

Land at Banbury Road
Southam
Warwickshire
Archaeological Evaluation



for
Orbit Homes

CA Project: 660658
CA Report: 17549

October 2017



Land at Banbury Road Southam Warwickshire

Archaeological Evaluation

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SUMMARY

Project Name:	Land at Banbury Road
Location:	Southam, Warwickshire
NGR:	441698 260918
Type:	Evaluation
Date:	11-13 September 2017
Planning Reference:	14/00503/OUT
Location of Archive:	To be deposited with Warwickshire Museum
Site Code:	BARS 17

In September 2017, an archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology of land at Banbury Road, Southam, Warwickshire. The work was undertaken to fulfil a condition attached to planning consent for residential development of up to 47 dwellings. The fieldwork comprised the excavation of five trenches.

Interest in the site derives from its location within the hinterland of Southam, a medieval settlement which developed into a small light-industrial town during the 19th and 20th centuries. A previous geophysical survey of the site did not identify any anomalies of archaeological origin; however, geophysical survey to the immediate west identified a possible round house and length of ditch of probable Iron Age or Romano-British date.

The evaluation has recorded evidence for archaeological features, concentrated in the western part of the site, comprising three linear ditches. No dateable material was recovered from these features, which may represent further components of the putative Iron Age/Romano-British settlement identified to the west, outside of the site.

The evaluation also identified a series of furrows on an east to west alignment, located across the site.



1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In September 2017, Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation of land at Banbury Road, Southam, Warwickshire (centred at NGR: 441698 260918; Fig. 1). The fieldwork was carried out at the request of Orbit Homes.
- 1.2 The initial scope of works was defined during discussions between CA and Anna Stocks, Warwickshire County Council's Planning Archaeologist (WCCPA; who, at the time, was the archaeological advisor to Stratford on Avon District Council (SOADC); the local planning authority).
- 1.3 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a subsequent detailed *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) produced by CA (2016), initially approved by Anna Stocks. SOADC no longer receive archaeological advice from WCCPA and so the WSI was subsequently approved by Louise Koelman, Case Officer, SOADC. The fieldwork also followed *Standard and guidance: Archaeological field evaluation* (CIfA 2014).

The site

- 1.4 The proposed development area is approximately 1ha in size and comprises an area of rough pasture bounded by the A423 to the east, a small industrial park to the south, a petrol station immediately to the north and agricultural land to the west (Figs 2 & 3). The site lies at approximately 85m AOD, on land which slopes gently to the west.
- 1.5 The underlying bedrock geology of the area is mapped as interbedded rocks of the Rugby Limestone Member (BGS 2016). There is no recorded drift geology. Sandy clay natural with small stones and chalk flecks was observed during the evaluation.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The site is situated in the hinterland of Southam, a medieval settlement which developed into a small light-industrial town during the 19th and 20th centuries. A geophysical survey of the site identified no anomalies of archaeological origin (Stratascan 2014).

Iron Age (750BC – AD43)

- 2.2 A series of anomalies were recorded on a geophysical survey of land to the west of the A423. These are thought to represent a roundhouse and ditch, possibly the remains of a late prehistoric settlement. The proximity of this site is such that peripheral Iron Age activity may extend into the site.

Romano-British (AD43 – AD410)

- 2.3 A possible Romano-British site has been identified from pottery and artefact scatters, south of the Alko Works at the southern end of Southam. This may represent the remains of a villa, or similar rural settlement.

Medieval (1066 – 1539)

- 2.4 Southam is a medieval town, listed in Domesday Book as a settlement incorporating seven slaves, twenty villagers and eight smallholders. By the 13th century the settlement had grown to the extent that a charter was granted for a market. The market in Southam was established in 1227, and continued into the early 20th century. The town is certain to have had an influence on the development area, which lies within the town hinterland. Liminal space at the edge of medieval settlements have been associated with “anti-social” activities such as tanning and pottery production, although the distance of the development area from the town centre suggests that it lay within the substantial plough-lands which once surrounded Southam.

