

Evaluation of Land adjacent  
to Seymour Road/  
Birmingham Road, Oldbury,  
Sandwell

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**Project No 1719**

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For

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**LAND ADJACENT TO SEYMOUR ROAD/BIRMINGHAM ROAD, OLDBURY,  
SANDWELL  
AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION, 2007.**

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## **SUMMARY**

*In November 2007 Birmingham Archaeology undertook an archaeological evaluation of land adjacent to Seymour Road/ Birmingham Road, Oldbury, Sandwell in advance of a proposed residential development. The site was located approximately 800m to the east of Oldbury town centre and was centred on Ordnance Survey NGR SP 0011 8934. The northwestern boundary of site was formed by the Birmingham Road, and the southeastern site boundary was defined by Seymour road.*

*Six evaluation trenches between 16m and 28.5m were excavated at strategic positions across the site. The same general pattern of deposition was encountered across the six trenches. This consisted of sand and gravels, overlain by contemporary deposits of mixed sandy silt and demolition rubble overburden and levelling deposits of red sand. This pattern of deposition represented a deliberate attempt to flatten and level the site after the demolition and clearance of the structures and was relatively uniform across the site.*

*The extant archaeology was directly comparable to the evidence available in the ordnance survey mapping. The trenches on the southern side of site provided evidence of domestic occupation. A series of early-20<sup>th</sup> century foundation walls and drainage were identified representing the residential properties fronting onto Seymour Road, along with a series of contemporary and modern waste and demolition pits. Evaluation of the northern side of the site provided evidence of structures dated to the late-19<sup>th</sup> century which related to the residential properties fronting on to Birmingham Road. These structures took the form of foundation walls and regularly laid engineering brick yard surfaces with inlaid drainage channels and subterranean pipes.*

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**1 INTRODUCTION**

**1.1 Background to the project**

Birmingham Archaeology was commissioned by Bryant Homes North Midlands to undertake a programme of trial trenching ahead of a proposed residential development at Seymour road/Birmingham Road, Oldbury Sandwell (hereinafter referred to as the site, Planning Application Number DC/06/46496).

This report outlines the results of a field evaluation carried out between 19<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2007, and has been prepared in accordance with the Institute of Field Archaeologists Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations (IFA 1994).

The evaluation conformed to a brief produced by Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (Appendix 4), and a Written Scheme of Investigation (Birmingham Archaeology 2007, Appendix 5) which was approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to implementation, in accordance with guidelines laid down in Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 (DoE 1990).

**1.2 Location and geology**

The site was located approximately 800m to the east of Oldbury town centre and was centred on Ordnance Survey NGR SP 0011 8934 (Fig. 1). The site occupied a currently undeveloped plot of land that was generally rectangular in plan and which comprised approximately 0.7 hectares. The northwestern boundary of site was formed by the Birmingham road, and the southeastern site boundary was defined by Seymour road.

The underlying geology consisted of natural superficial deposits of glacial till comprised of red-brown pebbly clay. These deposits are underlain by strata of the Keele formation of the Carboniferous (Westphalian D Series). This is described as red and orange calcareous mudstone with red and purple sandstone and mudstone (Wood 2007).

The present character of the site is mainly open with some tree cover. Tarmac and concrete surfaces were present within the northern part of the site, and are evidence of the previous land use. Residential properties bounded the site to the northwest and large industrial properties to the southwest.

**2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

The site adjoins an area of archaeological potential. Medieval settlement is recorded in the general vicinity, but its precise location and extent is not presently clear. The development site is close to the remains of the 16<sup>th</sup>-century Blakely Hall (c 1540), demolished in the 1930s, but located immediately to the north of the site on the opposite side of the Birmingham Road (SMR No. 13503). A moated site first recorded in AD 1291 northwest of Blakeley Hall assumed to be the remains of the earlier 13–14<sup>th</sup> century Blakely Hall (SMR No. 2815) was also situated to the northeast of site across Birmingham Road. It also lies close to the site of a watermill recorded on Ogilby's map of 1675, and first recorded in 1302. The location of the Ruskin

Pottery Works was located approximately 400m further to the east along the Birmingham Road (SMR No. 10547) and Ruskin pottery has also been recorded in this area. Also, the remains of the Chances Glassworks are situated to the north-east of the site (SMR Nos. 1435 – Various). Of these features the most significant is the remains of the former site of Blakely Hall. At present there is no evidence of the original extent of the Hall and its grounds. There is also the possibility of evidence relating to the post medieval industrial activity within the area.

The first available cartographic source of the site is the Ordnance Survey map of 1886 (Fig.3). The site is partially developed with residential properties fronting along the Birmingham Road. The site of Blakeley Hall is noted and the Birmingham and Midland Tramway depot is situated to the east of site. The OS map of 1904 (Fig.4) shows very little development of the site with just one residential property being introduced in the northeast corner. The OS map of 1919 (Fig. 5) shows the site as almost entirely developed with residential properties and their associated gardens. By the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century these residential properties began to be demolished and replaced by garages. Complete clearance of the site had occurred by 1999.

### **3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The principle aim of the evaluation were to:

- Establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains within the site.
- To determine the nature, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains identified.
- To provide data concerning the development of Oldbury from the medieval period to the present.
- To contribute towards an appreciation of the development of the pottery industry in late-medieval to early post-medieval Oldbury.
- To contribute to the broader appreciation of the development of the town of Oldbury.

### **4 METHODOLOGY**

#### **4.1 Fieldwork**

Prior to the commencement of fieldwork a review of the cartographic sources was undertaken. This rapid map regression exercise was supplemented by consultation of the Sandwell MBC Sites and Monuments Record (SMR). This preliminary review of the sources informed the decisions regarding location and anticipated findings of the trenches.

Six trenches comprising a total of 125 linear metres were excavated across the site totalling 200m<sup>2</sup> (125m x 1.6m), this provided (approximately) a 3% sample of the total site area (Fig. 2). The trenches were located to test areas of archaeological potential as indicated by the map regression and consultation of the SMR, and were approved by Charlotte Lewis, the Assistant Archaeologist, Sandwell MBC before commencement of trenching. Subject to this, the aim of the evaluation was to test the site as widely as possible.

The trenches were located in order to avoid the location of the former boundaries of the series of late-19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup>-century terraces that fronted onto the roads surrounding the site but have since been demolished. However, various trench locations stipulated in the Written Statement of Investigation proved to be unviable due to unforeseen circumstances including

the presence of hard-standing, vegetation and the constraints of Japanese knotweed infiltration. Therefore trenches were altered in order to obtain an appropriate site sample with the approval of the Assistant Archaeologist, Sandwell MBC.

All topsoil and modern overburden was removed using a JCB mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless ditching bucket, under direct archaeological supervision, down to the top of the uppermost archaeological horizon or the subsoil. Subsequent cleaning and excavation was by hand. A representative sample of archaeological features and deposits was manually excavated in order to define their character and to obtain suitable dating evidence. Generally, 50% of pits or post-holes and a 1m section of linear/ curvilinear features was excavated. Archaeological deposits were not completely excavated unless this was unavoidable. The depth of archaeological deposits across the site was assessed, although the full length of every trench was not necessarily excavated down to natural. In the case of this evaluation, extensive 19<sup>th</sup>/ 20<sup>th</sup> century structural remains survived and test areas were dug within each trench to prove or disprove the presence of earlier below-ground deposits.

All stratigraphic sequences were recorded. Features were planned at a scale of 1:20 or 1:50, and sections were drawn through all cut features and significant vertical stratigraphy at a scale of 1:10. A comprehensive written record was maintained using a continuous numbered context system on *pro-forma* context and feature cards. Written records and scale plans were supplemented by photographs using digital, monochrome and colour slide photography.

Recovered finds were cleaned, marked and remedial conservation work was undertaken as necessary. Treatment of all finds conformed to guidance contained within '*A Strategy for the Care and Investigation of Finds*' published by English Heritage (1995).

The full site archive includes all artefactual remains recovered from the site and the paper archive. The site archive will be prepared according to guidelines set down in Appendix 3 of the Management of Archaeology Projects (English Heritage, 1991), the Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long-term Storage (Walker, 1990) and Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological collections (Museum and Art Galleries Commission, 1992). The finds will be deposited at Wednesbury Museum and Art Gallery and the paper archive will be deposited with Smethwick Library, subject to permission from the landowner.

## **5 RESULTS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

Detailed descriptions and dimensions of the significant contexts are presented in Appendix 1 and full details are available in the project archive. In the following sections both feature (cut) and context numbers are highlighted in bold. This section is separated into trenches in numerical order. Each individual trench is then described stratigraphically beginning with the earliest deposits. A representative sample of trench plans and sections are illustrated at the back of this report. These have been chosen to illustrate the significant archaeological deposits/ structures described for each trench.

The same general pattern of deposition was encountered across the six trenches. This consisted of a primary layer of mixed greyish and brownish orange, clay sand which was overlain by a mid-greyish brown, sandy-silt, overlain in places by levelling layers of orangey red sand and ultimately sealed by a thin layer of modern topsoil. This pattern of deposition was disturbed across the site to the presence of tarmac and concrete surfaces.



The spread of archaeological features confirmed the evidence preserved in the historical and cartographic sources. The majority of archaeological features were present around the edges of site, these related to the late-19<sup>th</sup> to early-20<sup>th</sup> century residential properties fronting onto the Birmingham, Seymour and Rood End Roads. The foundations of several of these properties and their boundary walls were encountered along with a variety of intrusions cut into the rear gardens of these properties. No significant earlier features were encountered and only one sherd of residual medieval pottery was found.

## **5.2 Trench 1** (Figure 5, Plate 1)

Trench 1 was located at the southwestern corner of site and was aligned northeast to southwest. The trench was 20.2m in length and 1.6m in width and was excavated to a depth of 0.75m. A group of parallel early-20<sup>th</sup> century walls, aligned northwest to southeast, were exposed within this trench. These walls were the foundation walls of the rear of the properties fronting on to Seymour Road, first evident on the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition Ordnance survey map (Fig. 4).

### **5.2.1 Subsoil (natural)**

The natural subsoil **1002** was reached at 0.65m below ground level at a height of 150.66m AOD. It consisted of mixed greyish and brownish orange clayey sand.

### **5.2.2 Archaeological features and deposits**

The trench contained a series of contemporary northwest to southeast aligned walls **1003/1004/1005/1006/1007/1008/1009/1012/1013**. These walls were grouped under one number (**1015**) due to their contemporary construction but were not stratigraphically linked. Each wall was constructed of machine-cut unfrosted dark orange 3 inch bricks set in a cement base mortar within an English bond. The walls were constructed upon a stepped foundation course. The walls were 2-3 courses thick and were regularly grouped. They represent the walls at the rear of the properties fronting on to Seymour Road. Parallel to walls **1009** and **1012**, and probably contemporary was a linear pipe trench (**1010**) within which was a thin copper water pipe and a dark brown, sandy silt backfill (**1011**). West of this feature was the base of a shallow pit **1016** again filled by a dark brown, sandy silt (**1017**). This pit was likely to be a levelling/ demolition intrusion cut into the natural.

The features were covered by a mid-greyish brown, silty sand (**1001**) which was in places overlain by patches of orangey red levelling sand (**1014**). The trench was sealed by a mid-dark brown, sandy silt topsoil (**1000**).

## **5.3 Trench 2** (Figure 5, Plate 2)

Trench 1 was located at the southern half of site and was aligned northeast to southwest. The trench was 20m in length and 1.6m in width and was excavated to a depth of 0.35–0.7m. A collection of early-20<sup>th</sup> century walls comprising two phases of construction were exposed within this trench. These walls were on the same alignment as those exposed within trench 1 and represent the foundation walls of the rear of the properties fronting on to Seymour Road, first evident on the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition Ordnance survey map (Fig. 5). The structures include ceramic drainage pipes and truncated concrete flooring.

### **5.3.1 Subsoil (natural)**

The natural subsoil (**2004**) was reached at 0.55m below ground level at 151.05m AOD. It consisted of mixed greyish and brownish orange clay sand.

