

**Land adjacent to 17 Stratford Road
Honeybourne
Worcestershire**
Archaeological Evaluation



for
Mr J Thomas

CA Project: 6244
CA Report: 17253
WCC Reference: WSM 69193

May 2017



Land adjacent to 17 Stratford Road Honeybourne Worcestershire

Archaeological Evaluation

CA Project: 6244
CA Report: 17253
WCC Reference: WSM 316608



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SUMMARY

Project Name:	Land adjacent to Stratford Road
Location:	Honeybourne, Worcestershire
NGR:	411792 244079
Type:	Evaluation
Date:	2-4 May 2017
Planning Reference:	Wychavon District Council W/16/01702/OU
WCC Reference:	WSM69193
Location of Archive:	To be deposited with Worcestershire County Museum
Site Code:	SRHW 17

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in May 2017 on land adjacent to 17 Stratford Road, Honeybourne, Worcestershire. Five trenches were excavated.

One Iron Age/early Roman and two Roman drainage ditches on a north-east/south-west alignment and two postholes of Roman date were located at the south-western end of the site. A shallow north/south aligned drainage ditch of probable post-medieval date was identified in the middle of the site.



1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In May 2017 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation for Mr J Thomas on land adjacent to 17 Stratford Road, Honeybourne, Worcestershire (centred at NGR: 411792 244079; Fig. 1). The evaluation was undertaken to fulfil a condition attached to outline planning permission, granted by Wychavon District Council (WDC; planning ref: W/16/01702/OU, condition 12), for the erection of five bungalows.
- 1.2 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a detailed *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) produced by CA (2017) and approved by Adrian Scruby, Historic Environment Advisor, Worcestershire Archive & Archaeology Service, the archaeological advisor to WDC. The fieldwork also followed *Standard and guidance: Archaeological watching brief* (ClfA 2014) and the *Standards and guidelines for archaeological projects in Worcestershire* (WCC 2016). It was monitored by Adrian Scruby, including a site visit on 3 May 2017.

The site

- 1.3 The site is approximately 0.85ha in extent and comprises an agricultural field on the southern edge of Honeybourne. The area subject to built development is located in the northern half of the site and covers approximately 0.3ha. The site is bounded to the north by residential properties fronting on to Stratford Road, to the west by the Gate Inn public house and Weston Road, and to the south and east by agricultural land. A small watercourse, the Gate Inn Brook, forms the site's southern boundary. The site lies at approximately 50m AOD, on land that slopes gradually down to the brook at the south.
- 1.4 The underlying bedrock geology of the area is mapped as Blue Lias Formation and Charmouth Mudstone Formation (undifferentiated) of the Jurassic and Triassic periods (BGS 2017). No superficial deposits are recorded. The natural geological substrate encountered on site was a Blue Lias clay with patches of orange clay and gravels.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Prehistoric

- 2.1 A Historic Environment Assessment of South Worcestershire (WHEAS 2010) characterises the area around Honeybourne as having strong potential for the survival of later prehistoric archaeological remains, although none are known from within the site itself, or the immediate vicinity.

Roman

- 2.2 The site is located 25m to the east of the Roman road known as Ryknild Street (WSM30300- also known as Buckle Street), which runs north from the Fosse Way at Bourton-on-the-Water to Alcester (Margary 1973, road 18a). This road crosses the Gate Inn Brook immediately to the west of the site (WSM21579). Recent archaeological excavations have uncovered evidence for Roman settlement immediately to the west of the road (CA 2013; WSM49638), 150m north-west of the site, and on the course of the proposed Honeybourne to Wormington gas pipeline, approximately 1.2km south-east of the site (Hart and McSloy 2012).
- 2.3 In the vicinity of Honeybourne a number of Roman artefacts including coins and a brooch fragment have been reported under the Portable Antiquities Scheme (WSM38609). The Historic Environment Assessment of South Worcestershire interprets the scatters of Roman material from around Honeybourne as being suggestive of a well-populated Roman landscape (WHEAS 2010).