Post-medieval (1540 – 1800)

- 2.5 The battle of Southam occurred early in the English Civil War, involving Parliamentary forces under Lord Brooke, and Royalist soldiers commanded by the Earl of Northampton. The battle itself is thought to have involved a limited skirmish to the north of the town, although the parliamentary force is thought to have approached the battlefield from the south. A small brickworks is visible to the south of the development area on the First Edition of the Ordnance Survey 6 Inch map.

Undated

- 2.6 A series of undated linear earthworks are situated to the north-east of the site. These may represent the remains of medieval ridge and furrow field systems.

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 The objectives of the evaluation, as detailed 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 SOADC 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 50m long by 1.6m wide trenches in the locations shown on the attached plan (Fig. 2). The trench plan was designed to sample potential archaeological features recorded by the geophysical survey, as well as providing a sample of the areas devoid of geophysical anomalies. 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*. However,, no deposits were identified that required sampling. All artefacts recovered were processed in accordance with CA 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 Milton Keynes. The site archive will be deposited with Warwickshire

Museum. A summary of information from this project, set out within Appendix B, 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 are to be found in Appendix A.
- 5.2 The results of the fieldwork show a poor correlation with the preceding geophysical survey (Stratascan 2014). Cultivation marks and ditches recorded by the evaluation were not identified as anomalies in the geophysical survey.
- 5.3 No archaeological features or deposits were identified within Trenches 1 and 3 to 5. Furrows, derived from ridge and furrow cultivation, were identified within all trenches (Trenches 1 to 5).

General Stratigraphy

- 5.4 A broadly similar stratigraphic sequence was revealed within all the trenches. The natural substrate, comprising patchy sandy clay with chalk flecks and stone inclusions, was encountered at an average depth of 0.6m below the present ground level (bpgl). This was overlain by a c. 0.31m thick layer of subsoil, comprising light yellow brown sandy clay, which was in turn sealed by a c. 0.29m thick layer of dark brown grey clay silt topsoil. Within the northern part of the site (Trench 5) this stratigraphy was overlain by a deposit of deliberately dumped construction material (501), measuring 0.46m thick. This comprised stone and rubble in a light grey sandy silt matrix. A c. 0.23m thick layer of topsoil (500), consisting of dark brown grey silty clay sealed this deposit (Figs 4 & 5).

Undated

Trench 2 (Figs 2-8)

- 5.5 Located towards the southern end of the trench were parallel north-east/south-west orientated ditches 203 and 205/209 (Fig. 6). Ditch 203 was separated from ditch 205/209 by a c. 1m gap, which may once have contained an earthen bank, although no evidence of this was identified. Ditches 203 and 205/209 had symmetrical profiles with moderately sloping sides and slightly concave bases. Ditch 203, which was exposed for a length of 7.2m, measured 0.42m wide and 0.18m deep (Fig. 7; section

AA). Ditch 205/209 measured in excess of 0.35m in length and was between 0.25m and 0.4m wide, with an average depth of 0.14m (Fig. 7; section BB). No finds were recovered from the respective mid brown grey silty clay fills of ditches 203 and 205/209 (fills 204, 206/210 respectively).

5.6 Cutting the fill 204 of ditch 205/209, was north-east/south-west orientated ditch 207/211 (Fig. 8). It was exposed for a total length of 2.5m and measured on average 0.33m wide by 0.13m deep. It had moderately sloping sides with a concave base. No finds were recovered from its single dark grey brown silty clay fill, derived from secondary silting.

5.7 Although undated artefactually all the ditches were cut furrows of a probable medieval/post-medieval date.

Furrows

Trenches 1 to 5

5.8 Furrows on a broadly east/west orientation were recorded in Trenches 1 to 5 (Fig. 2). These furrows measured on average 2.3m wide and c. 0.2m deep. They are interpreted as furrows based on their symmetrical profiles with moderately sloping sides, flat bases and single silty clay fills. These features represent the ploughed-out remnants of a medieval ridge and furrow agricultural field system.

6. DISCUSSION

6.1 To the west of the site, geophysical anomalies representing archaeological features have been identified in fields to the west of the A423 (HER Number MWA19300). These comprised a possible round house and length of ditch of probable Iron Age or Romano-British date.

