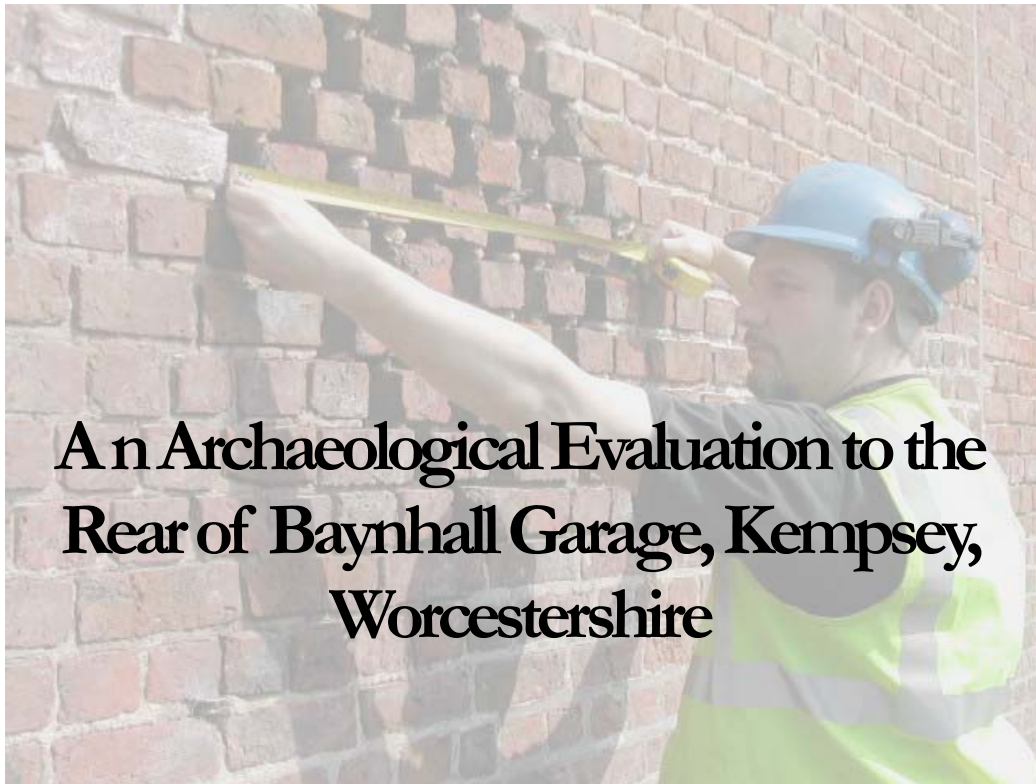


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*Archaeological Evaluation of Land to the rear of
Baynhall Garage, Kempsey, Worcestershire*



An Archaeological Evaluation to the Rear of Baynhall Garage, Kempsey, Worcestershire

A report for Mr Adrian Edwards

October 2005

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Project: PJ 150

WSM 34494

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1. Project Background

1.1. Location of the Site

Baynhall Garage is located at Baynhall on the A38 trunk road from Worcester to Tewkesbury around 2 kilometres to the south of Kempsey (NGR SO8504 4737). Kempsey is probably best described as a large village, with ribbon settlement laid out along and off the A38. The village is of mixed period, with 17th century timber-framed houses standing alongside modern development. Baynhall consists of a farm, a few cottages and Baynhall Garage, which is a large, mainly modern car sales and servicing establishment, with dealerships from Mazda, Mitsubishi, Kia and Daihatsu and (Figure 1).

1.2. Project Details

A planning application has been made to Malvern Hills District Council by Mr A.Edwards, via his agent The Design Company of Upton-upon-Severn, to construct a new dwelling and garage at the rear of the commercial premises (reference MH/04/2013). The planning process determined that the proposed development may affect an archaeological site listed on the Worcestershire County Historic Environment record as ‘a site of archaeological interest’ (WSM 10413). The listed site lies to the east of the development area and consists of a holloway and a cropmark enclosure. The area around Kempsey has many recorded archaeological sites, especially from the prehistoric and Romano British periods. As a result, the Planning Archaeologist, Worcestershire County Council, placed a ‘programme of archaeological work’ planning condition on the application, for which a brief of work was written (WHEAS 2005).

