



*Land at*

**Church Road & Pumphouse Lane,  
Webheath, Worcestershire, B975PH**

*Land at*

**Church Road & Pumphouse Lane,**  
*Webheath, Worcestershire, B97 5PH*

*Topographical Survey and Field Evaluation*

NGR: SP 01655 66513

Site code: web19

OASIS ID: 110archa1-370324

Activity number: WSM71901

*Sean Cook BA (Hons) MCIfA*

*Illustration; Jill Atherton MCIfA*

22nd October 2019

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

## Contents

<i>SUMMARY</i> .....	3
<i>INTRODUCTION</i> .....	5
<i>Location and scope of works (Figs. 1 &amp; 2)</i> .....	5
<i>Geology and topography</i> .....	5
<i>ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND</i> .....	5
<i>SURVEY &amp; EXCAVATION</i> .....	7
<i>Aims of the work</i> .....	7
<i>Methodology</i> .....	8
<i>RESULTS: earthwork &amp; historic mapping surveys</i> .....	9
<i>RESULTS: field evaluation (Fig. 3)</i> .....	10
<i>Soil and ground conditions</i> .....	10
<i>Reliability of field investigation</i> .....	11
<i>Distribution of archaeological deposits</i> .....	11
<i>Presentation of results</i> .....	11
<i>RESULTS: Description of deposits (Figs. 4-6)</i> .....	11
<i>FINDS</i> .....	12
<i>Environmental data</i> .....	12
<i>DISCUSSION (Fig. 7)</i> .....	15
<i>BIBLIOGRAPHY</i> .....	17
<i>Archive Location</i> .....	17
<i>APPENDIX 1: OASIS</i> .....	29

*Front cover; View of development site from north.*

## *SUMMARY*

An archaeological earthwork survey & evaluation on land at Church Road & Pumphouse Lane, Webheath, Worcestershire was carried out in advance of residential development of the site. The results confirmed that the ridge and furrow systems to the south-west did not extend as far as Church Road, on the north-east side. In the larger landscape this system lies within an area bounded on the south-east by a green way and on the west by a line of road or track. An earthen bank on the north side of the greenway formerly retained a large pond which is drawn on the 1844 Tithe Map and may be associated with an earlier water management system

A shallow ditch recorded during the excavation near the middle of the site is what remains of the boundary shown on the 1st Ed. OS 1884-6, predating the existing fence-line. The finds within the fill were modern. Scatters of brickwork on the ground locate two buildings shown on early C20 historic maps. The presence of slate in the ditch-fill adds detail to these lost buildings and is consistent with the traditional character shown in the standing historic brick-structures. Contemporary with these lost buildings is the gate on Church Road and the associated hedge which forms an encroachment onto the older way.

Other lost buildings are shown on the 1884 OS map, to the rear of the Pumphouse lane dwellings and which appear from their plan to be pig-houses. This is not the case for the lost buildings within the site however, the remains of dead or fallen fruit trees nearby, the standing pear tree at the rear of a bungalow garden and the field to the south named 'Peartree Piece' on the Tithe Map suggests a possible connection.

The results of the evaluation indicate that activity within the site largely characterised by the creation of a new boundary during the C19 when the area appears to have first been occupied. The absence of any features predating this period and the lack of residual finds associated with earlier activity suggests that there is unlikely to be remains within the site associated with the pre-C19 use of the site. This may in part be explained by the location of the site along the edge of Church Road where the adjacent field names indicate that the area has historically been used as common land and has as a result remained undeveloped.



Fig. 1; Site location (circled in red).