Medieval

- 2.4 The site is located close to the core of the medieval settlement of Church Honeybourne. The village is listed in the Domesday Book as *Huniburne* and developed further with the establishment of the Church of St Ecgwin (WSM02825) in the 13th century, 200m west of the site.
- 2.5 Extensive areas of medieval and later ridge and furrow have been recorded to the south of the Gate Inn (WSM46233), including in the fields immediately to the south of the site; however, none is recorded within the site itself.

Post-Medieval/Modern

- 2.6 Historic mapping indicates that the site comprised undeveloped land between the Gate Inn and the main village settlement throughout the modern period.

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 The objectives of the evaluation 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 WDC 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, each 12m long and 2m wide, in the locations shown on the attached plan (Fig. 2). The 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* but 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 along with the site archive. A summary of information from this project, set out within Appendix D, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

5. RESULTS (FIGS 2-8)

- 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.
- 5.2 The natural geological substrate comprised a Blue Lias clay with patches of orange clay and gravels. Within Trenches 1-4 it was overlain by a layer of silty clay subsoil which averaged 0.1m in depth, which, in turn, was sealed by 0.25m of topsoil. Within Trench 5 the natural substrate was overlain by patches of alluvium which was overlain by the subsoil.
- 5.3 Trenches 1, 2 and 5 contained no archaeological features or deposits. The features identified within Trenches 3 and 4 cut the natural geological substrate and were sealed by subsoil.

Trench 3 (Figs 2-7)

- 5.4 Ditch 303 (Figs 3 & 7, Section DD) was aligned north-east/south-west, and measured 2.15m in width, 0.63m in depth, with steep sides and a rounded base. It was filled by grey silty clay 304 from which nine sherds of 2nd to 4th-century pottery were recovered.
- 5.5 Ditch 305 (Figs 3 & 6, Section CC) was aligned north-east/south-west, and measured 1.8m in width, 0.39m in depth, with moderate sides and a rounded base. It contained two sterile silty clay fills 306 and 315. Six sherds of 2nd to 4th-century pottery were recovered from fill 306.
- 5.6 Ditch 312/314 (Figs 3-5, Sections AA & BB) was aligned north-east/south-west, and measured 1.86m in width, 0.58m in depth, with moderate sides and a rounded base. It was filled by a grey silty clay 311/313 from which three sherds of Iron Age pottery were recovered (from 311).
- 5.5 Postholes 308 and 310 (Figs 3-5, Sections AA & BB) cut the south-eastern side of ditch 311/313. Both were roughly circular in plan and measured 0.5m in diameter and 0.25m deep. Posthole 308 was filled by brown silty clay 307 from which six

sherds of mid 1st to 2nd-century pottery were recovered. Posthole 310 was filled by brown silty clay 309 and contained no finds.

Trench 4 (Figs 2 & 8)

- 5.7 Ditch 403 (Fig. 8, Section EE) was aligned north/south, and measured 0.52m in width, 0.16m in depth, with moderate sides and a flat base. It was filled by grey silty clay 304 from which one sherd of Roman pottery was recovered. Ditch 403 was cut on its southern edge by a modern ceramic field drain.

6. THE FINDS

- 6.1 Artefactual material was hand-recovered from five deposits (ditch and posthole fills). The recovered material dates to the late prehistoric and Roman periods. The pottery has been recorded according to sherd count/weight per fabric. Quantities of the artefact types are given in Appendix B. Where possible, fabric codes are equated to the Worcestershire online ceramics database (codes beginning “TF”). Where applicable, National Roman Fabric Reference Collection codes are also given in Appendix B (Tomber and Dore 1998).

Pottery: Late prehistoric

- 6.2 A fragment of Droitwich organic briquetage (TF2) was retrieved from fill 311 of ditch 312. This fabric was used to manufacture vessels used for the extraction and transport of salt throughout the Iron Age. An unfeatured bodysherd in a coarse, vesicular fabric (VES), also from fill 311 is also most likely of Iron Age date.