6.2 The evaluation has recorded evidence for archaeological features, concentrated in the western part of the site, comprising three linear ditches. No dateable material was recovered from these features, which may represent further components the putative Iron Age/Romano-British settlement identified to the west.

- 6.3 There was a poor correlation between the evaluation and the results of a previous geophysical survey carried out within the site (Stratascan 2014), which did not identify any anomalies of potential archaeological origin within the site.

Undated

- 6.4 Parallel ditches 205/209 and 203 may be associated with the settlement activity identified to the west, outside of the site; possibly forming part of an eastern boundary, or element of an interconnecting trackway of this putative settlement. Alternatively they may form part of a medieval/post-medieval field system representing paired field boundary ditches flanking a former earthen bank. Ditch 207, which cuts ditch 205/209 may also form a separate phase of pre-medieval activity.
- 6.5 It remains difficult to confidently date these ditches, although given their differing alignment to the current field arrangement, it is suggested that they pre-date the medieval/post-medieval period. All of the identified ditches were cut by furrows and sealed beneath subsoil, which itself is interpreted as having been formed from the ploughed out remnants of ridge and furrow. Such evidence provides a *terminus ante quem* (*time before which*) for the ditches most probably in the medieval/post-medieval period.
- 6.6 The evaluation identified a series of furrows on an east to west alignment, located within Trenches 1 to 5. Standing ridge and furrow earthworks were also evident in adjacent fields to the north-east of the site. These represent partial elements of the former open field system and indicate that the area was previously used as arable land. No dateable material was recovered from these features, which most likely date from the medieval or post-medieval period. The furrows fit within the general alignment of the surrounding field systems depicted on current OS mapping. Based on morphological characteristics these field systems predominantly relate to Parliamentary Enclosures of the post-medieval period, with partial surviving elements of earlier medieval strip fields.



7. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Ralph Brown, assisted by Abigail Breen and Samuel Burns. The report was written by Ralph Brown. The illustrations were prepared by Aleksandra Osinska. The archive has been compiled by Emily Evans, and prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The project was managed for CA by Stuart Joyce.

8. REFERENCES

BGS (British Geological Survey) 2016 *Geology of Britain Viewer* http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geology_viewer_google/googleviewer.html Accessed 13 September 2016

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2016 *Land at Banbury Road, Southam, Warwickshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation*

DCLG (Department of Communities and Local Government) 2012 *National Planning Policy Framework*

Stratascan 2014 *Land at Banbury Road, Southam, Warwickshire, unpublished Geophysical Survey Report*



APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench No	Context	Type	Fill of	Context Interpretation	Context Description	L (m)	W (m)	T (m)
1	100	Layer		Topsoil	Friable dark brown grey silty loam with 5% sub angular stone inclusions 0.01-0.04m	>50	>1.6	0.28
1	101	Layer		Subsoil	Firm light yellow brown sandy clay with 1% sub angular stone inclusions 0.01-0.04m	>50	>1.6	0.22
1	102	Layer		Natural	Firm patchy sandy clay ranging from mid brown grey, mid brown orange and mid grey blue with 15% chalk flecks and 5% sub angular stone inclusions 0.01-0.06m	>50	>1.6	
1	103	Cut		Furrow Cut	E-W aligned furrow. Shallow concave profile	>16	>1	>0.14
1	104	Fill	103	Fill of Furrow	Mid yellow brown sandy clay	>16	>1	>0.14
2	200	Layer		Topsoil	Friable dark brown grey silty loam with 5% sub angular stone inclusions 0.01-0.04m	>50	>1.6	0.24
2	201	Layer		Subsoil	Firm light yellow brown sandy clay with 1% sub angular stone inclusions 0.01-0.04m	>50	>1.6	0.36
2	202	Layer		Natural	Firm patchy sandy clay ranging from mid brown grey, mid brown orange and mid grey blue with 15% chalk flecks and 5% sub angular stone inclusions 0.01-0.06m	>50	>1.6	
2	203	Cut		Ditch	NNW-SSE linear with straight 45° sides and a concave base	>1	0.42	0.18
2	204	Fill	203	Secondary silting	Firm mid brown grey silty clay with 2% angular stone 0.01-0.03m	>1	0.42	0.18
2	205	Cut		Gully	NNW-SSE linear with straight 60° sides and a concave base	>1	0.25	0.14
2	206	Fill	205	Secondary silting	Firm mid brown grey silty clay with 2% angular stone 0.01-0.03m	>1	0.25	0.14
2	207	Cut		Ditch	NNE-SSW linear with straight 60° sides and a concave base	>1	0.3	0.14
2	208	Fill	207	Secondary silting	Firm dark grey brown silty clay with 2% angular stone 0.01-0.03m	>1	0.3	0.14
2	209	Cut		Ditch	NNW-SSE linear with straight 50° sides and a concave base	>1	0.4	0.15
2	210	Fill	209	Secondary silting	Firm mid brown grey silty clay with 2% angular stone 0.01-0.03m	>1	0.4	0.15
2	211	Cut		Ditch	NNE-SSW linear with straight 40° sides and a concave base	>1	0.35	0.11
2	212	Fill	211	Secondary silting	Firm dark grey brown silty clay with 2% angular stone 0.01-0.03m	>1	0.35	0.11
2	213	Cut		Furrow	E-W linear with straight 15° sides concave base and imperceptible breaks of slope	>1.6	2.3	0.18
2	214	Fill	213	Fill of Furrow	Firm mid yellow brown sandy clay with 2% sub angular stones 0.01-0.05	>1.6	2.3	0.18

2	215	Cut		Furrow Cut	E-W aligned furrow. Shallow concave profile	>1.6	2.1	0.19
2	216	Fill	215	Fill of Furrow	Firm mid yellow brown sandy clay with 2% sub angular stones 0.01-0.05	>1.6	2.1	0.19
2	217	Cut		Furrow Cut	E-W aligned furrow. Shallow concave profile	>1.6	1.3	0.12
2	218	Fill	217	Fill of Furrow	Firm mid yellow brown sandy clay with 2% sub angular stones 0.01-0.05	>1.6	1.3	0.12
2	219	Cut		Furrow Cut	E-W aligned furrow. Shallow concave profile	>1.6	2.1	0.17
2	220	Fill	219	Fill of Furrow	Firm mid yellow brown sandy clay with 2% sub angular stones 0.01-0.05	>1.6	2.1	0.17
2	221	Cut		Furrow Cut	E-W aligned furrow. Shallow concave profile	>1.6	2.2	0.18
2	222	Fill	221	Fill of Furrow	Firm mid yellow brown sandy clay with 2% sub angular stones 0.01-0.05	>1.6	2.2	0.18
2	223	Cut		Furrow Cut	E-W aligned furrow. Shallow concave profile	>1.6	1.8	0.14
2	224	Fill	223	Fill of Furrow	Firm mid yellow brown sandy clay with 2% sub angular stones 0.01-0.05	>1.6	1.8	0.14
2	225	Cut		Furrow Cut	E-W aligned furrow. Shallow concave profile	>1.6	0.8	0.8
2	226	Fill	225	Fill of Furrow	Firm mid yellow brown sandy clay with 2% sub angular stones 0.01-0.05	>1.6	0.8	0.8
3	300	Layer		Topsoil	Friable dark brown grey silty loam with 5% sub angular stone inclusions 0.01-0.04m	>50	>1.6	0.33
3	301	Layer		Subsoil	Firm light yellow brown sandy clay with 1% sub angular stone inclusions 0.01-0.04m	>50	>1.6	0.28
3	302	Layer		Natural	Firm patchy sandy clay ranging from mid brown grey, mid brown orange and mid grey blue with 15% chalk flecks and 5% sub angular stone inclusions 0.01-0.06m	>50	>1.6	
3	303	Cut		Furrow Cut	E-W aligned furrow. Shallow concave profile	>26	>0.8	0.1
3	304	Fill	303	Fill of Furrow	Mid yellow brown sandy clay	>26	>0.8	0.1
4	400	Layer		Topsoil	Friable dark brown grey silty loam with 5% sub angular stone inclusions 0.01-0.04m	>50	>1.6	0.3
4	401	Layer		Subsoil	Firm light yellow brown sandy clay with 1% sub angular stone inclusions 0.01-0.04m	>50	>1.6	0.38
4	402	Layer		Natural	Firm patchy sandy clay ranging from mid brown grey, mid brown orange and mid grey blue with 15% chalk flecks and 5% sub angular stone inclusions 0.01-0.06m	>50	>1.6	
4	403	Cut		Furrow Cut	E-W aligned furrow. Shallow concave profile	>2.3	2	0.16

