

Land off Hospital Lane Powick Worcestershire

Archaeological Evaluation



for
Pegasus Group

on behalf of
Westleigh Partnerships Ltd

CA Project: 5960
CA Report: 16373

Worcestershire HER Ref: WSM67971

July 2016



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Powick
Worcestershire

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SUMMARY

Project Name: Land off Hospital Lane
Location: Powick, Worcestershire
NGR: 382069 250977
Type: Evaluation
Date: 4-5 July 2016
Planning Reference: 14/01360/OUT
Location of Archive: To be deposited with Worcestershire County Museum
Site Code: HLP16

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in July 2016 on land off Hospital Lane, Powick, Worcestershire. Five trenches were excavated.

Two narrow, shallow ditches, both of which are likely to relate to agricultural land management or division, were identified in the western half of the site. Two abraded sherds of Roman pottery were recovered from the fill of one of these ditches; however the possibility that this pottery is residual should not be overlooked.



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 In July 2016 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation for Pegasus Group, on behalf of Westleigh Partnerships Ltd, on land off Hospital Lane, Powick, Worcestershire (centred on NGR: 382069 250977; Fig. 1). Outline planning permission for residential development has been granted by Malvern Hills District Council (MHDC; planning ref: 14/01360/OUT, Condition 16), conditional on a programme of archaeological work being completed. Following consultation between Pegasus Group Ltd and Adrian Scruby (Historic Environment Advisor, Worcestershire Archive & Archaeology Service), the archaeological advisor to MHDC, it was determined that this would comprise archaeological trial trench evaluation.

1.2 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a detailed *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) produced by CA (2016) and approved by Mr Scruby. The fieldwork also followed *Standard and guidance: Archaeological field evaluation* (CIfA 2014) and the *Standards and Guidelines for Archaeological Projects in Worcestershire* (WHEAS 2010).

The site

1.3 The development area is 0.6ha in extent, and comprises an area of rough grassland and scrub. The site is bounded to the north by the Crown Public House and its associated car park, to the east by Hospital Lane and to the south and west by residential properties. The site lies between 50m and 52.5m AOD, with ground levels dropping away gradually to the east and west.

1.4 The underlying geology is mapped as Sidmouth Mudstone Formation of the Triassic Period (BGS 2016). The natural substrate, comprising red-brown clay with gravel and sand patches, was identified in all of the excavated trenches.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 An archaeological desk based assessment of the site has been undertaken (CgMs 2014). A summary of pertinent information contained in this document, along with any additional publically available information, is presented below:
- 2.2 The development area is located within a landscape known to have been utilised during the Iron Age (CgMs 2014). An archaeological evaluation undertaken immediately to the west of the current site (CA 2012) identified a ditch and a pit/ditch terminal, both of which contained pottery of Middle Iron Age date, in trenches excavated to the west of The Crown Public House. However, no evidence of further Iron Age activity was identified in the trenches excavated closest to the current development area (*ibid.*). Subsequent archaeological excavation revealed a small, sub-rectangular Middle Iron Age enclosure, the interior of which contained a scatter of small pits, postholes and gullies that probably represented structures associated with either settlement activity or stock management (CA 2015). The excavation confirmed that the enclosure was contained to the north-eastern corner of the site and was likely to be surrounded by agricultural land. A north-west/south-east aligned palaeochannel was also identified during the excavation, orientated in the direction of the current proposed development site.
- 2.3 A number of further potential Iron Age features, recorded approximately 650m to the east of the current site, have been identified from aerial photographs (CgMs 2014). These features comprise a ring ditch, a field system, pit alignments and an undated enclosure (*ibid.*).
- 2.4 The current development area appears to be isolated from any known foci of Roman settlement activity and from any main trading route of Roman date (*ibid.*). A single pit, containing small quantities of Roman pottery, was identified during the archaeological excavation immediately to the west of the current site (CA 2015). However, the lack of further demonstrably contemporary features and Roman artefactual material during the excavation suggests that the area was used predominantly for agricultural purposes during the Roman period (*ibid.*).
- 2.5 Prior to the CA evaluation (CA 2012) and excavation (CA 2015), the earliest evidence of human occupation within the immediate vicinity of the site dated from the medieval period; archaeological investigations, limited to a single evaluation,

recorded medieval and post-medieval field boundaries and agricultural features, in addition to an unstratified post-medieval find of a cannon ball c.0.5km to the north-east of site. Possible medieval fishponds have been recorded on LiDAR and aerial photographs at Collet's Green (CgMs 2014). Given that the proposed development area is over 1km west of the historic centre of Powick village, it is likely to have comprised part of an undeveloped rural landscape at this time (*ibid.*).

