

# Former Harbury Cement Works Station Road, Bishops Itchington Warwickshire

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCHING



**EXPERTISE WHERE YOU NEED IT**

**Archaeology Warwickshire Report No 1889**

**November 2018**



*Working for  
Warwickshire*

**Project:** Former Harbury Cement Works  
**Commissioned by:** CgMs Consulting  
**Site Code:** HD18  
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## SUMMARY

*An archaeological trial trenching, comprising nine 40m x 1.8m and two 30m x 1.8m trial trenches, was carried out on behalf of CgMs Consulting in advance of residential development.*

*Geological natural clay was exposed in all trenches but no significant archaeological deposits or finds were recorded.*

*A ditch in Trench 6 confirmed the presence of a former 19<sup>th</sup> century field boundary. This yielded no finds and likely became disused during the industrial period.*

*Evidence for modern quarrying was also present in the south eastern corner of the site.*

# 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Outline Planning permission has been granted for residential development on Former Harbury Cement Works, Bishops Itchington, Warwickshire (Planning Ref: 15/04532/OUT). Condition 17 of the permission requires the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI). A WSI was prepared by CgMs Heritage (Flintcroft 2018) on behalf of the developer. A geophysical survey carried out in advance of the trial trenching did not indicate any significant archaeological deposits (Magnitude Surveys 2018).
- 1.2 Archaeology Warwickshire were commissioned to undertake the programme of trial trenching detailed in the approved WSI, which took place between 15<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> October 2018. This report presents the results of that work.
- 1.3 Eleven trial trenches were excavated: nine trenches measuring 40m x 1.8m, and two trenches measuring 30m x 1.8m. One trench targeted a linear anomaly depicted on the geophysical results which corresponded to a field boundary on the first edition O.S map 1887.
- 1.4 This work was carried out in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Standard and guidance for field evaluation (2014).

## 2 SITE LOCATION

- 2.1 The site is located in the north of Bishop's Itchington. It comprises c.2.5 hectares of land centred at National Grid Reference SK 2270 2130 (Fig 1). The site is bounded to the north west by Station Road (B4451), to the south west by Blue Pool quarry lake, to the south by woodland, to the East by a further quarry lake and to the north by open fields and an access road to the site.
  
- 2.2 The British Geological Survey records the bedrock within and around the site as mudstone and limestone of the Rugby Limestone Member. No overlying superficial deposits are recorded within the site.

### 3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 No designated heritage assets are recorded within the application area although one entry of archaeological activity is recorded within 1km of the site on Heritage Gateway. The evidence comes from a 2014 archaeological excavation of a site c.800m south of the current development. This excavation produced evidence for prehistoric (Bronze Age) gullies, pits and postholes (HER ref MWA30212); Iron Age / Roman activity (MWA 30213); and medieval plots on the edge of Bishop's Itchington village (MWA 30214).
- 3.2 The development site is located some distance outside the historic village core of Bishop's Itchington, and was anticipated to have formed part of the agricultural land worked from the village.

#### **Geophysical Survey**

- 3.3 A fluxgate magnetometer was undertaken across most of the site. An area c. 0.98ha in size could not be surveyed due to the presence of modern construction works. With the exception of the overwhelming effect of adjacent Heras fencing along the field edges, the survey responded favourably to the survey environment. A drainage network was evident in the results; one of the drains detected in the location of an historic field boundary, suggesting the historic field boundary has been utilised in the drainage network. Several anomalies were marked as 'Possible Drain' or 'Undetermined'. These may reflect drains or more recent activity. No anomalies were ascribed an archaeological classification (Magnitude Surveys 2018).

## 4 AIMS AND METHODS *(as stated in the WSI)*

4.1 The aims of the archaeological trial trenching were as follows:

- To determine the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any archaeological remains within the development site;
- To assess the artefactual and environmental potential of the archaeological deposits encountered;
- To assess the impact of previous land use on the site;
- To inform formulation of any further measures to mitigate impacts of the proposed development on surviving archaeological remains;
- To produce a site archive for deposition with an appropriate museum and to provide information for accession to the Staffordshire HER.

4.2 Trenches were opened up by a 360° excavator fitted with a 1.80m wide toothless ditching bucket. .

4.3 Topsoil and other plough soils were removed under the supervision of an experienced archaeologist until either the top of archaeological remains or geological natural was reached.



## 5 RESULTS

### Geological Natural

- 5.1 The geological natural across the whole site was mid-light brown reddish grey sandy clay (102, 202, 302, 402, 502, 602, 702, 802, 902, 1002 and 1102) which was exposed at a depth of 0.4-0.55m below the current ground surface in the higher area along the south west of the site and 0.58–1.20m along the lower lying north eastern side of the site.