### 5.3.2 Archaeological features and deposits

The trench contained a series of walls (**2005/2007/2009**) aligned both northwest to southeast and northeast to southwest. These walls were grouped as one (**2012**) due to their contemporary construction but were not stratigraphically linked. They represent the same phase of construction to that exposed within Trench 1 (**1015**). The walls were constructed of machine-cut unfrogged dark orange 3in bricks set in a cement base mortar within an English bond. They constituted a series of small outbuildings and possible store rooms attached to the rear of the houses fronting on to Seymour Road. A secondary phase of construction was apparent as a group of structures (**2013**), including northwest to southeast orientated walls, salt-glazed ceramic drainage pipes and truncated concrete flooring. The walls (**2006/2008**) were constructed of machine-cut, unfrogged reddish orange 3in bricks set in a cement based mortar within an English bond. These features were built between the primary phase of building and probably occurred within a few years of the original build. Related to the primary phase of construction and overlain by wall **2008** was a linear salt glazed drainage pipe cut (**2010**) which was backfilled with dark brown silt (**2011**).

The features were covered by a mid-greyish brown silty sand (**2003**) which was overlain by an imported levelling deposit of red sand (**2002**). The trench was sealed by a mixed dark brown and red sandy silt topsoil (**2001**).

### 5.4 Trench 3 (Figure 6, Plates 3 & 4)

Trench 3 was located just west of the centre of site and was aligned northwest to southeast. The trench was 19.5m in length and 1.6m in width and was excavated to a depth of 0.8m. The trench was devoid of any structural deposits as it was situated within an area of relatively undeveloped land identified in the historic mapping. This area was between the boundaries of the back gardens of the residential properties and was therefore the most promising location for identifying earlier deposits. A group of modern intrusions were identified beneath the northern section of the trench. One residual sherd of medieval pottery was recovered.

#### 5.4.1 Subsoil (natural)

The natural subsoil (**3002**) was reached at 0.8m below ground level at 150.75m AOD. It consisted of greyish brown, silty sand. This slightly differed from that exposed on the south of site.

#### 5.4.2 Archaeological features and deposits

At the northwestern end of the trench, beneath the northern section was a sub-square shaped cut (**3004**) which was filled with blackish brown sandy silt (**3003**). This irregularity of this feature makes it likely that this was a deeper stratified patch of subsoil. Further towards the centre of the trench was a regular rectangular cut (**3006**), with steep vertical sides. It was excavated to a depth of 0.6m but the base was not reached. The primary fill was mixed orange and dark brown silty sand (**3011**) and included 19<sup>th</sup>-century ceramics and a residual sherd of medieval pottery. The upper fill level (**3005**) was more mixed and included large amounts of building rubble. The purpose of the pit remained unknown. A further sub-square shallow pit (**3008**) was exposed further to the southeast along the trench. The fill contained degraded fabric and small animal bones covered by a black silty fill (**3007**). This probably represented a pet burial. A further rectangular cut (**3010**) was exposed at the southeast end of the trench. This was similar in form to that of pit **3006** but was filled by 20<sup>th</sup>-century domestic waste such as plastics, ceramics and building rubble within a mixed black silt (**3009**).

The features were covered by a dark brown sandy silt (**3001**) and was sealed by a 0.3m thick **red sand topsoil (3000)**.

## **5.5 Trench 5** (Figure 7, Plates 5-7)

Trench 5 was located on the northern side of site and was aligned northeast to southwest. The trench was 28.5m in length and 1.6–2m in length and was excavated to a depth of 1.2m. A group of late-19<sup>th</sup> century walls and brick yard surfaces northeast to southwest and northwest to southeast were exposed within this trench. These structures represented the foundation walls and associated yard surfaces of the properties fronting on to Birmingham Road first evident on the 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey map (Fig. 3).

### **5.5.1 Subsoil (natural)**

The natural subsoil (**5017**) was reached at 1.2m below ground level at 149.173m AOD. It consisted of mixed orange sand and gravels. This again differed slightly from the natural exposed elsewhere on site.

### **5.5.2 Archaeological features and deposits**

Cut into the natural at the eastern end of the trench was a linear salt glazed ceramic drain (**5013**) orientated north to south. A small patch of machine-cut, unfrogged 3in red bricks (**5012**) were also exposed at this end of the trench. These features were overlain by a brownish-black, sandy silt deposit (**5016**) interpreted as a levelling layer for the yard surfaces and foundation walls constructed above. These structures were heavily truncated by later intrusions but their general form was still identifiable. A long wall (**5009**) situated at the western end of the trench was aligned northeast to southwest and northwest to southeast. This was constructed from machine-cut unfrogged 2¾in orangey red bricks, set in a cement based mortar, within a simple stretcher bond. Attached to the southern elevation of this wall was a large single skinned brick rectangular structure (**5010**) interpreted as the foundations of a small secondary outbuilding. An associated salt-glazed ceramic drain (**5007**) was situated just south of this building. This was overlain by the remains of a truncated paving brick yard surfaces which surrounded the southern (**5011**) and eastern (**5008**) elevations of these features. A small wall (**5006**) orientated northwest to southeast was situated east of these features, this wall was truncated but appeared to mark the boundary of a series of substantial yards and gutters to the east. The foundations of a further truncated wall (**5004**) aligned northwest to southeast was set within the yard surfaces and was therefore contemporary with it. This wall was composed of machine-cut, frogged 3in orange bricks.

The yard surfaces were separated into three distinct types and probably represent one contemporary phase. Each type of surface was separated by a series of regularly laid open guttering to collect the surface water. The guttering itself was made up of gully shaped engineering bricks. The northernmost surface (**5003**) was composed of 6¼in wide by 2in thick paving bricks set in a simple stretcher bond. South of this was a more crudely constructed unfrogged 3in thick red brick surface (**5002**) again laid in a stretcher bond. A further type of surface composed of regular 5in wide by 1½in thick paving bricks (**5001**) was laid at the northeastern end of the trench. This variety of brick types was probably due to availability of materials, repair and visual effect. Cut into these surfaces were three regularly aligned concrete fence posts (**5005**) which probably relate to a boundary fence inserted after the demolition of the buildings.

The features were covered by a 0.5m thick mixed demolition layer (**5014**) composed of a mixed sandy silt and brick rubble. This was further overlain by a thin (0.15m) levelling layer of

pinkish orange gravel and sand (**5015**). The trench was sealed by a dark blackish brown sandy silt topsoil (**5000**).

## **5.6 Trench 6** (Figure 8, Plate 8)

Trench 6 was located towards the southeast corner of site and was aligned north to south. The trench was 20m in length and 1.6m in width and was excavated to a depth of 0.35–0.7m. A group of early-20<sup>th</sup> century walls, aligned northwest to southeast and northeast to southwest, were exposed within this trench. These walls were the foundation walls of the rear of the properties fronting on to Seymour Road, first evident on the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition Ordnance survey map (Fig. 5) and relate to the walls exposed in both trench 1 and 2.

### **5.6.1 Subsoil (natural)**

The natural subsoil (**6002**) was reached at 0.55m below ground level at 151.01m AOD. It consisted of mixed orange clayey sand and gravels. Slightly different in colour from that exposed in the other trenches in this vicinity (Trenches 1 and 2).

### **5.6.2 Archaeological features and deposits**

The trench contained a series of walls (**6003**) aligned both northwest to southeast and northeast to southwest. These were contemporary with those exposed in Trenches 1 and 2 (**1015**, **2012**). The walls were constructed of machine-cut, unfrosted dark orange, 3in bricks set in a cement base mortar within an English bond. Again, these constituted a series of small outbuildings and possible store rooms attached to the rear of the houses fronting on to Seymour Road. A further wall aligned northeast to southwest (**6006**) was exposed at the northern end of the trench. This was constructed of similar materials and probably represents a boundary wall at the end of these properties. These features were overlain by a mixed greyish brown, silty sand demolition and subsoil layer (**6001**) into which had been cut (**6004**) a large (4.5m) modern rubbish pit. This was primarily composed of frequent inclusions of brick rubble, plastics, and material (**6005**) consistent with a domestic rubbish tip. This rubbish pit had partially cut into the natural. At the southern end of the trench the structural features had been covered by a further deposit of orangey red levelling sand (**6007**), frequently observed across site.

The trench was sealed by a mixed dark brown and red sandy silt topsoil (**6000**).

## **5.7 Trench 7** (Figure 8, Plate 9)

Trench 7 was located towards the southeast corner of site and was aligned north to south adjacent to Trench 6. The trench was 16m in length and 1.6m in width and was excavated to a depth of 0.25m–0.9m. A series of heavily truncated walls early-20<sup>th</sup> century were exposed at the south end of the trench again related to the properties fronting on to Seymour Road, first evident on the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition Ordnance survey map (Fig. 5). A group of modern pit intrusions were cut into the natural at the northern end of the trench.

### **5.7.1 Subsoil (natural)**

The natural subsoil **7002** was reached at 0.75m below ground level at 150.58m AOD. It consisted of mixed orange clayey sand and gravels.

### 5.7.2 Archaeological features and deposits

A series of heavily truncated walls (**7004/7005/7006**) were situated at the northern end of the trench. These walls were aligned both northwest to southeast and northeast to southwest and were constructed of machine-cut unfrosted dark orange 3in bricks set in a cement base mortar within an English bond. At the northern end of the trench natural was overlain by a 0.2m thick layer of yellowish brown silty sand (**7013**). Several modern features cut into this and the natural layers. Pit (**7008**) was sub-circular, 1.5m in width and excavated to a depth of 0.7m. A post hole was noted in the southern edge. The pit was filled with modern garden soil and red sand (**7007**) with inclusions of modern domestic waste. A circular steel tank (**7010**) was situated north of this pit and was filled with a black silt (**7009**). A further linear feature (**7012**) was situated at the far northern end of the trench. This was again filled with modern domestic waste and rubble (**7011**). These features probably all relate to modern garden features and waste pits at the end of the gardens or possibly with the burial of waste after demolition and levelling.

The features were covered by a dark brown sandy silt (**7001**) and was sealed by a 0.3m thick red sand topsoil (**7000**).

## 6 SUMMARY

### 6.1 Archaeological Features and Deposits

Archaeological features were found in all of the six trenches. The archaeological features identified, correspond to the late-19<sup>th</sup> to early-20<sup>th</sup> century residential properties fronting onto the Birmingham, Seymour and Rood End Roads present on the Ordnance Survey mapping. The structures are characterised by the truncated remains of foundations which predominantly lay immediately beneath the topsoil and sand levelling deposits. Further intrusive features were exposed towards the rear of these properties, which relate to the period of occupation of these structures.

The principle dated features and deposits were:

- Late-19<sup>th</sup> century foundation walls, yard surfaces and associated drainage related to the residential properties fronting on to Birmingham Road within Trench 5.
- Early-20<sup>th</sup> century foundation walls related to the residential properties fronting on to Seymour Road within Trenches 1, 2, 6 and 7. Two phases construction of which are represented within Trench 2.
- 20<sup>th</sup> century-modern domestic and demolition waste pits encountered within Trenches 3, 6 and 7.

### 6.2 Overburden and topsoil

Overlying the majority of features across the site were a series of contemporarily laid 0.3–0.6m thick deposits of mixed dark brownish black sandy silt and demolition rubble overburden. These deposits were slightly deeper on the northern side of site. This was overlain across much of the site by imported levelling deposits of red sand. The site was covered by a mixed dark brown and red sandy silt topsoil and there were patches of surviving hard-standing at intervals across site. These overburden deposits represent a deliberate attempt to flatten and level the site after the demolition and clearance of the structures.

## **7 THE FINDS**

### **7.2 The pottery**

The majority of pottery encountered within all of the six trenches was consistent with the late-19<sup>th</sup> and early-20<sup>th</sup> century deposits. The pottery assemblage was predominantly made up of mass produced domestic glazed blue transfer printed wares, pale yellow glazed stonewares, and plain glazed white stonewares. Occasional fragments of black glazed industrial slipwares were also recovered.

One sherd of residual ceramic was exposed within the pit fill **3011**. This sherd was a pale orange grey sandy fabric body sherd possibly dated to the 13<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> century. Please see Appendix 3 for a quantification of the finds.

### **Catalogue**

#### **3011**

- 2 x blue shell-edge plate sherds, 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- 1 x blue transfer-printed (chinoiserie design) ware bowl sherd, 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- 1 x indeterminate blue transfer-printed ware sherd, 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- 1 x 19<sup>th</sup> century yellow ware/cane ware sherd, 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- 1 x brown-glazed coarseware sherd, 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- 1 x unglazed medieval sherd, 13<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> century (not closely datable).

## **7 DISCUSSION**

The natural geological substrate was identified at approximately 0.55–1.2m below present ground level. It appeared to be slightly deeper on the northern side of site than the southern side of site. The archaeological features were predominantly of late-19<sup>th</sup> to early-20<sup>th</sup> century origin and they provide confirmation of the Ordnance Survey mapping of this area.

