

**NORTON LANE
WORCESTER
WORCESTERSHIRE**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

For

**TAYLOR WIMPEY UK LTD
AND
PERSIMMON HOMES LTD**

CA PROJECT: 3257
CA REPORT: 10194
WCC REFERENCE: WSM 42456

NOVEMBER 2010


**COTSWOLD
ARCHAEOLOGY**



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signed	
date	19 November 2010
issue	01

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SUMMARY

Project Name: Norton Lane
Location: Worcester, Worcestershire
NGR: SO 8677 5142
Type: Evaluation
Date: 19-22 October 2010
Location of Archive: To be deposited with Worcester City Museum and Art Gallery
Accession Number: WCC Reference: WSM 42456
Site Code: NLW10

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in October 2010. Thirteen trenches were excavated.

Two intercutting ditches mostly probably dating to the Roman period, although there is a possibility that the earliest is Iron Age in origin, were identified. The earlier of the ditches may have defined the northeast corner of an enclosure, although the possibility that it is curvilinear in plan should not be dismissed. Small quantities of iron slag were recovered from both ditches.

No other archaeological remains were uncovered during the evaluation. Extensive modern disturbance and dumping was revealed in the southern field of the proposed development.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In October 2010 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation for Taylor Wimpey UK Ltd and Persimmon Homes Ltd at Norton Lane, Worcester, Worcestershire (centred on NGR: SO 8677 5142; Fig. 1). The evaluation was undertaken prior to determination of a planning application for development of the site.
- 1.2 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a recommendation by Mike Glyde, Historic Environment Planning Advisor, Worcestershire Historic Environment and Archaeological Service (WHEAS), the archaeological advisor to Wychavon District Council, and with a subsequent detailed Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced by CA (2010a) and approved by Mr Glyde. The fieldwork also followed the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (IfA 2008), the *Requirements and Guidelines for Archaeological Project in Worcestershire* (WHEAS 2003), the *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage 1991), and the *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE): Project Manager's Guide* (EH 2006).

The site

- 1.3 The site is situated to the south of Worcester, in the suburban area of Norton, on land to the immediate west of a housing estate adjacent to Norton Road and to the north and east of St Peter's Garden Centre (Fig. 2). The site lies at approximately 32m AOD, with ground levels dropping gently from north to south.
- 1.4 It occupies 3.2 hectares and comprises an area of relatively flat, mown grassland (Field 1) and an area of undulating grass and scrubland with sporadic tree cover (Field 2).
- 1.5 The underlying solid geology of the area is mapped as Branscombe Mudstone Formation of the Norian period of the Upper Triassic era (BGS 2010). This was observed in all trenches, outcropping as reddish brown clay with occasional bluish grey patches.

Archaeological background

- 1.6 A desk based assessment of the site undertaken by CSa describes the cultural heritage of the site and its environs fully (CSa 2010). A summary of that information is provided below.
- 1.7 The proposed development area occupies part of the site of the former Norton Barracks and lies in an area of archaeological potential. An undated cropmark enclosure is recorded by Worcestershire HER (WSM01367) approximately 120m to the west of the application area, and a large Roman farm or hamlet, with a specialist industrial character, approximately 650m to the north-east (Jackson et al 1992). A small watercourse along the southern boundary formerly feed a large medieval fishpond located 65m beyond the site (CSa 2010).
- 1.8 An archaeological watching brief was undertaken throughout the site in September 2010 during groundworks associated with ground clearance for suspected unexploded ordnance (UXO) identified during a preceding geophysical survey. The mechanical excavation of 186 test-pits, typically measuring 0.8m by 0.5m, was archaeologically monitored. The depths of the excavations were determined by the depth of the suspected UXO, and were typically between 0.05m and 0.36m below the present ground surface (the majority of the excavated test-pits did not penetrate below the existing topsoil). However, deeper excavations within 31 of the test-pits did identify evidence that modern demolition rubble had been spread throughout much of the site. No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during the groundworks and, despite visual scanning of spoil, no artefactual material pre-dating the modern period was recovered (CA 2010b). The results of the geophysics and location of the test-pits are shown on Fig. 2)

Archaeological objectives

- 1.9 The objectives of the evaluation were to establish the character, quality, date and extent of any archaeological remains or deposits surviving within the site. This information will assist the Local Planning Authority (Wychavon District Council) in making an informed judgement on the significance of the archaeological resource and the likely impact upon it of the proposed development.