1.3. Site Description

The proposed development site is a flat rectangular area bounded on the south, west and north by mature hedges and fencing, with modern housing development and Baynhall Garage to the east fronting the A38. The River Severn flows through the wide narrow valley less than 500 metres to the west. The development site has lately been used for parking vehicles.

2. Methods and Process

2.1. Project Specification

- The archaeological project conforms to the Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation (IFA 1999).
- The archive conforms to the standards and guidelines established by the Archaeological Data Service.
- The project conforms to a brief prepared by the Planning Archaeologist, Worcestershire Historic Environment and Archaeology Service (WHEAS, 2005) and for which a project proposal and detailed specification was produced (Mercian Archaeology 2005).

2.2. Specific Aims of the Project

- To evaluate the proposed development site by a combination of intrusive and non-intrusive methods in order to develop an understanding of how either natural processes, cultural processes or a combination of both, resulted in the formation of the site.
- To determine how any archaeological remains, should they be encountered, relate to the Holloway and cropmark features that were recognised from an aerial photograph to the east of the site, which are listed on the Worcestershire County Historic Environment Record (WSM 10413).
- To place the site and any archaeological deposits encountered into a wider context, using readily available background information, including cartographic sources, historic documents, photographs and primary and secondary written sources.
- To use the results of the archaeological work to produce a report highlighting: -
 1. The survival and location of any archaeological deposits.
 2. Analysis of identified natural and cultural deposits and their interpretation.

3. The Documentary Research

3.1. The Topographical, Archaeological and Historic Background

Kempsey lies around 5 kilometres to the south of the city of Worcester on the gravel river terrace of the eastern bank of the River Severn. The river flows southwards in the wide valley to the west, with vast tracts of meadowland along the rich fertile floodplain. Areas of meadowland to the west and north-west are known along the Severn from Shropshire to Gloucestershire as 'hams', from the Old English 'hamm', meaning 'hemmed in' land, typically in the bend of a river. The hams would have been managed as common hay meadow since at least the medieval period.

To the east is the line of the Roman road from Tewkesbury to Worcester, the line of which, has been closely followed by the A38 and M5. This is one of three proposed Roman roads along this communication corridor, with another through the village at Old Road South and a third crossing this road at Palmers Cross (Morrell 1999-2005).

The soils of the area are a weakly structured, slightly stony sandy loams grading out to porous brownish subsoils (Beard et al, 1986). The underlying geology is glacio-fluvial or river terrace drift of the Wick 1 association (British Geological Survey 1993, 1:50000 map). This provides ideal growing conditions for wheat, barley and beans (VCH III, 431). Large areas of orchard are shown on early maps and hop-kilns on the eastern side of the road indicates that hop growing was also part of the local agricultural economy.

The Worcestershire Historic Environment Record (HER) indicates that the development site lies within an area of intensive archaeological activity. A series of cropmark features have been recorded in the vicinity during over a decade of aerial reconnaissance. The overall nature of the cropmarks suggests a prehistoric landscape focused on the Severn Valley and along the ridge of higher ground to the east, which during the later Romano British period focused on the roman road to the east of the village. To the south-east of the development on the opposite side of the A38 a series of cropmark ring ditches have been recorded (WSM 10409; WSM 10410; WSM 10411; WSM 10362). The concentration of the ring ditches, which are the ditched remains of probable Bronze Age barrows, or burial mounds, suggests a prehistoric cemetery in this location, possibly focused on a (now) cropmark feature interpreted as a henge monument (WSM 10408), which probably was constructed during the Neolithic period, but remained as a special place in the landscape into the Bronze age. There is further evidence for Neolithic activity in the area; a sherd of a spiral banded long necked beaker from the Neolithic period was found less than a kilometre to the north (WSM 02119). There have been further ploughed out barrows noted widely across the area during aerial reconnaissance (WSM 01380) and geophysical survey to the west of the A38 (WSM 26405). The field systems, enclosures and evidence for houses of the prehistoric and later Romano British period are also spread widely across the area (WSM 26405; WSM 30892; WSM 30893; WSM 30896; WSM 01352; WSM 01353; WSM 01357; WSM 02114; WSM 02117; WSM 02118; WSM 06032). The area is also noted for prehistoric pit-alignments, again noticed during aerial archaeology (WSM 30505; WSM 30509; WSM 01357). To the west of the site a programme of archaeological field-walking and a metal detector survey has recorded evidence for Late Iron Age and