4	404	Fill	403	Fill of Furrow	Mid yellow brown sandy clay	>2.3	2	0.16
4	405	Cut		Furrow Cut	E-W aligned furrow. Shallow concave profile	>2.3	2.4	0.18
4	406	Fill	405	Fill of Furrow	Mid yellow brown sandy clay	>2.3	2.4	0.18
4	407	Cut		Furrow Cut	E-W aligned furrow. Shallow concave profile	>2.3	1.7	0.12
4	408	Fill	407	Fill of Furrow	Mid yellow brown sandy clay	>2.3	1.7	0.12
5	500	Layer		Topsoil	Friable dark brown grey silty loam with 5% sub angular stone inclusions 0.01-0.04m	>50	>1.6	0.23
5	501	Layer		Made ground	Friable light brown grey sandy silt with 25% sub angular stone 0.01-0.06m and 10% concrete and brick rubble	>28	>1.6	0.46
5	502	Layer		Buried topsoil	Friable dark brown grey silty loam with 5% sub angular stone inclusions 0.01-0.04m	>28	>1.6	0.25
5	503	Layer		Buried subsoil	Firm light yellow brown sandy clay with 1% sub angular stone inclusions 0.01-0.04m	>50	>1.6	0.31
5	504	Layer		Natural	Firm patchy sandy clay ranging from mid brown grey, mid brown orange and mid grey blue with 15% chalk flecks and 5% sub angular stone inclusions 0.01-0.06m	>50	>1.6	
5	505	Cut		Furrow Cut	E-W aligned furrow. Shallow concave profile	>2.3	1.7	0.12
5	506	Fill	505	Fill of Furrow	Mid yellow brown sandy clay	>2.3	1.7	0.12

APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project Name	Land at Banbury Road, Southam, Warwickshire: Archaeological Evaluation	
Short description	<p>In September 2017, an archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology of land at Banbury Road, Southam, Warwickshire. The work was undertaken to fulfil a condition attached to planning consent for residential development of up to 47 dwellings. The fieldwork comprised the excavation of five trenches.</p> <p>Interest in the site derives from its location within the hinterland of Southam, a medieval settlement which developed into a small light-industrial town during the 19th and 20th centuries. A previous geophysical survey of the site did not identify any anomalies of archaeological origin; however, geophysical survey to the immediate west identified a possible round house and length of ditch of probable Iron Age or Romano-British date.</p> <p>The evaluation has recorded evidence for archaeological features, concentrated in the western part of the site, comprising three linear ditches. No dateable material was recovered from these features, which may represent further components of the putative Iron Age/Romano-British settlement identified to the west, outside of the site.</p> <p>The evaluation also identified a series of furrows on an east to west alignment, located across the site.</p>	
Project dates	11/09/17 to 13/09/17	
Project type	Excavation	
Previous work	none	
Future work	Unknown	
PROJECT LOCATION		
Site Location	Banbury Road, Southam, Warwickshire	
Study area (M ² /ha)	1ha	
Site co-ordinates	441698 260918	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Brief originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Stuart Joyce	
Project Supervisor	Ralph Brown	
MONUMENT TYPE		
	none	
SIGNIFICANT FINDS		
	none	
PROJECT ARCHIVES		
	Intended final location of archive	Content
Physical	Warwickshire Museum	none
Paper	Warwickshire Museum	Context sheets, Sections
Digital	Warwickshire Museum	digital photos, report
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
	CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2017 <i>Land at Banbury Road, Southam, Warwickshire: Archaeological Evaluation</i> . CA typescript report 17549	