- 2.6 Built heritage within the vicinity of the site is limited to a dispersed array of 19th and 20th-century buildings, including farm buildings and cottages, and Second World War air raid shelters. The site of the former Powick Mental Hospital is recorded to the south of Bowling Green (*ibid.*).

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 The objectives of the evaluation, as stated in the WSI (CA 2016), were to provide information about the archaeological resource within the site, including its presence/absence, character, extent, date, integrity, state of preservation and quality, in accordance *Standard and guidance: Archaeological field evaluation* (CIfA 2014). This information will enable MHDC, advised by Adrian Scuby, to identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset, consider the impact of the proposed development upon it, and to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the development proposal, in line with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012).

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The fieldwork comprised the excavation of five trenches in the locations shown on the attached plan (Fig. 2). Trenches 1, 2 and 4 measured 30m in length and 1.8m in width. Trenches 3 and 5 measured 20m in length and 1.8m in width. All were moved from their original position as set out in the WSI, and Trench 3 was reduced in length, due to the presence of trees, with the approval of Mr Scruby. Trenches were set out on OS National Grid (NGR) co-ordinates using Leica GPS and surveyed in accordance with CA Technical Manual 4: *Survey Manual*.

- 4.2 All trenches were excavated by mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless grading bucket. All machine excavation was undertaken under constant archaeological supervision to the top of the first significant archaeological horizon or the natural substrate, whichever was encountered first. Where archaeological deposits were encountered they were excavated by hand in accordance with CA Technical Manual 1: *Fieldwork Recording Manual*.
- 4.3 Deposits were assessed for their palaeoenvironmental potential in accordance with CA Technical Manual 2: *The Taking and Processing of Environmental and Other Samples from Archaeological Sites*. No deposits were identified that required sampling. All artefacts recovered were processed in accordance with Technical Manual 3: *Treatment of Finds Immediately after Excavation*.
- 4.4 The archive and artefacts from the evaluation are currently held by CA at their offices in Kemble. Subject to the agreement of the legal landowner the artefacts will be deposited with Worcestershire County Museum under accession number WSM67971, along with the site archive. A summary of information from this project, set out within Appendix C, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain, and a digital copy of the report will be lodged with the Worcestershire Historic Environment Record.

5. RESULTS (FIGS 2-4)

- 5.1 This section provides an overview of the evaluation results; detailed summaries of the recorded contexts and finds are to be found in Appendices A and B respectively.
- 5.2 In all of the excavated trenches the natural substrate, comprising red-brown clay with gravel and sand patches, was recorded at a depth of between 0.4m and 0.75m below present ground level (bpgl). Throughout Trench 1, and across the south-western half of Trench 2, the natural substrate was overlain by a sterile deposit averaging 0.35m in thickness, that probably represents an episode of colluviation. This was overlain by subsoil, averaging 0.2m in thickness, which was in turn overlain by topsoil, ranging between 0.1m and 0.2m in thickness. Elsewhere the natural substrate was directly overlain by subsoil, ranging between 0.15m and 0.3m in thickness, which was in turn overlain by topsoil, ranging between 0.25m and 0.3m in thickness.

- 5.3 No archaeological features or deposits were identified within Trenches 1, 4 and 5. The archaeological features identified in Trenches 2 and 3 cut the natural substrate and were sealed by subsoil.

Trench 2 (Figs 2 & 3)

- 5.4 A narrow, shallow ditch 205 (Fig. 3, section AA) was identified in the north-eastern third of the trench. It was aligned north-west/south-east, had a 'V'-shaped profile and contained a single undated fill, 204.

Trench 3 (Figs 2 & 4)

- 5.5 A narrow, shallow ditch 303 (Fig. 4, Section BB) was identified close to the north-eastern extent of the trench. It was aligned north-east/south-west, had an irregular profile and contained a single fill, 304, from which two small sherds of abraded Roman pottery were recovered.

6. THE FINDS

- 6.1 Artefactual material recovered during the evaluation is listed in Appendix B and discussed further below. Pottery fabric codes given in parenthesis below and in Appendix B, match those of the Worcestershire pottery Type Series (Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service 2016)

Pottery

- 6.2 A total of two sherds (2g) of pottery, dating to the Roman period, were recovered from ditch 303 (fill 304). The sherds, one of Severn Valley Ware (TF 12) and one of a sandy greyware fabric (TF 14) are very small and abraded and, as such, may be residual.