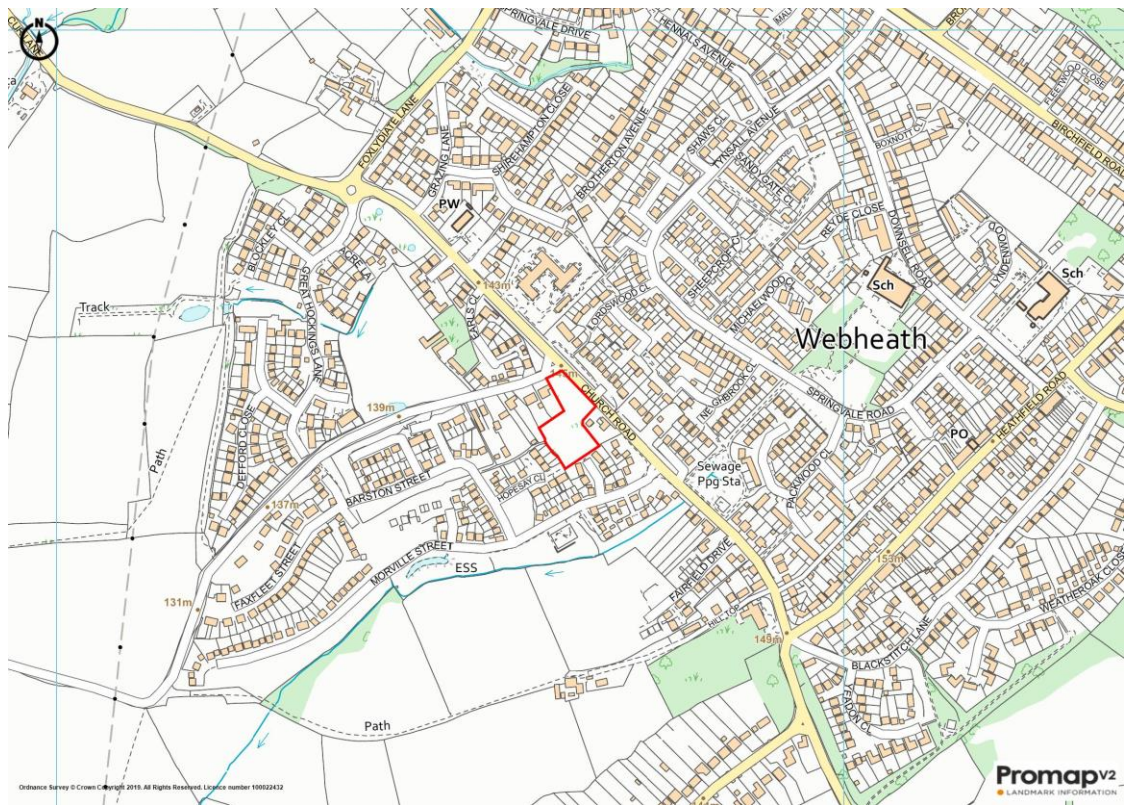


Fig. 2; Area of study (outlined in red).

## *INTRODUCTION*

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

This document details the results of a programme of archaeological work comprising an earthwork survey followed by field evaluation in the form of trial trenching, carried out during 26<sup>th</sup> September and 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> October 2019 on land at Church Road & Pumphouse Lane, Webheath, Worcestershire, B975PH at the request of Eden Properties (Midlands). The site lies within an area of archaeological potential just north of ridge and furrow earthworks and probable building platforms. In view of this planning permission had been granted (planning Ref: 19/00320/FUL) for the erection of nine bungalows on the site conditional on a programme of archaeological work to be carried out in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and a mitigation strategy issued by Worcestershire Curatorial Services.

### *Geology and topography*

The former village of Webheath now forms a semi-rural suburb of Redditch Town and it is just north of the small rural village of Callow Hill. Webheath sits within a mixed landscape of flat to intermediate, undulating topography and the proposed development site currently consisting of open grassland comprises 4,900m<sup>2</sup> and lies at 145m AOD. The underlying geology comprises gravels of the Second Terrace of the River Avon (BGS, 1974).

## *ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND*

Webheath was formerly a hamlet within the large parish of Tardebigge which took its name from the ancient village and was originally situated on the borders of Warwickshire. The parish also included the other hamlets of Redditch, Bentley Pouncefoot, Tutnall and Cobley which have now become separate civil parishes. The history of Tardebigge begins in the later C10th with its documentation as a manor purchased before the conquest from King Ethelred by a Dean Worcester for his church. Domesday (1086) shows that it was subsequently held by the Sheriff of Staffordshire at Kingswinford Manor, but after this date Tardebigge is said to have been included in the endowment of Bordesley Abbey, founded in

1138. The manor or grange of Tardebigge remained in the possession of the Abbot and convent of Bordesley until the abbey was surrendered to the king in 1538 (VCH, 1913).

An Historic Environment Record (HER) search was carried out on a buffered 500m radius of the site and recorded 18 archaeological activities and 33 HER monuments. The search area sits within a mixed landscape of flat to intermediate, undulating topography based on bedrock geology made up of mudstone and superficial geology made up of a large deposit of till. The surrounding area in the north was, historically, under pasture with a small scale, regular, enclosure field pattern. The historic settlements within the region have all been subsumed into the modern suburbs; however, some modern housing follows the historic field boundaries, although this is not consistent. Tree cover is made up of scattered hedgerow oaks and streamside cover.

There are two listed buildings and nine other unlisted historic buildings within the search area. The earliest structures date from the C18 and C19 and include Pumphouse Farm, Boxnot Farm, now lost, and Springhill farm, reordered as dwellings which are located nearby to the north-west. St Philip's Church dates to 1869-70. An Historic England project to identify the Historic Farmsteads of Worcestershire also recorded five farmsteads dating from the C18 and C19 and a single C19 out-farm.

An archaeological assessment of land adjacent Pumphouse Farm (north of the site) comprising a walkover survey (Mould, 1997) was carried out as part of an earlier proposal for residential development of the area north of Pumphouse Lane and identified features (WSM30153) that may have formed part of the medieval landscape, comprising ridge and furrow (WSM21777), possible pond (WSM30153), former field boundaries and a possible hollow-way.

A subsequent evaluation (WSM30154; Mould, 1997) consisting of a series of trial trenches were excavated across the assessment area and concluded that in the absence of any medieval artefacts the earthwork features were probably related to the establishment and subsequent development of Pumphouse Farm (WSM54850), a partially extant C18 farmstead in a regular courtyard with an L-plan range plus detached buildings to the third side of the yard.

Little of Pumphouse Farm is visible from Pumphouse Lane however the character of the east brick-built gable of the house is consistent with the C18 date ascribed to it, the small brick cottage on the road frontage to the south-east has a denticulated-cornice and segmental heads over the wood-framed casement-windows. Much of the old front of another modest dwelling opposite has been masked by the addition of a large, possibly 1970s, wing. A terrace of four



dwellings, formerly standing to the north-east of this last-mentioned cottage are in line with the late C19 boundary of the site which is adjacent. The present hedgerow forming the boundary around the north corner of the site is close to the road and has encroached upon the old wide verge of the highway at this point, further south-east it is the opposite side has been encroached upon. The hedge has little variety and iron-fittings on the very rotten pintle-hung gate on Church Road suggest a late C19 date, consistent with the cartographic evidence and the brick house with the wavy bargeboards to the south-east.