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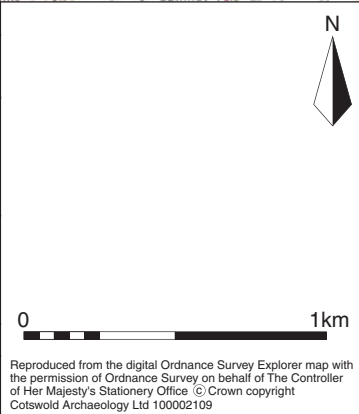
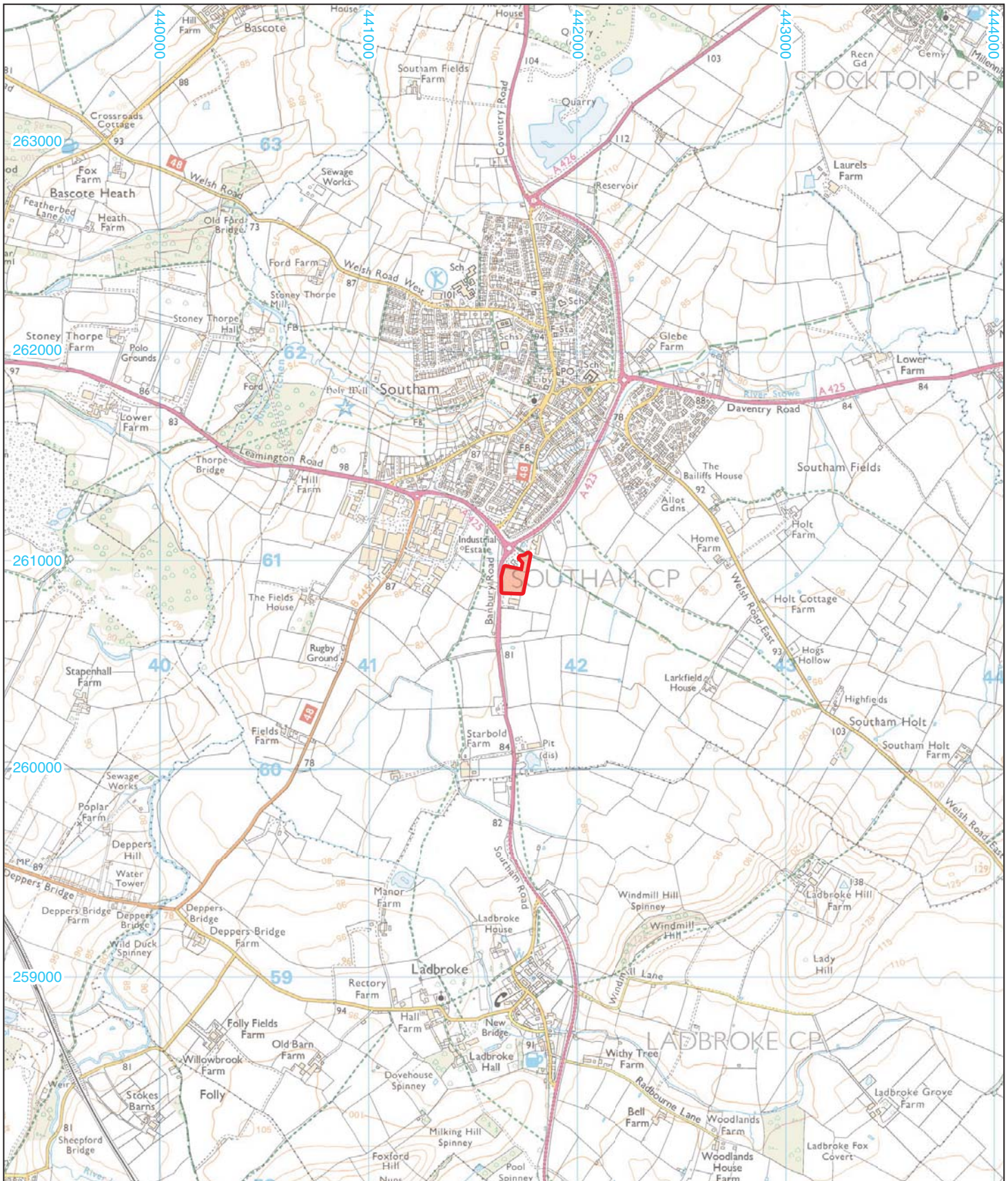