### Deposit Sequence

- 5.2 Where not disturbed by anthropogenic activity, the clay substrate was directly overlain by a sequence of silt derived colluvium and plough soils; subsoil overlaid by topsoil. The subsoil was a consistent mid brown clay rich sandy silt across the site. It accumulated significantly in depth as a colluvium deposit downhill towards the western border (Photo 1).

### Cut Features

- 5.3 One archaeological feature was encountered on the site in trench 6. NE-SW oriented ditch 603 cut the subsoil and was overlain by the topsoil. It contained no finds however it corresponds to a N/S oriented linear field boundary depicted on the 1887 first edition O.S map, dividing the north western and south eastern sides of the site. The geophysical survey results also represent this as a linear anomaly to the same extent. It was 1.6m wide, 0.80m deep and extended beyond the width of the trench, presumably across the majority of the site from NE to SW. Its fills comprised a typical redeposited natural base fill (604) of light yellow grey sandy clay overlain by dark brown grey silt (605) which was in turn overlain by a natural disuse siltation deposit (606).
- 5.4 In Trench 11 the subsoil (1001) and geological natural (1002) was disturbed by quarry 1003 from 16m north west of the south east end. The eastern edge of this was N-S oriented and it contained a backfill of firm grey clay intermixed with limestone rubble.

## 6 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 No significant archaeological deposits or finds were recorded on the site.
- 6.2 Although ditch 603 contained no material evidence for dating, it post-dated the subsoil and represents a 19<sup>th</sup> century field boundary dividing the land. This shows former segmentation of the present field, and its fill sequence suggests it went out of use during the industrial period prior to the modern formation of topsoil. This possibly occurred from a conversion to pasture as part of increased later stages of enclosure acts.
- 6.3 Modern disturbance encountered in Trench 10 was likely to be associated with former quarry works within the immediate surrounding area.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeology Warwickshire would like to thank Myk Flitcroft at CgMs for commissioning the work.

## REFERENCES

CgMs 2018 *Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation for trial trenching: Former Harbury Cement Works, Station Road, Bishops Itchington, Warwickshire*, CgMs Consulting.

Magnitude Surveys 2018 *Geophysical survey report of land at Station Road, Bishops Itchington, Warwickshire*, Magnitude Surveys report.





1: Trench 8, looking south, with colluvium subsoil increasing in depth towards the north east



2: Trench 6, looking south east, with ditch 603 across the centre





3: Representative section of ditch 603 and deposit sequence in Trench 6, looking south west



4: Trench 10, looking north west, with quarry 1003 in foreground

## APPENDICES

### A List of contexts

<b>Trench</b>	<b>Context</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Depth (m)</b>	<b>Comment</b>
1	100	Dark greyish brown sandy clay rich silt	0.30	Topsoil
1	101	Yellowish brown clay silt with occasional fragment of limestone	0.30 – 0.65	Subsoil/geological interface
1	102	Greenish gray clay		Geological natural
2	200	Dark grey brown sandy clayey silt	0.25	Topsoil
2	201	Yellowish brown clayey silt with occasional limestone	0.20 – 0.30	Subsoil/geological interface
2	202	Greenish grey clay with outcrops of grey limestone rubble		Geological natural
3	300	Dark greyish brown sandy clayey silt	0.30 – 0.35	Topsoil
3	301	Yellowish brown clayey silt	0.25 – 0.45	Subsoil/geological interface
3	302	Yellowish brown clay with outcrops of grey limestone rubble		Geological natural
4	400	Dark greyish brown sandy clay silt	0.15	Topsoil
4	401	Firm grey silty sand	0.25	Subsoil/geological interface
4	402	Reddish brown sandy clay		Geological natural
5	500	Greyish brown sandy clay silt	0.28	Topsoil
5	501	Brown clayey silt	0.30	Subsoil/geological interface
5	502	Grey or red-brown clay with occasional limestone		Geological natural
6	600	Greyish brown sandy clay silt	0.30	Topsoil
6	601	Brown clayey silt	0.20	Subsoil/geological interface
6	602	Grey or red-brown clay with occasional limestone		Geological natural