Trench 5 provided evidence of structures dated to the late-19<sup>th</sup> century which were related to the residential properties fronting on to Birmingham Road. These structures took the form of foundation walls, regularly laid engineering brick yard surfaces with inlaid drainage channels. Salt glazed ceramic drains were also associated with these structures.

Trenches 1, 2, 6 and 7 provided further evidence of the domestic occupation of site. A series of early-20<sup>th</sup> century foundation walls representing the residential properties fronting onto Seymour Road were exposed. These structures were all regularly laid out and also included evidence of drainage pipes. There was evidence of two phases of construction within Trench 2. This probably represented a relatively short time period at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

A series of contemporary and modern waste and demolition pits were encountered within what would have been the rear gardens of these properties. The pits were all irregularly cut and appeared to have been situated at random. Pits were encountered within Trenches 3, 6 and 7.

These late-19<sup>th</sup> and early-20<sup>th</sup> century structures provide further evidence of the rapidly expanding industrialised towns of the West Midlands during this period and the increased need for domestic housing for those moving into these developing areas. The archaeological evidence confirms and enhances the documentary record. The presence of the residual medieval pottery sherd further confirms the medieval settlement of Oldbury and its close proximity to the site of Blakeley Hall.

## **8 IMPLICATIONS**

The evaluation successfully characterised the archaeological remains across the site. Deposits predating the late-19<sup>th</sup> to early-20<sup>th</sup> century are not likely to exist in this area due to disturbance caused by the extensive activity within this period. These structures were constructed relatively close to the natural geologic deposits and have therefore obscured any earlier evidence from this area. The site itself was almost completely developed and undisturbed land was limited. As such the survival of earlier archaeological remains is not anticipated.

## **10 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The project was commissioned by Alan Jarvis of Bryant Homes North Midlands. Thanks go to Charlotte Lewis, who monitored the project on behalf of Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council. Work on site was undertaken by Anthony Aston, Kristina Krawiec and William Mitchell. William Mitchell produced the written report which was illustrated by Nigel Dodds and Helen Moulden, and edited by Chris Hewitson who also managed the project for Birmingham Archaeology.

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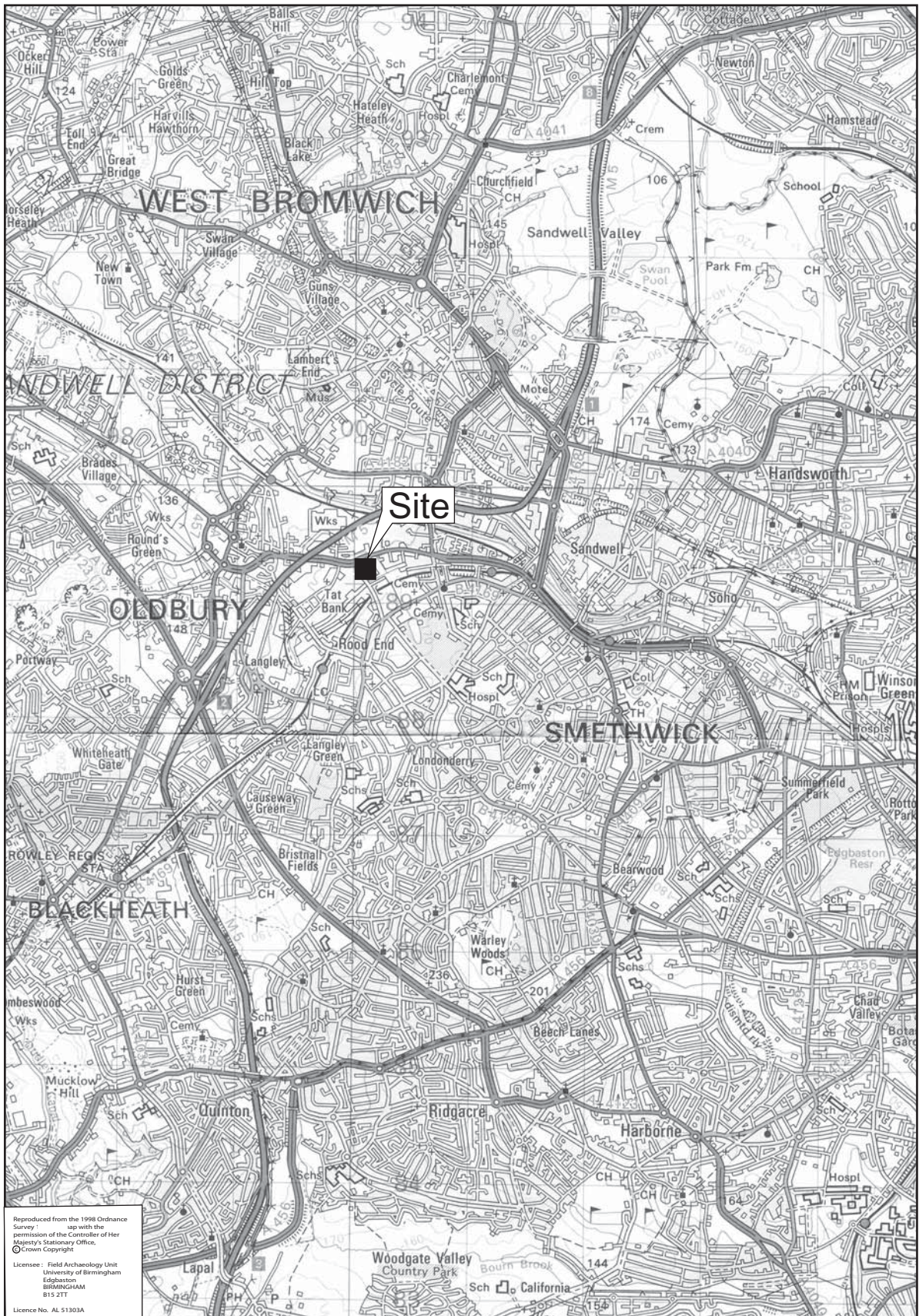


Fig.1





Fig.2

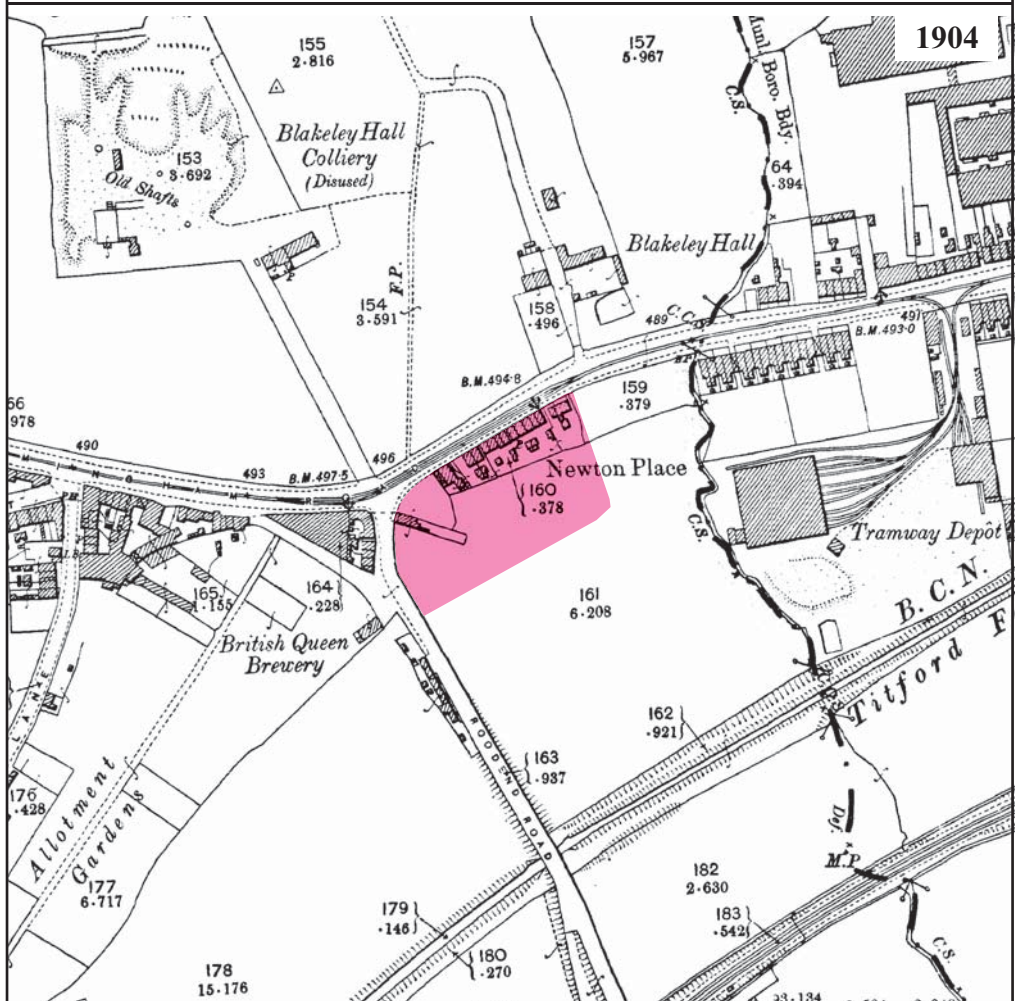
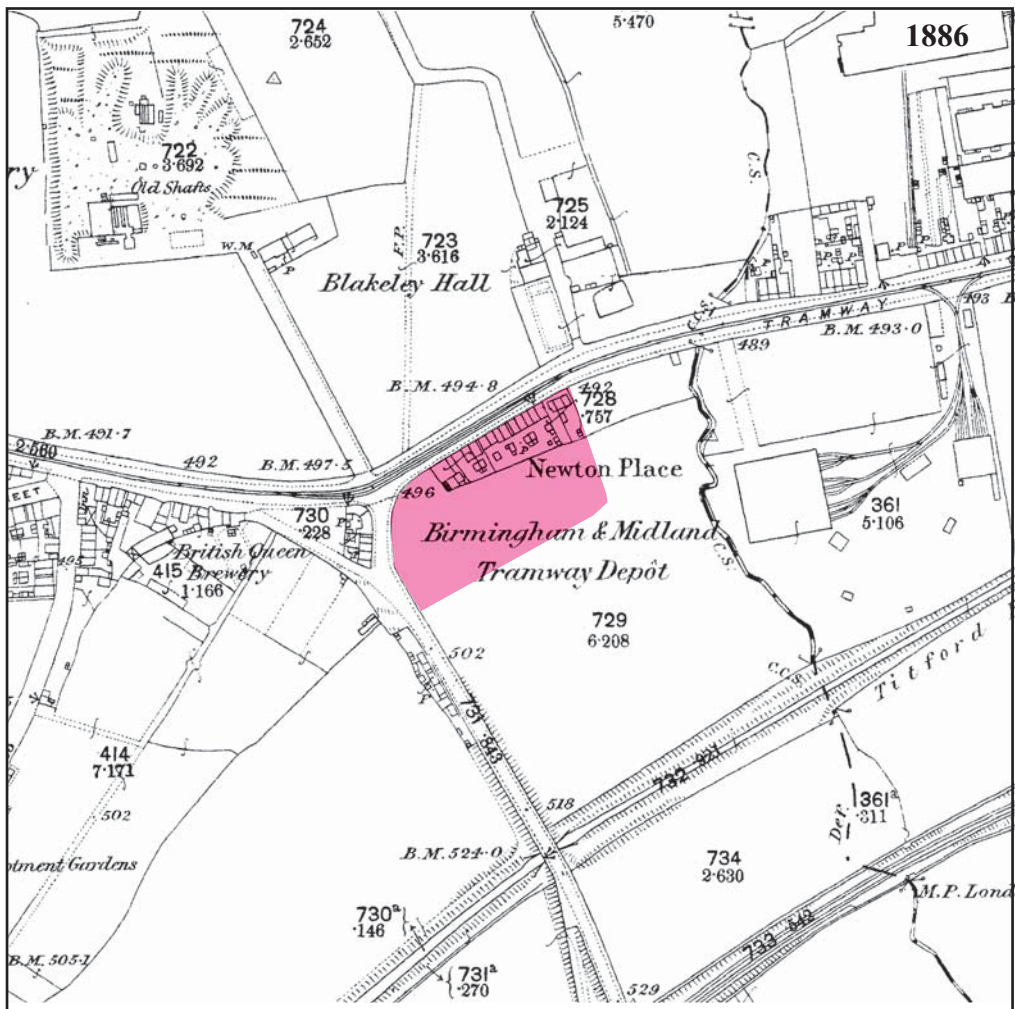


