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**CASTLE FARM
CAMPUS, PRIORSLEE,
TELFORD AND
WREKIN,
SHROPSHIRE:**

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL
EVALUATION 2008**



Project No. 1805

**CASTLE FARM CAMPUS, PRIORSLEE, TELFORD AND WREKIN,
SHROPSHIRE:**

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION 2008

by
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Appendix 1: Atkins Heritage, 2008, Castle Farm Campus, Priorslee, Telford. Scheduled Ancient Monument WK 207 specification for archaeological evaluation

Appendix 2: Birmingham Archaeology, 2008, Castle Farm Campus, Priorslee, Telford and Wrekin, Shropshire. Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Evaluation. Scheduled Ancient Monument: WK 207

SUMMARY

Birmingham Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation at the Castle Farm Campus of the University of Wolverhampton, Priorslee, Telford and Wrekin, Shropshire (centred on NGR 724096) during May and June 2008. The work was carried out in advance of the proposed development of the site, which is within the boundary of a scheduled ancient monument (SAM WK 207).

Previous archaeological work recorded evidence of a double ditched Iron Age enclosure at the easter part of the site and this was subsequently destroyed during the construction of Priorslee Lake. It was thought that cropmarks visible on aerial photographs of the present site may be associated with the features previously recorded, perhaps being evidence of an annex to the enclosure.

Five trial trenches were excavated within the boundary of the SAM, with two of the trenches located to investigate the cropmarks. No archaeological features, deposits or finds were identified. It is possible that the presence of the cropmarks could be explained by variations in the natural geology observed during the evaluation.

**CASTLE FARM CAMPUS, PRIORSLEE, TELFORD AND WREKIN, SHROPSHIRE:
AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION 2008**

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background to the project

Birmingham Archaeology was commissioned by Atkins Heritage on behalf of Bovale Ltd to undertake a programme of trial trenching ahead of a proposed commercial development at Castle Farm Campus, Priorslee, Telford and Wrekin, Shropshire.

This report outlines the results of a field evaluation carried out during June 2008, and has been prepared in accordance with the Institute of Field Archaeologists Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations (IFA 2001).

The evaluation conformed to a specification (Appendix 1) for archaeological evaluation produced by Atkins Heritage (*Castle Farm Campus, Priorslee, Telford. Scheduled Ancient Monument WK 207 specification for archaeological evaluation*, Appendix 1) which was approved by English Heritage, advisors to the Secretary of State, and the Historic Environment Officer, Shropshire County Council. A Written Scheme of Investigation (Birmingham Archaeology 2008, Appendix 2) was approved by English Heritage and 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 is located at the Castle Farm Campus of the University of Wolverhampton, Priorslee, Telford and Wrekin, Shropshire, and is centred on NGR SJ 724 096 (Figs. 1 and 2, hereinafter referred to as the site). It is located within the boundary of a scheduled ancient monument (WK 207).

The underlying geology consists of mudstone and sandstone bedrock with superficial deposits of devensian till (British Geological Survey 2007, 1:50,000 sheet 153).

The present character of the site is a grassed raised area with vegetation to the immediate south. The area to the north of the site was occupied by modern factory buildings until recently. Priorslee Lake lies to the south of the site with the B5060 Castle Farm Way to the east and north of the site.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The site (within the boundary of scheduled ancient monument WK 207) includes the location of remains of an Iron Age enclosure first recognised as a series of cropmarks by Arnold Baker in 1959. Subsequently Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit carried out archaeological investigations at the site (Ashton- Cooper et al 1980 and Roe 1991). The results of the investigations indicated the main double ditched enclosure was of Iron Age date with the enclosure ditches being up to 3m deep. The southern side of the probable subcircular enclosure had been destroyed by the canalisation of the Wesley Brook. Finds included prehistoric, Roman and medieval pottery and briquetage. Evidence of the occupation of the interior of the enclosure was sparse, although only part of the interior was investigated. However, pits, a large posthole, a hearth and spreads of charcoal were recorded in the interior. The

investigations also revealed evidence of farming on the site at Castle Farm dating from the 12th to 19th centuries.

The majority of the monument was destroyed during the process of creating a reservoir (Priorslee Lake). The English Heritage scheduled monument description states that two-thirds of the scheduled area was destroyed but that the area to the northwest, including a possible annex (believed to be post-medieval in origin) may, to a reasonable extent, remain. It may also be possible that further elements, possibly including the large ditches, may only have been partially truncated by the construction of Priorslee Lake.

Two geotechnical test pits were excavated within the Scheduled Ancient Monument (WK 207), the site of the Iron Age enclosure, and were subject to a watching brief by Birmingham Archaeology in 2008 (*Castle Farm Campus, Priorslee, Telford and Wrekin, Shropshire: an archaeological watching brief 2008*). No evidence of the enclosure or associated features was encountered during the excavation of the two test pits. No significant archaeological deposits, features or finds were recorded.

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The principle aim of the evaluation was to determine the character, state of preservation and the potential significance of any buried remains.

More specific aims were to:

- Determine the presence or absence, character, extent, date, integrity, state of preservation and quality of any archaeological deposits that survived within the footprint of the specified area of the proposed development; and
- Inform the design for further archaeological works that would appropriately mitigate the impacts of the construction works on the buried archaeological resource

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1. Fieldwork

A total of five trenches were excavated across the site totalling 320m² (four 30m x 2m, and one 40m x 2m) (Trenches 1-2 and 4-6, Fig. 2). Due to logistical reasons, after consultation with English Heritage, Trench 3 was not excavated.

The trenches were located to provide an adequate evaluation of the area affected by the development in order to obtain information on the presence and preservation of any archaeological deposits. Trenches 1 and 2 targeted cropmarks visible on aerial photographs. Trench 2 was excavated in two parts to avoid damaging a monitoring well.

All topsoil and modern overburden was removed using a 360° tracked mechanical excavator with a toothless ditching bucket, under direct archaeological supervision, down to the top of the uppermost archaeological horizon or the natural subsoil. Subsequent cleaning and excavation was by hand.

In areas where the depth of modern overburden was such that the trial trenches required stepping, this was done in accordance with the Birmingham Archaeology Health and Safety at Work manual.

All stratigraphic sequences were recorded, even where no archaeology was present. 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 1:20 or 1:100. 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 monochrome, digital and colour slide photography.

Any recovered finds were to be 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.

The full site archive includes all artefactual 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 (UKIC, 1990) and Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological collections (Museum and Art Galleries Commission, 1992). The paper archive will be deposited with the appropriate repository subject to permission from the landowner.

5. RESULTS

5.1. Trench 1 (Fig. 3, Plate 1)

The natural subsoil in Trench 1 was reached at a height of 124.4m AOD at the northwest end of the trench and 122.78m AOD at the southeast end, and consisted of slightly silty red clay or blue clay (104). At the southeast end of the trench, natural subsoil 104 was cut by a small irregular tree bole (106, Plate 2) 0.54m in diameter and 0.36m deep. It contained a yellow sandy silt (105). Sealing 105 and natural 104 was a thin layer of yellow/blue silty clay (103) 0.2m deep. Overlying 103 was a layer of organic-rich black silty clay (103) interpreted as buried topsoil, c.0.2m deep. Sealing layer 103 was a layer of redeposited clay (101), c3.2m deep. Overlying 101 was a brown organic silty clay topsoil (100), 0.3m deep. A recent test pit (TP205), previously the subject of the watching brief (Birmingham Archaeology 2008) cut all these layers.

