archaeological recording was undertaken to obtain a record of any archaeological deposits or finds disturbed or exposed during excavation of the site. Machine excavation was only used for the removal of non-archaeologically significant material (modern deposits) and was used to excavate these layers stratigraphically. All machining was conducted under constant and close archaeological supervision at all times using a toothless bucket. The trench was 0.60m wide and approx. 1m deep throughout the excavation, except on the north edge of trench 3 (plot 3) where excavation went beyond 1m.

### *Description of deposits*

#### TRENCHES 1-3 (plots 1-3)

##### *Contexts 102, 103 & 105 (natural geology)*

The surface of the geological horizon (context 102), a natural substrate comprising a Light brown-orange, sandy-clay, was exposed throughout the excavated foundation trench at a relatively level height of approx. 57.10m AOD. This layer was truncated during excavation of the trench by machine to a depth of about 0.20m, no archaeological features were observed cut into or overlying this layer. Context 103 and context 105 (natural geology) represent variations in the natural geology comprising pockets of yellowish-brown sandy-gravel with a component of clay.

##### *Context 101 (relict subsoil layer) and Context 100 (topsoil layer)*

Overlying the natural clay throughout all areas of the excavation was the undated subsoil layer (context 101), comprising a mid greyish-brown silty-clay with a small inclusion of charcoal flecking and an equally small component of small rounded pebbles. The depth of this layer varied across each plot from a minimum of 0.20m to a maximum depth of 0.50m. This was overlain by the modern topsoil (context 100) which comprised a mid to dark greyish brown loam. It also varied in depth across each plot or trench from a minimum of 0.20m in thickness to a maximum depth of 0.55m.