Fig.3

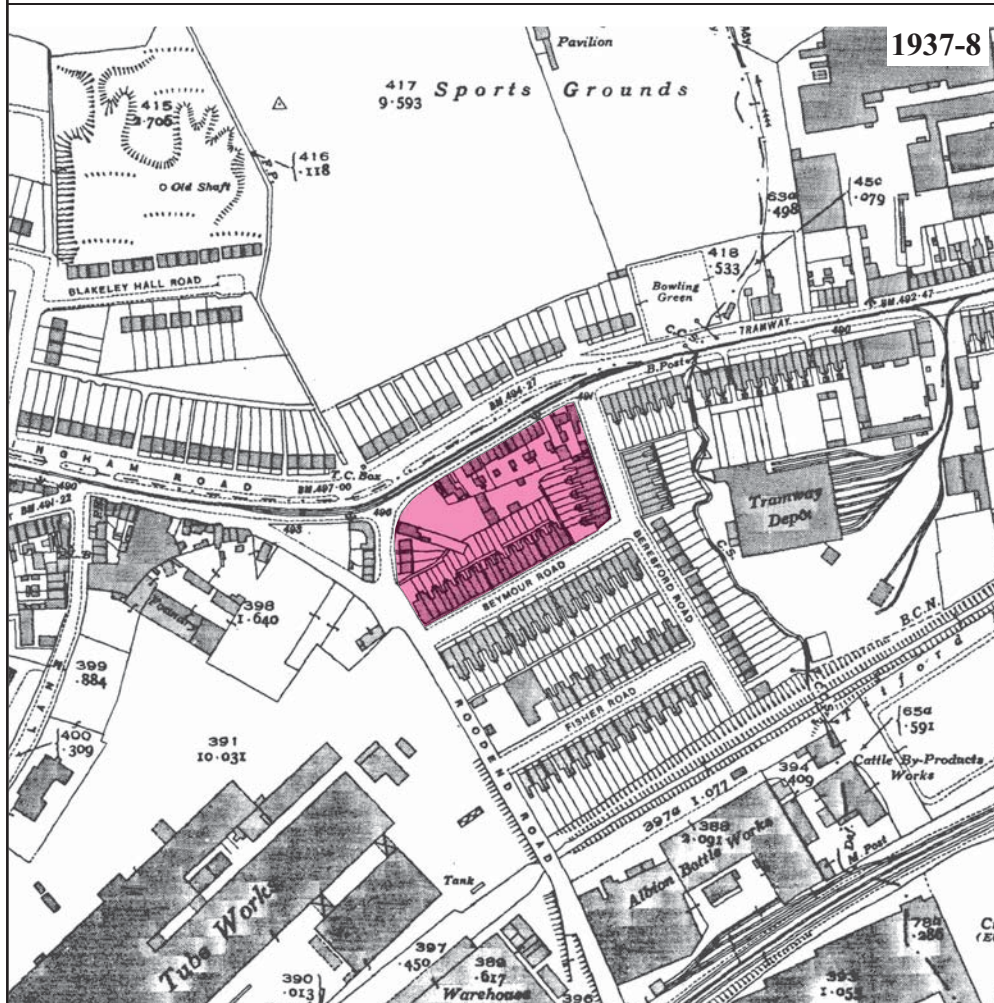
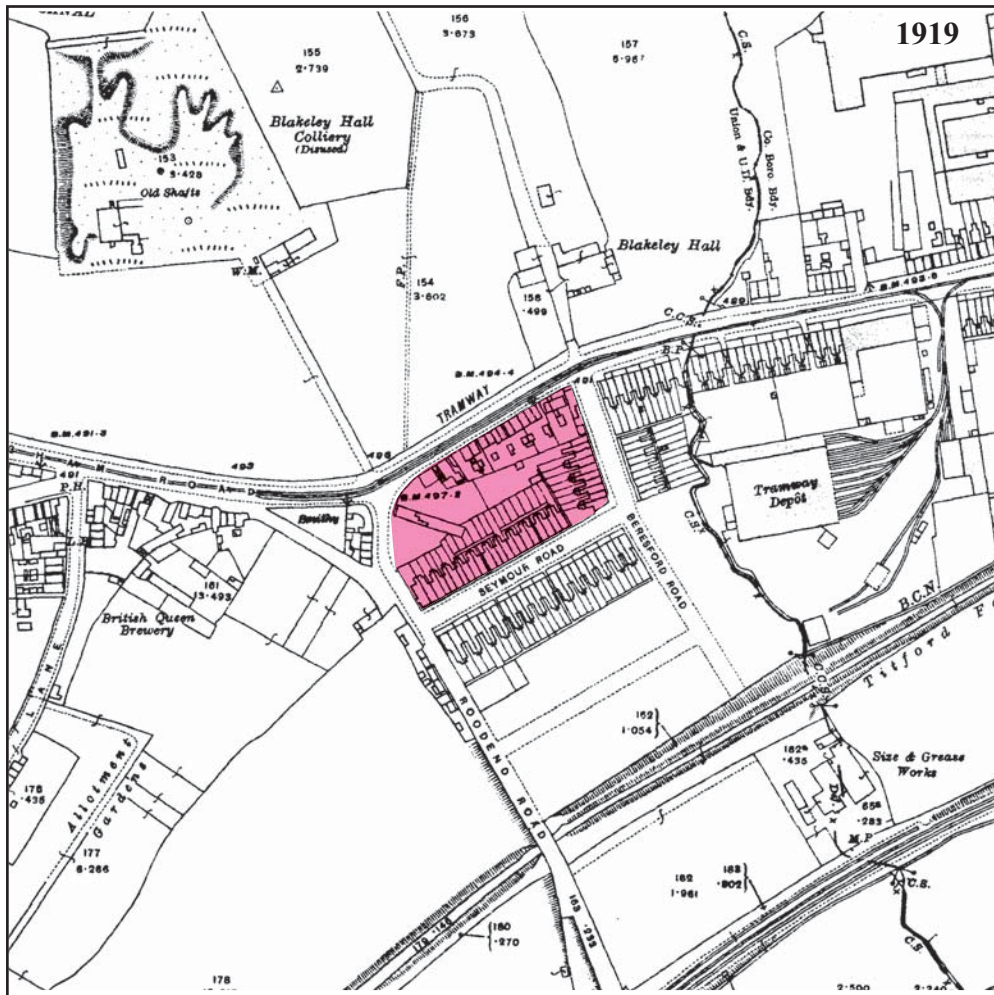


