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TAYLOR WIMPEY (WEST MIDLANDS)

LAND AT RYALL ROAD (PHASE 2)

UPTON-UPON-SEVERN

WORCESTERSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

July 2017

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TAYLOR WIMPEY (WEST MIDLANDS)

Ryall Road, Upton-upon-Severn, Worcestershire

Watching brief Report

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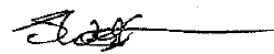


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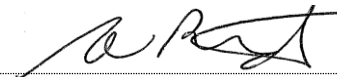
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SUMMARY

Wardell Armstrong was commissioned by Taylor Wimpey (West Midlands), to undertake an archaeological watching brief at Ryall Road, Holly Green, Upton-upon-Severn, Worcestershire. The watching brief was required as a condition of planning consent ahead of the construction of 33 new domestic properties and associated infrastructure.

The watching brief monitored all intrusive works associated with the general ground reductions and site strip to the top of the natural substrate ahead of the development. Despite the potential for archaeological remains to be present, no features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed and only deposits of later post-medieval date were revealed.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Circumstances and Planning Background

1.1.1 Intermittently between the 26th January and 19th April 2017, Wardell Armstrong (WA) undertook an archaeological watching brief at land off Ryall Road, Holly Green, Upton-upon-Severn, Worcestershire (Site centred NGR: SO 86275 40960). It was commissioned by Taylor Wimpey (West Midlands) (hereafter known as the Client) during the construction of 33 new dwellings with associated infrastructure, access routes and open space for which a planning consent has been granted by Malvern Hills District Council (planning reference: 15/00684/FUL).

1.1.2 The proposed development area was considered to have potential to contain archaeological remains based on the known historic and archaeological background of the local landscape and a previous geophysical survey carried out across the development area.

1.1.3 An archaeological watching brief is defined as a programme of 'monitoring and investigation carried out during a non-archaeological activity within a specified area of land or development where construction operations may disturb or destroy archaeological remains' (CIFA 2014a).

1.2 Project Documentation

1.2.1 The project conforms to a brief prepared by Mike Glyde, Historic Environment Advisor, Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service, Worcestershire County Council (reference: **WSM 49647**; September 2014). A WSI was then produced to provide a specific methodology based on the brief for a programme of archaeological mitigation implemented via a watching brief. This was approved by Adrian Scruby, Historic Environment Advisor prior to the fieldwork taking place. This is in line with government advice as set out in Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2012).

1.2.2 In addition, the archaeological watching brief conforms to the guidelines and standards laid down in the following documents

- *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief*, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists: Reading (CIFA 2014a);
- *Code of Approved Conduct for the Regulation of Arrangements in Field Archaeology*, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists: Reading (CIFA 2014b);

- *Standard and Guidance for the Collection, Documentation, Conservation and Research of Archaeological Materials*, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists: Reading (CIFA 2014c);
- *Management of Archaeological Research Projects in the Historic Environment (Morphe)*: Historic England, London (HE 2015);
- *Standards and guidelines for archaeological projects in Worcestershire*: Worcestershire Archives and Archaeology Service, Worcestershire County Council, Worcester (WCC 2010).

1.2.3 This report outlines the work undertaken on site, the subsequent programme of post-fieldwork assessment, and the results of this watching brief.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Standards and guidance

2.1.1 The archaeological watching brief was undertaken following the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (2014a), the *Standards and guidelines for archaeological projects in Worcestershire* (WCC 2010) and in accordance with the Wardell Armstrong fieldwork manual (2012).

2.1.2 The fieldwork programme was followed by an assessment of the data as set out in the *Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (CIfA 2014a) and the *Standard and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (CIfA 2014c).

2.2 Documentary Research

2.2.1 An archaeological heritage impact assessment was prepared by Andrew Josephs Associates (2015) which set out the known archaeological and historical background of the site, and provided an assessment of the significance of all known and potential heritage assets up to 1km from the area of investigation.