8. DISCUSSION

- 8.1 The evaluation has identified a small number of archaeological features within the proposed development area. These features were confined to Trenches 2 and 3, located in the western half of the site.
- 8.2 Despite the close proximity of the current site to previously identified Middle Iron Age settlement activity (see *archaeological background* above) no features or deposits of this date were identified during the current evaluation. The results of the current evaluation support the interpretation that this settlement activity was focussed to the north-west of the current site and was likely to be surrounded by agricultural land.
- 8.3 The exact function of ditches 205 and 303, identified in Trenches 2 and 3 respectively, remains unclear. However, the nature of these ditches suggests that they are likely to relate to agricultural land management or division. The limited quantity and the abraded nature of the Roman pottery recovered from ditch 303 suggests that this material may be residual. Previous archaeological investigations (see *archaeological background* above) have revealed a general paucity of Roman activity in the vicinity of the current site and have suggested that the site and the nearby area lay within an essentially agricultural landscape during the Roman period.
- 8.4 It is likely that the probable colluvial deposit identified in Trenches 1 and 2 is related the north-west/south-east aligned palaeochannel previously identified during the archaeological excavation to the west of the proposed development area (see *archaeological background* above).
- 8.5 The absence of medieval and post-medieval settlement activity revealed by the current evaluation further strengthens the suggestion that the current site is likely to have formed part of the agricultural hinterland of Powick during these periods.

9. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Luke Brannlund, assisted by Noel Boothryd. The report was written by Luke Brannlund. The finds report was written by Katie Marsden. The illustrations were prepared by Leo Heatley. The archive has been compiled by and prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The project was managed for CA by Steven Sheldon.

10. REFERENCES

BGS (British Geological Survey) *Geology of Britain Viewer* http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyviewer_google/googleviewer.html Accessed 06 July 2016

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2012 *Land to the Rear of Russell Close, Powick, Worcestershire: Archaeological Evaluation. CA report 123351; HER No: WSM 47424*

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2015 *Land to the Rear of Russell Close, Powick, Worcestershire: Archaeological Excavation. CA report 15857*

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2016 *Land off Hospital Lane, Powick, Worcestershire, Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation.*

CgMs 2014 *Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment. Land off Hospital Lane, Powick, Worcestershire. CgMs report CP/17909*

Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service 2016 'Worcestershire Ceramics Online Database', <http://www.worcestershireceramics.org/#fabrics/list> (accessed 12 July 2016)

APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

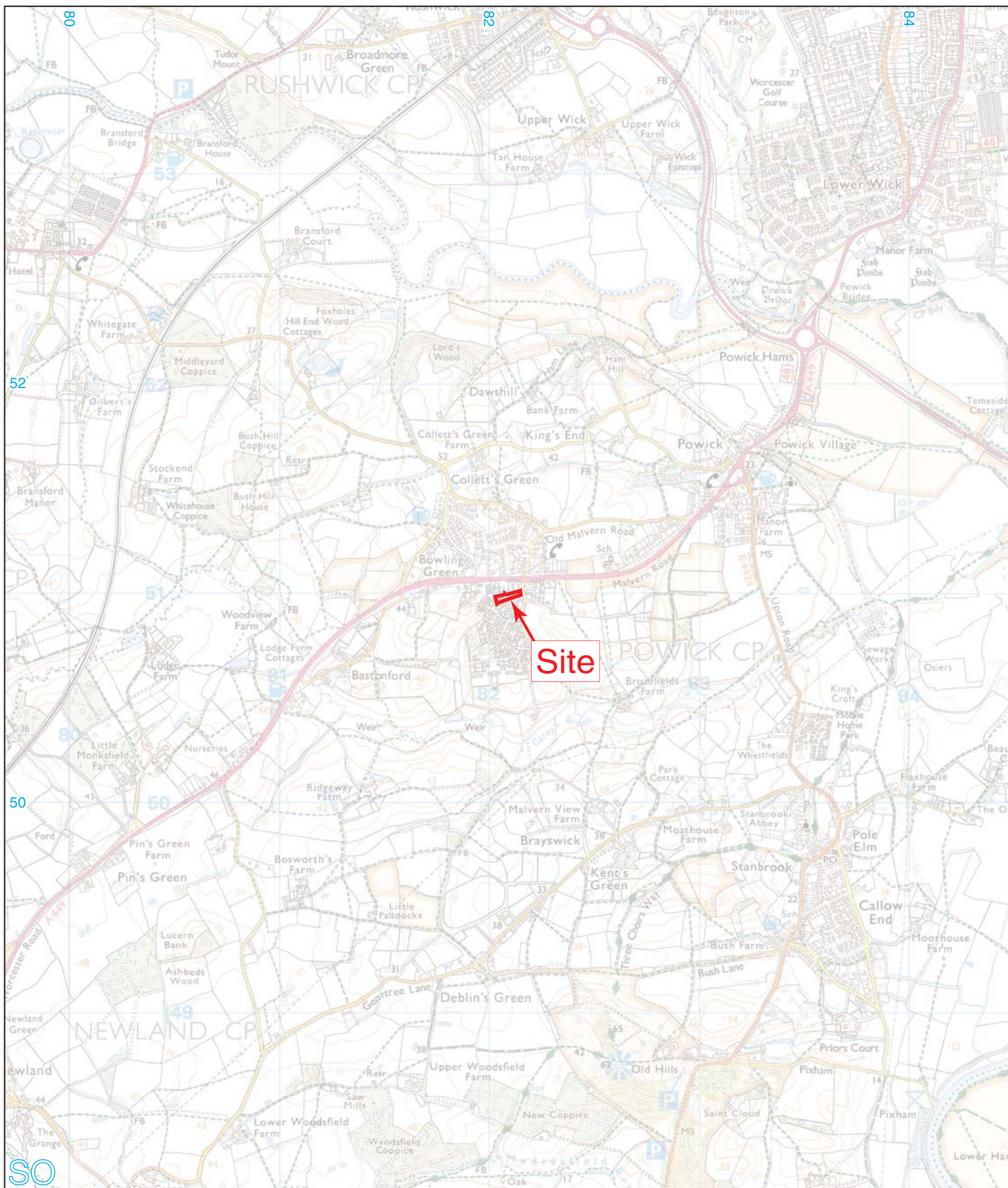
Trench No.	Context No.	Type	Fill of	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	D (m)	Spot-date
1	100	Layer		Topsoil	Dark brown sand silt	>30	>1.8	0.1	
1	101	Layer		Subsoil	Mid brown sand clay	>30	>1.8	0.2	
1	102	Layer		Colluvium?	Sterile mid brown grey sand silt	>30	>1.8	0.35	
1	103	Layer		Natural substrate	Mid red brown clay with gravel and sand patches	>30	>1.8	>0.1	
2	200	Layer		Topsoil	Dark brown sand silt	>30	>1.8	0.2	
2	201	Layer		Subsoil	Mid brown sand clay	>30	>1.8	0.2	
2	202	Layer		Colluvium?	Sterile mid brown grey sand silt, present across south-western half of trench only	>14	>1.8	0.35	
2	203	Layer		Natural substrate	Mid red brown clay with gravel and sand patches	>30	>1.8	>0.2	
2	204	Fill	205	Single fill of ditch 205	Light grey brown silt clay with occasional rounded pebble inclusions	>1.8	0.7	0.2	
2	205	Cut		Ditch	NW/SE aligned, shallow 'V'-shaped profile	>1.8	0.7	0.2	
3	300	Layer		Topsoil	Dark brown sand silt	>20	>1.8	0.25	
3	301	Layer		Subsoil	Mid brown sand clay	>20	>1.8	0.15	
3	302	Layer		Natural substrate	Mid red brown clay with gravel and sand patches	>20	>1.8	>0.5	
3	303	Cut		Ditch	NE/SW aligned, shallow irregular profile	>2	1.1	0.2	
3	304	Fill	303	Single fill of ditch 303	Mid yellow brown sand silt with occasional rounded pebble inclusions	>2	1.1	0.2	RB
4	400	Layer		Topsoil	Dark brown sand silt	>30	>1.8	0.3	
4	401	Layer		Subsoil	Mid brown sand clay	>30	>1.8	0.2	
4	402	Layer		Natural substrate	Mid red brown clay with gravel and sand patches	>30	>1.8	>0.1	
5	500	Layer		Topsoil	Dark brown sand silt	>20	>1.8	0.3	
5	501	Layer		Subsoil	Mid brown sand clay	>20	>1.8	0.3	
5	502	Layer		Natural substrate	Mid red brown clay with gravel and sand patches	>20	>1.8	>0.3	