5.2. Trench 2 (Fig. 4, Plates 3 and 4)

The natural subsoil in Trench 2 was reached at a depth of 124.82m AOD at the northwest end of the trench and 122.63m AOD at the southeast end, and consisted of slightly silty red clay or blue clay (203). Overlying natural 203 was a thin layer of black silty clay (202), c0.3m deep, interpreted as buried topsoil. Sealing 202 was a layer of red redeposited clay (201), c2.5m deep. Overlying 201 was a brown organic-rich silty clay topsoil (200), 0.2m deep.

5.3. Trench 4 (Fig. 5, Plate 5)

The natural subsoil in Trench 4 was reached at a height of 125.14m AOD at the north end of the trench, and 123.77m AOD at the south end, and consisted of a brown clay-gravel (403). Sealing natural 403 was a thin layer of black silty clay (402), c0.2m deep, interpreted as buried topsoil. Sealing layer 402 was a red redeposited clay (401), c2.2m deep. Overlying 401 was a brown silty clay organic topsoil (400) 0.2m in depth.

5.4. Trench 5 (Fig. 6, Plate 6)

The natural subsoil in Trench 5 was reached at a height of 125.89m AOD at the north end of the trench, and 124.08m AOD at the south end of the trench. The natural subsoil consisted of a red clay (503). Overlying natural 503 was a thin layer of black silty clay (502), c0.2m deep, interpreted as buried topsoil. This was sealed by a layer of redeposited red clay (501), c2m deep. Overlying layer 501 was an organic-rich brown silty clay topsoil (500), 0.2m deep.

5.5. Trench 6 (Fig. 7, Plate 7)

The natural subsoil in Trench 6 was reached at a height of 125.65m AOD and consisted of a brown clay-gravel (603). Overlying natural 603 was a thin layer of a black silty clay (602), c0.3m deep, interpreted as buried topsoil. This was sealed by a layer of redeposited red clay (601), c1.6m deep. Overlying layer 601 was a brown silty clay organic topsoil (600), 0.2m deep.

6. DISCUSSION

The surface of the natural subsoil and what appears to be a buried topsoil were encountered in all the evaluation trenches. The undated layer of probable buried topsoil sealing the natural subsoil is likely to be the former topsoil which has been sealed by a deep layer of clay, probably deposited during landscaping works at the time of the creation of Priorslee Lake, to the south of the site, and construction of factory buildings, to the north, in the 1980s.

The absence of any significant archaeological features, deposits or finds in the evaluation trenches suggest that it is probable that no archaeological features associated with the ditched Iron Age enclosure to the east, or any other significant archaeological features, are present within the site. Variations in the nature of the natural subsoil observed in Trenches 1 and 2 may explain the differential growth of crop seen as cropmarks on aerial photographs.

As no significant archaeological features or deposits were recorded during the evaluation no further archaeological work is recommended, although the decision on this is to be made by English Heritage and the Shropshire County Council Historic Environment Officer.

7. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The project was commissioned by Atkins Heritage, on behalf of Bovale Ltd. Thanks are due to Dr. Mark Hewson who monitored the project on behalf of Atkins Heritage for his co-operation and assistance throughout the project. Thanks also go to William Klemperer, Inspector of Ancient Monuments who monitored the project on behalf of English Heritage. Work on site was undertaken by Paul Collins and Phil Mann. Phil Mann produced the written report which was illustrated by Nigel Dodds. The report was edited by Laurence Jones, who also managed the project for Birmingham Archaeology.

8. REFERENCES

Ashton- Cooper et al, 1980 'Excavation and survey at Castle Farm, Shifnal, Shropshire: an interim report', *West Midlands Archaeology* **23**, 40-51

Birmingham Archaeology 2008 *Castle Farm Campus, Priorslee, Telford and Wrekin, Shropshire: an archaeological watching brief 2008*. Birmingham Archaeology report no.1766

Birmingham Archaeology 2008 *Castle Farm Campus, Priorslee, Telford and Wrekin, Shropshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Evaluation 2008*

Department of the Environment (DoE) 1990 *Planning Policy Guidance Note 16: Archaeology and Planning*

Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) 2001 *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations*

Museums and Galleries Commission. 1992 *Standards in the museum care of archaeological collections*. London: Museums and Galleries Commission

Roe, A 1991 'Excavations at Castle Farm, Shifnal, 1980' in Carver, M.O.H (ed) 1991 *Prehistory in Lowland Shropshire*. *Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological Society*. **LXVII**, 65-83