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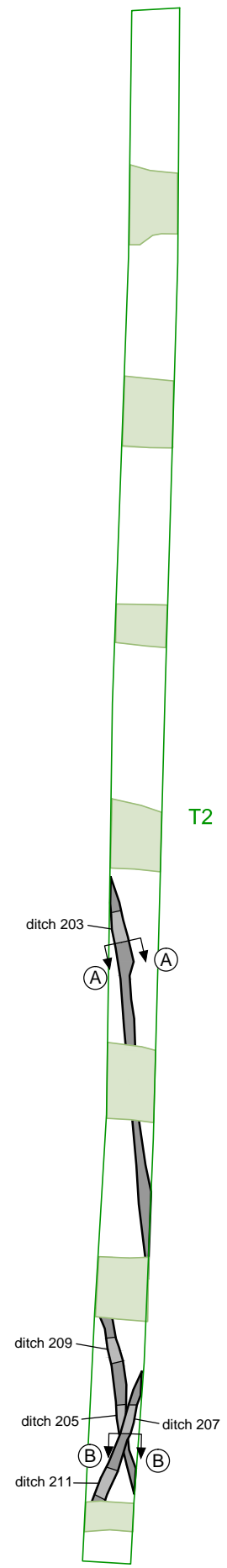
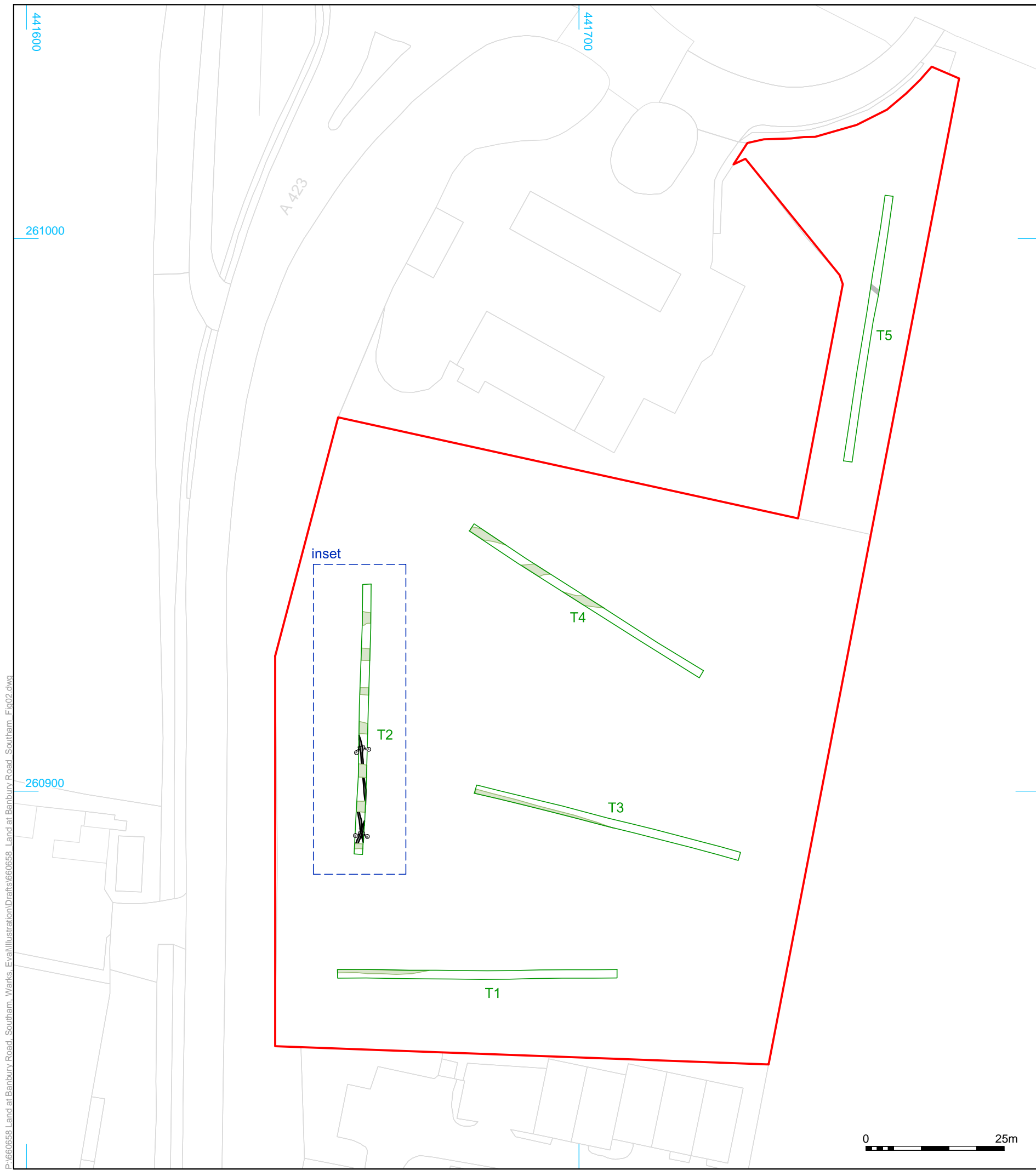