Romano British settlement activity, with a concentration of Severn Valley ware pottery (WSM 30894) and metalwork including an Iron Age coin, Roman coins and a Roman brooch (WSM 30895). Records of medieval and post-medieval activity is mainly confined to buildings, one notably 'The Nash', which may have originally been built in the 15th century, although now it is much reduced and altered (WSM 01355). The Nash was surrounded by a small deer park of around 7 acres, with 21 acres of woodland (WSM 29000).

Overall, the evidence contained within the HER highlights the rich archaeological potential of the Kempsey area, which has evolved over some 8 millennia, from a prehistoric landscape focussing on the Severn Valley, to the post-medieval semi-urban scene focused on the A38 trunkroad.

3.2. The Cartographic Sources

In 1836 the Tithe Commutation Act was passed by Parliament, resulting in an extensive survey of land across England in order to produce a series of Tithe Apportionment Maps that relayed information about land ownership and use, aimed at converting the commutation of tithe in kind to land taxation (Hoskins 1972, 37). The mid-19th century tithe map of Kempsey is shown in Figure 2.

The 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1885 shows the development site to be an orchard at that time, a pair of cottages stood off the road frontage, approximately on the site of the present garage. The orchard was part of a wide band of orchard spreading northwards on the western side of the A38. The later edition of 1904 shows a similar pattern (Figure 3).

Cartographic Sources Consulted

WRO ~ Worcestershire Records Office

| Source | Reference Number |
|--|------------------|
| Tithe Map of Kempsey on CD Rom | WRO S760-376-1 |
| Ordnance Survey 1st Edition 6" (1885). Supplied by HER and not able to reproduce | |
| Ordnance Survey 2 nd Edition (1904), Worcestershire Sheet XL.8 | |

Other sources used are referenced within the report.

3.4. The Fieldwork Methodology

The archaeological evaluation was undertaken on 7th September 2005.

The areas to be trenched were surveyed using a Garrett Ultra GTA metal detector configured to detect all metals to a maximum depth of 15 centimetres. The spoil was also scanned during the excavation process.

The evaluation trench, totalling 36 square metres, was excavated by JCB equipped with a 1.60 metre-ditching bucket. The trench location is shown in Figure 4

Paul Williams carried out the evaluation for Mercian Archaeology.

The methodology adopted and the favourable working conditions meant that the aims and objectives of the brief could be fully met and the fieldwork was successfully concluded.

4. The Archaeological Fieldwork

4.1. The Evaluation Results

The metal detector survey of the area to be trenched produced no signals to suggest the presence of metals of any type. The only metal encountered during the work was modern iron items, which were contained within dumped levelling layers (see below).

One 20 metre x 1.8 metre trench was excavated by a JCB fitted with a ditching bucket, after first breaking the heavily compacted surface with a toothed bucket. The trench was laid out adjacent to the building plot, which had already been pegged out. The trench location is shown in Figure 4

The site was overlain by a denuded turf and thin greyish topsoil [100]. The reason for the poor quality of the turf was soon apparent; the JCB had to revert to a toothed bucket to break up the layer below the topsoil due to its extremely compact nature. This layer [101] was around 20 centimetres thick and consisted of a gravely hardcore mix with brick fragments and general building debris. This had clearly been well compacted by a machine. This lay over a similar, but slightly looser layer of hardcore and rubble, taking the total depth below ground level to 0.50 metres. The horizon between this layer and the layer below was clearly visible and so the machine was re-fitted with the ditching bucket at this point.

A buried turfline [102] lay below the hardcore. This was around 7 centimetres thick and was a plastic greenish-brown silty matrix with surviving yellowed grass in patches on the upper level.

The turf sealed an orange to brown sandy-gravel subsoil [103] some 20 centimetres thick. This was a well-mixed layer, with abundant small to medium round and sub-round stones, but noticeably lacking in any form of cultural material.