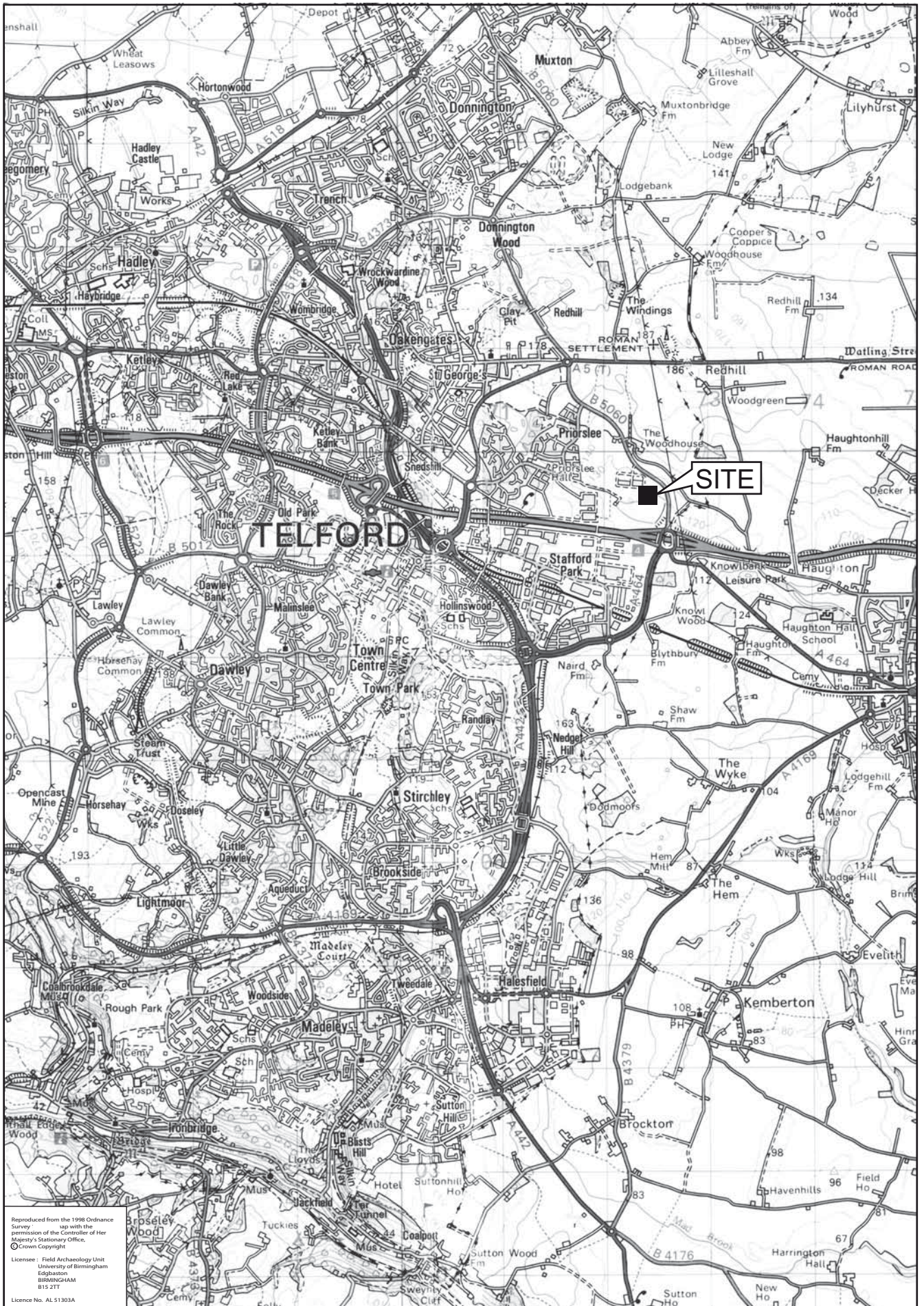
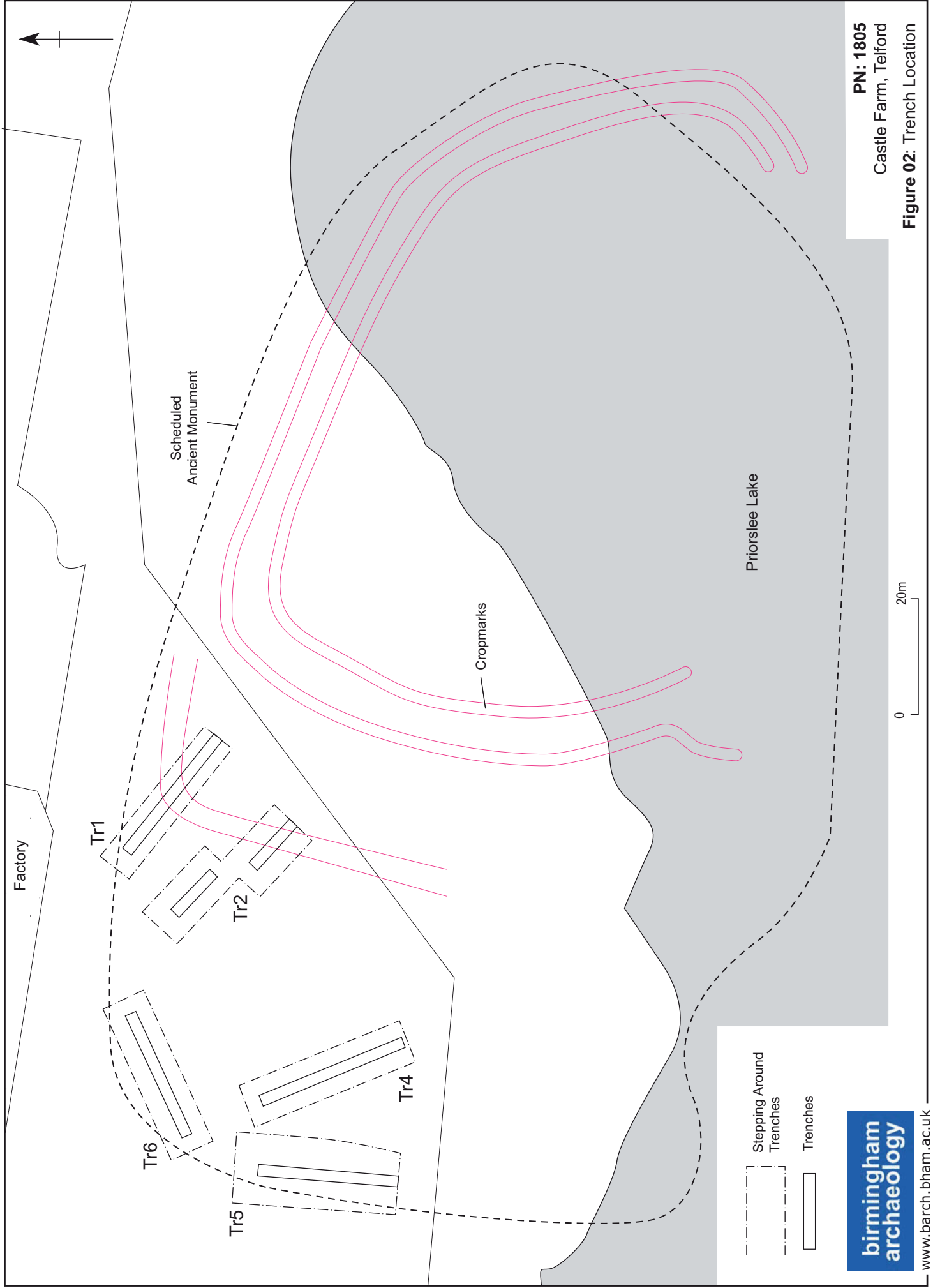


Fig.1



PN: 1805
 Castle Farm, Telford
Figure 02: Trench Location

Priorslee Lake

Cropmarks

Scheduled
 Ancient Monument

Factory

Tr1

Tr2

Tr4

Tr6

Tr5

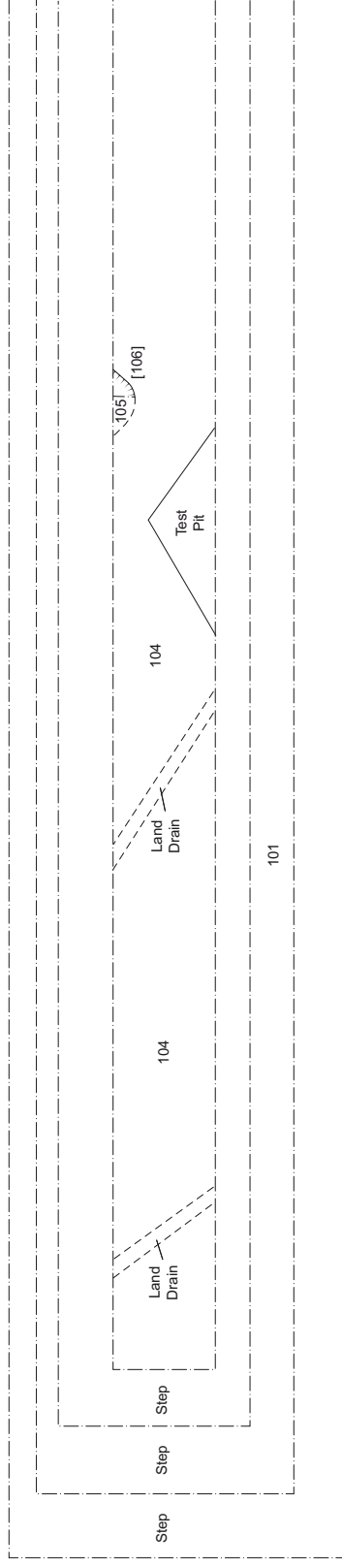
Stepping Around
 Trenches

Trenches

0 20m

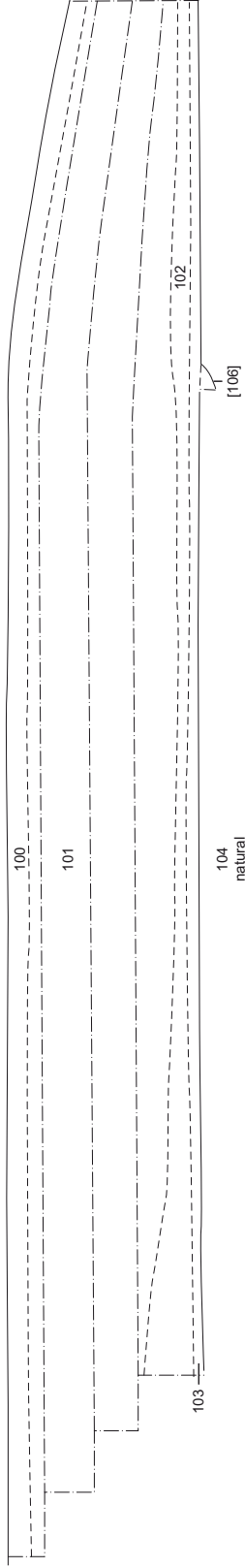
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Trench 1