The site itself sits within the corner of a large, roughly triangular area of land in which are recorded a series of earthwork monuments (Mould, 1997). This land is characterised as a small to medium scale piecemeal enclosure field pattern, Church Road marks the northeast boundary whilst Pumphouse Lane runs along the northwest side. The eastern part is likely to be later, but the west end is probably earlier formerly connecting with a Hollow Way (WSM37540) interpreted as a former route-way linking Upper Bentley to Webheath (OS1884-6). The boundary to the south is currently represented by a track that is historically associated with a more direct route, the Tardebigge tithe map shows this was named 'Green Lane' suggesting this was the older and original route. Transecting this triangular area of land from west to east is a watercourse with a large pond (WSM21767) and possible former pool (WSM21766) towards the west end, the field name here is 'pond meadow' and the site may be associated with water management. Land parcels extend either side of the watercourse where large tracts of ridge and furrow have been recorded (WSM21764; WSM21765; WSM21769; WSM21770; WSM21771; WSM21772; WSM21774; WSM21775). Within this area earthwork also include a possible small house platform (WSM37538) identified during an evaluation (Cook, 1995). Further possible building platforms (WSM56999) have been surveyed south of Holly Cottage (Kimber, 2012). Part of one related system of ridge and furrow and a shallow ditch.

## *SURVEY & EXCAVATION*

### *Aims of the work*

The aims of the topographical survey will be prior to the evaluation, to survey any earthworks identified within the proposed development area and to record these as a minimum to an Historic England (2017), Level 2, standard earthwork survey

comprising a two-dimensional plan of the site combined with a photographic and descriptive record of the earthworks.

The objectives of the evaluation (trial trenching) are to determine the date, character, quality, survival and extent of the archaeological deposits within the application area likely to be threatened by the proposed development in order to inform the basis of a mitigation strategy.

### *Methodology*

Survey of earthworks (humps and bumps): The initial on-site inspection established the general disposition of features which were supplemented by ground level photography to provide additional perspectives.

Capped-pins were inserted at key positions and were plotted using traditional survey methods (both triangulation and plane-table) to produce a drawn plan at 1:200 scale. Levels can then be taken along and across the plotted features to optimise the retrievable information.

Finally, all these aspects of the survey were brought together to produce a discrete hachured plan integrated into plans of a smaller scale to illustrate the features in their context and setting.

Evaluation (trial trenching) comprised a 4% sample of the development with four trenches located to represent a reasonable coverage of the main areas of impact.

The archaeological field work and post-excavation was carried out in accordance with standards and guidance for archaeological field evaluations produced by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA, 2014).