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PROJECT TITLE
 Land at Banbury Road, Southam
 Warwickshire

FIGURE TITLE
 Site location plan

DRAWN BY	AO	PROJECT NO.	660658	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	DJB	DATE	28/09/2017	1
APPROVED BY	SRJ	SCALE	@A4 1:25,000	

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- site boundary
- evaluation trench
- archaeological feature
- furrow
- modern
- section location

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PROJECT TITLE
 Land at Banbury Road, Southam
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FIGURE TITLE
 Trench location plan, showing
 archaeological features

<small>DRAWN BY</small> AO	<small>PROJECT NO.</small> 660658	<small>FIGURE NO.</small>
<small>CHECKED BY</small> DJB	<small>DATE</small> 28/09/2017	2
<small>APPROVED BY</small> SRJ	<small>SCALE@A3</small> 1:750 & 1:200	

P:\660658 Land at Banbury Road, Southam, Works, Evaluation\Drafts\660658 Land at Banbury Road, Southam, Fig02.dwg

3



Site, looking south-east

4



Trench 5, looking south (1m scales)



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PROJECT TITLE

Land at Banbury Road, Southam
Warwickshire

FIGURE TITLE

Photographs

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CHECKED BY	DJB	DATE	28/09/2017	3 & 4
APPROVED BY	SRJ	SCALE@A4	NA	



5

Trench 5 section, looking east (1m scale)



6

Trench 2, looking north (1m scales)



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PROJECT TITLE

Land at Banbury Road, Southam
 Warwickshire

FIGURE TITLE

Photographs

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FIGURE NO.

5 & 6

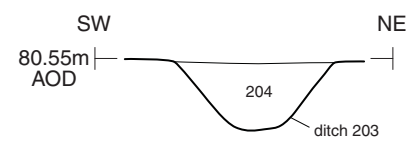


Ditch 203, looking south-east (0.4m scale)

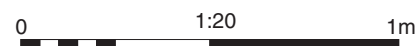
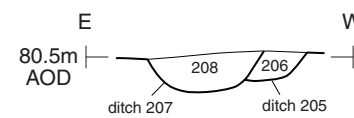


Ditch 205 and ditch 207, looking north (0.4m scale)

Section AA



Section BB





Ditch 211, looking north-east (0.3m scale)



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PROJECT TITLE

Land at Banbury Road, Southam
Warwickshire

FIGURE TITLE

Photograph

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FIGURE NO.

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