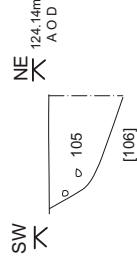


NW
127.60m
A O D

SE
K

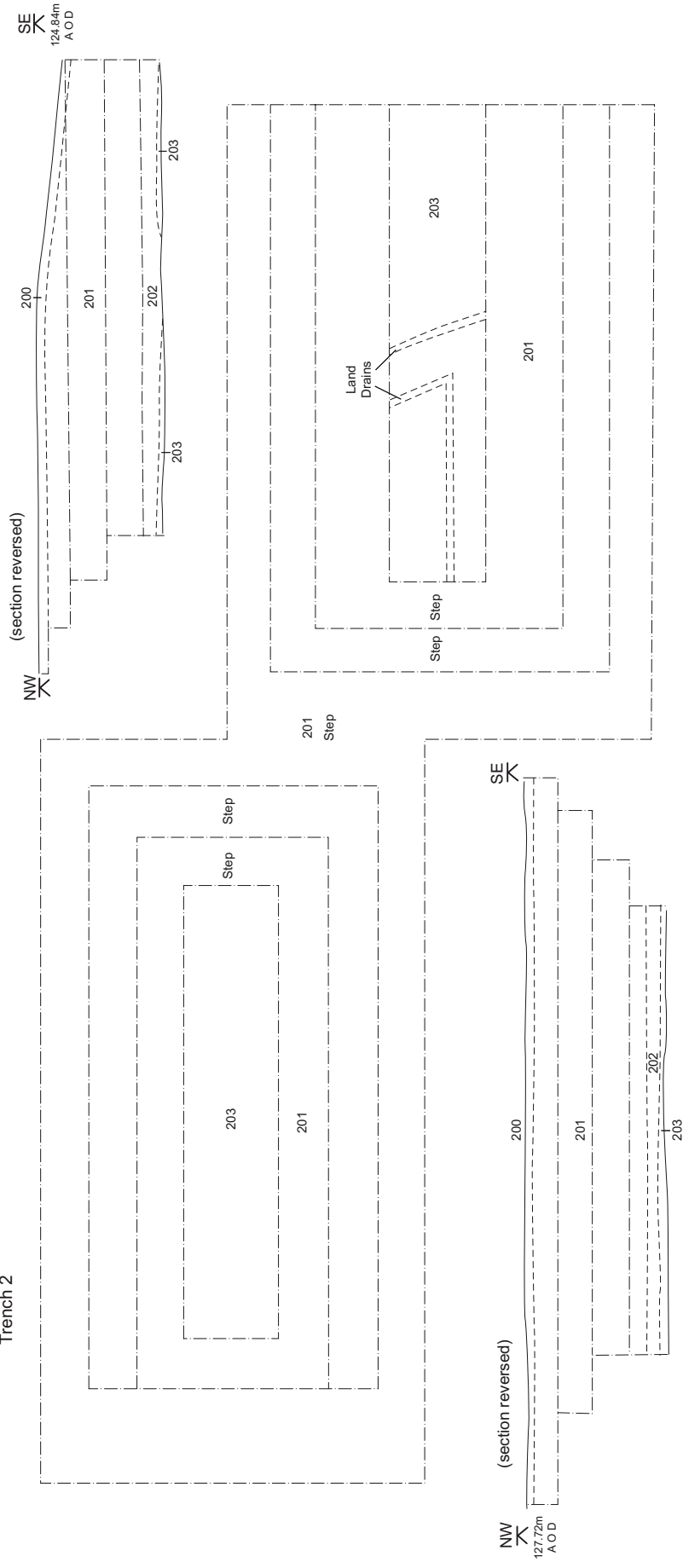


0 5m

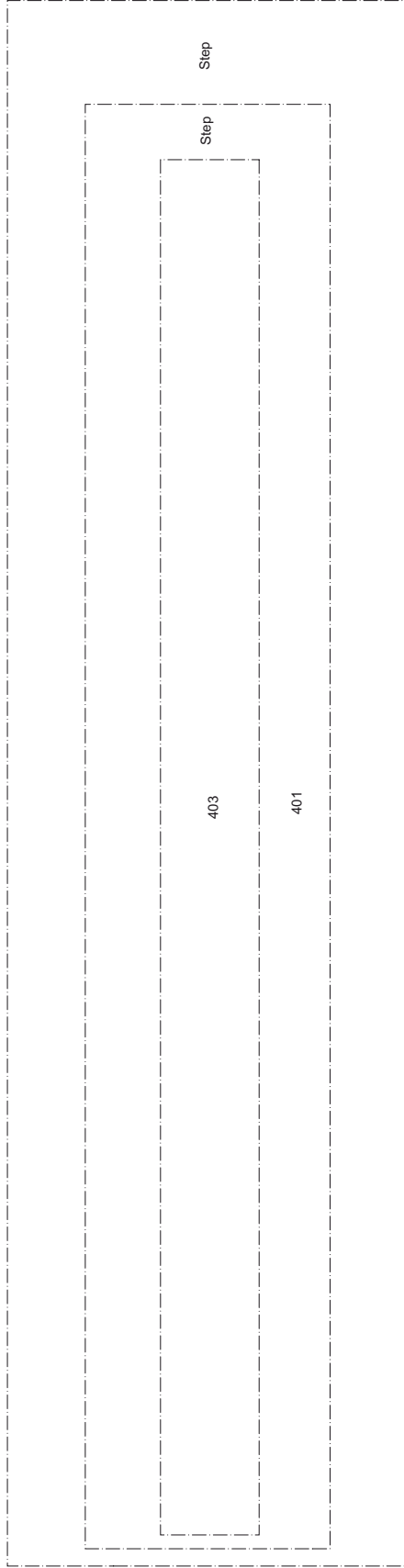


0 1m

Trench 2

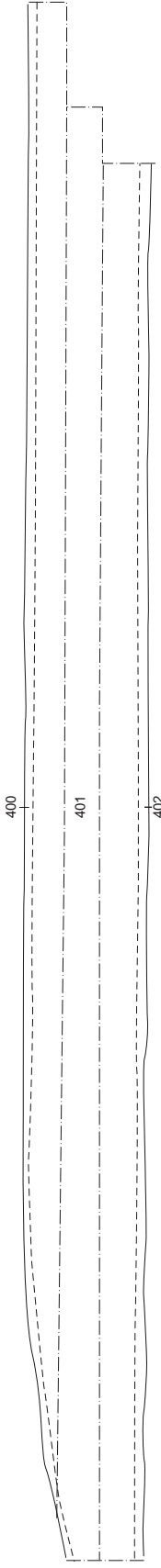


Trench 4

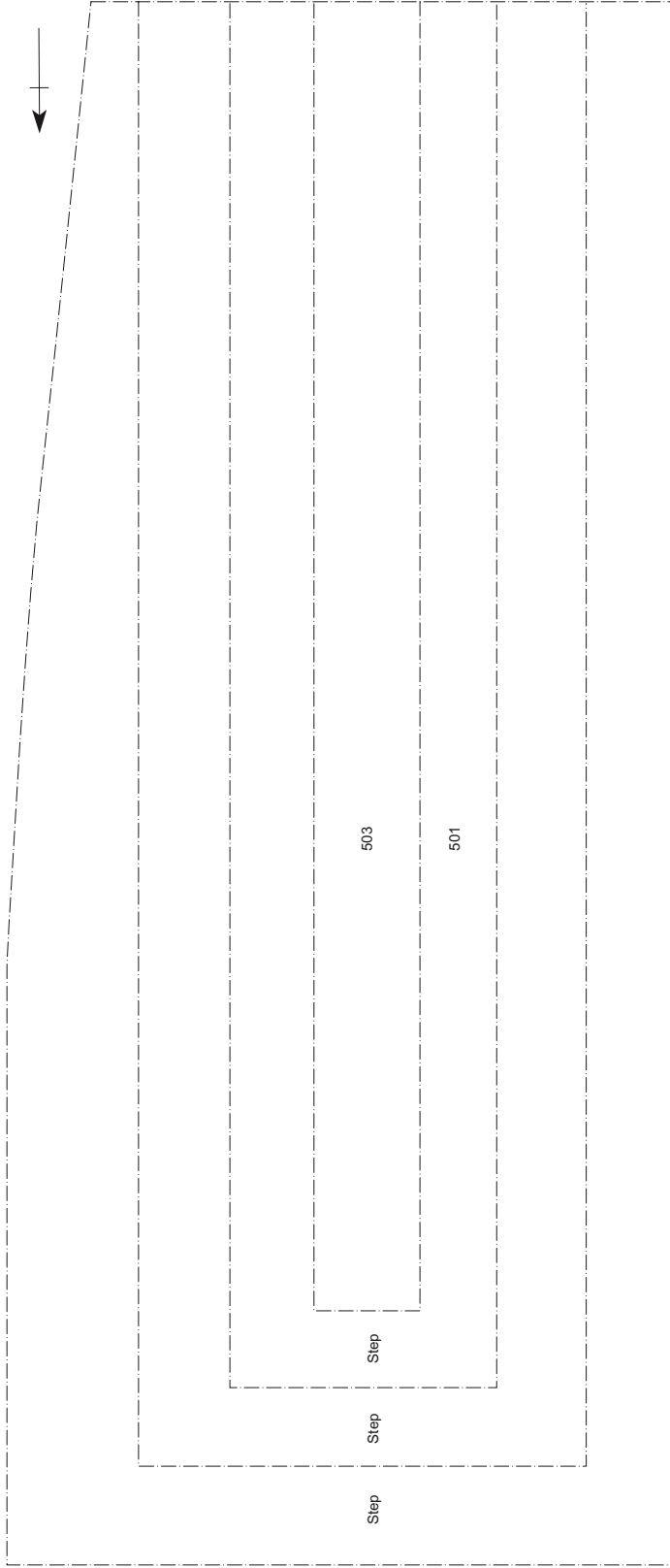


S
K
125.23m
A.O.D

N
K

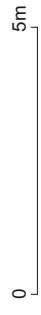
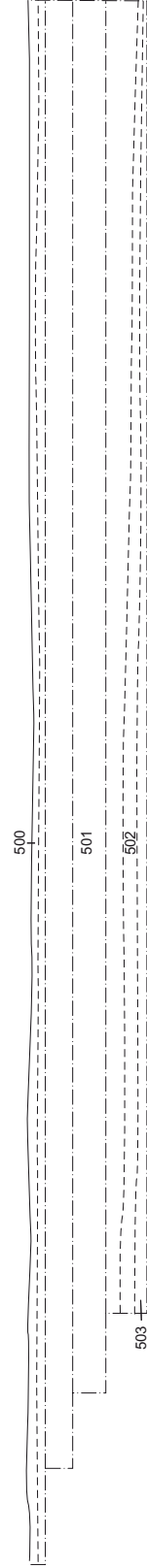


Trench 5

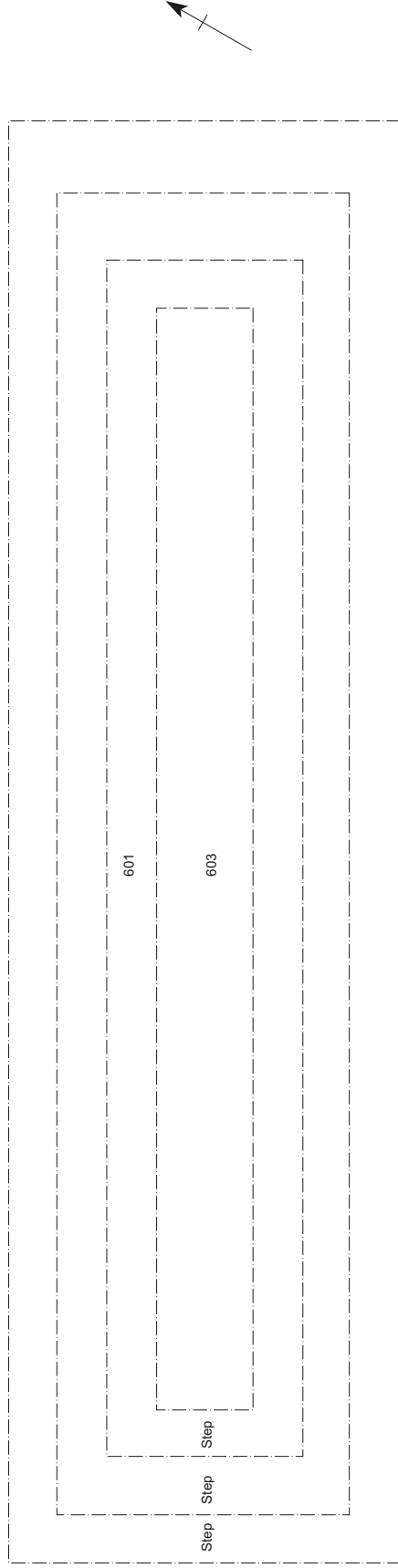


N
127.69m
AOD

S
K



Trench 6



SW
K
127.85m
AOD

NE
K

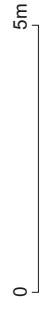
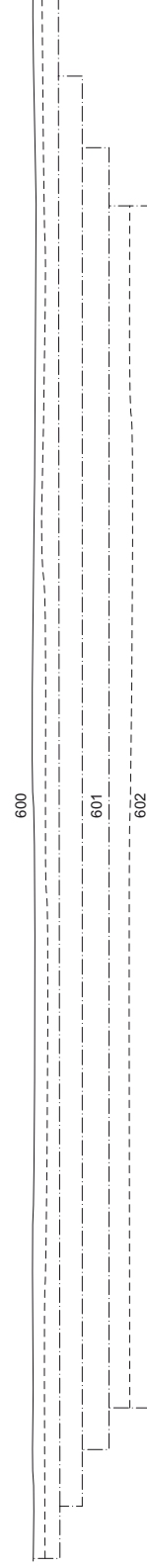




Plate 1



Plate 2



Plate 3



Plate 4



Plate 5



Plate 6



Plate 7

Castle Farm Campus, Priorslee, Telford

Scheduled Monument WK 207

SPECIFICATION FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

			DOCUMENT REF: Castle Farm Campus - Evaluation Specification - Scheduled Monument WK207.doc			
0	Final	MPH			RPS	20-03-08.
		Originated	Checked	Reviewed	Authorised	Date
Revision	Purpose Description	ATKINS				

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1. INTRODUCTION, SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

- 1.1 This document forms the specification for an archaeological evaluation of the proposed development of Castle Farm Campus, Priorslee, Telford, where the proposed development is located within the area encompassed by Scheduled Monument WK 207.
- 1.2 Atkins Limited has been commissioned by Bovale Ltd to undertake the archaeological project management and environmental consultancy for the proposed new development at the site.
- 1.3 In summary, the proposed evaluations are to be undertaken in an area where there is a potential for the survival of the remains of an Iron Age enclosure and associated features, designated as Scheduled Monument WK 207. This has been described in Chapter 8 of the Environmental Statement, *Outline Planning Application for Mixed Use Development, Castle Farm Campus, Priorslee, Telford*.

2. EVALUATION OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 The specific aims of the evaluation are to:-
- Determine the presence or absence, character, extent, date, integrity, state of preservation and quality of any archaeological deposits that survive within the footprint of the specified area of the proposed development; and
 - Inform the design for further archaeological works that will appropriately mitigate the impacts of the construction works on the buried archaeological resource.