RESULTS: earthwork & historic mapping surveys

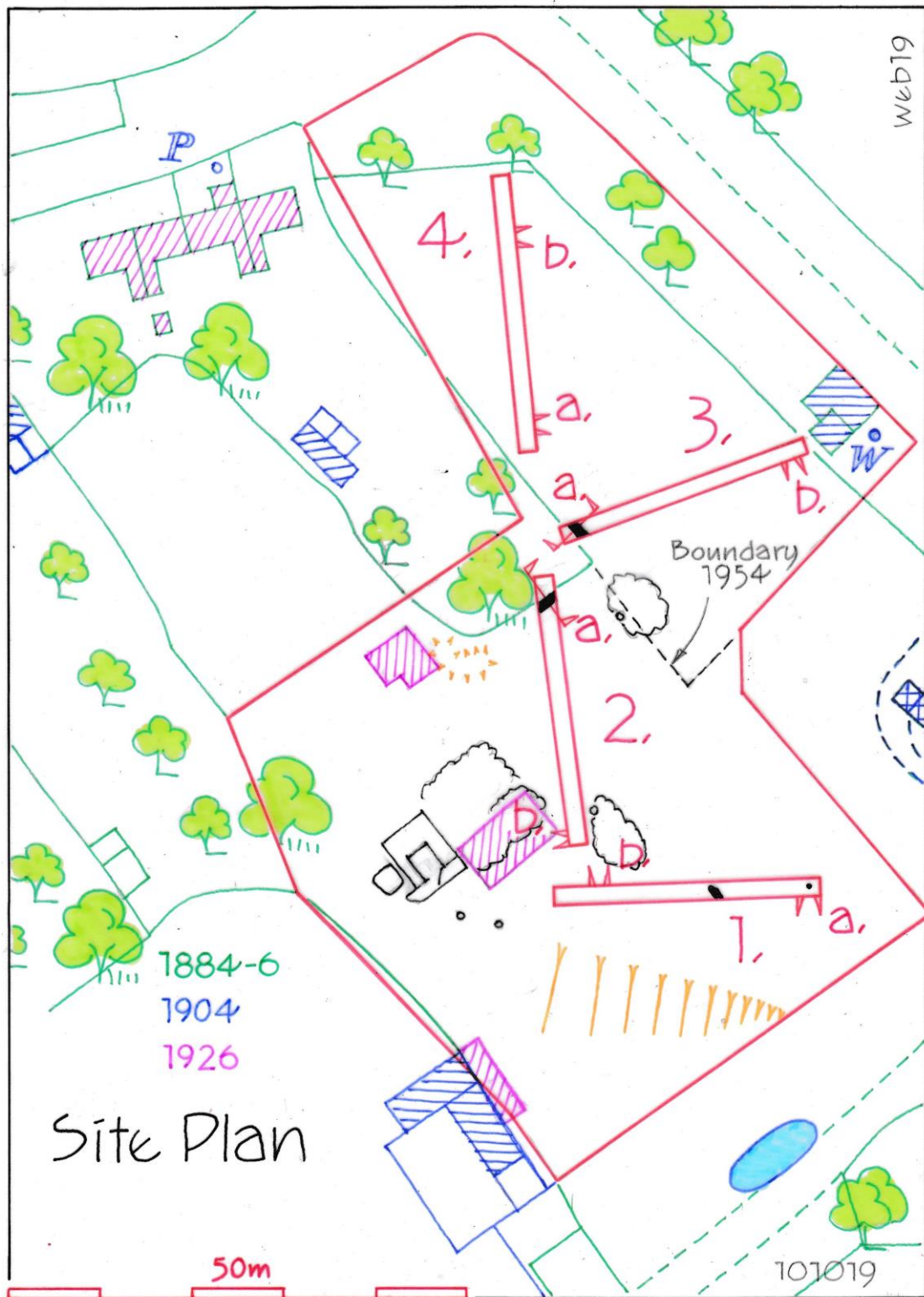


Fig. 3; Plan of the site shown in its historic setting, based on the 1st Ed OS.

The site is composed of a northern and a southern part, the northern field is rectangular and adjacent to a main northwest/southeast road, to the north-east, and Pumphouse Lane, on the north-west, this road leads to the nearby remains of Pumphouse Farm and several dwellings. The southern field is also rectangular and attached to the other for a short distance, in 1954 a boundary is shown here but its former presence is no longer evident on the ground. The ground slopes down gently from the north but becomes increasingly steep in the southern part. The eastern corner of the northern field, just beyond the present gateway from the road, was formerly occupied by a small dwelling and well, shown on the 1<sup>st</sup> Edition OS but there is no visible evidence. A single tree survives in the north end shown as part of an earlier boundary before the existing hedge extended the field north-west and north-east.

There was a building at the south corner of the site, attached to buildings beyond, no remains are visible, however there is some evidence for the two other buildings in the north-western part of the field. These buildings are now lost but appear on the OS 1927 and are still shown on the 1987-92 map. Scattered bricks and brickwork are evident in both areas.

One lightly built and clad building does stand, located next to the brick building near the middle of the field and probably associated but not shown on any maps. This building appears to have been in a partly derelict state when a rudimentary stable was constructed within the south-east end and the remaining part 'crazy-paved'. The mounds to the south-west suggest deposits resulting from 'mucking-out'.

### *RESULTS: field evaluation* (Fig. 3)

#### *Soil and ground conditions*

Conditions were generally wet during excavation, the water table appeared relatively high with parts of the trench becoming inundated with water soon after excavation and the deposits showed good moisture retention. Excavation was relatively smooth throughout the trench being made through alternate layers of topsoil and underlying subsoil leaving a clean and visible surface within the natural substrate (mainly a sandy-gravel).

### *Reliability of field investigation*

Although some root penetration associated with the earlier trees within the site were observed within some of the trenches, the evidence overall indicates little in the way of previous disturbance other than that associated with the now demolished brick buildings which formerly occupied the site.

### *Distribution of archaeological deposits*

No archaeological deposits were encountered during the trial trenching. Instead a sequence of three stratified deposits were recorded comprising natural gravel sealed by a homogenous layer of relict subsoil which was in turn overlain by the modern topsoil. Truncating the surface of the gravel were a series of modern fire pits tree associated occupation in the C20.

### *Presentation of results*

The results of the excavation (below) are described from the earliest to the latest deposits. The trench was attributed context numbers with a numerical value equivalent to the number of the trench.

### **RESULTS: Description of deposits** (Figs. 4-6)

The trenches were disposed across the site in an east-west pattern; trenches 1 and 2 in the southern part, whilst 3 and 4 were positioned in the other half. The surface of the natural substrate which was uncovered in all four trenches comprised an orange sandy-gravel (102, 202, 302 and 402). Overlying the sand was a relict subsoil (101, 201, 301 and 401) in varying thicknesses between 0.20m and 0.36m across the site. This in turn was overlain by a 0.20m thick layer of modern topsoil (100, 200, 300 and 400). The similarity of colour of the subsoil and natural appears to have resulted from a long period of ploughing.

Two patches of burnt soil in Trench 1, interpreted from the finds within the fill as modern fire-pits, slightly penetrated the surface of the natural deposit. These features appear to have resulted from root burning probably associated with recent clearance of the site.

A linear ditch [204] and [304], about 1.00m wide and varying in depth from between 0.20-25m was uncovered in Trenches 2 and 3 and although not

fully exposed the remains clearly indicate that the features form a right angle in the unexcavated area between the two trenches. This ditch feature is consistent with the boundary shown here on the 1st Edition OS and associated with a row of four terraced dwellings on Pumphouse Lane. The fill of this feature (203 and 303) consisted of a dark greyish-brown, clayey silt with a pebble component, frequent flecking (small to large) c10-15% of fill, the finds were mainly modern; fragments of glass, porcelain pottery, slate and brick. No archaeological features were found in Trench 4.