2.3 The Watching Brief

2.3.1 The watching brief comprised the monitoring of all intrusive works associated with the current development, this comprised the excavation and recording of all archaeological deposits within the area threatened by the proposed development. The area of the proposed development is approximately 1.18ha and lies at a height of approximately c.12m above AOD. The general aims of these investigations were:

- to allow the monitoring archaeologist to signal that an archaeological find has been made before it is destroyed;
- to provide the opportunity for appropriate resource allocation if the archaeological find cannot be dealt with under the watching brief remit;
- to determine the presence or absence of buried archaeological remains within the proposed development site;
- to determine the character, date, extent and distribution of any archaeological deposits and their potential significance;
- to determine levels of disturbance to any archaeological deposits from plough damage/agricultural drainage/ past industrial practices/past building activities

and investigate and record all deposits and features of archaeological interest within the areas to be disturbed by the current development;

- to determine the likely impact on archaeological deposits from the proposed development;
- to disseminate the results of the fieldwork through an appropriate level of reporting.

2.3.2 Deposits considered not to be significant were removed by mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket to maximise the chance for identification of archaeological remains, should they be present. All intrusive groundworks were monitored under close supervision by a suitably trained archaeologist. Where potential archaeological remains were present the area was subsequently cleaned by hand. All possible features and deposits were inspected for their potential but no archaeological remains were noted.

2.3.3 All finds encountered were retained on site and returned to the Carlisle office where they were identified, quantified and dated to period. A *terminus post quem* was then produced for each stratified context under the supervision of the WA Finds Officer, and the dates were used to help determine the broad date phases for the site. On completion of this project, the finds were cleaned and packaged according to standard guidelines (Ibid). Please note, the following categories of material will be discarded after a period of six months following the submission of this report, unless there is a specific request to retain them (and subject to the collection policy of the relevant depository):

- unstratified material;
- modern pottery;
- material that has been assessed as having no obvious grounds for retention.

2.3.4 All deposits were investigated for their palaeoenvironmental potential, however in this instance no contexts were deemed suitable for sampling.

2.3.5 A full professional archive has been compiled in accordance with the project specification, and the Archaeological Archives Forum recommendations (Brown 2011). The archive will be deposited with Worcestershire Museum Services, with copies of the report sent to the County HER, available upon request. The project and its archive is referenced in the Worcestershire HER under event number **WSM**

68376, in addition WA has used internal project identifier **RRU-A; BM11267**.

2.3.6 Wardell Armstrong supports the **Online Access** to the Index of archaeological Investigations (OASIS) project. This project aims to provide an online index and access to the extensive and expanding body of grey literature created as a result of developer-funded archaeological work. Details of the results of this project will be made available by WA as a part of this national project. The OASIS reference for the project is: **Wardella2-275424**.

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 Location and Geological Context

3.1.1 The site environs comprised open fields to the east whilst Ryall Road bounds the site to the west, with residential properties on the opposite side of the highway. Existing residential housing bound both the northern and southern boundaries. The development area was situated on the eastern bank of the River Severn, c.11km south of Worcester and c.750m to the northeast of Upton-upon-Severn.

3.1.2 The site, comprising pasture land, was approximately 1.18 hectares in size and roughly square in shape with a second small square extending from the northeast corner. The ground was situated at a height of c.24m AOD (Above Ordnance Datum) with the ground dropping very gradually to the south and southeast to c.21m AOD.

3.1.3 The underlying solid geology within the area of investigation is mapped as siltstones and mudstones associated of the Branscombe Mudstone Formation (BGS 2017). This is overlain in the south of the site by superficial deposits of alluvium comprising clay, silt, sand and gravels.

3.1.4 The natural substrate observed during the archaeological investigations comprised a firm, silt-rich clay which is consistent with the mapped geologies above.