3. FIELDWORK METHODOLOGY

Trial Trenching

- 3.1 As a result of consultation with English Heritage, the location of a statutorily designated site – Scheduled Monument WK 207 in one specific area of the proposed development (Drawing 5035361-HR01) necessitates that a programme of trial trenching be implemented. This evaluation specification accompanies the application for Scheduled Monument Consent to undertake construction groundworks for the

proposed development scheme. Trial trenching will be undertaken only following consent to do so via the Scheduled Monument Consent.

3.2 There will be a total of six trenches comprising an area of 380m² which totals c.7% of the area of the Scheduled Monument within the proposed development area. The location of these trenches will be confirmed in consultation with English Heritage in advance of the commencement of fieldwork. See indicative trench locations on Drawing 5035361-HR01. The proposed trench dimensions measure as follows:

- Trench 1: 30m X 2m
- Trench 2: 30m x 2m
- Trench 3: 40m x 2m
- Trench 4: 30m x 2m
- Trench 5: 30m x 2m
- Trench 6: 30m x 2m

3.3 All topsoil and modern overburden will be removed using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, under direct archaeological supervision, down to the top of the uppermost archaeological horizon or the subsoil. The likelihood is that there will be a requirement to use a tracked 360° vehicle since this type of machine is likely to be less damaging to the ground surface and underlying deposits than the wheeled JCB excavator. In addition, the depths of made ground that are to be expected, possibly as much as 4m in some areas, as depicted on the geological cross-section through the Scheduled Monument (see Drawing 5361-011), suggest the greater reach of a 360° tracked excavator is the appropriate choice.

3.4 Following machine excavation as described above all subsequent cleaning and excavation will be by hand. A representative sample of archaeological features and deposits will be manually sample-excavated sufficient to define their character and to obtain suitable dating evidence. Generally, 50% of pits or postholes and a 1.0m section of linear/ curvi-linear features will be excavated. Sampling of cut features will include feature intersections to establish relative chronologies. Archaeological deposits will not be completely excavated unless this is unavoidable.

- 3.5 The depths of made ground in this location may require that some or all of the trial trenches would require stepping, in accordance with accepted industry health and safety protocols (SCAUM). Should made ground deposits prove to be excessively deep, such that stepping would prove unmanageable, it will be necessary to excavate by machine to the surface of the uppermost archaeological horizon and record exposed features or finds in plan. In this eventuality, should such features or finds be exposed which, in the opinion of the 'site archaeologist' are significant and warrant full recording, the English Heritage Inspector of Ancient Monuments will be informed immediately and a site meeting convened to agree an appropriate and proportionate way forward.
- 3.6 All machining will be undertaken under direct archaeological supervision. On the southern boundary of the proposed development site there are a number of trees, hedgerows and shrubby vegetation. All machine excavation will respect Tree Preservation Orders and other vegetation which is deemed desirable to retain.
- 3.7 Small finds will be recorded three dimensionally. Bulk finds will be collected by context. All non-modern artefacts recovered will be retained and removed from the site for processing and analysis. Non-modern artefacts will be collected from the excavated spoil. In addition, the spoil heaps will be routinely scanned using a metal detector in the aid of recovering any ancient metalwork contained therein.
- 3.8 Any finds of human remains will be left *in situ*, covered and protected and advice will be sought from the Ministry of Justice to ascertain whether or not the local Coroner should be informed and whether or not a Home Office licence is required for removal and study of remains. English Heritage, the Local Planning Archaeologist and the Client will also be given an opportunity to comment.
- 3.9 All finds of gold and silver will be removed to a safe place and reported to the local Coroner according to the procedures relating to the Treasure Act of 1996. Where removal can not be effected on the same working day as the discovery, suitable security measures will be taken to protect the finds from theft.
- 3.10 The archaeological contractor is expected to be a Registered Archaeological Organisation (RAO) with the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) and will follow the Code of Conduct set out by the Institute of Field Archaeologists. The evaluation will

be undertaken in accordance with the standards laid down in the 'Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluation' (1999).

- 3.11 After recording, the trenches will be backfilled with excavated material, but will otherwise not be reinstated.

Recording

- 3.12 All contexts will be recorded using standard recording systems in accordance with the IFA Standards and Guidance for archaeological excavations; planning and surveying will be based on a site grid tied into the Ordnance Survey National Grid and ordnance datum levels will be taken where appropriate.
- 3.13 Sections will be drawn at 1:10 and site plans at 1:20 unless circumstances dictate otherwise. Plans at other scales will be drawn if appropriate. An overall excavation plan related to the site grid and tied in to the Ordnance Survey National Grid will be drawn. All features revealed in the excavated area will be planned.
- 3.14 A full photographic record comprising black and white negative and colour slides will be made. If digital photographs form part of the final survey report, images will be at least 300 dpi and be taken with an optical zoom camera.
- 3.15 Samples will be taken from well stratified deposits to determine the presence / absence of suitable environmental material for future analysis, including dating. No analysis of samples will be necessary at this stage and no more than four samples (for dating purposes) are likely to be required.
- 3.16 All finds will be processed according to the IFA's *Guidelines for Finds Work*. All pottery and other finds will be marked with the site code and context number and, where possible with the Museum Accession number. In all cases, all bags and boxes will be marked with the Museum Accession Number.

Site Management

- 3.17 Current Health and Safety guidelines will be followed on site and all mains service locations will be identified in order to avoid damage to these.

4. POST-EXCAVATION METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 A post-excavation design will be produced following the completion of site works. The likelihood of carrying out further works on the site will inform the design; English Heritage and the T&WDC Planning Archaeologist will be given an opportunity to comment.

5. REPORTING

- 5.1 It is likely that a full evaluation report will be produced, to contain the following information:
- Summary - a concise, non-technical summary
 - Introduction - General introduction to the project including reasons for work, planning background
 - Background - to include geology, topography, archaeological and historical background
 - Aims and Objectives - Summary of aims and objectives of the project
 - Method - methodology adopted to carry out the work
 - Fieldwork Results - Detailed description of results
 - Specialist Reports
 - Discussion and Conclusions - Overview of archaeological deposits and artefacts, including details of preservation and survival of the deposits across the site; discussion and interpretation of the results will include both the immediate archaeological context and in relation to other relevant evidence.

- Appendices - context descriptions, finds catalogues, content of archive, site matrix
- Figures - location plan, section drawing showing present ground level and depth of deposits, including Ordnance datum.

5.2 An OASIS form will also be completed and submitted by the archaeological contractor (<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/>).

6. GENERAL WORKING PRACTICES AND STANDARDS

6.1 A project design (Written Scheme of Investigation) including a programme of work will be prepared and submitted to English Heritage in advance of trial trenching. It will describe the proposed personnel and their assignments, together with the methods and practices which are proposed to be employed for all aspects and stages of the work.

6.2 Management of the work will be in general accordance with the methods and practices described in the Management of Archaeological Projects (English Heritage, 1991 (revised 1996)).

6.3 All fieldwork and post-excavation will be carried out to accepted professional standards by appropriately qualified and experienced staff and will comply with the '*Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (Institute of Field Archaeologists, 1994 (revised 2001)).

7. MONITORING

7.1 The work will be monitored by Atkins Heritage who will invite English Heritage's Inspector of Ancient Monuments and T&WDC Planning Archaeologist to comment throughout the project. They will be afforded the opportunity to inspect the site and the records during any stage of the fieldwork and post-excavation process.

8. FINDS AND ARCHIVES

8.1 All finds will be cleaned, conserved and catalogued in a manner appropriate for their long-term storage and for deposition as an archive in accordance with the UKIC (1990) Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long-term Storage.