A scattering of bricks in the vicinity of each of the buildings shown on the OS 1926 edition, not on the 1904, is clearly demolition rubble and the presence of brick and slate in the fill of the ditch suggests that the destruction of the wavy boundary, a hedge, was contemporary, presumably when the terraced dwellings were replaced by the two existing bungalows and the existing boundary.

### *FINDS*

Finds were recovered during sample excavation of the two ditch fills (203) & (303). Both fills produced modern finds consisting of a few fragments of porcelain pottery dated to the C20th including the complete lid of a jar or tea pot. Finds also included bottle glass, brick, slate and iron. These finds were not retained.

### *Environmental data*

None of the deposits exposed during the excavation proved suitable for palaeo-environmental sampling.

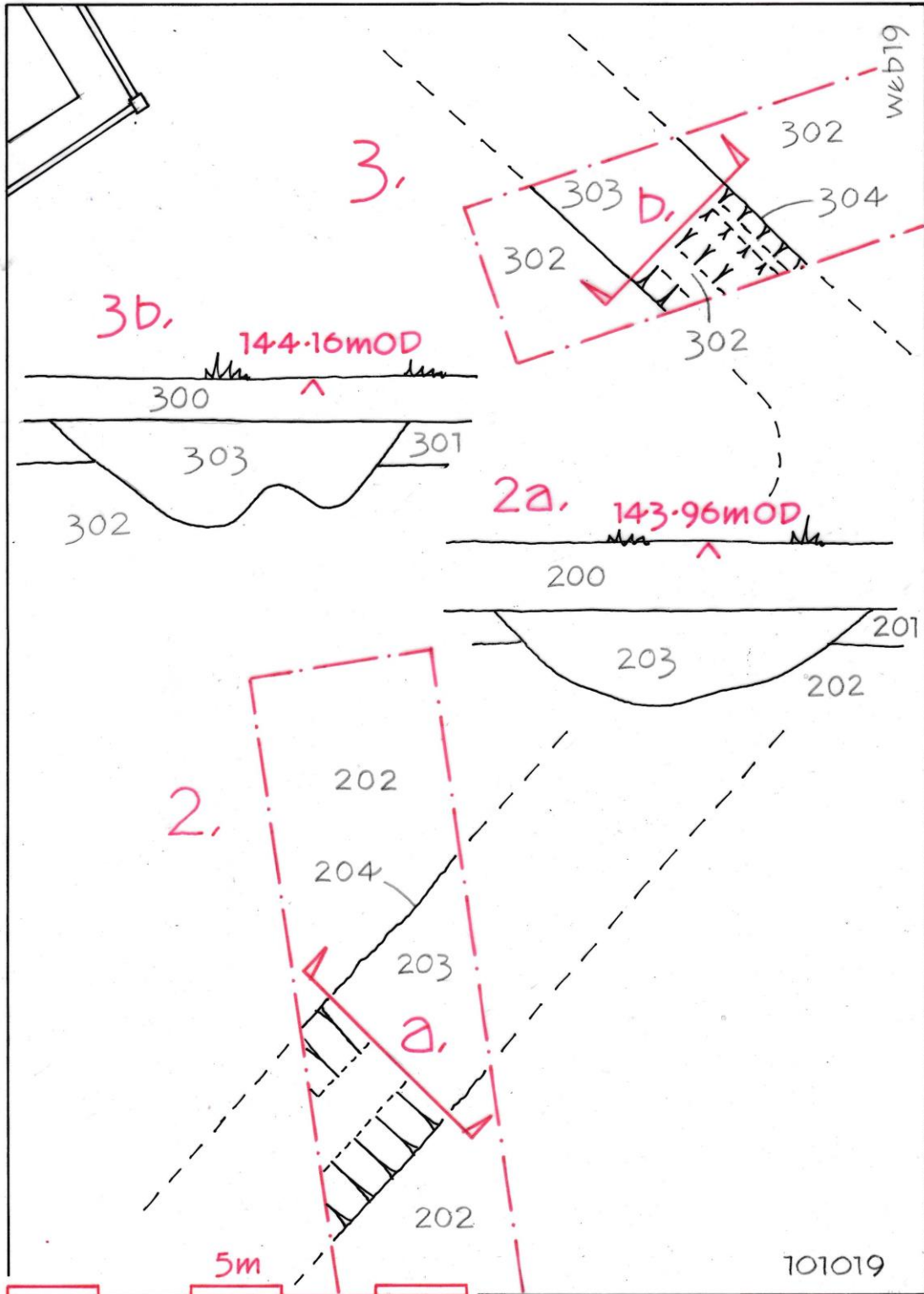


Fig. 4; trenches 2 and 3, plans and sections