Methodology

- 1.10 The fieldwork comprised the excavation of 13 trenches in the locations shown on the attached plan (Fig. 2). All trenches measured 1.8m wide; Trenches 1 to 7, 12 and 13 were 50m long; Trench 8, 33m; Trench 9, 30m; Trench 10, 26.5m; and Trench 11, 22m. With the exception of Trench 1, which was moved south by some 15m to avoid a footpath, all trenches in Field 1 were laid out in accordance with the original trench plan (with a small extension to the north side of Trench 2), while all but Trench 6 in Field 2 were moved slightly or shortened due to tree coverage and ecological considerations. Changes to the original trench plan were made with the approval of Mr Glyde and after on-site consultation with Aidan Marsh of CSa Environmental. Trenches were set out on OS National Grid (NGR) co-ordinates using a Leica 1200 series SmartRover GPS and surveyed in accordance with CA Technical Manual 4 *Survey Manual* (2009).
- 1.11 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* (2007).
- 1.12 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* (2003) and no deposits were identified that required sampling. All artefacts recovered were processed in accordance with Technical Manual 3 *Treatment of Finds Immediately after Excavation* (2010).
- 1.13 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 Worcester City Museum and Art Gallery under accession number WSM 42456, 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.

2. RESULTS (FIGS 2 & 3)

- 2.1 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.
- 2.2 Two ditches dating to the Roman period were revealed in Trench 2. No other significant archaeological deposits or features were observed during the evaluation. Modern rubbish pits were recorded in Trench 8 (pit 803) and Trench 10 (pit 1003). Extensive deposits of modern rubbish, typically scaffolding poles, other metal waste and rubble associated with construction/demolition, and plastic sacks and sheeting were observed within the topsoil of all trenches within Field 2.

Trench 2 (Figs 2 & 3)

- 2.3 A small extension along the northwest side of the trench was mechanically excavated to clarify the identified features. Ditch 206, aligned north-west/south-east with a probable return aligned north-east/south-west was exposed in the trench extension. It contained fill 207 from which a small amount of iron slag, a single sherd of Iron Age/early Roman pottery, and animal bone was recovered. It was cut by north-east/south-west aligned ditch 203, the upper fill, 204, of which contained pottery, animal bone, and a small quantity of iron slag. The pottery assemblage from fill 204 dates to the 2nd to 3rd centuries AD.

The Finds and Palaeoenvironmental Evidence

- 2.4 Small quantities of artefactual materials were recovered from two deposits, comprising Roman pottery, industrial residue, burnt stone and animal bone (Appendix B).
- 2.5 From fill 204 within ditch 203, 14 sherds of Roman pottery identified as nine sherds of Severn Valley ware, six scraps of Malvernian rock-tempered ware, and one rim sherd from a plain rim dish in Dorset Black-Burnished ware, were recovered. This assemblage suggests a date for the deposit in the 2nd to 3rd centuries AD.

- 2.6 A small scrap of Malvernian rock-tempered ware was retrieved from fill 207 within ditch 206. The tradition of this pottery production spans the Iron Age to Early Roman period.
- 2.7 Small quantities of ironworking residues were recovered from ditch fills 204 and 207 and were identified as a dense metallic slag, produced during iron smelting and vitreous material resulting from high temperature reaction with silica within clay lining or natural clay.

3. DISCUSSION

- 3.1 The two ditches identified within Trench 2 mostly probably date to the Roman period although the possibility that ditch 206 is Iron Age in origin should not be overlooked. The earlier of the two ditches, 206, seemingly defined the northeast corner of an enclosure that had largely infilled by the time ditch 203 was dug. However, the possibility that the earlier ditch is curvilinear in plan should not be dismissed.
- 3.2 The recovered artefacts from both ditches included small, but nonetheless noteworthy, quantities of iron slag associated, within ditch 203 at least, with 2nd- to 3rd-century AD pottery. Such findings correlate with previous archaeological works in the area, notably those from a large Roman farm or hamlet approximately 650m to the north-east of the application site (Jackson et al 1992). A specialist industrial character was previously suggested for this settlement due to the recovery of large volumes of iron smithing waste dated to the 2nd to 3rd centuries AD (ibid.). The much smaller quantities of slag recovered during the current works may suggest that ditches 203 and 207 are peripheral elements to these earlier findings.
- 3.3 The evaluation identified little evidence of modern disturbance within Field 1, which contrasts markedly with Field 2, where modern dumped construction material and garden waste was revealed throughout. Evidence for modern truncation was also revealed within Field 2 in trenches 6 and 10, although the majority of modern disturbance does not extend below the topsoil.

4. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by David Parry, assisted by Jonathan Boon. The report was written by David Parry. The illustrations were prepared by Jon Bennett. The archive has been compiled by David Parry, and prepared for deposition by James Johnson. The project was managed for CA by Cliff Bateman

5. REFERENCES

BGS 2010 http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyviewer_google/googleviewer.html accessed 26 October 2010

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2010a *Norton Lane, Worcester, Worcestershire: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation*

CA 2010b *Norton Lane, Worcester: Archaeological Watching Brief*. CA typescript report **10141**

CSa (CSa Environmental Planning) 2010 Land off Norton Lane, Worcester: Archaeological Desk-based Assessment. Typescript report CSA/1596/02a

Jackson R, Hurst D, Pearson E and Ratkai S (1992). *Archaeology on the Strensham to Worcester Aqueduct*. In Transactions of the Worcestershire Archaeological Society 3rd Series, **15**, 1-62.

APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench 1

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
100	Layer	Topsoil – mid brown sandy clay silt with occasional pebbles			0.2	
101	Layer	Subsoil – mid reddish brown sandy clay silt with occasional pebbles			0.14	
102	Layer	Natural substrate – red sandy silt clay with common rounded and sub-rounded stones				

Trench 2

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
200	Layer	Topsoil – mid brown sandy clay silt with occasional pebbles			0.2	
201	Layer	Subsoil – mid reddish brown sandy clay silt with occasional pebbles			0.18	
202	Layer	Natural substrate – red sandy silt clay with common rounded and sub-rounded stones				
203	Cut	Ditch. Filled with 204 and 205. Cuts fill 207	u/k	2.7	0.58	
204	Fill	Upper fill of 203. Occasional pottery, animal bone, iron slag	u/k	2.5	0.4	C2-C3
205	Fill	Lower fill of 203	u/k	2.62	0.3	
206	Cut	Ditch. Filled with 207	u/k	c. 2.0	0.7	
207	Fill	Single fill of 206. Occasional pottery, animal bone, iron slag	n/a	c. 2.0	0.7	IA-RB

Trench 3

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
300	Layer	Topsoil – mid brown sandy clay silt with occasional pebbles			0.22	
301	Layer	Subsoil – mid reddish brown sandy clay silt with occasional pebbles			0.3	
302	Layer	Natural substrate – red silty clay with some grey green sandy clay patches, with common rounded and sub-rounded stones				

Trench 4

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
400	Layer	Topsoil – mid brown sandy clay silt with occasional pebbles			0.19	
401	Layer	Subsoil – mid reddish brown sandy clay silt with occasional pebbles			0.2	
402	Layer	Natural substrate – red silty clay with some grey green sandy clay patches, with common rounded and sub-rounded stones				

Trench 5

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
500	Layer	Topsoil – mid brown sandy clay silt, occasional pebbles			0.22	
501	Layer	Subsoil – mid reddish brown sandy clay silt with occasional pebbles			0.12	
502	Layer	Natural substrate – red sandy silt clay with occasional pebbles				

Trench 6

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
600	Layer	Topsoil – mid brown sandy clay silt with occasional pebbles. Abundant modern rubbish/rubble			0.25	
601	Layer	Subsoil – mid reddish brown sandy clay silt with occasional pebbles. Occasional modern rubbish			0.2	
602	Layer	Natural substrate – red silty clay with some grey green sandy clay patches, with common rounded and sub-rounded stones. Small patches of modern disturbance				

Trench 7

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
700	Layer	Topsoil – mid brown sandy clay silt with occasional pebbles. Occasional modern rubbish/rubble			0.22	
701	Layer	Subsoil – mid reddish brown sandy clay silt with occasional pebbles			0.18	
702	Layer	Natural substrate – red silty clay with some grey green sandy clay patches, with common rounded and sub-rounded stones				

Trench 8

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
800	Layer	Topsoil – mid brown sandy clay silt with occasional rounded and sub-rounded stones. Common modern rubbish/rubble			0.22	
801	Layer	Subsoil – mid orange brown sandy clay silt with occasional rounded and sub-rounded stones			0.2	
802	Layer	Natural substrate – red silty clay, no inclusions				
803	Cut	Modern rubbish pit filled with 804	13	u/k	u/k	
804	Fill	Fill of 803 – demolition rubble including large concrete slabs and blocks, tarmac, brick, plastic, wood and metal	13	u/k	u/k	