Late prehistoric/early Roman

- 6.2 A total of six sherds (118g) was recovered which dated from the late Middle Iron Age to the 2nd century AD. The average sherd weight was relatively high, at 18g indicating a low degree of fragmentation. A total of five sherds of Malvernian limestone-tempered ware (TF4.1, Peacock’s Group B) (Peacock 1968, 415), dating from the Late Iron Age to the 1st century AD, was recovered from fill 306 of ditch 305 and fill 307 of posthole 308. The latter was a rimsherd from a large storage jar with a hammer rim, which is a typical form in this ware type. Fill 311 of ditch 312 produced an unfeatured bodysherd of Malvernian igneous/ metamorphic rock-tempered ware (TF3, Peacock’s Group A) (*ibid.*, 421). This ware type continued in use from the late Middle Iron Age to the 2nd century AD.

Roman

Pottery of Roman date totalled 17 sherds (437g). The average sherd weight of 26g is high for a Roman group and the sherds are in a moderate to good condition in terms of edge abrasion and surface preservation. The fine, sandy greyware (TF14) and Severn Valley oxidised ware (TF12) were both manufactured throughout the Romano-British period. However, one sherd in fabric TF14 from fill 306 of ditch 305 featured clay rustication, which is a surface treatment in use during the 2nd century AD. A sherd of Severn Valley oxidised ware from fill 307 of posthole 308 presented as a charcoal-tempered variant (TF12.3). This type of pottery is relatively common in Worcestershire and typically dates to the mid 1st to 2nd centuries. The only regional import was a rimsherd from a (Seager Smith and Davies) Type 22 flat rim dish in Southeast Dorset Black-burnished ware (TF22). This form dates to the 2nd century (Seager Smith and Davies 1993, 232–3).

7. THE BIOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

Animal Bone

- 7.1 A total of 17 fragments of animal bone (846g) were recovered from fills 304 and 306, within ditches 303 and 305. Artefacts dating from the Roman period were also recovered from these deposits. The animal bone was only moderately well preserved and highly fragmented; however it was possible to confirm the presence of cattle (*Bos taurus*) and sheep/goat (*Ovis aries/Capra hircus*). Each of these species was identified from fragments of the ulna, radius or the metapodials, all of which are meat-poor skeletal elements of the lower limbs. No cut and/or chop marks were observed to suggest an origin in butchery waste. Both cattle and sheep/goat were commonly exploited domestic animals in the Roman period; therefore their inclusion with a ditch fill of this date is not unexpected (Baker and Worley, 2014).

8. DISCUSSION

Iron Age/Roman

- 8.1 The earliest feature encountered during the evaluation was ditch 312/314, which contained Iron Age pottery from two vessels and one sherd of Malvernian fabric that could be Iron Age or early Roman in date. The ditch runs north-east/south-west, and appears to drain water to the south-west towards the Gate Inn Brook.

- 8.2 Postholes 308 and 310, spaced approximately 0.8m from each other, cut into the south-eastern edge of drainage ditch 312/314. These postholes relate to a phase of Roman activity within the site dating to the mid-1st to 2nd centuries. Within the limited scope of the evaluation it appears that they follow the line of ditch 312/314 and may possibly be a reinstatement of the same boundary, although the possibility that they are contemporary with ditch 305 cannot be ruled out.
- 8.3 Ditches 303 and 305 are both on a north-east/south-west alignment, again suggestive of the need to drain the site south-westwards towards the Gate Inn Brook. Pottery recovered from ditches 303 and 305 is dated to between the 2nd and 4th centuries AD and was recovered in good condition, in terms of edge abrasion and surface preservation. It was not possible to determine why the two ditches were dug so close together, but it may suggest the area was subject to heavy flooding in the Roman period and that there was the need to remove large amounts of water. The alignment of these ditches broadly corresponds to those found during the excavation, undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in 2013, 150m north-west of site (CA 2013; WSM49638). The ditches found during that excavation were also aligned north-east/south-west and were interpreted as drainage ditches, draining water away from settlement focus towards the Gate Inn Brook (CA 2013).