The natural layer below [104] was of a similar matrix, with patches of pure reddish sand. 20th century ploughing had clearly disturbed this layer and closely spaced plough-furrows were visible running approximately north to south across the trench (Plate 2). The furrows survived to around 10 centimetres deep into the previously undisturbed natural.

There were no significant archaeological deposits or features encountered during the evaluation and there were no stratified dateable artefacts recovered during the work.

5. Discussion of the Physical and Documentary Evidence

The evidence from the archaeological evaluation shows that a hardcore layer was laid over existing grassland and compacted for use as a car parking area, during the late 20th century. Below the buried turf was a ploughsoil, which must have also have developed during the 20th century, as the early Ordnance Survey sheets show that the area was formerly orchard. The plough furrows were noted in section (Plate 1) and in plan (Plate 2). There was a notable lack of finds or inclusions within the trench, which would be expected with pre-20th century ploughing, when household waste, including broken pottery would be mixed in with the manure and spread across the land by the ploughing action.

The evidence, however, does not indicate that the wider area of the site is definitively devoid of prehistoric features associated with the wider landscape. The relatively small scale of the development meant that only 36 square metres of the site were evaluated, which in reality may have been within an area of prehistoric or later activity, but not noted as any features did not pass through the trench.

6. Conclusion

The results of the archaeological evaluation at land to the rear of Baynhall Garage were negative with no significant below ground archaeological deposits or features observed within the evaluation trench. The evidence from the archaeological work indicates that the area has lately been used for car parking with a compacted hardcore surface having been laid down sometime during the late 20th century directly over an area of grass. Below the buried turf there is evidence of early 20th century ploughing. The early Ordnance Survey maps show that at the turn of the century the area was covered in orchard.

7. Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank the client Mr Adrian Edwards for his co-operation. Thanks are also due to Richard Tippin of The Design Company, Upton-upon-Severn, Eddie Collins for operating the JCB, Emma Hancock of Worcestershire Historic Environment and Archaeology Service for carrying out the HER search; Mike Glyde, Planning Archaeologist, Worcestershire Historic Environment and Archaeology Service and the staff of Worcester Records Office.