3.2 Historical and Archaeological Background

3.1.5 A Heritage Impact Assessment was produced to summarise the known historical and archaeological background of the site and the surrounding landscape to a distance of 1km (Andrew Josephs Associates 2015). It is not intended to repeat that information here and what follows is a brief overview, for further details please refer to the original document.

3.1.6 This report identified that there were no designated heritage assets within the site boundary, however there are a further number within the wider search area of 1km. No heritage assets designated as scheduled ancient monuments are recorded within the immediate vicinity of the site. Although three non-designated heritage assets are listed between 75m and 200m of the site boundary.

3.1.7 Previous archaeological works within the immediate study area comprised a single site that stripped and recorded an access road and area to the west of the application site. A single ditch of unknown date was recorded, aligned approximately east-west towards the north end of the area of investigation and it was thought there is a

possibility the feature extended east into the site.

- 3.1.8 **Prehistoric:** There is evidence of prehistoric activity ranging from the Neolithic to Iron Age across the landscape with a ring ditch (HER Reference: **WSM 01090**) of possible Neolithic date recorded 750m northeast of the area of investigation. Cropmarks of late prehistoric date (HER Reference: **WSM 01045**) have been identified 200m northeast and further crop marks of unknown date (HER Reference: **WSM 01398**), but believed to be Prehistoric based on their morphology lie to the northeast.
- 3.1.9 **Romano-British:** A rectilinear enclosure of probable Romano-British origin based on morphological comparison (HER Reference: **WSM 22870**) is recorded 750m northeast and has been truncated by the Upton to Pershore Road (A4104). Unstratified Romano-British finds have also been recorded during field walking across the wider study area.
- 3.1.10 **Medieval and post-medieval:** There is evidence of a deserted medieval settlement (HER Reference: **WSM 05944**) 800m northwest of the PDA, and post-medieval features including a water meadow (HER Reference: **WSM 34591**) and two brick works (HER Reference: **WSM 16802**) and (HER Reference: **WSM 19615**) to the west on the banks of the River Severn. The area was active during the Second World War with the Severn valley considered a likely invasion site, as such sites include aircraft landing obstacles (HER Reference: **WSM 17331**), a pillbox (HER Reference: **WSM 17124**) and training rifle ranges (HER Reference: **WSM 24700**).

4 WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The watching brief was undertaken intermittently between the 29th November 2016 and the 19th April 2017. The archaeological watching brief monitored all intrusive works associated with the reduction of the site level ahead of building of new dwellings at Ryall Road, Holly Green, Upton-upon-Severn. Where appropriate individual context numbers are provided, for a full list of contexts please see Appendix 1.

4.1.2 The development groundworks required the reduction of the area to the top of the clay natural substrate. The excavations largely comprised the removal of topsoil and subsoil to a depth of up to 1.50m, exposing and truncating digging the natural substrate by up to 0.50m along the south-east edge of the proposed development.

4.2 Results

4.2.1 **Area 1:** The natural substrate (**102**) consisted mainly of sand with moderately sorted rounded to sub-rounded gravels to cobbles throughout. This was sealed by subsoil (**101**) that comprised a mid-brownish red, coarse silty clay. The clasts were friable and firm and contained moderate, poorly-sorted angular to sub-rounded cobbles to gravel, with the depth of the deposit measuring 0.20m. The plough soil (**100**) sealing the sequence consisted of a mid-greyish brown, coarse-grained sand and silt. The deposit was loosely compacted and contained occasional rounded to sub-rounded gravels with infrequent sub-rounded to rounded cobbles throughout, ranging in depth from 0.36m up the current slope to the north to 0.54m down slope to the south.

4.2.2 **Area 2:** The natural substrate comprised a firm, mid-greyish yellow silty clay (**2002**) that became a light orangey-red after exposure to rain. Little variation was noted although an increased frequency of gravels and pebbles were noted towards the southwestern boundary of the intrusive works.

4.2.3 The natural was sealed by up to 0.30m thickness of mid-yellowish brown subsoil (**2001**). On the southwest edge of the site, the subsoil had a higher content of moderately sorted gravels and pebbles as well as modern demolition waste such as brick, CBM and industrial clinker and ash.