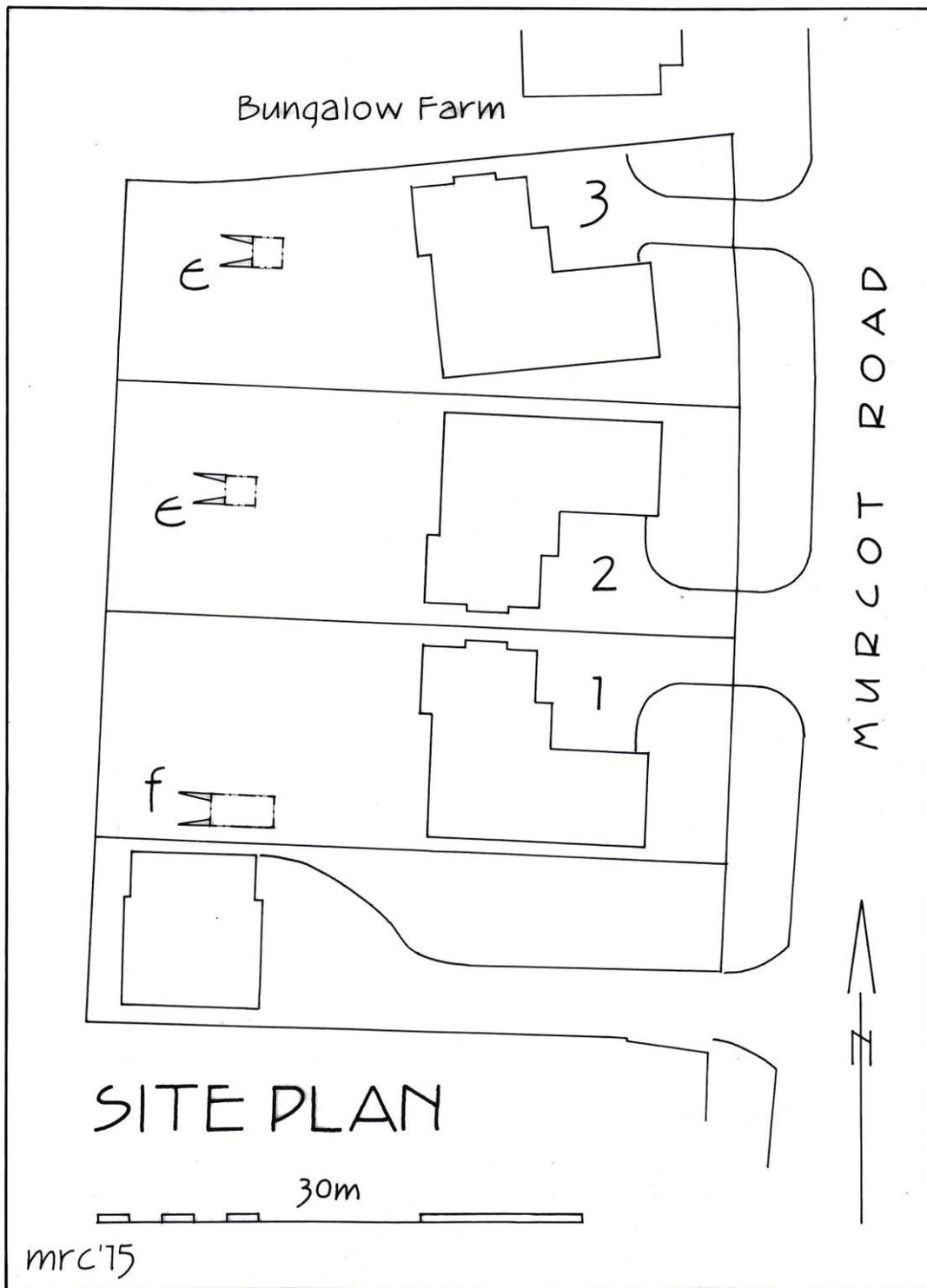


Fig. 3; site plan

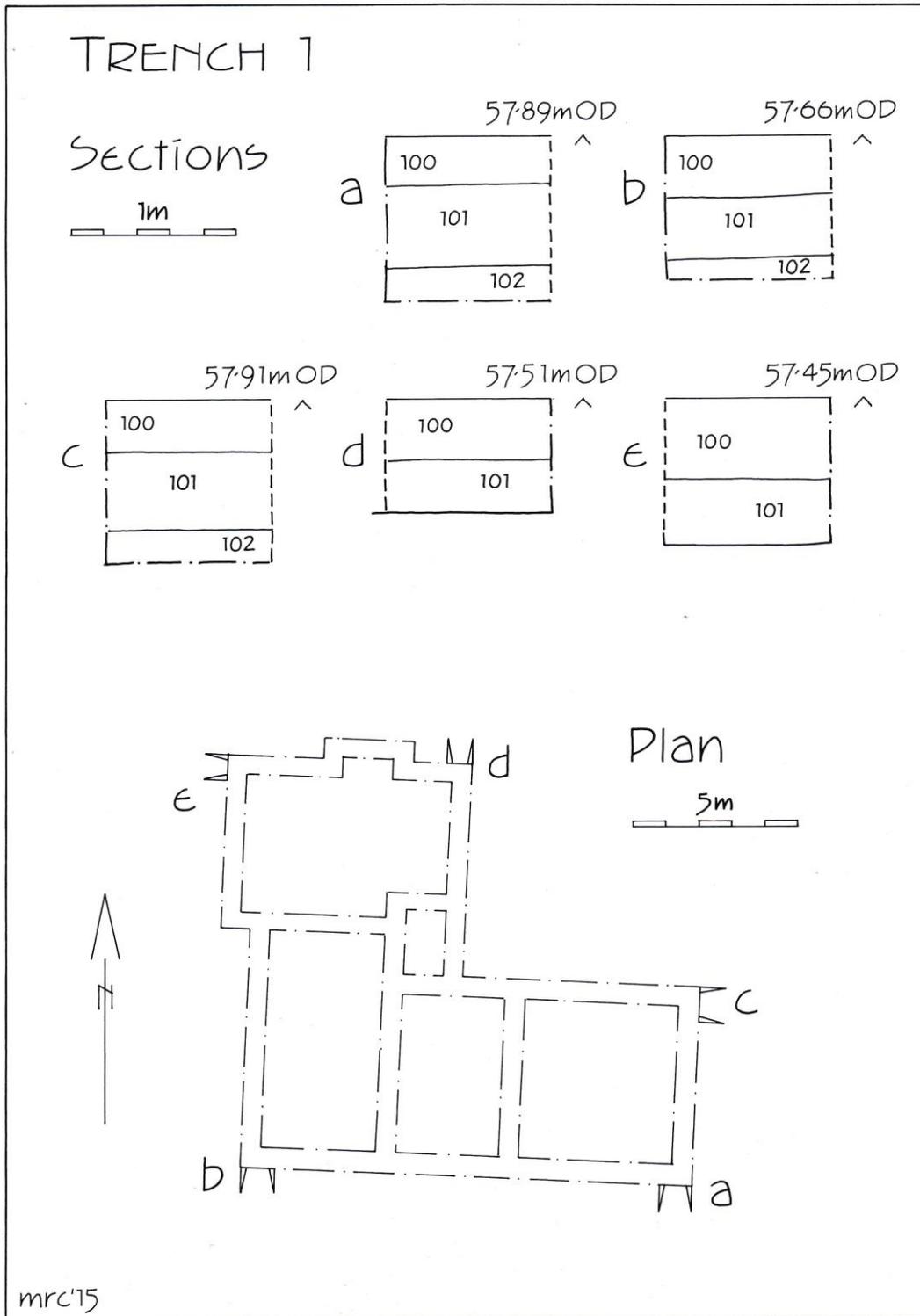