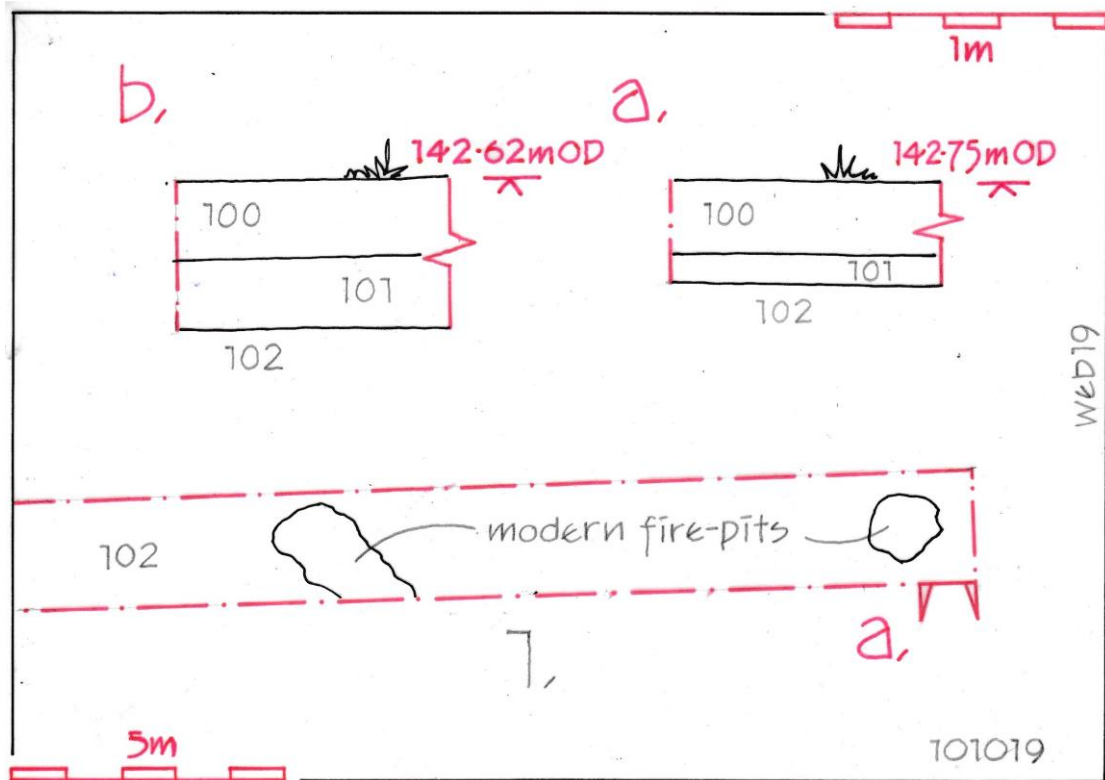


Fig.5; trench 1, plan and sections

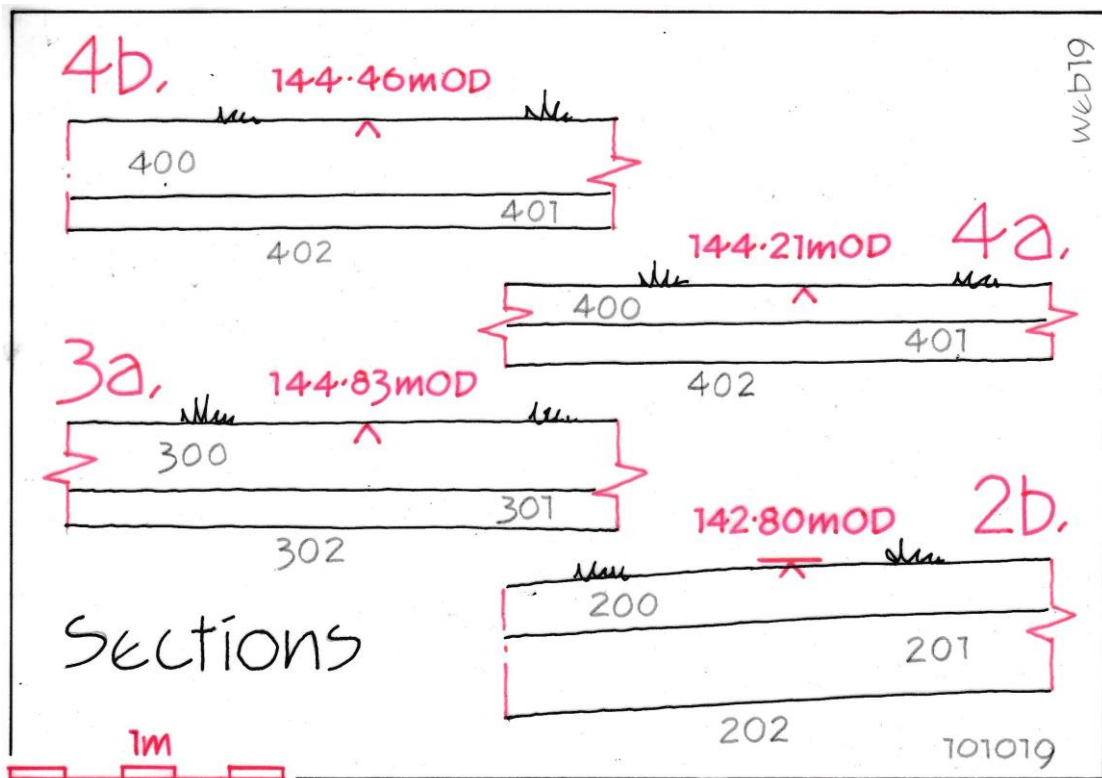


Fig. 6; trenches 2, 3 & 4, sections



## *DISCUSSION* (Fig. 7)

The excavations confirmed that the extensive ridge and furrow systems known to the south-west did not extend as far as Church Road, on the north-east side. In the larger landscape this system lies within a large easily identified triangular area bounded on the south by a redundant green way and on the northwest by the line of a former road or track. An earthen bank along part of the north side of the greenway formerly retained a larger pond than is shown on the 1st Ed. OS and is also drawn on the Tithe Map, 1844. These earthworks including possible house platforms were recorded to the south of the site during an earlier survey, they were shown not to extend into the application site suggesting that the area of investigation marks the northern limit of any earlier activity.