Fig.4

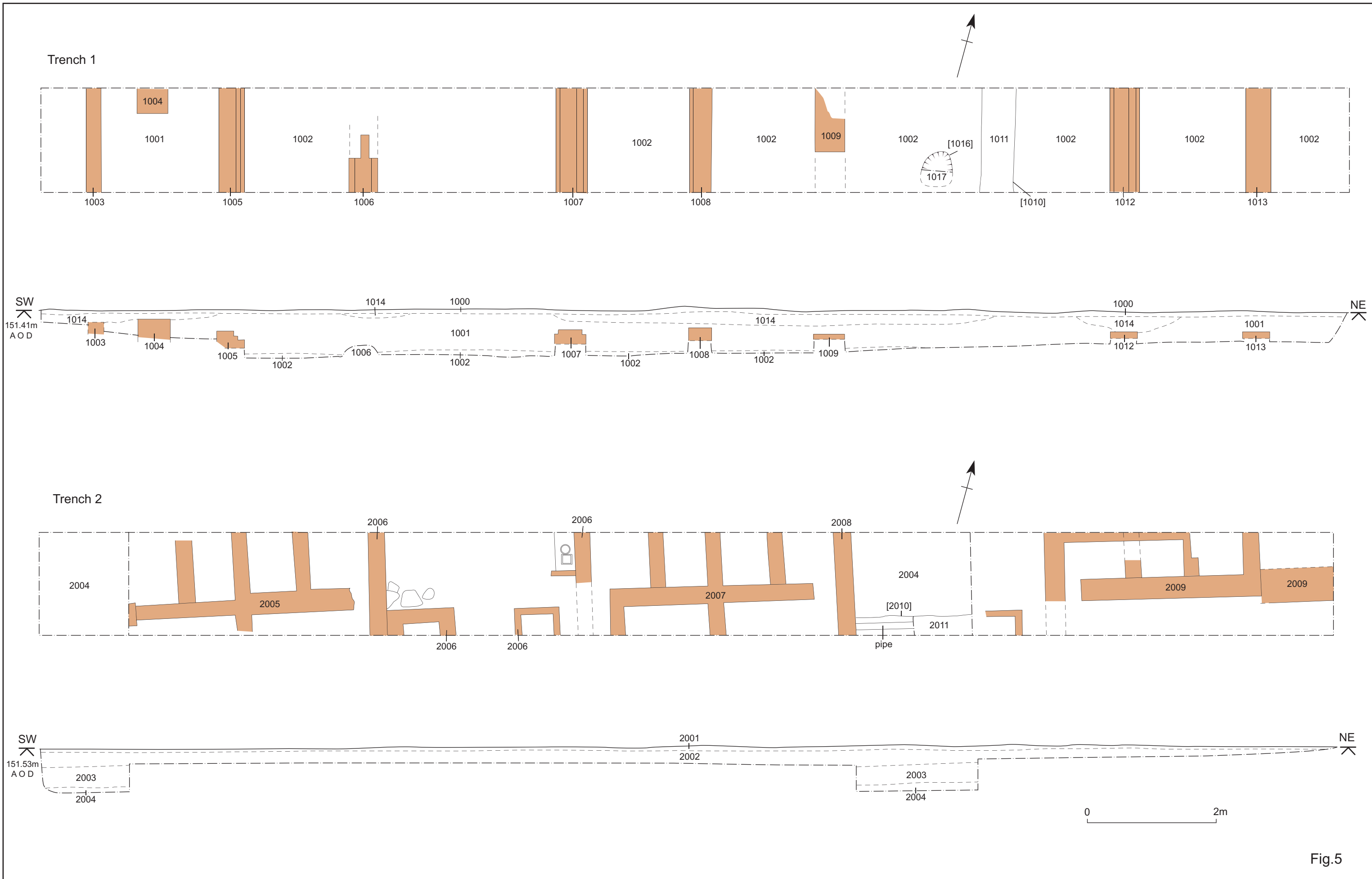


Fig.5

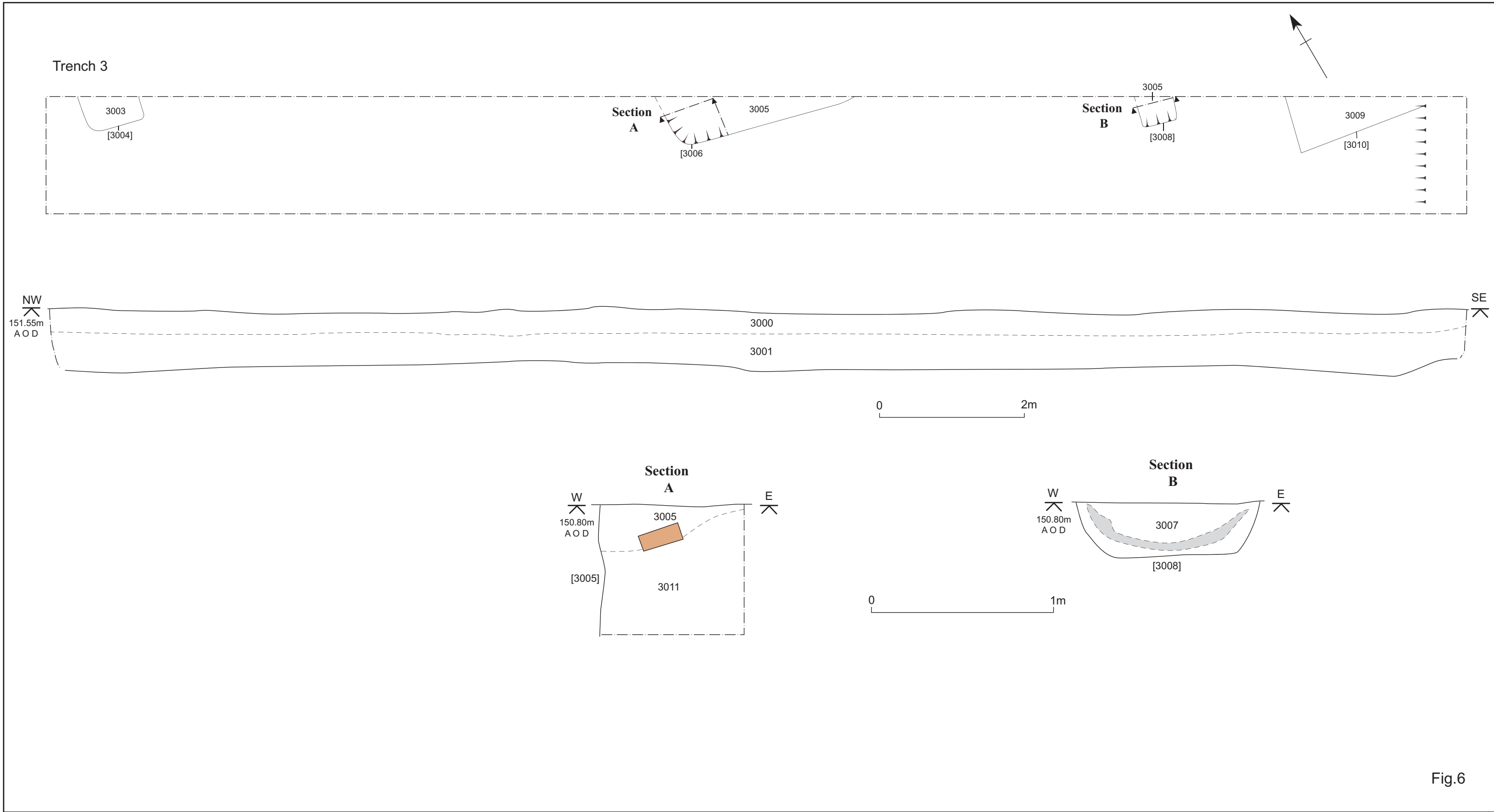


Fig.6

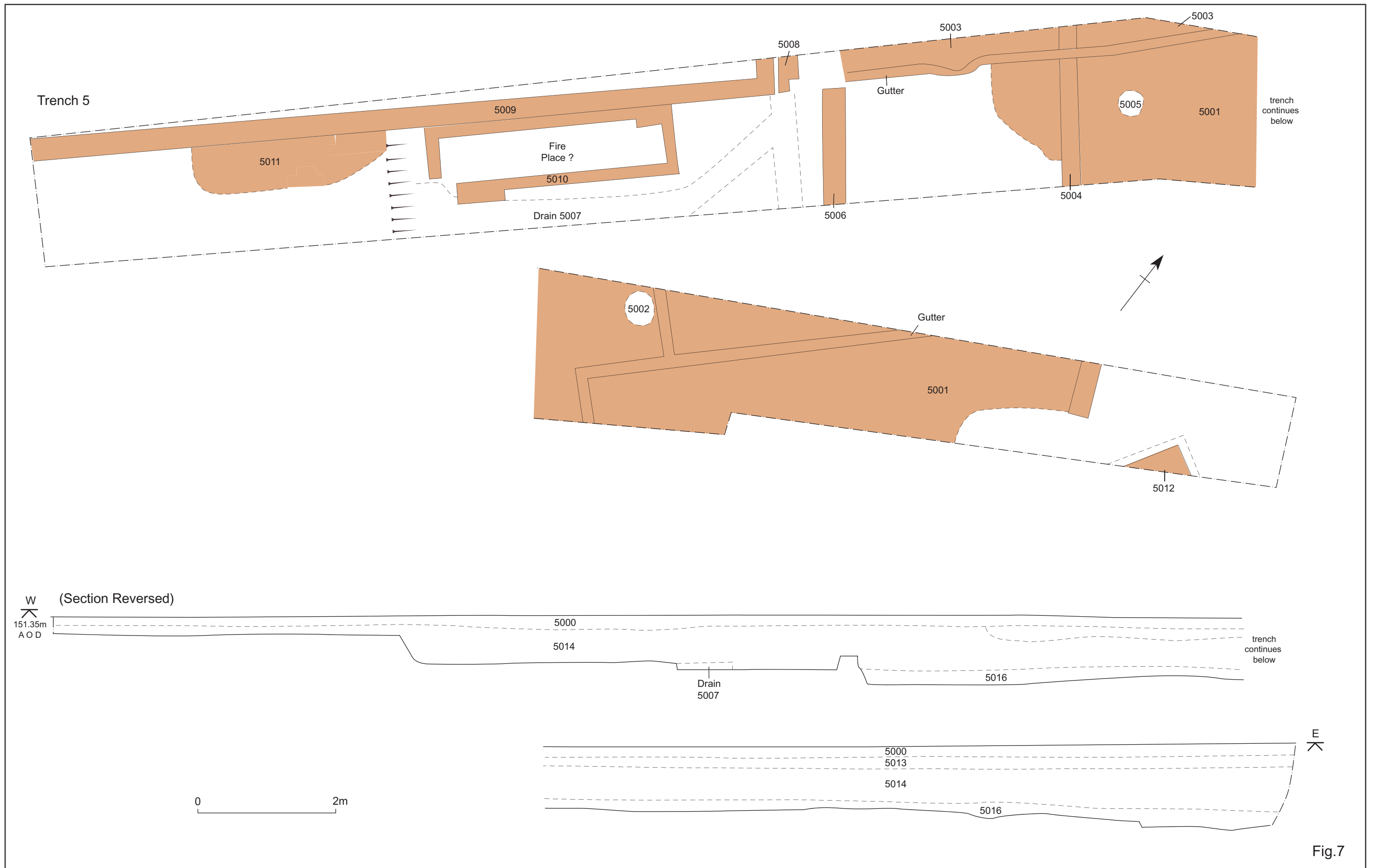
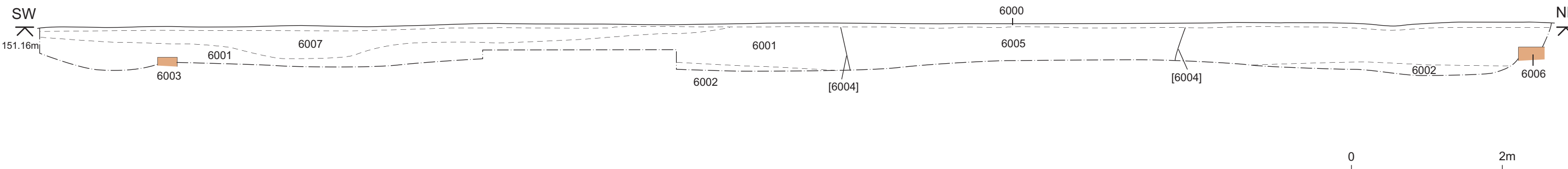
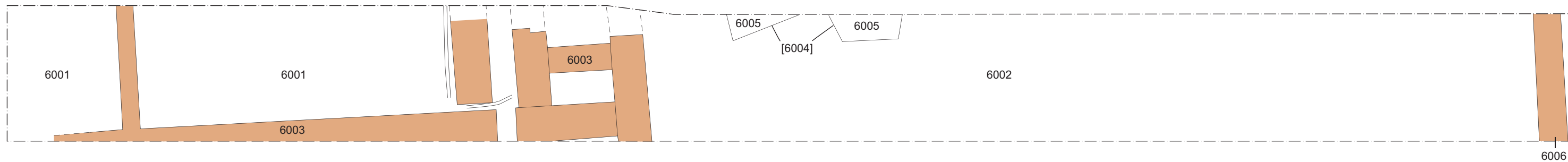


Fig.7

Trench 6



Trench 7

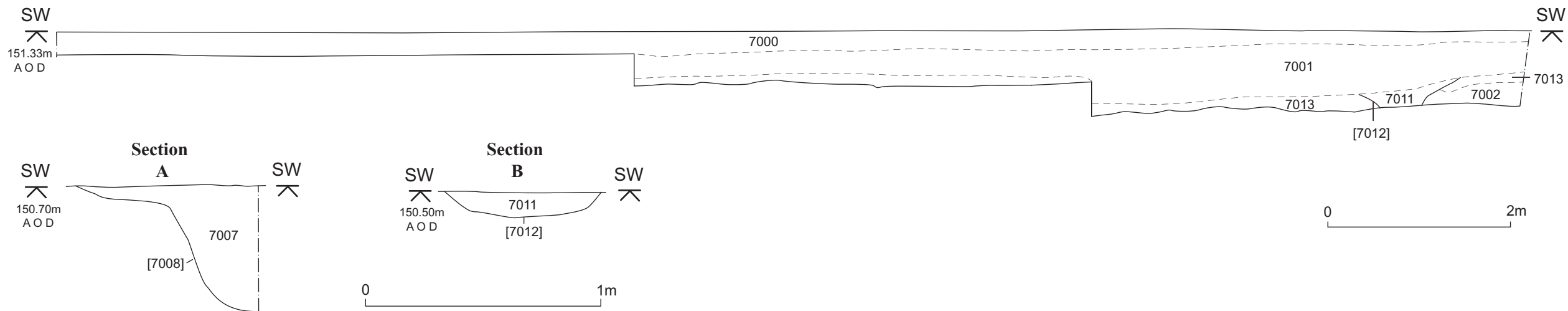
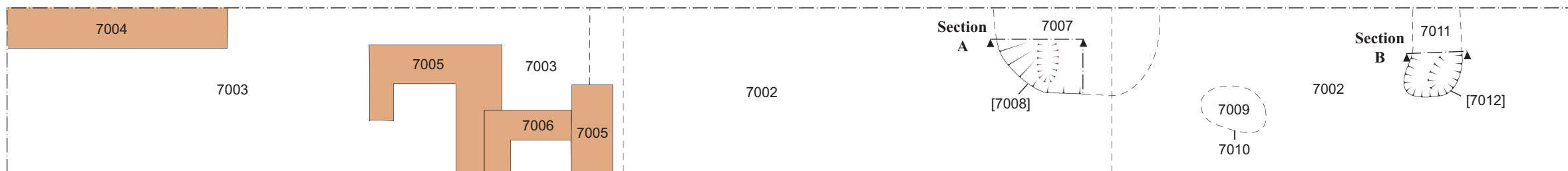


Fig.8



Plate 1: Trench 1, facing Southwest



Plate 2: Trench, facing Southwest





Plate 3: Trench 3, facing West



Plate 4: Trench 3, Pit 3006 facing North



Plate 5: Trench 5, facing Northwest



Plate 6: Trench 5, Yard surface 5001/5002/5003 detail, facing Northeast



Plate 7: Trench 5, Northeast end of trench post removal of yard surface, facing Southeast



Plate 8: Trench 6, facing Northwest



Plate 9: Trench 7, Southeast end of trench facing Northwest

## APPENDIX 1: FEATURE AND CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

**Trench 1:** (Figure 5, Plate 1) 20.2m in length x 1.6m in width

Feature no	Description	Max dimensions (m)	
		Width	Depth
1015	Group. 19 <sup>th</sup> century terraced housing foundations. Aligned N-S. Includes walls 1003, 1004, 1005, 1006, 1007, 1008, 1009, 1012 and 1013	Average 0.48m	Average 0.16m
1017	Pit feature, probable overburden intrusion	0.5m	0.05m

**Trench 2:** (Figure 5, Plate 2) 20m in length x 1.6m in width

Feature no	Description	Max dimensions (m)	
		Width	Depth
2010	Salt glazed 19 <sup>th</sup> century drain.	0.3m+	0.3m+
2012	Group. Phase 1. 19 <sup>th</sup> century terraced housing foundations. Aligned NS and EW. Includes walls 2005, 2007 and 2009	Average 0.48m	Average 0.12m
2013	Group. Phase 2. 19 <sup>th</sup> century terraced housing foundations. Aligned NS and EW. Includes walls 2006 and 2008	Average 0.48m	Average 0.12m

**Trench 3:** (Figure 6, Plates 3 & 4) 19.5m in length x 1.6m in width

Feature no	Description	Max dimensions (m)	
		Width	Depth
3006	Rectangular pit. Aligned E-W. Sherd of residual 16 <sup>th?</sup> century ceramic within fill.	2.2m	0.6m
3008	Small irregular pit. Pet burial	0.5m	1.8m
3010	Irregular rectangular pit aligned E-W. Modern	2.2m	?