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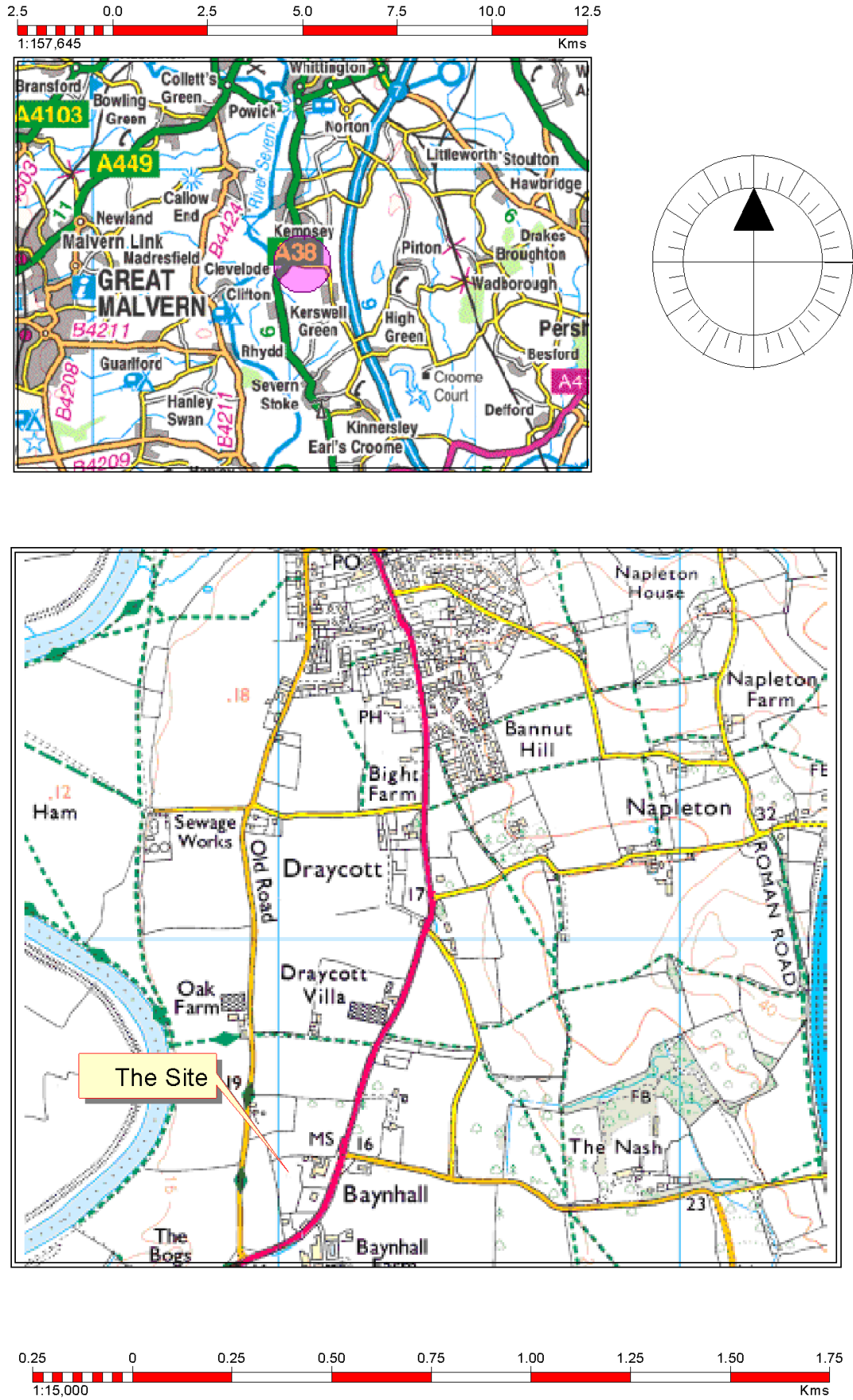
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Requirements for a Programme of Archaeological Work at Land to the Rear of Baynhall Garage, Kempsey, Worcestershire

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Figure 1: Location of the Site



Location of the Site at Baynhall, Kempsey

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Figure 2: Extract from the Tithe Apportionment Map of Kempsey



The mid-19th century tithe map shows the location of the site and property boundaries at this time.