APPENDIX B: THE FINDS

Context	Class	Description	Ct.	Wt.(g)	Spot-date
304	Roman pottery	Greyware (TR 14)	1	1	RB
	Roman pottery	Seven Valley Ware (TR 12)	1	1	

APPENDIX C: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project Name	Land off Hospital Lane, Powick, Worcestershire	
Short description	<p>An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in July 2016 at Land off Hospital Lane, Powick, Worcestershire. Five trenches were excavated.</p> <p>Two narrow, shallow ditches, both of which are likely to relate to agricultural land management or division, were identified in the western half of the site. Two abraded sherds of Roman pottery were recovered from the fill of one of these ditches. However, the possibility that this pottery is residual should not be overlooked.</p>	
Project dates	4-5 July 2016	
Project type	Field evaluation	
Previous work	None	
Future work	Unknown	
PROJECT LOCATION		
Site Location	Land off Hospital Lane, Powick, Worcestershire	
Study area (M ² /ha)	0.6 ha	
Site co-ordinates	SO 382099 250983	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Steven Sheldon	
Project Supervisor	Luke Brannlund	
MONUMENT TYPE	None	
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	None	
PROJECT ARCHIVES	Intended final location of archive	Content
Physical	Worcestershire County Museum, WSM67971	Pottery
Paper	Worcestershire County Museum, WSM67971	Context sheets, trench recording sheets, photographic registers, section drawings
Digital	Worcestershire County Museum, WSM67971	Digital photographs
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2016 <i>Land off Hospital Lane, Powick, Worcestershire: Archaeological Evaluation</i> . CA typescript report 16373		



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PROJECT TITLE
 Land off Hospital Lane, Powick,
 Worcestershire

FIGURE TITLE
 Site location plan

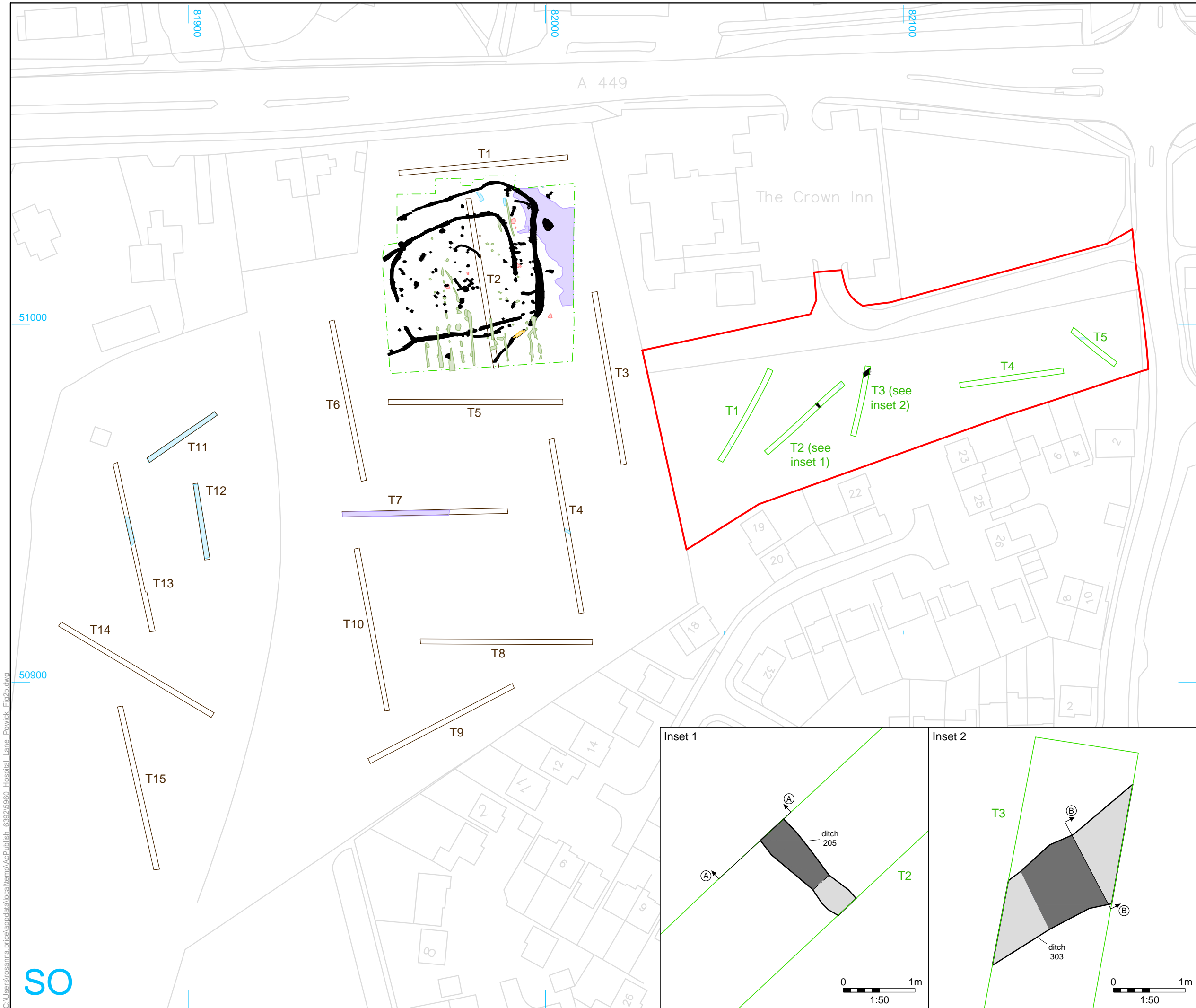
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CHECKED BY LM
APPROVED BY SS
PROJECT NO. 5960
DATE 20-07-2016
SCALE@A4 1:25,000