4.2.4 This in turn was overlain by an 0.10m thick, mid-greyish brown topsoil (**2000**); in

patches, this was highly mixed with redeposited natural substrate and subsoil.

- 4.2.5 An irregular, pit-like feature **[2003]** was revealed in the southeast facing section of the excavations associated with the access road in the northwest corner of the site. This measured 5.10m in width by 0.45m in depth and demonstrated to truncate the topsoil **(2000)** and subsoil **(2001)** and was filled with a single deposit **(2004)** comprising modern demolition waste of clinker, ash and brick (*plate 3*).
- 4.2.6 A large rectilinear feature, **[2005]**, truncated the natural substrate, subsoil and topsoil and measured 6.30m in length by 1.40m in width. Aligned northwest to southeast, the feature had vertical sides and well defined edges that suggested that they were the result of a mechanical excavator and was filled with a modern deposit of clinker, ash and red brick **(2006)** (*plate 4*).
- 4.2.7 Given the identical nature of the fills of both **[2003]** and **[2005]** it is postulated that they are roughly contemporary in nature and, given the clearly modern date of the features, it is postulated that they are associated with pre-commencement works undertaken for ground engineering purposes. In addition to the above, a roughly 10m square area contained a dump of later post-medieval material with large quantities of brick and CBM, glass, pottery and even several fence posts.

4.3 Palaeoenvironmental Sampling

- 4.3.1 All deposits were inspected for their palaeoenvironmental potential however, in this instance, no contexts were revealed that were suitable for sampling.

5 FINDS ASSESSMENT

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 A total of sixty-eight artefacts, weighing c.3.3kg, were recovered from deposits during the archaeological watching brief, carried out in two phases, on land at Ryall Road, Upton-upon-Severn.
- 5.1.2 All finds were handled, processed and assessed in accordance recommendations made by Watkinson & Neal (1998) and the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CifA) Standard & Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials (2014c).
- 5.1.3 All artefacts were boxed according to material type and conforming to the deposition guidelines recommended by Brown (2011), EAC (2014) and Worcestershire Museum.
- 5.1.4 The finds assessment was compiled by Sue Thompson and the quantification is presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Quantification of bulk finds by context					
Context	Material	Quantity	Weight (g)	Date	Comments
100	Bone	4	2		1 x burnt
100	CBM	1	21	Post Med	Brick frag
100	Clay Pipe	1	2	Post Med	Stem frag
100	Pottery	8	12	Post Med	Refined whiteware, stoneware, blackware
2000	Bone	1	21		Animal bone
2000	Clay pipe	4	7	Post Med	Stem x 2, bowl frag x 2
2000	Concrete	1	249	Modern	Tile frag
2000	Glass	2	37	Post Med	Green glass bottle x 1, clear window x 1
2000	CBM	2	173	Post Med	Brick frag, red unglazed floor tile
2000	Pottery	31	210	Post Med	Refined whiteware, transfer printed, salt glazed stoneware, black-glazed red earthenware
2000	Pottery	3	27	Med	Abraded sherds – Worcester Fabric 66
2004	CBM	1	2400	Modern	Brick
2004	Ceramic	9	162	Modern	Glazed wall tile frags
Total		68	3323		

5.2 Ceramics

5.2.1 Three potentially medieval pottery sherds weighing 27g were recovered from topsoil (2000), (Table 1). All three of the sherds are of a wheel thrown sandy oxidised fabric, with both orange and green glaze, possibly Hereford glazed fine micaceous ware, (Worcester Fabric 66), which dates to the 14th – 15th century in Worcestershire (worcesterceramics.com) The sherds are abraded and in poor to moderate condition.

5.2.2 Thirty-nine sherds of post-medieval pottery sherds, weighing 222g, were recovered from topsoil deposits (100) and (2000) (Table 1). The sherds comprise sherds of salt-glazed stonewares, black-glazed red earthenwares and refined whitewares, both plain and transfer printed.