Post-Medieval and Modern

- 8.4 Ditch 403 lies on a north-south alignment and contained a single sherd of abraded Roman pottery recovered from the surface of the fill. The north-south alignment and shallow nature of this ditch differs from the substantial north-east/south-west aligned Romano-British ditches located to the south-west. The abraded nature of the pottery recovered and the differences in both alignment and size, compared to the Romano-British ditches, suggests it is likely to be a later drainage ditch, possibly of post-medieval date.

9. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Alison Roberts, assisted by Liam Wilson. The report was written by Alison Roberts. The finds and biological evidence reports were written by Jacky Sommerville and Andy Clark respectively. The illustrations were prepared by Charlie Patman. The archive has been compiled by Alison Roberts, and

prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The project was managed for CA by Richard Young.

10. REFERENCES

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Worcestershire online ceramics database: <http://www.worcestershireceramics.org> (accessed 9 May 2017)

WHEAS (Worcestershire Historic Environmental and Archaeology Service) 2010 *Historic Environment Assessment for the South Worcestershire Joint Core Strategy Area*



APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench No.	Context No.	Type	Fill of	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	D (m)
1	100	Layer		topsoil	dark grey brown silty clay	12	1.8	0.1
1	101	Layer		subsoil	mid grey brown silty clay	12	1.8	0.15
1	102	Layer		natural substrate	orange-blue clay with gravels	12	1.8	>0.05
2	200	Layer		topsoil	dark grey brown silty clay	12	1.8	0.25
2	201	Layer		subsoil	mid grey brown silty clay	12	1.8	0.1
2	202	Layer		natural substrate	orange-blue clay	12	1.8	>0.1
3	300	Layer		topsoil	same as 200	12	1.8	0.33
3	301	Layer		subsoil	same as 201	12	1.8	0.08
3	302	Layer		natural substrate	same as 202	12	1.8	>0.05
3	303	Cut		ditch	U-shaped ditch, north-east/south-west aligned	>1.8	2.15	0.63
3	304	Fill	303	fill of ditch	mid grey brown silty clay	>1.8	2.15	0.63
3	305	Cut		ditch	U-shaped ditch, north-east/south-west aligned	>1.8	1.8	0.39
3	306	Fill	305	2nd fill of ditch	mid grey brown silty clay	>1.8	1.8	0.39
3	307	Fill	308	fill of posthole	dark brown silty clay with occ. charcoal flecks	0.5	0.55	0.22
3	308	Cut		posthole	circular posthole, rounded base	0.5	0.55	0.22
3	309	Fill	310	fill of posthole	dark brown silty clay with occ. charcoal flecks	0.28	0.6	0.29
3	310	Cut		posthole	circular posthole, rounded base	0.28	0.6	0.29
3	311	Fill	312	fill of ditch	light yellow brown silty clay	>1.8	1.86	0.58
3	312	Cut		ditch	U-shaped ditch, north-east/south-west aligned	>1.8	1.86	0.58
3	313	Fill	314	fill of ditch	same as 311	>1.8	1.86	0.58
3	314	Cut		ditch	same as 312	>1.8	1.86	0.58
3	315	Fill	305	1st fill of ditch	light yellow silty clay	>1.8	1.8	0.05
4	400	Layer		topsoil	same as 200	12	1.8	0.25
4	401	Layer		subsoil	same as 201	12	1.8	0.1
4	402	Layer		natural substrate	same as 202	12	1.8	>0.05
4	403	Cut		ditch	U-shaped ditch, north/south aligned	12	1.8	0.16
4	404	Fill	403	1st fill of ditch	mid grey brown silty clay	12	1.8	0.16
5	500	Layer		topsoil	same as 200	12	1.8	0.3
5	501	Layer		subsoil	same as 201	12	1.8	0.07
5	502	Layer		natural substrate	same as 202	12	1.8	>0.04
5	503	Layer		alluvium	dark blue grey silty clay	12	1.8	