Scale unknown

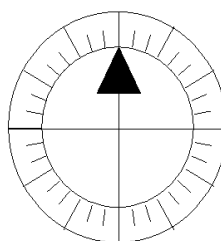
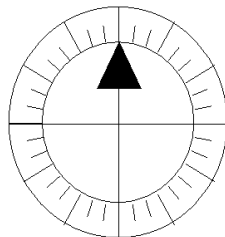
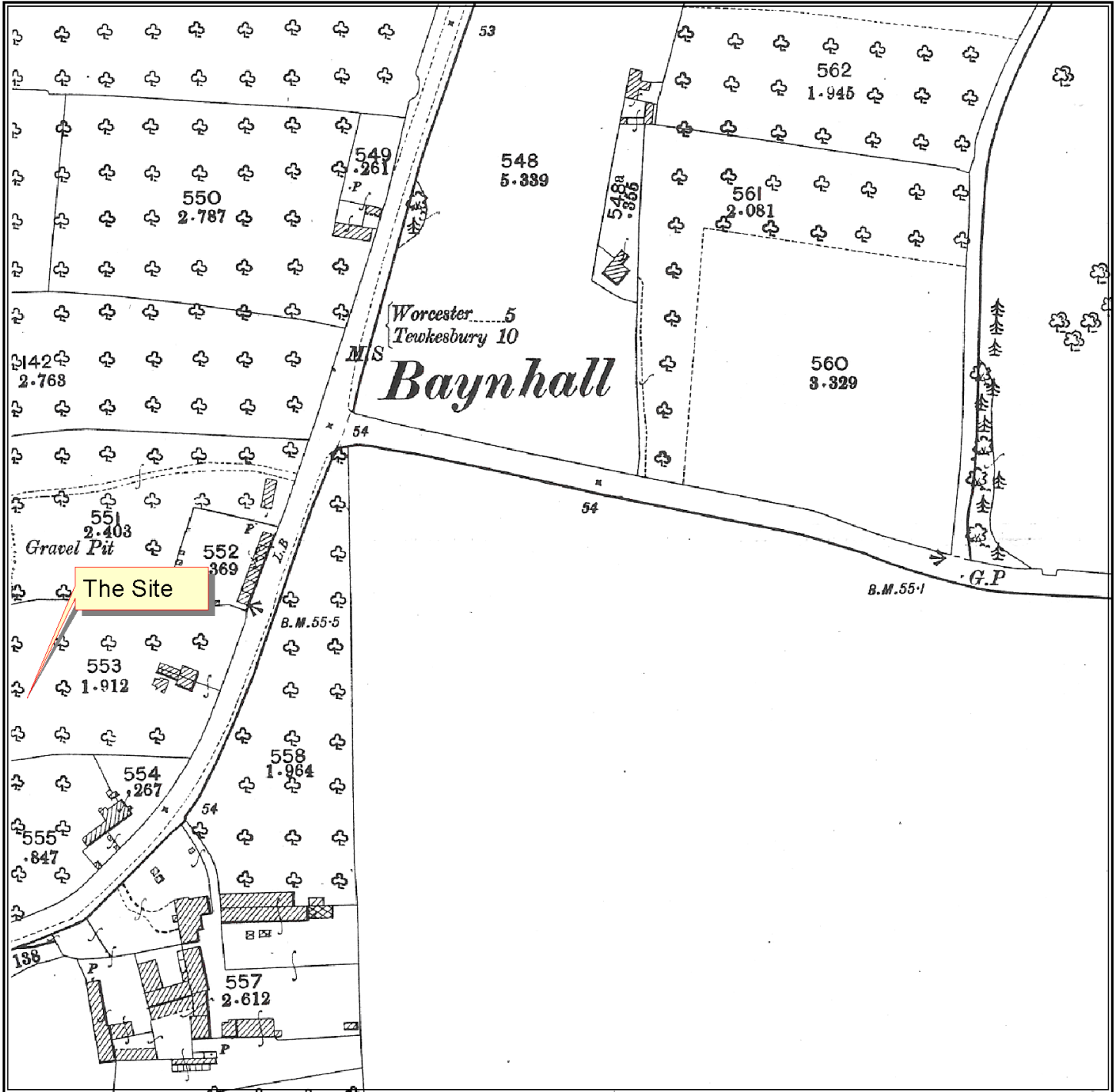


Figure 3: 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey (1904)