Fig. 4; plan & sections

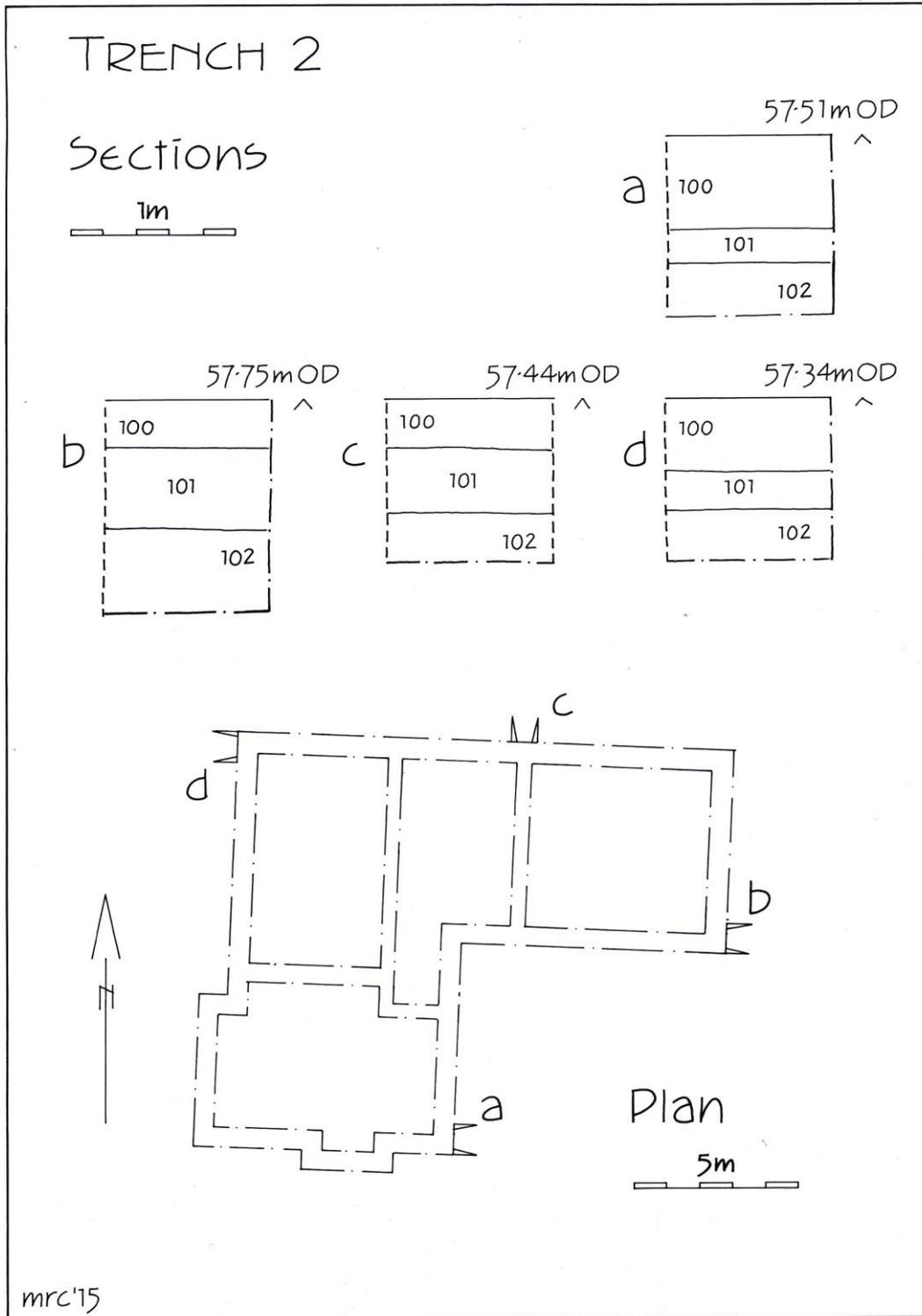


Fig. 5; trench 2, plan & sections