**Trench 5:** (Figure 7, Plates 5-7) 28.5m in length x 1.6-2m in width

Feature no	Description	Max dimensions (m)	
		Width	Depth
5001	Engineering brick yard surface.	8.6m	0.04m
5002	Red brick yard surface	4m	0.04m
5003	Engineering brick yard surface.	4.5m	0.05m
5004	Wall. Aligned N-S. Truncated foundations of machine made brick wall	2.1m	0.08m
5005	Post holes. Modern concrete fill surrounding timber posts	0.36m	?
5006	Wall. Aligned N-S. Truncated foundations of machine made brick wall	1.4m	0.16m
5007	Salt glazed 19 <sup>th</sup> century drain.	4m	?
5008	Engineering brick yard surface	0.6	0.04 m

5009	Wall. Aligned E-W. Truncated foundations of machine made brick wall	0.4m	0.5m
5010	Wall. Aligned E-W. Truncated foundations of machine made brick wall	2.2m	0.2m
5011	Engineering brick yard surface	2.4m	0.07m
5012	Wall. Aligned NE- SW. Truncated foundations of machine made brick wall.	1m	0.2m
5013	Salt glazed 19 <sup>th</sup> century drain.	5.5m	?

**Trench 6:** (Figure 8, Plate 8) 20m in length x 1.6m in width

Feature no	Description	Max dimensions (m)	
		Width	Depth
6003	Group. 19 <sup>th</sup> century terraced housing foundations. Aligned NW- SE and NE-SW	Average 0.48m	Average 0.16m
6004	Waste pit (S). Modern	4.5m	0.35+
6006	Wall. Aligned SW- NE. Truncated foundations of machine made brick wall.	1.6m	0.16m

**Trench 7:** (Figure 8, Plate 9) 16m in length x 1.6m in width

Feature no	Description	Max dimensions (m)	
		Width	Depth
7004	Wall. Aligned N-S. Truncated foundations of machine made brick wall	0.23m	0.06m
7005	Red brick yard surface.	0.23m	0.06m
7006	Wall. Aligned N-S and EW. Truncated foundations of machine made brick wall.	0.8m	?
7008	Large Pit/ post-hole feature.	1.5m	0.7m
7010	Steel tank feature	0.7m	?
7012	Linear feature aligned E-W	0.5m	0.3m

**APPENDIX 2: PHOTOGRAPHIC REGISTER**

SITE: <u>Oldbury eval 07</u>		PROJECT No: <u>BA1719</u>	FILM No: <u>2</u>
FILM TYPE: B&W <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		C-slide <input type="checkbox"/>	C-print <input type="checkbox"/>
Digital <input type="checkbox"/>		A.S.A:	

No.	Description	Scales	Or	Photo by	Date
1	Tr 5 Fingering back yard <sup>fully</sup> <sub>SW</sub>	2x2m	S-W	ML	20/11/07
2	Tr 5 " " <sup>fully</sup> <sub>NE</sub>	"	NE	"	"
3	Tr 5 " " <sup>fully</sup> <sub>NE</sub>	"	NE	"	"
4	Tr 5 " " <sup>fully</sup> <sub>NE</sub>	"	NE	"	"
5	Tr 5 " " <sup>fully</sup> <sub>N</sub>	"	N	"	"
6	Tr 1 general - showing found <sup>of</sup> <sub>traces</sub>	2x2m	S-W	ML	21/11/07
7	Tr 1 general " <sup>having</sup>	2x2m	N-E	M	"
8	Tr 1 detail " <sub>S-W end</sub>	"	S-W	"	"
9	Tr 1 detail " <sub>N-E end</sub>	"	"	"	"
10	TR 5 post one gen shots	2x2 + 1x1	W	AA	22/11/07
11	" detail (5012)	1x1	"	"	"
12	" 5008 + 5009	1x1 + 2x2	W	"	"
13	" 5010 detail	"	"	"	"
14	" 5011 "	1x2	"	"	"
15	TR 2 general - found of <sup>buried</sup> <sub>king</sub>	2x2	S-W	ML	"
16	TR 2 general " "	"	N-E	"	"
17	TR 2 detail N-E end	1x2	S-W	"	"
18	TR 2 " central section	"	S-W	"	"
19	TR 2 S-W end	1x1	S-W	"	"
20	TR 2 example of S. <sup>of</sup> <sub>king</sub>	1x2	N	"	"
21	TR 3 general shot	1x1 + 2x2	NW	AA	22/11/07
22	TR 3 detail (30)	1x1	"	"	"
23	TR 3 general shot	1x1 + 2x2	SE	"	"
24	TR 6. general shot <sup>of</sup> <sub>king</sub>	2x2 + 1x1	S	ML	22/11/07
25	TR 6. general shot <sup>of</sup> <sub>king</sub>	"	N	"	"
26	TR 6. detail of S. <sup>of</sup> <sub>end</sub>	1x2 + 1x1	S	"	"
27	TR 6 detail of central <sup>of</sup> <sub>king</sub>	1x2	S	"	"
28	TR 3 detail SES (3005)	1x1	N	AA	27/11/07
29	TR 7 Gen: shot of <sup>of</sup> <sub>king</sub>	1x1 + 2x2	N	AA	"
30	TR 7 Gen: shot of <sup>of</sup> <sub>king</sub>	"	S	"	23/11/07
31	TR 7 (5012) detail	1x1	W	"	"
32	TR 7 (5008) "	"	"	"	"
33	Wall - Wharf - 173				
↓					
36					

SITE: Oldbury Eval ca

PROJECT No: SA 179

FILM No: 1

FILM TYPE: B&W

C-slide

C-print

Digital

A.S.A:

No.	Description	Scales	Or	Photo by	Date
1	TR 5 Engineering brick yard surface	2x2m	S-W	MM	20/11/07
2	TR 5 "		NE		
3	TR 5 " "		NE		
4	TR 5 " "		NE		
5	TR 5 " "		N		
6	TR 1 general - strong foundations of terminal	2x2m	S-W	MM	21/11/07
7	TR 1 general " " " " " " " "		NE		
8	TR 1 detail " " S-W end		S-W		
9	TR 1 detail " " N-E end		S-W		
10	TR 5 posts on gen. shot	2x2x1	W	AK	21/11/07
11	" detail (5012)	1x1	"	"	"
12	" 5008 & 5009	1x1/1x2	N	"	"
13	" 5010 detail	"	"	"	"
14	" 5011 "	1x2	"	"	"
15	TR 2 general - found. of terminal bldg	2x2	S-W	MM	
16	TR 2 general " " " " " "		NE		
17	TR 2 detail N-E end	1x2	S-W		
18	TR 2 detail N central sect	"	S-W		
19	TR 2 det. S-W end	1x1	S-W		
20	Example of S. face section - TR 2	1x2	N		
21	TR 3 general shot	1x2 (2x2)	N	AK	22/11/07
22	TR 3 general shot detail	1x1	W		
23	TR 3 general shot	1x1 (2x2)	SE		
24	TR 6 general shot facing S	2x2+1x1	S	MM	22/11/07
25	TR 6 general shot facing N	"	N		
26	TR 6 detail of S. end of tr.	1x2+1x1	S		
27	TR 6 detail of central section of tr.	1x2	S		
28	TR 3 detail SES (3006)	1x1	N	AK	22/11/07
29	TR 7 Gen. shot of wall	1x1 (2x2)	N	AK	
30	TR 7 Gen. shot of wall	"	S	AK	23/11/07
31	TR 2 [7012] detail	1x1	W	"	"
32	TR 2 [2008] "	"	"	"	"
33	Wall of 1733				
34					
35					
36					



SHEET 1 of 2

SITE: Oldbury Evaluation 07		PROJECT No: BT 1719		FILM No: —	
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		Digital <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		A.S.A:	
No.	Description	Scales	Or	Photo by	Date
1	Site fang N-E pre-ex	none	N-E	KK	19/1/07
2	" " "		N-E		
3	Site fang N - pre-ex		N		
4	TR 4 (pre-clear) fang N-E		N-E		
5	TR " " S-W		S-W		
6	TR 2 (pre-clear) fang N-E		S-W		
7	TR " " N-E		N-E		
8	TR 5 fang S-W		S-W		
9	TR 5 fang N - detail		N		
10	TR 3 (pre-clear) fang N-E		N-E		
11	TR 3 (pre-clear) fang S-W		S-W		
12	TR 2 (pre-clear) fang S-W		S-W		
13	TR " " N-E		N-E		
<del>14</del>	<del>TR</del>				
15	TR 5 Emergency Brick Surface	2x2m	S-W	WM	21/1/07
16	TR 5 " "		N-E		
17	TR 5 " "		N-E		
18	TR 5 " "		N-E		
19	TR 5 " "		N		
20	TR 1 general - Shovel found & toward	2x2m	S-W	WM	21/1/07
21	TR 1 general " " toward		N-E		
22	TR 1 detail " " S-W end		S-W		
23	TR 1 detail " " N-E end		"		
24	TR 1 Feature [1017]	1x1m	S-W		
25	TR 1 Feature [1017] post-ex	1x1m	S-W		
26	TR 5 Post ex gen. Shot	2x2 + 1x1	W	AK	21/1/07
27	" detail (5012)	1x1	"	"	"
28	" detail 5008 + 5009	1x1/2	"	"	"
29	" detail 5010	"	"	"	"
30	" detail 5011	1x2	"	"	"
31	TR 2 general - found & toward toward	2x2	S-W	WM	21/1/07
32	TR 2 general " "	2x2	N-E		
33	TR 2 detail N-E end	1x2	S-W		
34	TR 2 detail central section	1x2	S-W		
35	TR 2 detail S-W end	1x1	S-W		
36	Example of S. facing section TR 2	1x2	N		
37	TR 5 general shot	2x2 + 1x1	W	AK	22/1/07

SHEET 2 of 2

SITE: <u>Abbey Level 07</u>		PROJECT No: <u>A1719</u>		FILM No:	
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				Digital <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
A.S.A:					
No.	Description	Scales	Or	Photo by	Date
38	TR3 detail S30	1x1	N	AA	22/11/07
39	TR3 general shot	1x2	SE		
40	TR3 example of SWP's	1x2	SE		
41	TR6 general shot facing South	2x2+1x1	S	WM	
42	TR6 general shot facing N	"	N		
43	TR6 detail of S end of tr.	2x2+1x1	S		
44	TR6 detail of central section of tr.	1x2	S		
45	TR3 detail of SFS (30063)	1x1	N	AA	22/11/07
46	TR3 detail of SFS (30083)	1x1	N	"	"
47	TR7 Gen. shot generally	1x1	N	"	"
48	TR7 Gen. shot of North end	"	S	"	23/11/07
49	TR7 [SFB] detail	1x1	S	"	"
50	TR7 (30087) detail	"	"	"	"

### APPENDIX 3: ARCHIVE CONTENTS

#### LOCATION:

Finds are deposited at Wednesbury Museum and Art Gallery.

The paper and photographic archive is deposited at Smethwick Library.

#### SUMMARY:

##### Finds Archive

Context	Pottery	Glass	Clay Pipe	Tile	Brick	Iron	Copper Alloy	Glass Slag	Worked Bone	Concrete
1001	7	-	2	-	-	-	-	3	-	-
2011	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3011	8	2	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
6001	3	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
7007	8	4	1	-	1	-	3	-	-	-
7011	1	1	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-
U/S	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

##### Paper Archive

Description	Number of Sheets
Field Drawings	8
Stratigraphic Index	2
Drawing Index	1
Photographic Index	4
Context Sheets	41

##### Photographic Archive

Description	Number
Monochrome Contact Sheet	1
Colour Slides	32
Digital Photographs (CD)	1