APPENDIX B: THE FINDS

Context	Category	Description	Fabric Code/ NRFRC*	Count	Weight (g)	Spot-date
304	Roman pottery	Southeast Dorset Black-burnished ware	TF22/ DOR BB1	1	11	C2-C4
	Roman pottery	Severn Valley oxidised ware	TF12/ SVW OX2	6	259	
	Roman pottery	Fine sandy greyware	TF14	1	15	
	Roman pottery	Sandy oxidised ware	TF13	1	10	
306	Late prehistoric/Early Roman pottery	Malvernian limestone-tempered ware	TF4.1	1	10	C2-C4
	Roman pottery	Severn Valley oxidised ware	TF12 SVW OX2	1	11	
	Roman pottery	Fine sandy greyware	TF14	1	33	
	Roman pottery	Sandy oxidised ware	TF13	3	44	
307	Late prehistoric/Early Roman pottery	Malvernian limestone-tempered ware	TF4.1	4	104	MC1-C2+
	Roman pottery	Organically-tempered oxidised Severn Valley ware	TF12.3	1	36	
	Roman pottery	Fine sandy greyware	TF14	1	5	
	Roman pottery					
311	Late prehistoric pottery	Droitwich organic briquetage	TF2	1	22	IA
	Late prehistoric pottery	Vesicular fabric	VES	1	21	
	Late prehistoric/Early Roman pottery	Malvernian rock-tempered ware	TF3/ MAL REA	1	4	
	Roman pottery					
404	Roman pottery	Severn Valley oxidised ware	TF12/ SVW OX2	1	13	RB

* National Roman Fabric Reference Collection codes in bold

APPENDIX C: THE PALAEOENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

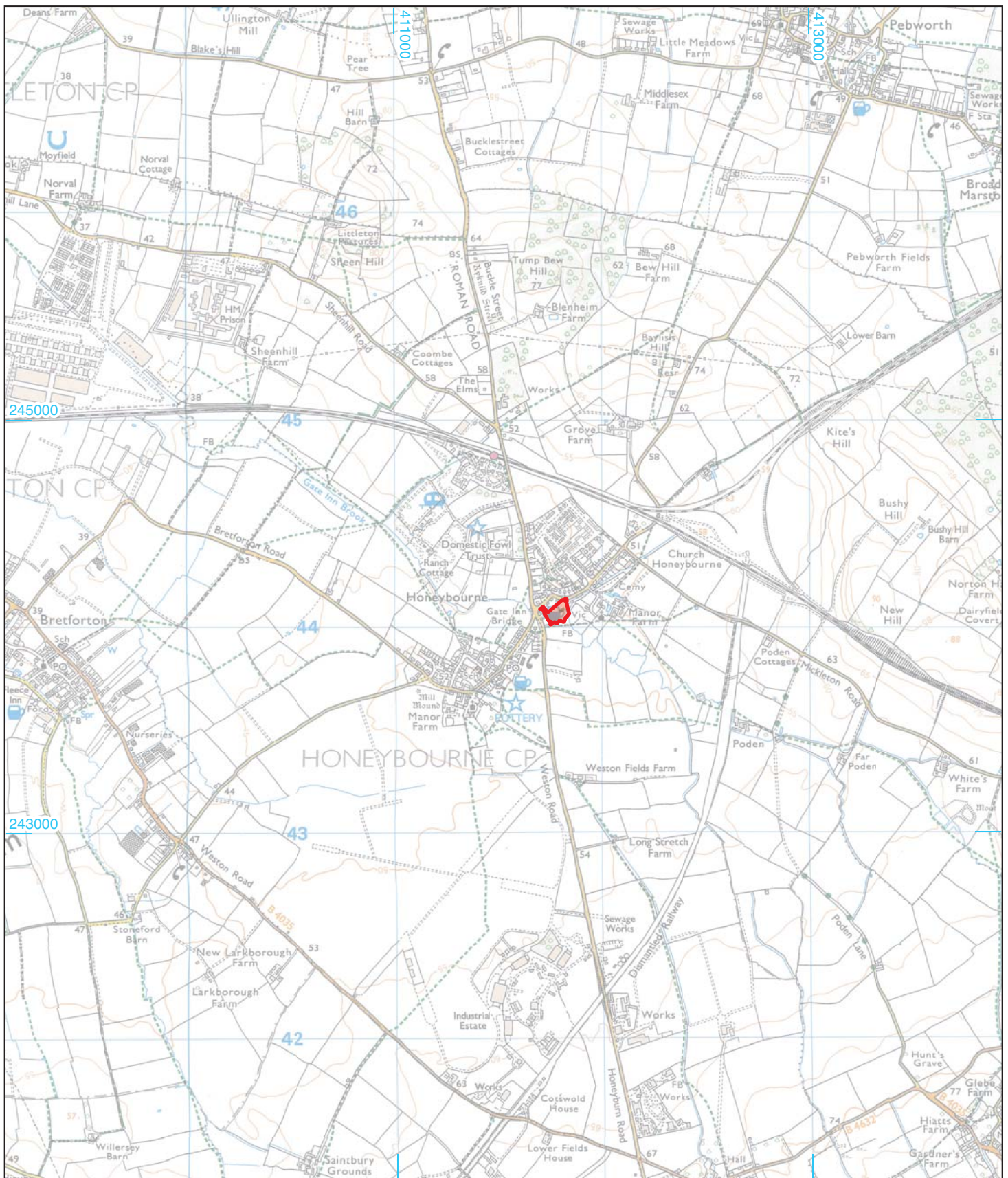
Table 1: Identified animal species by fragment count (NISP), weight and context.