5.2.3 The post-medieval ceramic assemblage includes both hollow and flat wares and is likely to date from the 18th to 19th century (Poole 1995, Hildyard 2005). The post-medieval sherds are in moderate to good condition but are in general small and very fragmentary. They display little evidence of post-depositional damage.

5.2.4 No further analysis is warranted.

5.3 Clay Pipe

5.3.1 Five clay tobacco pipe fragments were recovered from topsoil deposits, weighing 9g comprising two bowl and three stem fragments (Table 1). There are no maker's marks and the fragments are fairly abraded; however, it is possible to get a rough date based on the borehole of the pipe stem.

5.3.2 The stem borehole is roughly 2mm in diameter, giving an early 18th century date for the pipe stems. One of the pipe bowls fragments has simple rilling below the rim, otherwise they are undecorated (Kipfer 2008).

5.3.3 No further analysis is necessary.

5.4 Glass

5.4.1 Two shards of glass weighing 37g were recovered from (2000), comprising a fragment of green bottle glass and one of clear window glass (Table 1).

5.4.2 The shards are in moderate to good condition and are 19th-20th century in date.

5.4.3 No further analysis is warranted.

5.5 CBM

5.5.1 A single complete red brick weighing 2,400g, of mid-late 20th century date was

recovered from **(2004)**. The brick has three vertical holes, and machine rouletting on one face, and an incised lattice marking, but does not have a makers stamp. It is in moderate to good condition.

5.5.2 Nine glazed fragments of ceramic wall tile weighing 162g were also recovered from **(2004)**. The fragments are in good condition, and are of 20th century date.

5.5.3 Brick fragments were also recovered from topsoil deposits **(100)** and **(2000)**, along with a fragment of unglazed floor tile (Table 1).

5.5.4 The brick fragments are in poor condition with some post-depositional abrasion, and are of post-medieval to modern date.

5.5.5 A single concrete tile fragment was recovered from **(2000)**. It is in moderate condition and of modern date.

5.5.6 No further analysis is warranted.

5.6 Animal Bone

5.6.1 Five animal bone fragments weighing 23g were recovered from topsoil deposits (Table 1). The fragments are mostly small and in poor condition.

5.6.2 The bone comprises a single burnt pelvic or scapular fragment of a medium-sized mammal e.g. sheep/goat (*Ovid/Caprid*) or pig (*Sus sp.*) from **(100)**, (*Pers Comm. Stoakley 2017*). A further three miscellaneous unburnt animal bone fragments were recovered from **(100)**.

5.6.3 The distal end of an unburnt left humerus was recovered from **(2000)**, and is also likely to belong to a sheep/goat.

5.6.4 No further work is necessary.

5.7 Conclusions

5.7.1 The finds assemblage is largely post-medieval and 18th- 19th century in date. A small amount of medieval and modern material was also recovered.

5.8 Statement of Potential

5.8.1 As the finds were recovered from topsoil deposits, and post-medieval disturbances, the assemblage is therefore of limited archaeological interest.

5.8.2 The post-medieval finds will not be retained with the archive.

6 CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Interpretation

6.1.1 The archaeological watching brief monitored all intrusive works associated with the ground reductions ahead of the main development. The investigations revealed that no features of archaeological interest across the development area. Modern intrusions and redeposited dumps of modern material were present in the northwest corner of the site. Three fragments of medieval pottery were recovered their highly abraded nature and presence in the topsoil would suggest that these have been redeposited from places unknown.