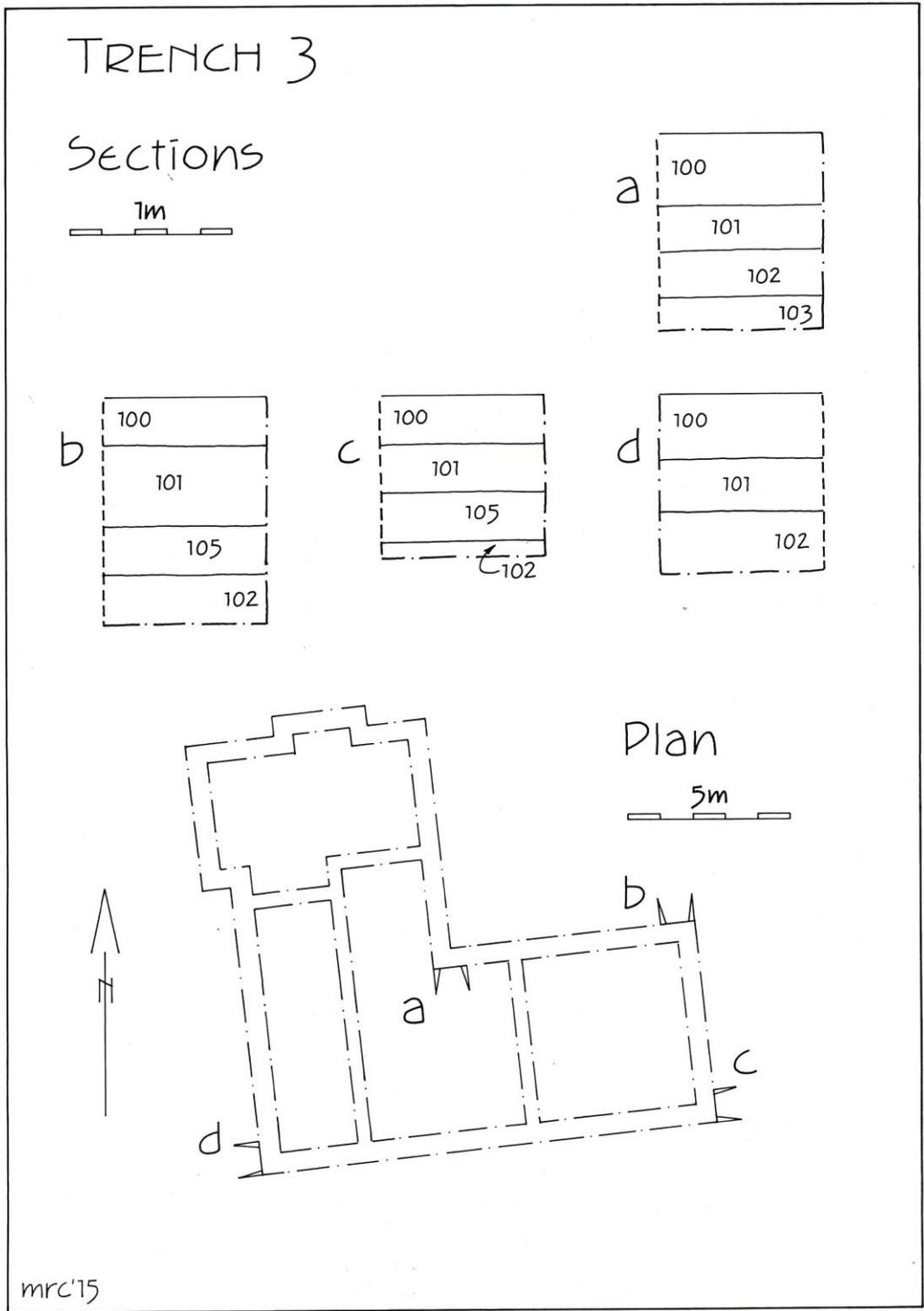


Fig. 6; trench 3 plan & sections

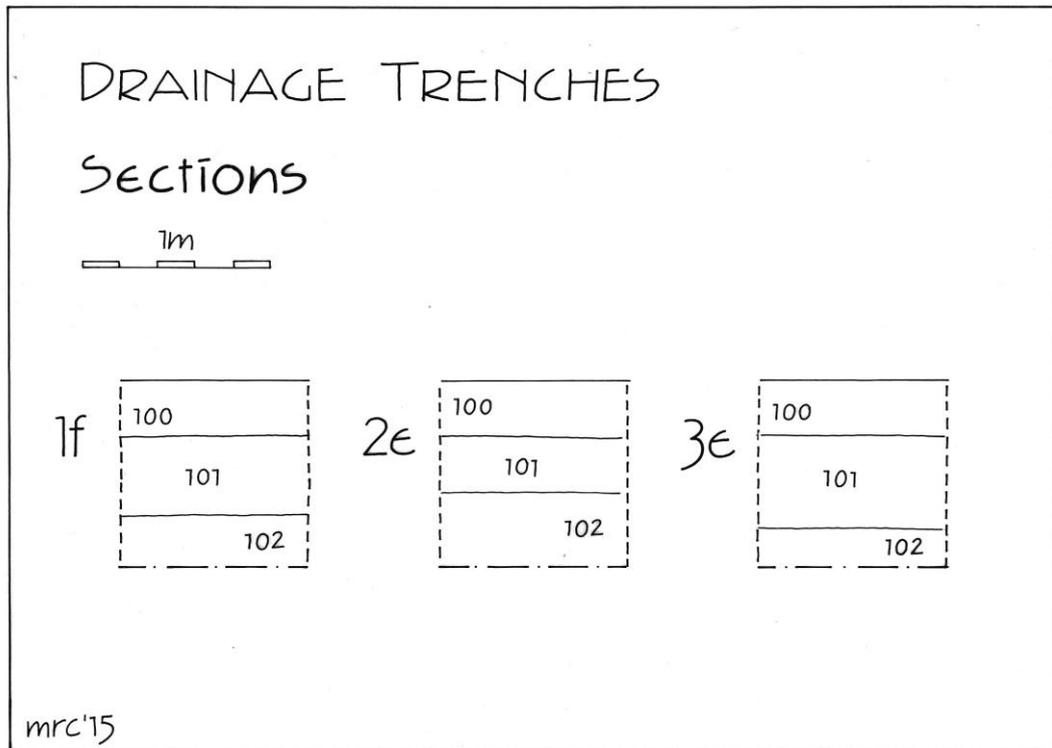


Fig. 7; drainage trenches

#### FINDS

No finds were retrieved during the excavation and deposit 101 was undated.