Cut	Fill	BOS	O/C	LM	Ind	Total	Weight (g)
303	304	4	1	4	7	16	834
305	306		1			1	12
Total		4	2	4	7	17	
Weight		762	32	28	24	846	

Bos = cattle; O/C = sheep/goat; LM = cattle size fragments; Ind – indeterminate;

APPENDIX D: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project Name	Land adjacent to 17 Stratford Road	
Short description	<p>An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in May 2017 on land adjacent to 17 Stratford Road, Honeybourne, Worcestershire. Five trenches were excavated.</p> <p>One Iron Age/early Roman and two Roman drainage ditches on a north-east/south-west alignment and two postholes of Roman date were located at the south-western end of the site. A shallow north/south aligned drainage ditch of probable post-medieval date was identified in the middle of the site.</p>	
Project dates	2-4 May 2017	
Project type	Field Evaluation	
Previous work	None	
Future work	Unknown	
PROJECT LOCATION		
Site Location	Land adjacent to 17 Stratford Road, Honeybourne, Worcestershire	
Study area (M ² /ha)	0.85ha	
Site co-ordinates	SP 1178 4407	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Brief originator	None	
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Richard Young	
Project Supervisor	Alison Roberts	
MONUMENT TYPE	None	
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	None	
PROJECT ARCHIVES	Intended final location of archive	Content
Physical	Worcestershire County Museum	Ceramics, animal bone
Paper	Worcestershire County Museum	Trench recording forms, context sheets, site drawing
Digital	Worcestershire County Museum	Database, digital photos
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
<p>CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2017 <i>Land adjacent to 17 Stratford Road, Honeybourne, Worcestershire: Archaeological Evaluation</i>. CA typescript report 17253</p>		



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PROJECT TITLE

Land adjacent to 17 Stratford Road,
 Honeybourne, Worcestershire

FIGURE TITLE

Site location plan

0 1km

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FIGURE NO.