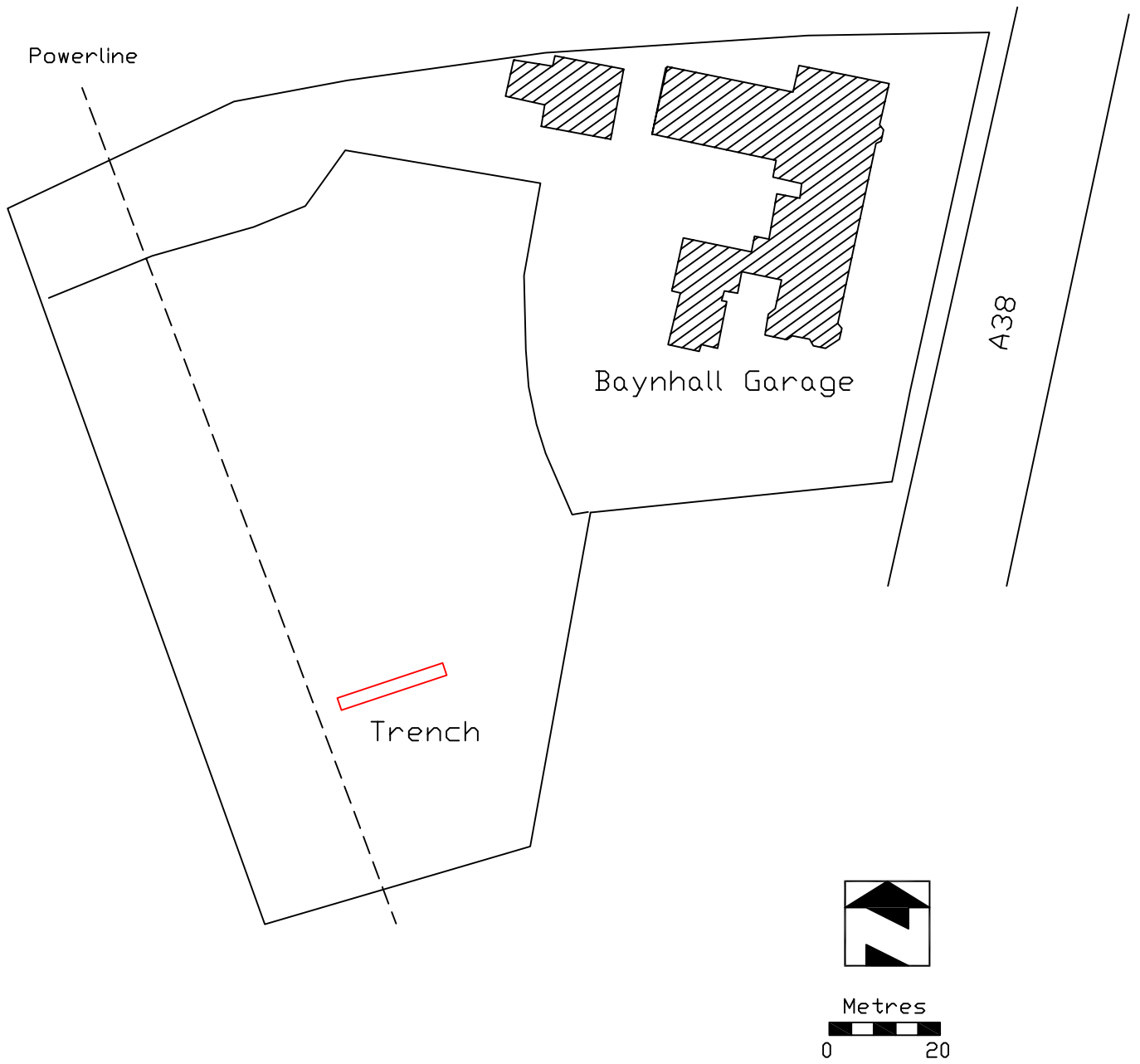
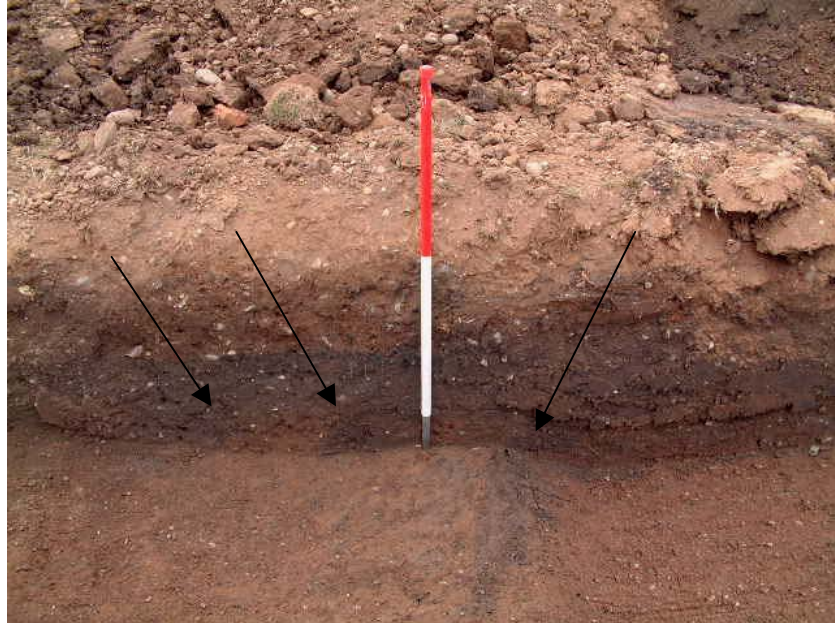


Figure 4: Trench Location

Plates

Plate 1



Soil profile in the trench section. Note the plough furrows (arrowed – scale 1 metre)

Plate 2



Plough furrows as seen during excavation