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Personal Communication

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APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT TABLE

Context Number	Context Type	Area	Description
100	Deposit	Throughout site	Topsoil
101	Deposit	Throughout site	Subsoil
102	Deposit	Throughout site	Natural clay substrate

Context Number	Context Type	Area	Description
2000	Deposit	Throughout site	Topsoil
2001	Deposit	Throughout site	Subsoil
2002	Deposit	Throughout site	Natural clay substrate
2003	Cut	NW corner of site	Tree bowl
2004	Fill	NW corner of site	Fill of [2003] modern brick & demolition
2005	Cut	NW corner of site	Rectangular modern feature
2006	Fill	NW corner of site	Fill of [2005] modern brick & demolition

APPENDIX 2: PLATES



Plate 1; Pre-ex shot of site. Looking northeast. No scale



Plate 2; New access road. Looking northwest. 2x1m scales

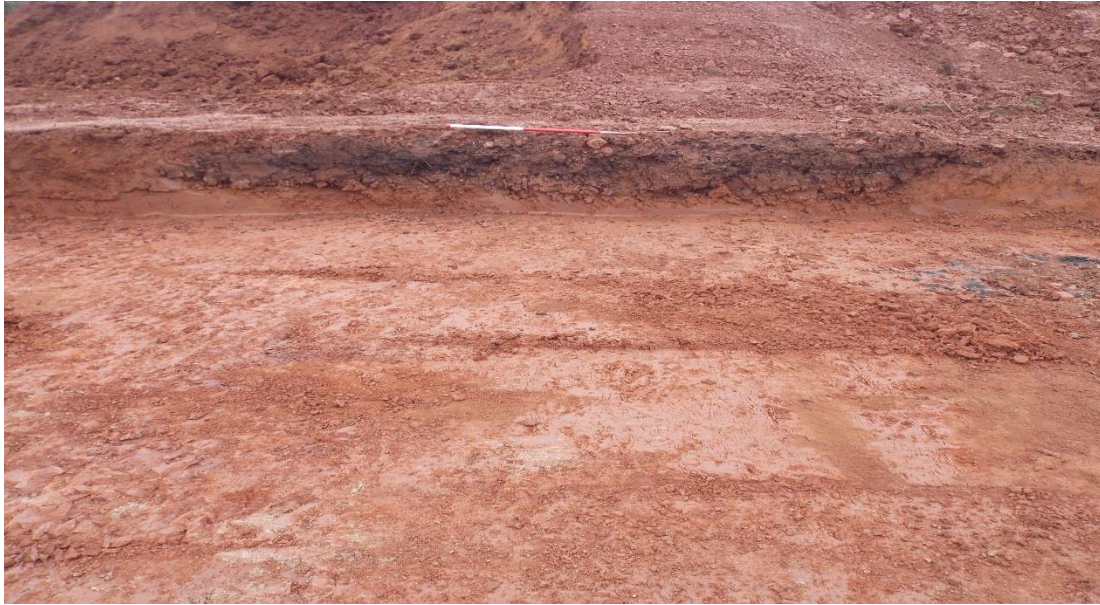


Plate 3; Southeast facing section showing irregular pit [2003]. 1m scale

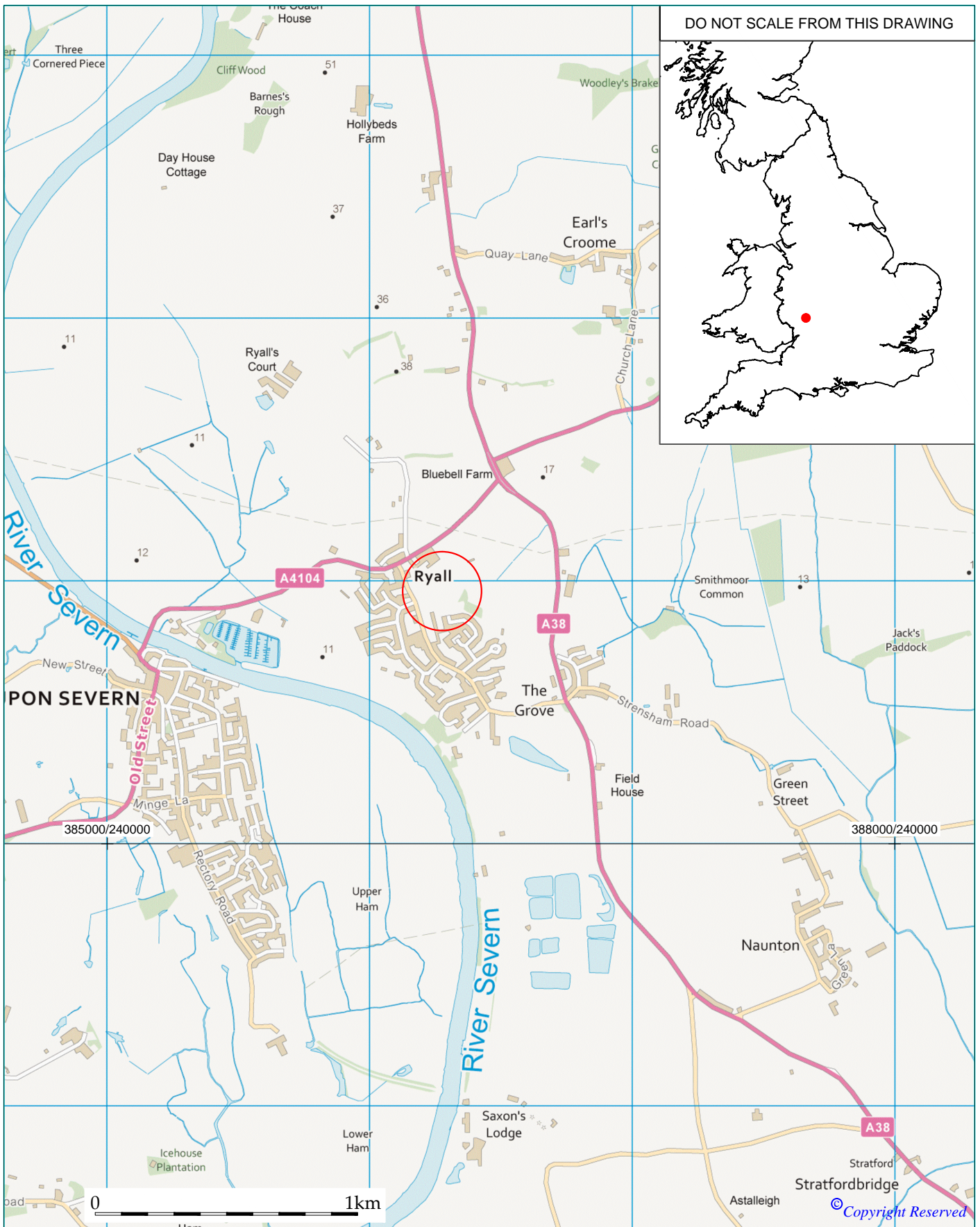



Plate 4; Northwest – southeast aligned rectilinear feature [2005]. Looking southeast. 2x1m scales