1



- site boundary
- evaluation trench
- archaeological feature
- modern
- field drain
- section location

0 50m

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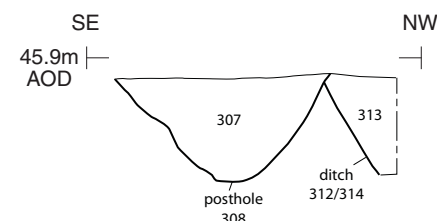
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PROJECT TITLE
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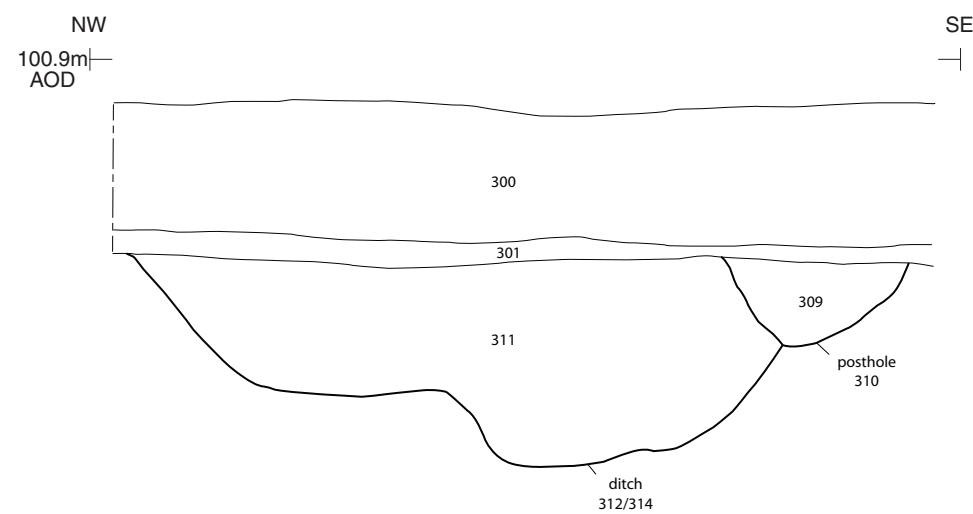
FIGURE TITLE
Trench location plan showing
archaeological features

DRAWN BY	CP	PROJECT NO.	6224	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	DJB	DATE	11/05/2017	
APPROVED BY	RY	SCALE@A3	1:1000 & 1:250	2