Trench 9

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
900	Layer	Topsoil – mid brown sandy clay silt with occasional rounded and sub-rounded stones. Occasional modern rubbish/rubble			0.2	
901	Layer	Subsoil – mid orange brown sandy clay silt with occasional pebbles			0.18	
902	Layer	Natural substrate – red silty clay, no inclusions				

Trench 10

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
1000	Layer	Topsoil – mid brown sandy clay silt with occasional rounded and sub-rounded stones. Common modern rubbish/rubble			0.22	
1001	Layer	Subsoil – mid orange brown sandy clay silt with occasional rounded and sub-rounded stones			0.18	
1002	Layer	Natural substrate – red silty clay with occasional pebbles				
1003	Cut	Modern rubbish pit filled with 1004	5	u/k	c. 0.8	
1004	Fill	Fill of 1003 – tarmac slabs, scaffolding poles, plastic	5	u/k	c. 0.8	

Trench 11

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
1100	Layer	Modern dumping including gravel and plastic bags of garden waste – above and mixed in with 1101			0.3	
1101	Layer	Topsoil – mid brown sandy clay silt with occasional rounded and sub-rounded stones. Some modern disturbance			0.18	
1102	Layer	Subsoil – mid orange brown sandy clay silt with occasional pebbles			0.2	
1103	Layer	Natural substrate – red silty clay with occasional rounded and sub-rounded stone				

Trench 12

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
1200	Layer	Topsoil – mid brown sandy clay silt with occasional rounded and sub-rounded stones. Extensive dumping of modern rubbish			0.22	
1201	Layer	Subsoil – mid orange brown sandy clay silt with occasional rounded and sub-rounded stones			0.2	
1202	Layer	Natural substrate – red silty clay with some bluish grey clay patches, with occasional pebbles				

Trench 13

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
1300	Layer	Topsoil – mid brown sandy clay silt with occasional pebbles. Common modern rubbish			0.2	
1301	Layer	Subsoil – mid reddish brown sandy clay silt with occasional pebbles			0.2	
1302	Layer	Natural substrate – red silty clay with some greenish grey sandy clay patches, with common rounded and sub-rounded stone				
1303	Layer	Dump of modern building/demolition rubble and rubbish in a matrix of mixed topsoil and redeposited natural			0.65	