- 8.2 With the exception of those covered by the procedures outlined above, all finds will be the property of the Landowner. Subject to the agreement of the owner, suitable arrangements will be made with a local museum or other appropriate body for a permanent repository for the finds. These arrangements will be in place prior to the commencement of the archaeological work.
- 8.3 The archaeological document archive will include all reports and field records including site context records, notebooks, plans, sections, computer printouts, photographic slides, photographs and all photographic negatives.
- 8.4 The original complete archaeological document archive will be deposited with the finds.
- 8.5 An appropriately bound hard (paper) copy of the archaeological document archives will be deposited with the appropriate local authority Sites and Monuments Record (SMR).

9. PUBLICATION AND DISSEMINATION

- 9.1 Arrangements will be made for a summary of the archaeological work to be published in the appropriate local county archaeological journal or equivalent publication.
- 9.2 If the results of the archaeological work are of sufficient importance then arrangements for full publication will be made.

PN 1805

**THE UNIVERSITY
OF BIRMINGHAM**



BIRMINGHAM ARCHAEOLOGY

Castle Farm Campus, Priorslee, Telford and Wrekin, Shropshire

Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Evaluation

Scheduled Ancient Monument: WK 207

NGR: SJ 724 096

Client: Atkins Heritage

Archaeological Contractor: Birmingham Archaeology

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document outlines a proposed programme of work required to undertake archaeological evaluation of land at Castle Farm Campus, Priorslee, Telford and Wrekin, Shropshire. The work was commissioned by Atkins Consultants Ltd, on behalf of Bovale Ltd, in advance of a proposed commercial development.
- 1.2 There is a potential for the survival of the remains of an Iron Age enclosure and associated features, designated as Scheduled Monument WK 207, within the proposed development area.
- 1.3 The presence or absence, character, date, extent and state of preservation of any archaeological remains within the proposed development area is, at present, unknown.
- 1.4 It has therefore been recommended that a programme of archaeological work should be carried out as a condition of planning consent. The work will be carried out in accordance with the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological field evaluation* (Institute of Field Archaeologists 1994, revised 2001). The evaluation will conform to a specification for archaeological evaluation produced by Atkins Heritage (*Castle Farm Campus, Priorslee, Telford. Scheduled Ancient Monument WK 207 specification for archaeological evaluation*) which was approved by English Heritage, advisors to the Secretary of State. The evaluation will be used to provide information which will aid mitigation for the proposed construction of the new buildings, if required.
- 1.5 Any variation in the scope of work would be agreed in advance with English Heritage and Atkins Heritage. The programme of work described below will fulfil the requirements of the specification.

2 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The site is located at the Castle Farm Campus of the University of Wolverhampton, Priorslee, Telford and Wrekin, Shropshire (centred on NGR SJ 724 096, Figs. 1 and 2; hereafter referred to as the site). It is situated south and west of Castle Farm Way road (B5060) and to the north of Priorslee Lake. It is located within the boundary of a Scheduled Ancient Monument (WK 207).
- 2.2 The underlying geology consists of mudstone and sandstone bedrock with superficial deposits of devensian till (British Geological Survey 2007, 1:50,000 sheet 153)
- 2.3 The present character of the site is a grassed raised area with vegetation to the immediate south. The area to the north of the site was occupied by modern factory buildings until recently. Priorslee Lake lies to the south of the site with the B5060 Castle Farm Way running to the east and north of the site.

3 HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The area of the Scheduled Monument (WK 207) includes the remains of an Iron Age enclosure first recognised as a series of cropmarks by Arnold Baker in 1959. Subsequently Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit carried out archaeological investigations at the site (Ashton- Cooper et al 1980 and Roe 1991). The results of the investigations indicated the

main double ditched enclosure was of Iron Age date with the enclosure ditches being up to 3m deep. The southern side of the probable sub-circular enclosure had been destroyed by the canalisation of the Wesley Brook. Finds included prehistoric, Roman and medieval pottery and briquetage. Evidence of the occupation of the interior of the enclosure was sparse, although only part of the interior was investigated. However, pits, a large posthole, a hearth and spreads of charcoal were recorded in the interior. The investigations also revealed evidence of a farming on the site at Castle Farm dating from the 12th to 19th centuries.

- 3.2 The majority of the monument was destroyed during the process of creating a reservoir (Priorslee Lake). The English Heritage Scheduled Monument description states that two-thirds of the scheduled area was destroyed but that the area to the northwest, including the annex (believed to be post-medieval in origin) may, to a reasonable extent, remain. It may also be possible that further elements, possibly including the large ditches, may only have been partially truncated by the construction of Priorslee Lake.
- 3.3 Two geotechnical test pits were excavated within the Scheduled Ancient Monument (WK 207), the site of the Iron Age enclosure, and were subject to a watching brief by Birmingham Archaeology in 2008 (*Castle Farm Campus, Priorslee, Telford and Wrekin, Shropshire: an archaeological watching brief 2008*). No evidence of the enclosure or associated features was encountered during the excavation of the two test pits. No significant archaeological deposits, features or finds were recorded. Modern overburden was up to 2.60m deep.

4 AIMS

- 4.1 The specific aims of the evaluation are to:-
- 4.2 Determine the presence or absence, character, extent, date, integrity, state of preservation and quality of any archaeological deposits that survive within the footprint of the specified area of the proposed development; and
- 4.3 Inform the design for further archaeological works that will appropriately mitigate the impacts of the construction works on the buried archaeological resource.

5 METHODOLOGY

- 5.1 Six trenches (five linear trenches measuring 30m x 2m and one trench measuring 40m x 2m) are to be excavated in the proposed locations shown on the attached plan. The location of the trenches is designed to investigate cropmark features and to test blank areas.
- 5.2 The location of the trenches is designed to provide an adequate evaluation of the area affected by the development in order to obtain information on the presence and preservation of any archaeological deposits.
- 5.3 The location of the trenches may be subject to alteration due to the presence of modern services or safety considerations. Any alteration to

this specification will only be made after consultation with the Inspector of Ancient Monuments, English Heritage and Atkins Heritage.

- 5.4 A site inspection will be conducted prior to any excavation in order to assess risk and access. A visual inspection of the site will be conducted during the evaluation, which will include examination of any available exposures.
- 5.5 Excavation of topsoil and modern overburden will be carried out using a tracked 360 degree type mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, down to the top of the uppermost archaeological horizon, or to the subsoil level if no archaeological deposits are encountered. Subsequent cleaning and excavation will be by hand as appropriate. Spoil from machine excavation and hand-excavation would be temporarily stored on-site.
- 5.6 The machine excavation will be carried out under the direct supervision of a qualified archaeologist. On the southern boundary of the proposed development site there are a number of trees, hedgerows and shrubby vegetation. All machine excavation will respect Tree Preservation Orders and other vegetation which is deemed desirable to retain.
- 5.7 The depth of modern overburden may require that some or all of the trial trenches would require stepping, in accordance with accepted industry health and safety protocols (SCAUM). Should made ground deposits prove to be excessively deep, such that stepping would prove an unmanageable, it will be necessary to excavate by machine to the surface of the uppermost archaeological horizon and record exposed features or finds in plan. In this eventuality, should such features or finds be exposed which, in the opinion of the 'site archaeologist' are significant and warrant full recording, the English Heritage Inspector of Ancient Monuments will be informed immediately and a site meeting convened to agree an appropriate and proportionate way forward.
- 5.8 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 and 1:20. 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. These may be supplemented by digital photographs. If digital photographs form part of the final survey report, images will be at least 300 dpi and be taken with an optical zoom camera.
- 5.9 All stratified finds will be collected by context and, where appropriate, individually recorded in 3 dimensions. Unstratified finds will only be collected where they contribute to the project objectives or are of particular intrinsic interest. On-site conservation advice will be provided by the appropriate specialist in the event of artefacts requiring conservation and 'lifting'. Finds of treasure will be reported to the Coroner in accordance with the Treasure Act procedures. Recovered finds will be cleaned, marked and remedial conservation work will be undertaken as necessary. Treatment of all finds will conform to guidance

contained within 'A strategy for the care and investigation of finds' published by English Heritage.