6	603	Gradual sides with concave base	0.80	Cut of ditch
6	604	Light yellow grey sandy clay	0.30	Fill out ditch 603
6	605	Dark brown silt with occasional charcoal	0.35	Secondary fill out ditch 603
6	606	Mid brown grey red clay rich silt	0.15	Upper fill out ditch 603
7	700	Dark brown grey sandy clay silt	0.30	Topsoil
7	701	Mid brown red clay with	0.45	Subsoil/geological interface
7	702	Red sandy silty clay		Geological natural
8	800	Greyish brown sandy clay silt	0.30	Topsoil
8	801	Light brown sandy silt	0.20-0.30	Subsoil/geological interface
8	802	Grey or red-brown clay with occasional limestone		Geological natural
9	900	Dark brown clay rich silt	0.40	Topsoil
9	901	Brown clayey silt	0.80	Subsoil/geological interface
9	902	Grey or red-brown clay with occasional limestone		Geological natural
10	1000	Dark brown clay rich silt	0.20	Topsoil
10	1001	Brown clayey silt	0.20	Subsoil/geological interface
10	1002	Grey or red-brown clay with occasional limestone		Geological natural
10	1003	N-S oriented straight western edge		Cut of quarry
10	1004	Grey clay and limestone rubble		Fill of quarry
11	1100	Dark brown clay rich silt	0.20	Topsoil
11	1101	Brown clayey silt	0.90	Subsoil/geological interface
11	1102	Grey or red-brown clay with occasional limestone		Geological natural