The shallow ditch feature that was uncovered near the middle of the site in trenches 2 & 3 was found to have been remains of a boundary shown on the 1st Ed. OS 1884-6, predating the existing fence-line which is associated with the two late C20 bungalows. The finds associated with the fill are modern and included fragments of bottle glass, porcelain pottery and brick and slate. There are two buildings shown on early C20 OS maps and scatters of brickwork on the ground locate, correctly, their former presence and probable appearance. The presence of slate here adds further detail to these lost buildings albeit of recent date and is consistent with the traditional character shown in the small amount of standing historic brick-structures from the later C18 to the early C20. Probably contemporary with these lost buildings is the gate on Church Road and the associated hedge which forms an encroachment onto the older way, the verge of which is clearly shown on the 1st Ed. OS. The rotten and ruinous gate was originally morticed and tenoned with five rails and braced in the form of a double X, the gate post are also rotten but iron furnishings survive and the simple terminations (fillets flacking semicircle) of the strap-hinges, for pintles, has been seen elsewhere in late C19 or early C20 contexts.

Other lost buildings are shown on the 1884 OS map, to the rear of the Pumphouse lane dwellings and which appear from their plan to be pig-houses. This is not the case for the lost buildings within the site however the remains of dead or fallen fruit trees nearby, the standing pear tree at the rear of a bungalow garden and the field to the south named 'Peartree Piece' on the Tithe Map suggests a possible connection.

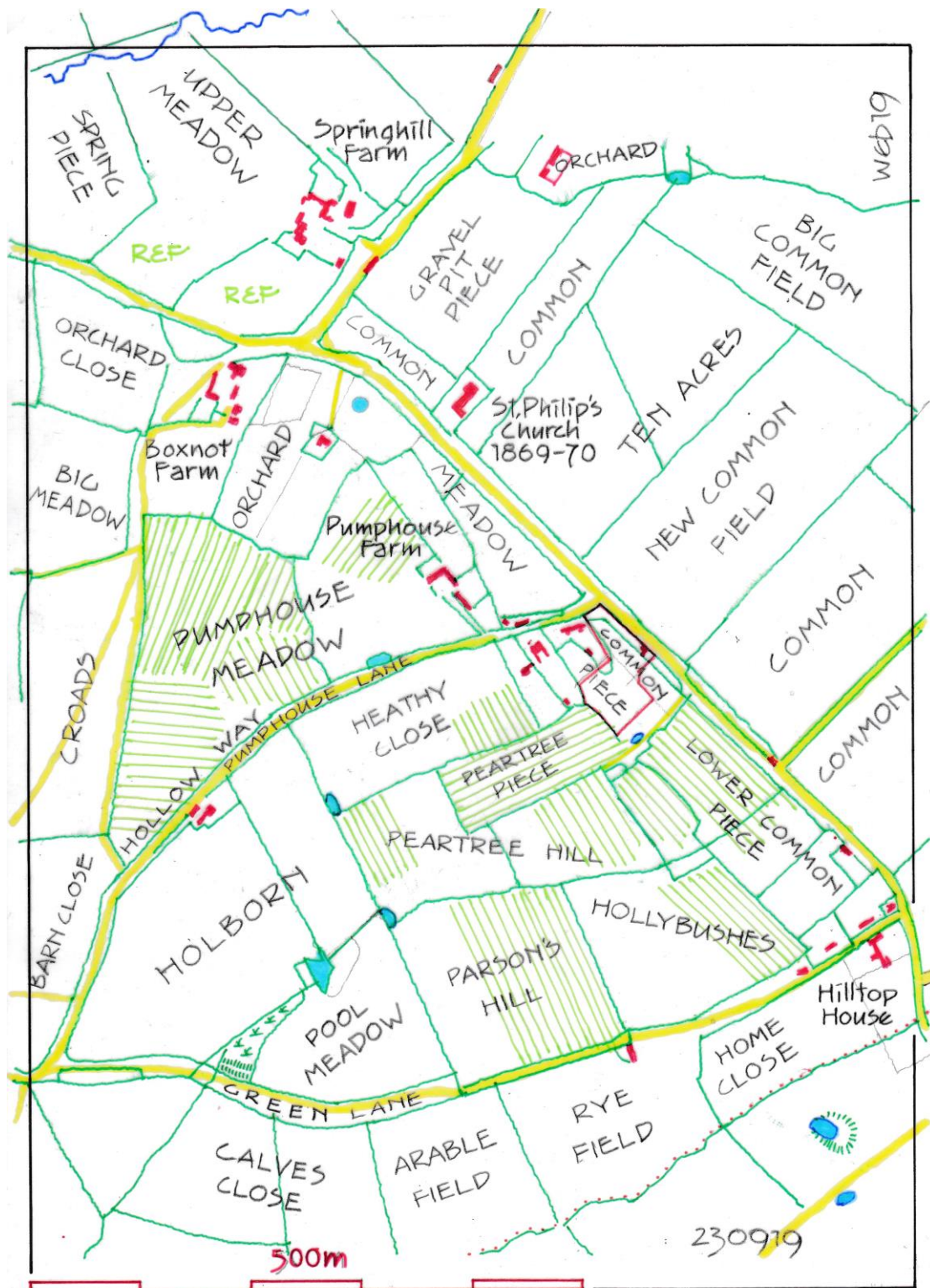


Fig 7; Webheath; sketch plan of the Historic Landscape

The results of the evaluation indicate that activity within the site is characterised by the creation of a new boundary during the C19 when the area appears to have first been occupied. The absence of any features predating this period and the lack of residual finds associated with earlier activity suggests that there is unlikely to be remains within the site associated with the pre-C19 use of the area. This may in part be explained by the location of the site along the edge of Church Road where the adjacent field names indicate that the area has historically been used as common land and has as a result remained largely undeveloped until more recent times.