**APPENDIX 4: DESIGN BRIEF**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION**

**LAND AT SEYMOUR ROAD AND BIRMINGHAM ROAD, OLDBURY**

**SANDWELL MBC**

**OCTOBER 2007**



**Site:** Land at Birmingham Road and Seymour Road, Oldbury

**Applicant:** George Wimpey North Midlands Ltd, Alan Jarvis (01902 623700)

**Agent:** Tweedale Ltd, Tettenhall Road, Wolverhampton

**Planning Officer:** Dawn Meeson (0121 569 4878)

**Borough Archaeologist:** Graham Eyre-Morgan (0121 569 4025)

**Assistant Archaeologist:** Charlotte Lewis Assistant Archaeologist (0121 569 4217)

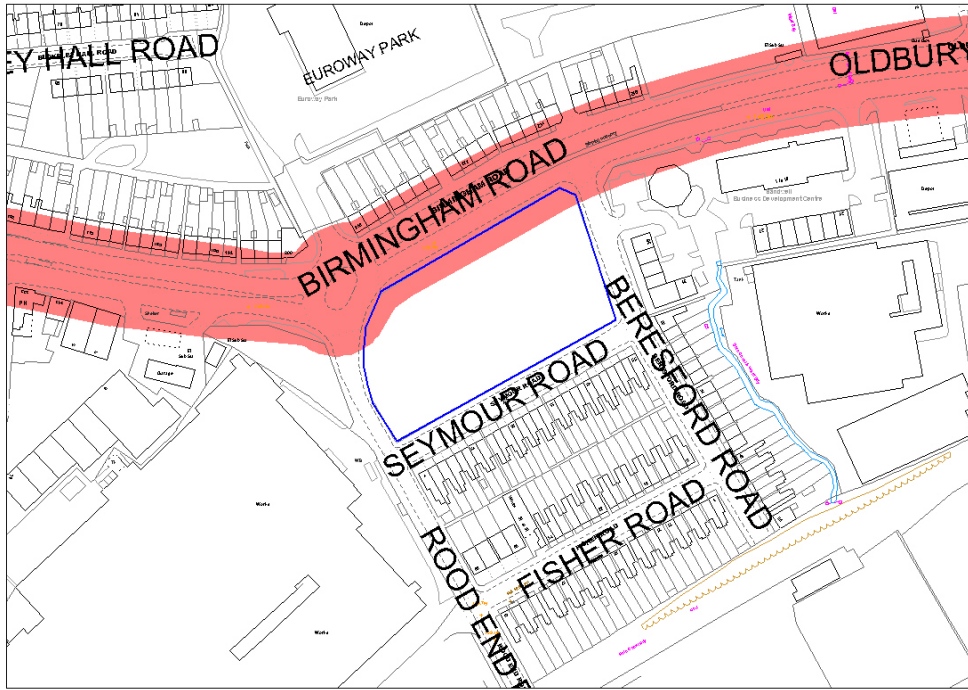
*This archaeological brief is only valid for six months. After this period the Borough Archaeologist should be contacted. Any written scheme of investigation resulting from this brief shall only be considered for the same period. The contractor is strongly advised to visit the site before completing their written scheme of investigation, as there may be implications for accurately costing the project.*

## **1. Introduction**

The Assistant Archaeologist of Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council has prepared this brief. The brief sets out the requirements for an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching. The purpose of evaluation is to determine the presence/absence of archaeological features within the application area so that an informed decision can be made on their preservation or otherwise. This Brief and any resulting Contractors' Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) will ensure that the requirements of the Condition can be adequately discharged.

## **2. Site Location and Description**

The site is located at Birmingham Road and Seymour Road, Oldbury, approximately 1 mile from Oldbury town centre. The site is currently grassed with group of trees on the land.



**Site of development** –Land at Birmingham Road and Seymour Road, Oldbury

### 3. Planning Background

3.1 This application forms part of DC/06/46496; the site is located at Birmingham Road and Seymour Road, Oldbury, the area is part of a residential development. The development area was deemed to be of archaeological and historical importance a recommendation was made by the Assistant Archaeologist, Sandwell MBC for an evaluation comprising of trial trenching to the determination of the planning application.

3.2 Based on the advice given in *Planning Policy Guidance Note 16: Archaeology and Planning* (DoE 1990, paras 21-22):

*‘No development involving any ground disturbance shall take place until an archaeological investigation of the site has been carried out in accordance with a specification to be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing’*

The evaluation is designed provide sufficient information on the presence/absence, nature, quality and extent of any below ground remains. If present, the investigation will identify any archaeological remains thereby enabling the formulation, if

appropriate, of an additional programme of excavation; should the deposits be of 'national importance' there would be a presumption in favour of their in-situ preservation.

3.3 This Brief and any resulting Contractors' Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) will ensure that the requirements of any future Condition can be adequately discharged.

#### **4. Archaeological Background**

This site is adjacent to an area of archaeological potential. It is known that medieval settlement existed in this area but it is unclear to what extent. The development area is close to the moated site of Blakeley Hall (first Mentioned 1291) and close to the site of the medieval water mill marked on Ogilby's map (1675) and first mentioned in 1302. Ruskin pottery has also been identified in this area and is identified on the Sandwell Sites and Monuments Record.

The current application provides a fresh opportunity of examining the origins and development of the medieval Oldbury. Isolated pottery fragments are also likely to provide important information on the chronology of the town, the status of the inhabitants and their general living conditions. Other archaeological remains could also be revealed. **Should archaeology be discovered it is possible that further archaeological work may required at the site before any development may take place.**

#### **5. Requirement for Work**

5.1 The purpose of the archaeological investigation is to locate and identify any surviving remains within the constraint area; in this particular instance this office wishes to know the extent, the date, nature and state of preservation of any archaeological deposits, which may be present under the area, proposed for development. The work must also assess the relative importance of these deposits, and the potential loss of any archaeological information by the development, therefore substantiating any need for further excavation or change in the planning consent

5.2 A **3% sample** of the development area will be investigated by trial trenching and the layout should be designed to ensure uniform coverage across the site; a trench plan must be appended to the specification.

5.3 The site-specific aims are:

- To establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains within the development area
- To determine the nature, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains encountered
- To provide further information on the origins and development of Oldbury from the medieval period to the present day
- To contribute to any existing corpus of academic knowledge
- To make available to interested parties the results of the investigation subject to any confidentiality restrictions

5.4 The evaluation recommended above is only the first stage in the archaeological investigation of each of the sites recommended. The scope of any further archaeological recording on each of the sites will depend on the results of the preliminary (and second phase if appropriate) evaluation of surviving archaeological deposits.

5.5 If evaluation indicates that significant archaeological evidence survives on the site, and would be negatively impacted by the proposed redevelopment, a further stage of detailed archaeological excavation and recording will be carried out, in accordance with a site-specific Written Scheme of Investigation approved by the Borough Archaeologist, which sets out specific aims of further recording work.

## **6.0 General Methodology**

6.1 The evaluation shall be supported by a written scheme of investigation.



6.2 The contractor is expected to follow the Code of Conduct of the Institute of Field Archaeologists.

6.3 Details including the name, qualifications and experience, of the site director and all other project personnel (including specialist staff) shall be supplied to the Borough Archaeologist as part of the written scheme of investigation.

6.4 Notification of the supervisor/project manager's name and the members of the team shall be provided in writing to Borough Archaeologist at least one week in advance of commencement of work.

6.5 The site code for this project is ODSR07.

6.6 All the latest Health and Safety guidelines shall be followed on site.

6.7 Should the client wish to curtail the investigation for any reason at any point in advance of its completion the contractor will still be expected to produce a full report including specialist finds assessments within the timetable set out below.

6.8 The IFA's *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations* should be used for additional guidance in the production of the written scheme of investigation, the content of the report, and the general execution of the project.

## **7. Evaluation Methodology**

7.1 The contractor shall ensure detailed study of all mains service locations and avoid damage to these.

7.2 Prior to the commencement of on-site works the contractor must consult the Sandwell Sites and Monuments Record (Fay de Souza 0121 568 4216) and undertake a rapid map regression exercise based on the sources held at the Local Studies Section of Smethwick Library. This information will assist in on-site interpretation.

7.3 It is recommended that a minimum of 3% of the area to be developed be investigated by trial trenching. The trial trenches will be machine excavated using a toothless ditching bucket, and under the supervision and to the satisfaction of a professional archaeologist. The exposed sub-soil or archaeological horizon will be hand cleaned in all trenches and any archaeological deposits or negative features planned.

7.4 At least 50% of all contained features shall be excavated. A stated percentage of structural and linear features to be excavated shall be provided in the WSI. For those trenches where substantial nineteenth and twentieth century masonry remains are encountered hand dug test pits will be excavated within the trench in order to examine the presence/absence of earlier remains. NOTE: In some circumstances it may be necessary to use shoring to support the sides of the trench, but advice must be sought from the Borough Archaeologist before employing this methodology.

7.5 Details of how all archaeological contexts and artefacts will be excavated, surveyed, recovered and recorded shall be provided. The site grid will be tied to the national grid.

7.6 Details of the site planning policy shall be given in the WSI. The normal preferred policy for the scale of archaeological site plans is 1:20 and sections at 1:10, unless circumstances indicate that other scales would be more appropriate.

7.7 The photographic record shall consist of high quality digital colour and black and white copies. This shall include both general and feature specific photographs; a photographic scale (including north arrow) shall be included in the case of detailed photographs. A photographic register and supporting plan detailing as a minimum feature number, location, and direction of shot shall accompany the photographic record.

7.8 The contractor must arrange, through a suitably qualified specialist, the assessment of the environmental and metallurgical potential of the site through the examination of suitable deposits. Guidance should be sought from the appropriate

English Heritage Regional Advisor in Archaeological Science and details of the methodology included within the WSI.

## **8.0 Finds**

8.1 All finds, where appropriate, shall be washed and marked with both the site code and context number.

8.2 The WSI shall include an agreed list of specialist consultants who might be required to conserve and/or report on finds, and advise or report on other aspects of the investigation.

8.3 Finds work should be to accepted professional standards and adhere to the Institute of Field Archaeologists *Guidelines for Finds Work*. Details of the finds retrieval policy must be included within the WSI.

8.4 The requirements for conservation and storage shall be agreed with Wednesbury Museum prior to the start of work, and confirmed in writing with the Borough Archaeologist.

## **9.0 Results**

9.1 The draft full report including all specialist assessments of artefact assemblages shall be submitted to the Borough Archaeologist within six weeks of completing the fieldwork for approval. Once approved a total of **eight** copies plus a copy on CD-ROM are to be supplied to the Borough Archaeologist for general distribution.

9.2 The report must contain:

- The aims and methods adopted during the course of the evaluation.

- Detailed results including a suitable conclusion and discussion. This must be linked to the research objectives cited above and consider the sites in their local, regional and national context.
- An assessment of the local, regional national importance of the site. The latter should be based on the criteria for scheduling as set out in Annex 4 of PPG 16 (DoE 1990).
- Impact Assessment and recommended mitigation strategy will be used to assess the impact of the proposal on the surviving archaeological resource.
- The contractor is also expected to formulate a mitigation strategy and future research programme. The latter should be based on national/regional/local research frameworks and identify the aims/objectives of any future excavation.
- Although the emphasis should be on those deposits that are likely to be destroyed, the wider potential the site must also be considered
- A concise non-technical summary of the project results
- All specialist reports and assessments
- Site location plan, copies of any historical maps and a representative sample of the photographs including colour prints
- Location plan of trenches in relation to the proposed development. All corners of each trench shall be given a 10 figure grid reference
- A section/s within each trench showing the depth of deposits including the present ground level with Ordnance Datum, vertical and horizontal scale
- Sufficient plans by period and area to aid interpretation
- Artefact illustrations that would be submitted in any future publication

### 9.3 The following appendices should also be included:

- Location and summary of the archive contents
- Completed summary sheet (copy attached to brief)
- Photographic register
- Archaeological brief, the approved contractors' written scheme of investigation together with the completed pro-forma and site location plan which were submitted as part of the planning application

9.4 The proposed format of the report will be described within the WSI.

## **10.0 Archive**

10.1 Before commencing any fieldwork, the Contractor must contact the Community History and Archives Service, Smethwick Library (High Street, Smethwick, West Midlands B661AB. Tel. 0121 5582561), to determine the requirements for the deposition of the archive.

10.2 The archive should include the record photographs and digital information together with a copy of the Report.

10.3 Photographic prints should be re-produced at a minimum of five by four inches and labelled on the back using indelible ink with the frame number, date, photographers name together with the site code, name and grid reference; the photographs being mounted in archival quality sleeves.

10.4 It is the responsibility of the Contractor to meet the Community History and Archives Service requirements with regard to the preparation of material for deposition.

10.5 Written notification of the commencement of fieldwork shall be given to Community History and Archives Service at the same time as the Borough Archaeologist.

10.6 A summary of the contents of the archive shall be supplied to Borough Archaeologist at the time of deposition.

10.7 Sandwell MBC supports the Online Access to Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) project. The overall aim of the OASIS project is to provide an online index to the mass of archaeological grey literature that has been produced as a result of the advent of large-scale developer funded fieldwork. The archaeological contractor must therefore complete the online OASIS form at <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/>. Contractors are advised to contact Sandwell MBC

Sites and Monuments Record prior to completing the form. Once a report has become a public document by submission to or incorporation into the SMR, Sandwell MBC Sites and Monuments Record may place the information on a web-site. Please ensure that you and your client agree to this procedure in writing as part of the process of submitting the report to the case officer at Sandwell MBC.

## **11.0 Monitoring**

11.1 The Borough Archaeologist will be responsible for monitoring progress and standards throughout the project and should be kept regularly informed during fieldwork, interpretation and reporting stages.