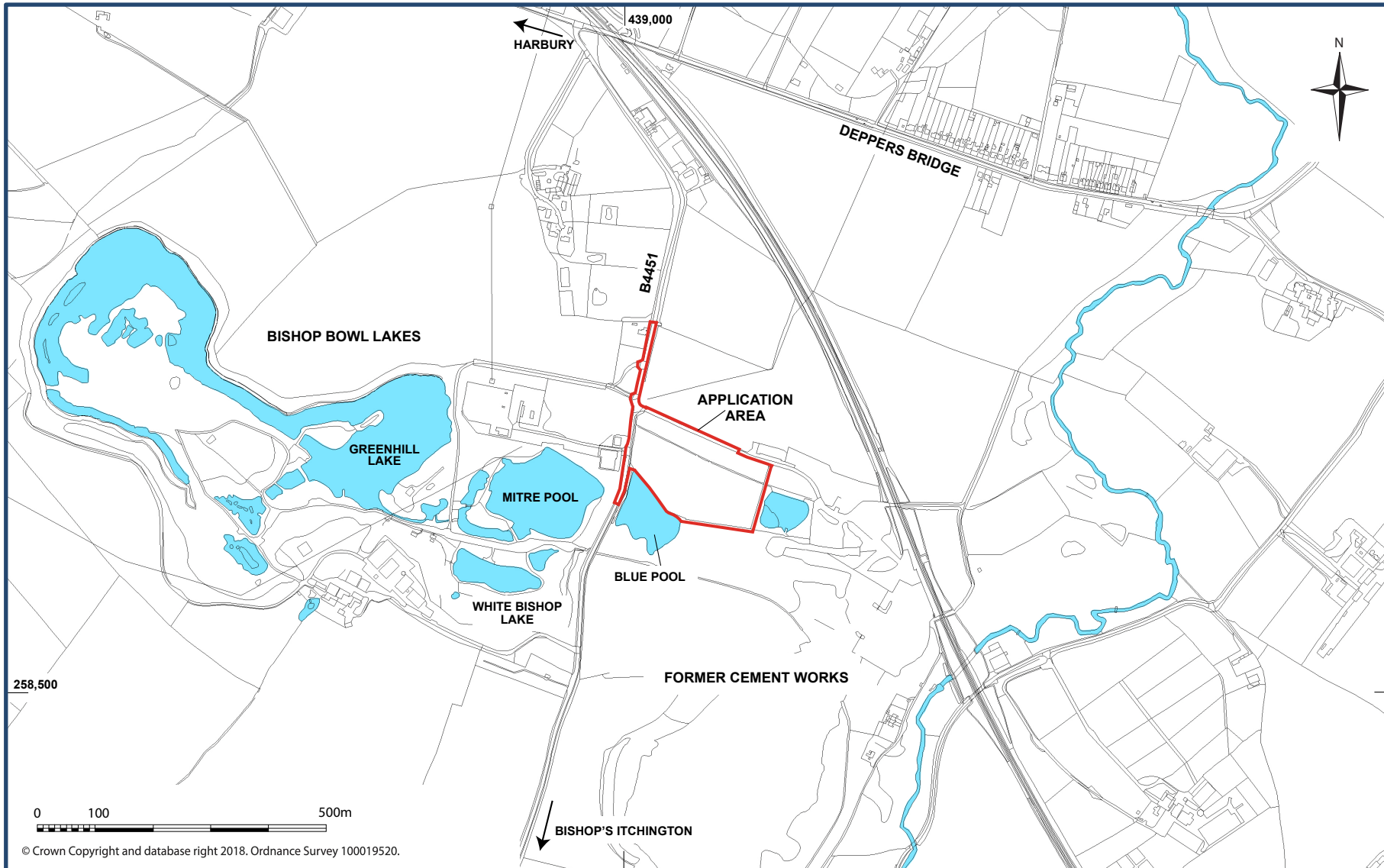


Fig 1: Location of application area

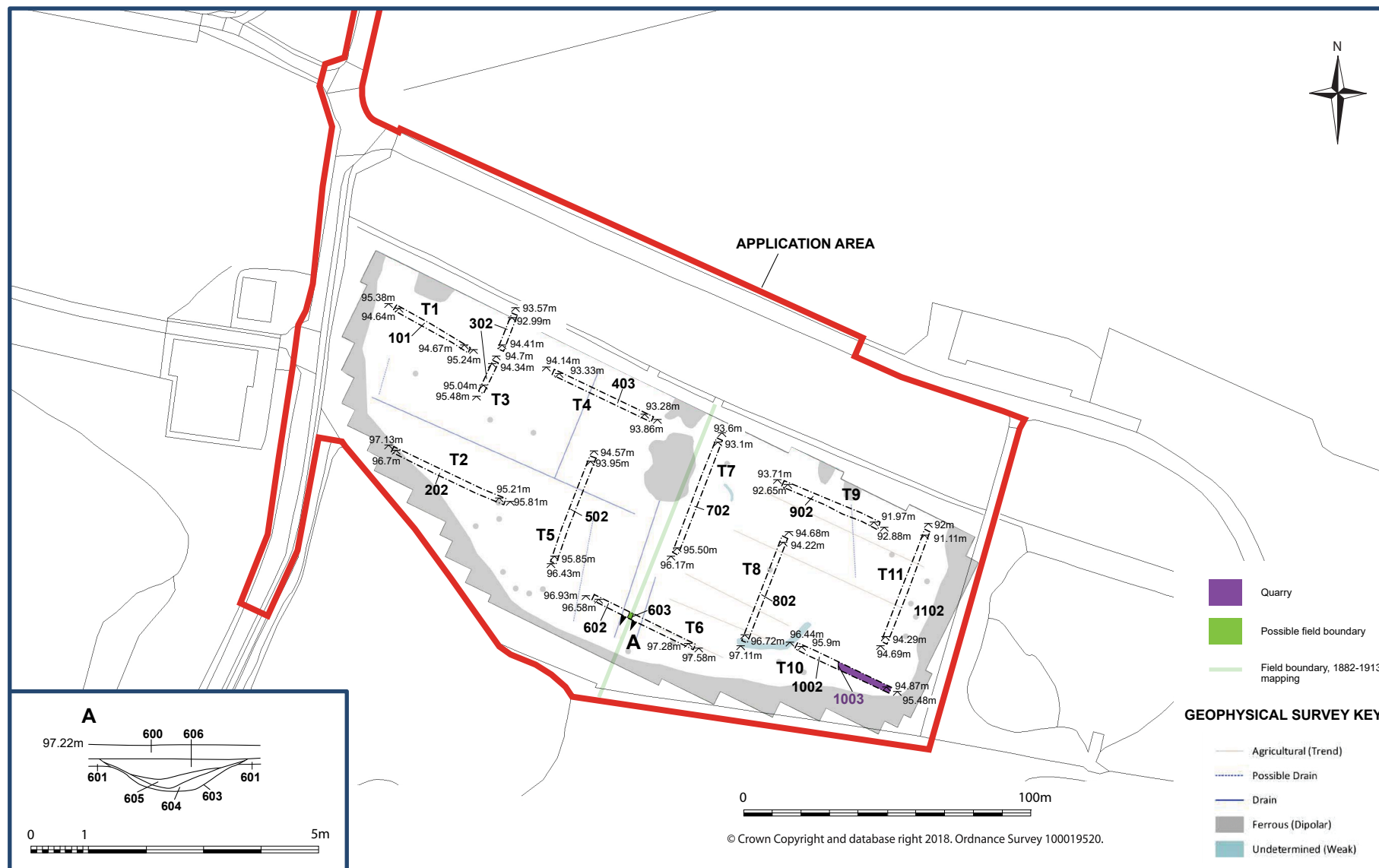


Fig 2: Location of excavated trenches, section A and geophysical survey