## ***BIBLIOGRAPHY***

- British Geological Survey, 1974. *Geological Survey of England and Wales, Redditch, sheet 189, solid and drift geology, 1:50,000.*
- CIfA, 2014. *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Evaluation*, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.
- Cook, M., 1995. *Evaluation at Norgrove; Church Road, Redditch (Stage 1)*, Archaeological Service - Worcestershire County Council.
- Historic England, 2017. *Understanding the Archaeology of Landscapes*. 2nd edition. Swindon, Historic England.
- Kimber, M., 2012. Land Adjacent to Pumphouse Lane, Redditch, Worcestershire Evaluation and Topographical Survey. Headland Archaeology Ltd.
- Mould, C. 1997. *An Archaeological Assessment of land adjacent to Pumphouse Lane, Webheath*, Birmingham Archaeology.
- OS 1st Edition 1884-86.
- OS 1904.
- OS 1927.
- OS 1954.
- OS 1981.
- Tithe Map of Bentley, Tutnall, Cobley, Tardebigg and Redditch, 1844.
- VCH, 1913. 'Parishes: Tardebigge', in *A History of the County of Worcester, Victoria County History*, vol. 3, 223-230 (London)

## ***Archive Location***

A digital (pdf) copy of the report (referenced with OASIS) will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service.



*Plate 1; A view across the site from the southern end.*



*Plate 2; The ruinous shed from north.*



*Plate 3; View across the site from south-west.*



*Plate 4; The southern part of the site from north.*



*Plate 5; Trench 1; detail of section a.*



*Plate 6; Trench 1; detail of section b.*



*Plate 7; Trench 2, showing fill (203) of ditch (204) to north-east.*



*Plate 8; Trench 2; detail of section b.*



*Plate 9; Trench 3; showing fill (303) of ditch (304) to north-east, note the bottle near the foreground from the fill deposit (303).*





*Plate 10; Trench 3; detail of section a.*



*Plate 11; Trench 4; view to north.*



*Plate 12; Trench 4; detail of section a.*



*Plate 13; Trench 4; detail of section b.*



*Plate 14; Trench 2, showing fill (203) of ditch (204) to south.*



*Plate 15; Trench 2, detail of fill (203) of ditch (204) after excavation, to south.*



Plate 16; Trench 3, showing ditch-fill (303).



*Plate 17; Trench 3; detail of ditch-fill (303) to east.*



*Plate 18; Trench 3; detail of ditch (304) after excavation.*



Plate 19; Modern finds from the ditch-fill



Plate 20; More modern finds from the ditch-fill.

## APPENDIX 1: OASIS

Project name	Land at pumphouse Lane, Webheath, Worcs
Short description of the project	<p>This document sets out details of a research design for an archaeological earthwork survey and evaluation on land at Church Road and Pumphouse Lane, Webheath, Worcestershire, B97 5PH at the request of Eden Properties Midlands Ltd. Planning permission has been granted (planning Ref: 19/00320/FUL) for the erection of nine bungalows on the site conditional on a programme of archaeological work comprising an earthwork survey followed by evaluation. The excavations have now confirmed that the ridge and furrow systems to the south-west did not extend as far as Church Road, on the north-east side. In the larger landscape this system lies within an area bounded on the south-east by a green way and on the west by a line of road or track. An earthen bank on the north side of the greenway formerly retained a large pond which is drawn on the 1844 Tithe Map. The shallow ditch near the middle of the site is what remains of the boundary shown on the 1st Ed. OS 1884-6, predating the existing fence-line. The finds within the fill are modern. Scatters of brickwork on the ground locate two buildings shown on early C20 OS maps. The presence of slate in the ditch-fill adds detail to these lost buildings and is consistent with the traditional character shown in the standing historic brick-structures. Contemporary with these lost buildings is the gate on Church Road and the associated hedge which forms an encroachment onto the older way. Other lost buildings are shown on the 1884 OS map, to the rear of the Pumphouse lane dwellings and which appear from their plan to be pig-houses. This is not the case for the lost buildings within the site however the remains of dead or fallen fruit trees nearby, the standing pear tree at the rear of a bungalow garden and the field to the south named 'Peartree Piece' on the Tithe Map suggests a possible connection.</p>
Project dates	Start: 26-09-2019 End: 12-10-2019
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	web19 – Site code
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 13 - Waste ground
Monument type	DITCH Uncertain

### **Project location**

Country	England
Site location	WORCESTERSHIRE REDDITCH REDDITCH Pumphouse Lane
Postcode	B97 5PH
Study area	240 Square metres
Height OD / Depth	Min: 142.08m Max: 144.06m

**Project creators**

Name of Organisation	one ten archaeology
Project brief originator	Local Planning Authority (with/without advice from County/District Archaeologist)
Project design originator	one ten archaeology
Project director/manager	sean cook
Project supervisor	sean cook
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Eden Properties Midlands Ltd.
Entered by	Jill Atherton (jillatherton.mcifa@btinternet.com)
Entered on	14 October 2019