FIGURE NO.

1






-  site boundary
-  evaluation trench
-  excavation area (CA 2015)
-  evaluation trench (CA 2012)
-  archaeological feature
-  archaeological intervention
-  cremation deposit
-  geological feature
-  furrow
-  modern
-  treethrow
-  section location



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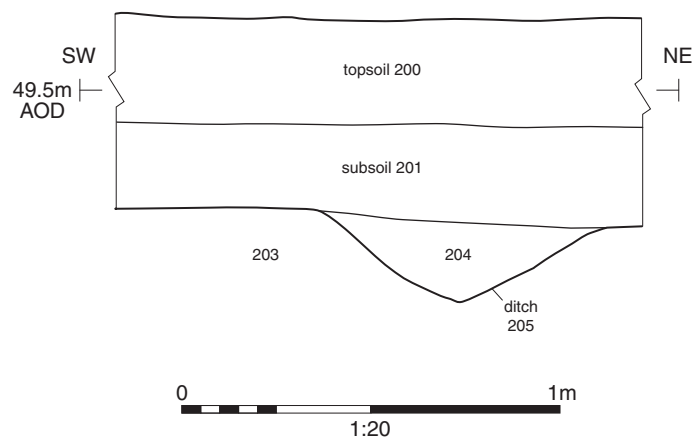
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PROJECT TITLE
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FIGURE TITLE
**Trench location plan, showing
archaeological features and previous
archaeological works**

DRAWN BY	RP	PROJECT NO.	5960	FIGURE NO. 2
CHECKED BY	DJB	DATE	25.07.16	
APPROVED BY	SS	SCALE@A3	1:1000	

Section AA



Ditch 205, looking north-west (1m scale)



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PROJECT TITLE

Land off Hospital Lane, Powick,
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FIGURE TITLE

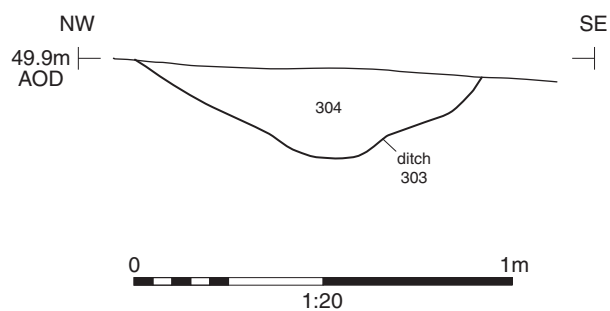
Ditch 205: section and photograph

DRAWN BY LJH PROJECT NO. 5630
 CHECKED BY LM DATE 20/07/16
 APPROVED BY SS SCALE@A4 1:20

FIGURE NO.

3

Section BB



Ditch 303, looking north-east (0.4m scale)



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PROJECT TITLE

Land off Hospital Lane, Powick,
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FIGURE TITLE

Ditch 303: section and photograph

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APPROVED BY SS

PROJECT NO. 5960
DATE 20/07/16
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FIGURE NO.

4

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