#### *Environmental data*

No animal bone was recovered and none of the deposits exposed during the excavation proved suitable for palaeo-environmental sampling.



Plate 1; section 1e, detail



Plate 2; overall view of plot 2 from the south-east



Plate 3; section 2a, detail



Plate 4; section 2b, detail



Plate 5; section 2c, detail



Plate 6; overall view of plot 3, from the west



Plate 7; section 3a, detail



Plate 8; section 3c, detail



Plate 9; section 2e, detail



Plate 10; section 3e, detail

## DISCUSSION

Historic mapping (OS 1885 & 1902) shows the site as formerly part of a larger open east-west rectangular field occupying an area to the north-west of the village where until recently there has been little or no development. The field has subsequently been sub-divided following the construction of Bungalow Farm to the north and an agricultural shed to the south.

The historic core of the medieval village lies to the south-east with the more recent development extending towards the north-west. The area around the site is characterized by medieval cultivation as evidenced by an extensive pattern of medieval ridge and furrow still visible within the fields either side of Murcot Road and encompassing the site. Ridge and furrow features also lie to the south of Hinton Road which borders the southern boundary of the study area.

A small sheep fold structure situated to the north of the study area in the adjacent field in 1885, was gone by 1902, but is perhaps early evidence of a change from cultivation to grazing that continues within the fields today.

No archaeological deposits were observed during the excavation, instead a sequence of three stratified homogenous layers were recorded across the site. The earliest of these was context 102, a natural substrate comprising a geology of sandy-clay. This was in turn overlain by context 101, a layer of relict subsoil which was sealed by the existing topsoil (context 100). The site was relatively flat, but the variation in the thickness of the subsoil layer, ranging between 0.25-0.50m in depth within each trench is perhaps an indication that the site was formerly cultivated with ridge and furrow. The absence of any archaeological deposits and a lack of finds would suggest little human activity within the study site apart from that associated with agriculture.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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

Glyde, M., 2015. *Requirements for a watching brief at Land adjacent Bungalow Farm, Murcot Road, Childswickham, Worcestershire, WR7 4PS.* Generic brief, Worcs. Archive and Archaeology Service, Worcs. C. C.

OS First Edition, 1885

OS Second Edition, 1902

Worcestershire Historic Environment and Archaeology Service 2015.

## APPENDIX 1: OASIS REPORT

Project name	Archaeological recording at land adjacent Bungalow Farm, Murcot Road, Childswickham, Worcs.
Short description of the project	Archaeological recording was carried out during May and June 2015 in connection with the erection of three detached dwellings.
Project dates	Start: 26-05-2015 End: 05-06-2015
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	WSM66621 - HER event no.
Any associated project reference codes	MRC15 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Cultivated Land 1 - Minimal cultivation
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Planning condition
Country	England
Site location	WORCESTERSHIRE WYCHAVON CHILDSWICKHAM land adjacent Bungalow Farm, Murcot Road, Childswickham
Postcode	WR107HR
Study area	0 Square metres
Site coordinates	SP 07168 38986 52.048798982757 -1.895463380199 52 02 55 N 001 53 43 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 57.1m Max: 57.1m
Name of Organisation	one ten archaeology
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project supervisor	sean cook
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	pdf report
Digital Contents	"other"
Paper Archive recipient	county museum

Paper Contents	"none"
Paper Media available	"Report"
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Land adjacent, Bungalow Farm, Murcot Road, Childswickham, Worcestershire; archaeological recording
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Cook, S
Date	2015
Issuer or publisher	one ten archaeology
URL	<a href="http://www.oasis.ac.uk">http://www.oasis.ac.uk</a>
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