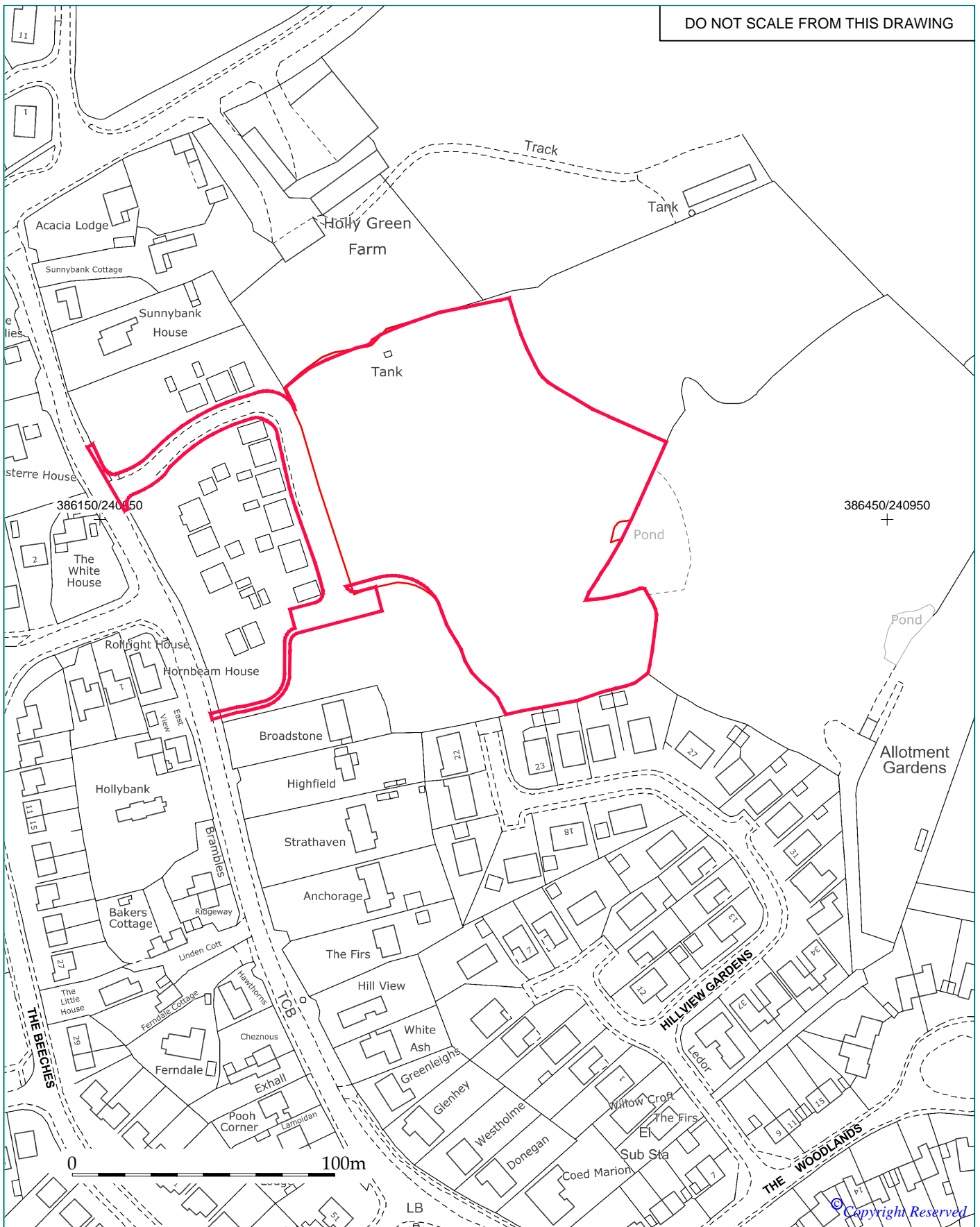
Plate 5; Excavated site showing natural substrate (2002). Looking west. 2x1m scales


APPENDIX 3: FIGURES



CLIENT	Taylor Wimpey West Midlands		DRG No.	BM11267-001	REV	001
PROJECT	Land off Ryall Road, Upton-upon-Severn, Worcestershire		SIZE	A4	SCALE	1: 20,000
DRAWING TITLE	Figure 1; Site Location.		DATE	03/05/2017	CHECKED BY	ND
			DRAWN BY	JW	APPROVED BY	AP
			 your earth our world			

DO NOT SCALE FROM THIS DRAWING



CLIENT	Taylor Wimpey West Midlands		DRG No.	BM11267-002	REV	001	
	PROJECT	Land off Ryall Road, Upton-upon-Severn, Worcestershire	SIZE	A4	SCALE	1: 2,000	
DATE			03/05/2017	DRAWN BY	JW	CHECKED BY	ND
DRAWING TITLE		Figure 2: Site Plan.		 wardell armstrong your earth our world			

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