- 5.10 Human remains will be recorded and left *in-situ*. If removal is required this will be in accordance with the terms of a Ministry of Justice licence and IFA guidelines (*Guidance to Standards for Recording Human Skeletal Remains* Brickley & McKinley 2004).
- 5.11 Spot levels will be taken where appropriate and all levels will be recorded relative to an Ordnance Survey datum level.
- 5.12 The trench will be backfilled 'as dug' with the excavated soil, but no allowance is made for specialist reinstatement or compaction of backfilled deposits.
- 5.13 A representative samples of the features, or feature types present in the trench will be hand-excavated to provide data concerning the survival and complexity of the features and their fills, and to recover artefacts and ecofactual samples for analysis. Generally, 50% of pits or postholes and a 1m section of linear/ curvi-linear features will be excavated. Sampling of cut features will include feature intersections to establish relative chronologies. Further sampling of features will only be undertaken if the initial sampling has failed to clarify the date, function and morphology of the features. 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.
- 5.14 Features believed to be of no archaeological potential may remain unexcavated in agreement with the English Heritage Inspector of Ancient Monuments.
- 5.15 All finds of gold and silver will be removed to a safe place and reported to the local Coroner according to the procedures relating to the Treasure Act of 1996. Where removal can not be effected on the same working day as the discovery, suitable security measures will be taken to protect the finds from theft.

Environmental sampling

- 5.16 Appropriate sampling would be undertaken to assess any archaeological deposits that may have an environmental potential. Particular attention would be paid to any charred remains or waterlogged deposits. Twenty litre soil samples will be taken from suitable datable archaeological features for the recovery of charred plant remains. The environmental sampling policy will follow 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.

Monitoring

- 5.17 Atkins Heritage will invite English Heritage's Inspector of Ancient Monuments and T&WDC Planning Archaeologist to comment throughout the project. They will be afforded the opportunity to inspect the site and the records during any stage of the fieldwork and post-excavation process. Atkins Heritage, in consultation with English Heritage, will be

responsible for monitoring the evaluation. Sufficient notice will be provided prior to the commencement of fieldwork so that arrangements for on-site monitoring can be made.

- 5.18 Site inspections will be arranged so that the general site stratigraphy can be assessed in the initial stages of trial trenching, and/or so that the site can be inspected when fieldwork is near to completion but before any trenches have been backfilled.
- 5.19 English Heritage Inspector of Ancient Monuments, T&WDC Planning Archaeologist and Atkins Heritage will be informed of any unexpected discoveries at the earliest opportunity.

Health and safety

- 5.20 Health and safety requirements will take priority over archaeological requirements. All current health and safety legislation, regulations and guidance will be complied with. The evaluation will conform to the The Standing Council of Archaeological Unit Managers: Health and Safety in Field Archaeology 2007 and Birmingham Archaeology: Health and Safety Manual 2008.
- 5.21 .A detailed Risk Assessment will be prepared prior to the commencement of fieldwork. All staff will be made aware of this and be given an on- site safety briefing. If the requirements of the brief are altered due to the interests of health and safety, this will be done with prior consultation with English Heritage and Atkins Heritage.

6 REPORTING

- 6.1 An illustrated report on the findings of both the evaluation and watching brief will contain the following:
- Summary
 - Description of the archaeological background
 - Methodology
 - Results, including a description and interpretation of the deposits identified, supported by appropriate plans and sections, including a trench location plan, a feature location plan and a long section of the trench.
 - Summary of the finds and environmental evidence. Pottery reports will refer to the appropriate county type series.
 - A discussion of the archaeological evidence recovered.
- 6.2 Three copies of the report will be available for the client and one will be available for the T&WDC Planning Archaeologist. Further copies will be sent for deposition with the County Sites and Monuments Record, on the understanding that they will be made available as a public document after an appropriate period.
- 6.3 The results of any mitigation excavation work may be published in an appropriate journal or other publication, and will include an account of any structures located and full details of significant finds, illustrated as

appropriate. Details of the place and date of publication will be notified to the County Sites and Monuments Record.

- 6.4 A summary account of the work will be submitted to the editor of *West Midland Archaeology* and any relevant period journals no later than March 31st of the year following the completion of fieldwork. All new BA reports will be made available online on the OASIS database (accessed via the Archaeological Data Service website).

7 STAFFING

The project will be managed and directed for Birmingham Archaeology by Laurence Jones Cert He (B. Archaeol) MIFA. The evaluation will be supervised in the field by Philip Mann BSc Hon., an experienced archaeologist, assisted by a team of three experienced site assistants.

Specialist staff will be, where appropriate:

Barry John Bishop- Flint artefacts, freelance consultant lithics specialist.

Dr Ann Woodward- Prehistoric pottery, Research Fellow, Birmingham Archaeology, University of Birmingham.

Dr Jeremy Evans- Roman pottery, Honorary Research Fellow, Birmingham Archaeology, University of Birmingham.

C. Jane Evans- Roman pottery, freelance consultant pottery specialist

Stephanie Rátkai- Saxon, medieval and post-medieval pottery, Honorary Research Associate and Finds Researcher, University of Birmingham.

Erica Macey-Bracken- Small finds, Birmingham Archaeology, University of Birmingham

Dr Andrew Howard- Archaeo-geomorphology, Lecturer in Archaeo-geomorphology and Remote Sensing, Institute of Archaeology and Antiquity, University of Birmingham.

Dr. Ben Gearey- Palynology, Geoarchaeology, Institute of Archaeology and Antiquity, University of Birmingham.

Dr Emma Tetlow- Palaeoentomology, Geoarchaeology, Institute of Archaeology and Antiquity, University of Birmingham.

Dr Pam Grinter- Charred plant remains, Institute of Archaeology and Antiquity, University of Birmingham.

Matilda Holmes- Animal bone, freelance consultant archaeozoologist.

Dr David Smith- Micro-fauna, Institute of Archaeology and Antiquity, University of Birmingham.

Dr Megan Brickley- Human Bone, Institute of Archaeology and Antiquity,
University of Birmingham.

Dr Roger White- Coins and brooches, Project Manager, Lecturer and Assistant
Director (Development), Institute of Archaeology and Antiquity,
University of Birmingham.

Jane Cowgill- slag and industrial residues, freelance consultant.

Rowena Gale- charcoal and wood, freelance consultant.

8 ARCHIVE

8.1 The full site archive will include all artefactual 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 Archaeological 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 an appropriate local repository, subject to permission from the landowner. The county SMR will be notified of the arrangements for deposition of the archive.

9 TIMETABLE

9.1 It is anticipated that the project will commence on 27th May, subject to the approval of this WSI.

10 INSURANCE

10.1 Birmingham Archaeology as part of Birmingham University holds Public and Employer's Liability Insurance to a limit of £50,000,000.

11 QUALITY CONTROL

11.1 Birmingham Archaeology is a Registered Archaeological Organisation with the Institute of Field Archaeologists. 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).

12 REFERENCES

Ashton- Cooper et al, 1980 'Excavation and survey at Castle Farm, Shifnal, Shropshire: an interim report', *West Midlands Archaeology* **23: 40-51**

Roe, A.1991 'Excavations at Castle Farm, Shifnal, 1980' in Carver, M.O.H. (ed) 1991 *Prehistory in Lowland Shropshire. Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological Society. LXVII, 65-83*

Birmingham Archaeology, 20th May 2008