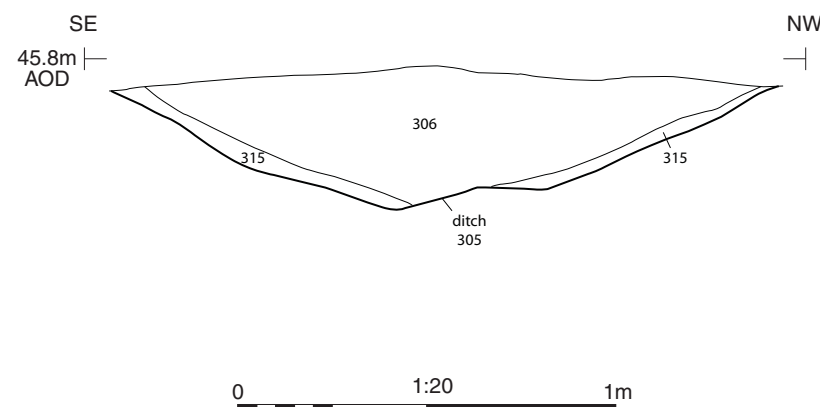
Section AA



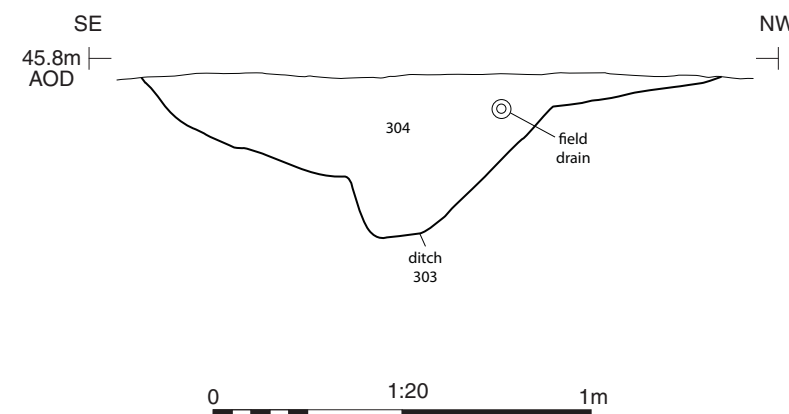
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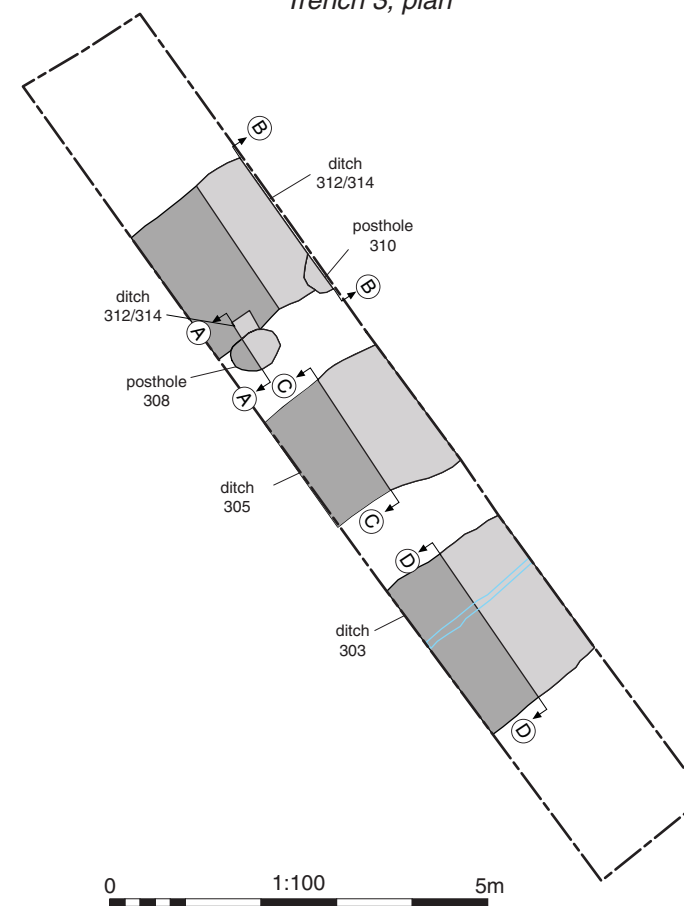
Section CC



Section DD



Trench 3, plan



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PROJECT TITLE
 Land adjacent to 17 Stratford Road,
 Honeybourne, Worcestershire

FIGURE TITLE
 Trench 3: plan and sections

DRAWN BY	CP	PROJECT NO.	6244	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	DJB	DATE	11/05/2017	3
APPROVED BY	RY	SCALE	A3 1:100 & 1:20	



4

Ditch 312 and posthole 310, looking north-east (scale 1m)



5

Ditch 314 and posthole 308, looking south-west (scale 0.4m)



6

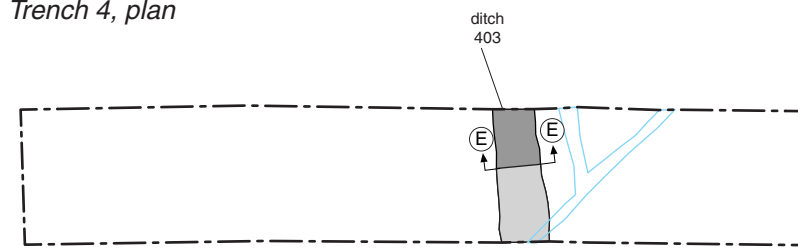
Ditch 305, looking south-west (scale 1m)



7

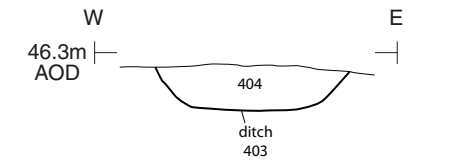
Ditch 303, looking south-west (scale 1m)

Trench 4, plan



0 1:100 5m

Section EE



0 1:20 1m



Ditch 403, looking north (scale 0.3m)

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