11.2 Written Notification of the start date will be given to the Borough Archaeologist at least one week before the commencement of work and once the fieldwork stage of the investigation has been completed.

## **12.0 Contractors Written Scheme of Investigation**

12.1 Any variations to the WSI shall be agreed in writing with the Borough Archaeologist before being implemented.

12.2 This Brief has been written following a cursory examination of the site by the Borough Archaeologist, potential contractors are therefore strongly advised to carry out their own inspection before submitting a written quotation.

12.3 If on first visiting the site or at any time during the recording exercise, it appears that:

- i) part or the whole of the site is not amenable to the recording programme outlined above, and/or
- ii) an alternative approach may be more appropriate or likely to produce more informative results, and/or
- iii) any features that should be recorded as having a bearing on the interpretation of the site have been omitted,

then it is expected that the Contractor will contact the Borough Archaeologist as a matter of urgency.

**For further information regarding the content of this Brief please contact the author at the address below. As part of our desire to provide a quality service, we would welcome any comments you may have on the content and presentation of this Archaeological Brief.**

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## **APPENDIX 4- DESIGN BRIEF**

### **ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION, SEYMOUR ROAD/BIRMINGHAM ROAD, OLDBURY**

#### **PART A (SITE SPECIFIC)**

##### **1 INTRODUCTION**

This document describes the programme of work required to undertake an archaeological evaluation at the above site. It follows the requirements of the archaeological brief dated October 2007, set by the Assistant Archaeologist, Sandwell MBC. Any proposed changes to the work detailed in this document will be discussed with the Assistant Archaeologist before implementation.

The work is required in advance of a proposed residential development.

*A separate written scheme of investigation would be prepared should further, mitigation fieldwork be required.*

##### **2 SITE DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION**

The area for evaluation comprises approximately 0.7ha. The northwestern site boundary is formed by Birmingham Road, and the southeastern site boundary is defined by Seymour Road. The site is located approximately 1 mile from Oldbury Town Centre.

The site is mainly open, with some tree cover.

##### **3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

The site adjoins an area of archaeological potential. Medieval settlement is recorded in the general vicinity, but its precise location and extent is not presently clear. The development site is close to the location of the moated site of Blakeley hall, first recorded in AD 1291. It also lies close to the site of a watermill recorded on Ogilby's map of 1675, and first recorded in 1302. Ruskin pottery has also been recorded in this area.

##### **4 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The principle aim of the evaluation is to determine the character, extent, date, state of preservation and the potential significance of any buried remains. In particular, it is intended to:

- Establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains within the site.
- To determine the nature, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains identified.
- To provide data concerning the development of Oldbury from the medieval period to the present.
- To contribute towards an appreciation of the development of the pottery industry in late medieval-early post-medieval Oldbury.
- To contribute to the broader appreciation of the development of the town of Oldbury.



## **PART B (GENERIC)**

### **5 METHODOLOGY**

The first stage of the evaluation will comprise a rapid map regression exercise and consultation of the Sandwell MBC Sites and Monuments Record (SMR).

The field investigation will comprise investigation of 3% of the site area, a total of 140m of trenches measuring 1.6m in width. The trenches will be located to test areas of archaeological potential as indicated by the map regression exercise, consultation of the SMR, and will be approved by the Assistant Archaeologist, Sandwell MBC before commencement of trenching. Subject to this, the aim of the evaluation will be to test the site as widely as possible.

All trench/test-pit locations have been agreed with the Borough Archaeologist. Some limited re-location of trenches may be required to avoid live services. Should the depth of overburden exceed 1.2m it will be necessary to broaden the trench to a total width of 4m, so that the trench will measure a minimum of 2m wide at base. The maximum depth of excavation will be 2m below the modern surface in the trench, and 1.2m in the test-pits. No deeper excavation will be undertaken. Trenches dug to a greater depth than 1.2m below the modern surface will be stepped and/or battered for safety.

All topsoil and modern overburden will be removed using a JCB excavator equipped with a toothless ditching bucket, working under direct archaeological supervision, down to the top of the uppermost archaeological horizon or the subsoil. A toothed bucket may be required to remove modern (eg demolition) deposits. Subsequent cleaning and excavation will be by hand. A representative sample of archaeological features and deposits will be manually sample excavated sufficiently to define their character and to obtain suitable dating evidence. Generally, 50% of pits or post-holes and a 1m section of linear/ curvilinear features will be excavated. Archaeological deposits will not be completely excavated unless this is unavoidable. The depth of archaeological deposits across the site will be assessed, although the full length of every trench will not necessarily be excavated down to natural. Where extensive 19/20th century structural remains hand-dug test-pits will be dug to prove/disprove the presence of earlier below-ground deposits.

All stratigraphic sequences will be recorded, even where no archaeology was present. Features will be planned at a scale of 1:20 or 1:50, and sections will be drawn of all cut features and significant vertical stratigraphy at a scale of 1:10. A comprehensive written record will be maintained using a continuous numbered context system on *pro-forma* context and feature cards. Written records and scale plans will be supplemented by photographs using monochrome and colour print and colour slide photography.

Twenty litre soil samples will be taken from suitable datable archaeological features for the recovery of charred plant remains. The environmental sampling policy followed the guidelines contained in the Birmingham Archaeology Guide to On-Site Environmental Sampling and the *Report of the Association for Environmental Archaeology Working Party on Sampling and Recovery*, September 1995. Recovered finds were cleaned, marked and remedial conservation work will be undertaken as necessary. Treatment of all finds conformed to guidance contained within 'A strategy for the care and investigation of finds' published by English Heritage.

The full site archive will include all artifactual and/or ecofactual remains recovered from the site. The site archive will be prepared according to guidelines set down in Appendix 3 of the Management of Archaeology Projects (English Heritage, 1991), the Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long-term Storage (Walker 1990) and Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological collections (Museum and Art Galleries Commission, 1992). Finds and the paper archive will be deposited with the appropriate museum, subject to permission from the landowner.

## **6.0 STAFFING**

The project will be managed Birmingham Archaeology by Kevin Colls, and supervised in the field by a suitably qualified and experienced archaeological supervisor assisted by an archaeological site assistant.

Specialist staff will be, where appropriate:

Stephanie Rátkai, post-Roman pottery

Erica Macey-Bracken, small finds

Dr Ben Gearey/ Dr Emma Tetlow, environmental analysis

Matilda Holmes, animal bone

## **7 REPORT**

An illustrated archive report would be compiled on completion of the fieldwork, to include:

- (a) Summary.
- (b) Description of the archaeological background.
- (c) Aims and methods.
- (e) A narrative description of the results and discussion of the evidence, set in their local, regional and national research context, supported by appropriate plans, sections and photographs.
- (f) Summary of the finds and environmental evidence.
- (g) Specialist assessments of the finds and environmental evidence.
- (h) Impact assessment and recommended mitigation strategy
- (i) Site location plan, identifying the trench locations, copies of historic maps, a selection of plans and sections, with AOD levels, as appropriate.
- (j) Appendices including the archive contents; fieldwork summary sheet; photographic register; archaeological brief; this document

The written report will be made publicly accessible, as part of the Sandwell MBC Sites and Monuments Record within six months of completion. Eight copies of the report will be lodged with the Assistant Archaeologist, Sandwell MBC. A digital copy on CD-ROM will be provided. A summary report may be submitted for inclusion in *West Midlands Archaeology*. If the results are considered of regional or national importance it may be appropriate to publish the report in an archaeological journal.

## **8 TIMETABLE**

Review/ monitoring meetings will be arranged during the fieldwork.

Week 1 Machining of overburden.

Week 2: hand-excavation and recording.

## 9 GENERAL

All project staff will adhere to the Code of Conduct of the Institute of Field Archaeologists. The project will follow the requirements set down in the Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation (Institute of Field Archaeologists 1994, revised 2001).

A detailed Risk Assessment will be prepared prior to the commencement of fieldwork. All current health and safety legislation, regulations and guidance will be complied with. The evaluation will conform to the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992 and Health and Safety in Field Archaeology Manual (SCAUM 2007).

Any human remains encountered will be initially left *in situ* and covered. In the event that human remains need to be removed this will be carried out under the terms of a Home Office Licence and adhering to relevant environmental health regulations. All finds which may constitute 'treasure' under the Treasure Act, 1997 will be removed to a safe place and reported to the local Coroner. If removal is not possible on the same working day as discovery, appropriate security arrangements will be provided to keep the finds safe from theft.

*Birmingham Archaeology 3 October 2007.*

**10 EXTENSION TO THE APPROVED WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION FOR THE SITE OF SEYMOUR ROAD/BIRMINGHAM ROAD, OLDBURY, SANDWELL MBC (PLANNING APPLICATION NUMBER DC/06/46496)**

Under the brief of the Sandwell MBC (Planning Application Number DC/06/46496) point 5.2 a 3% sample of the site was required to be evaluated. After consultation with the Sandwell MBC Historic Environment Record it was apparent that there were three archaeological features of distinct interest within the immediate vicinity of the site. These were;-

The remains of the 16<sup>th</sup> century Blakely Hall (c. 1540), demolished in the 1930s, but located immediately to the north of the site on the opposite of the Birmingham Road (SMR No. 13503).

A moated site north-west of Blakeley Hall assumed to be the remains of the earlier 14<sup>th</sup> century Blakely Hall (SMR No. 2815).

The location of the Ruskin Pottery Works located approximately 400m further to the east along the Birmingham Road (SMR No. 10547).

Remains of the Chances Glassworks to the north-east of the site (SMR Nos. 1435 – Various).

Of these features the most significant is the remains of the former site of Blakely Hall. At present there is no evidence of the original extent of the Hall and its grounds. There is also the possibility of evidence relating to the post medieval industrial activity within the area.

After consultation with the historic maps the trenches have been located in order to avoid the location of the former boundaries of a series of late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century terraces that lined the boundaries of the site but have now been demolished. The trenches have been separated into seven 20m trenches c. 1.6m wide located evenly spaced in the available back-plots of the terraces. This gives a combined area of c. 225m<sup>2</sup> of the total area of the plot of 6700m<sup>2</sup>. This gives a 3.4% coverage.

*Birmingham Archaeology 23 Oct 2007*

**APPENDIX 6: SANDWELL MBC SMR  
SUMMARY SHEET**

<b>Site name/Address:</b> Land at Birmingham Road and Seymour Road, Oldbury	
<b>Borough:</b> Sandwell	<b>NGR:</b> NGR SP 0011 8934
<b>Type of Work:</b> Archaeological Evaluation	<b>Site Code:</b> ODSR07
<b>Contractor:</b> Birmingham Archaeology	<b>Date of Work:</b> 19 <sup>th</sup> -23 <sup>rd</sup> Novermer
<b>Location of Finds/Curating Museum:</b> Wednesbury Museum and Art Gallery	
<b>Title of Report:</b> Land Adjacent to Seymour Road/Birmingham Road, Oldbury, Sandwell	
<b>SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:</b>  <p>In November 2007 Birmingham Archaeology undertook an archaeological evaluation of land adjacent to Seymour Road/ Birmingham Road, Oldbury, Sandwell in advance of a proposed residential development. The site was located approximately 800m to the east of Oldbury town centre and was centred on Ordnance Survey NGR SP 0011 8934. The northwestern boundary of site was formed by the Birmingham Road, and the southeastern site boundary was defined by Seymour road.</p> <p>Six evaluation trenches between 16m and 28.5m were excavated at strategic positions across the site. The same general pattern of deposition was encountered across the six trenches. This consisted of sand and gravels, overlain by contemporary deposits of mixed sandy silt and demolition rubble overburden and levelling deposits of red sand. This pattern of deposition represented a deliberate attempt to flatten and level the site after the demolition and clearance of the structures and was relatively uniform across the site.</p> <p>The extant archaeology was directly comparable to the evidence available in the ordnance survey mapping. The trenches on the southern side of site provided evidence of domestic occupation. A series of early-20<sup>th</sup> century foundation walls and drainage were identified representing the residential properties fronting onto Seymour Road, along with a series of contemporary and modern waste and demolition pits. Evaluation of the northern side of the site provided evidence of structures dated to the late-19<sup>th</sup> century which related to the residential properties fronting on to Birmingham Road. These structures took the form of foundation walls and regularly laid engineering brick yard surfaces with inlaid drainage channels and subterranean pipes.</p>	
<b>Author of Summary:</b> W. Mitchell	<b>Date of Summary:</b> 30 <sup>th</sup> January 2008