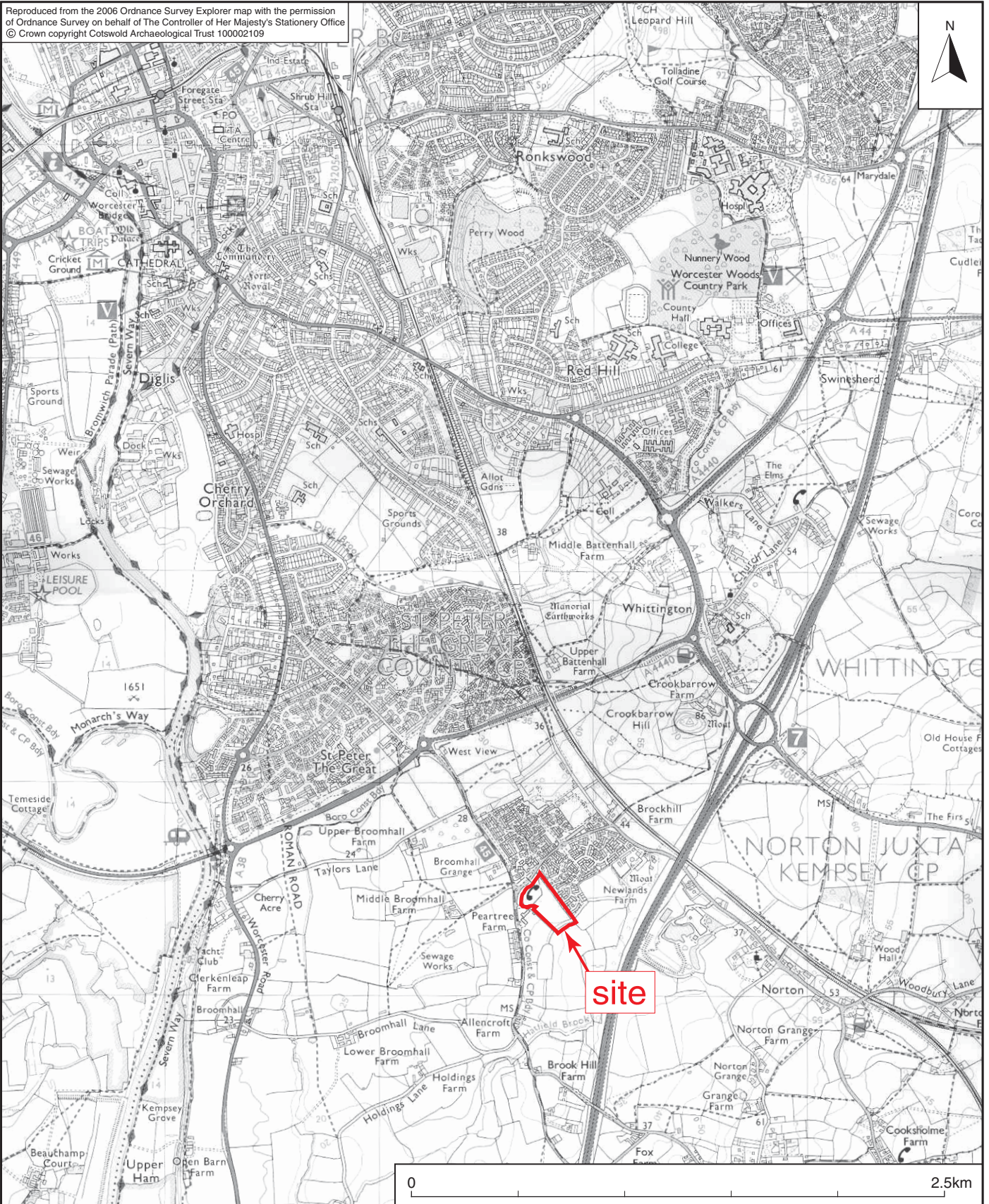
APPENDIX B: THE FINDS

Context	Description	Ct.	Wt.	Date
204	Roman pottery: Severn Valley ware (Worcestershire type 12), Malvernian rock-tempered ware (Worcestershire type 3), Black- Burnished ware (Worcestershire type 22)	14	200	C2-C3
	Industrial residue: dense and vitreous iron working slag	7	46	
	Animal bone: sheep	2	4	
	Burnt stone	1	20	
207	Animal bone: sheep-sized; cow-sized.	11	14	IA-RB
	Industrial residue: vitreous iron working slag	4	10	
	Roman pottery: Malvernian rock-tempered ware (Worcestershire type 3)	1	1	

APPENDIX C: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project Name	Norton Lane, Worcester	
Short description	<p>An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in October 2010. Thirteen trenches were excavated.</p> <p>Two intercutting ditches mostly probably dating to the Roman period, although there is a possibility that the earliest is Iron Age in origin, were identified. The earlier of the ditches may have defined the northeast corner of an enclosure, although the possibility that it is curvilinear in plan should not be dismissed. Small quantities of iron slag were recovered from both ditches.</p> <p>No other archaeological remains were uncovered during the evaluation. Extensive modern disturbance and dumping was revealed in the southern field of the proposed development.</p>	
Project dates	19-22 October 2010	
Project type	Field evaluation	
Previous work	DBA CSa Environmental CA Watching Brief (CA 2010 typescript report 10141)	
Future work	Unknown	
PROJECT LOCATION		
Site Location	Norton Lane, Worcester, Worcestershire	
Study area	3.2ha	
Site co-ordinates	SO 8677 5142	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Brief originator	n/a	
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Cliff Bateman	
Project Supervisor	David Parry	
MONUMENT TYPE	none	
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	Pottery, iron slag	
PROJECT ARCHIVES		
	Intended final location of archive	Content
Physical	Worcester City Museum and Art Gallery (WSM 42456)	Ceramics, animal bone, iron slag
Paper	Worcester City Museum and Art Gallery (WSM 42456)	Context sheets, trench sheets, photo registers, permatrace drawings
Digital	Worcester City Museum and Art Gallery (WSM 42456)	Digital photos
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2010 <i>Norton Lane, Worcester, Worcestershire: Archaeological Evaluation</i> . CA typescript report 10194		

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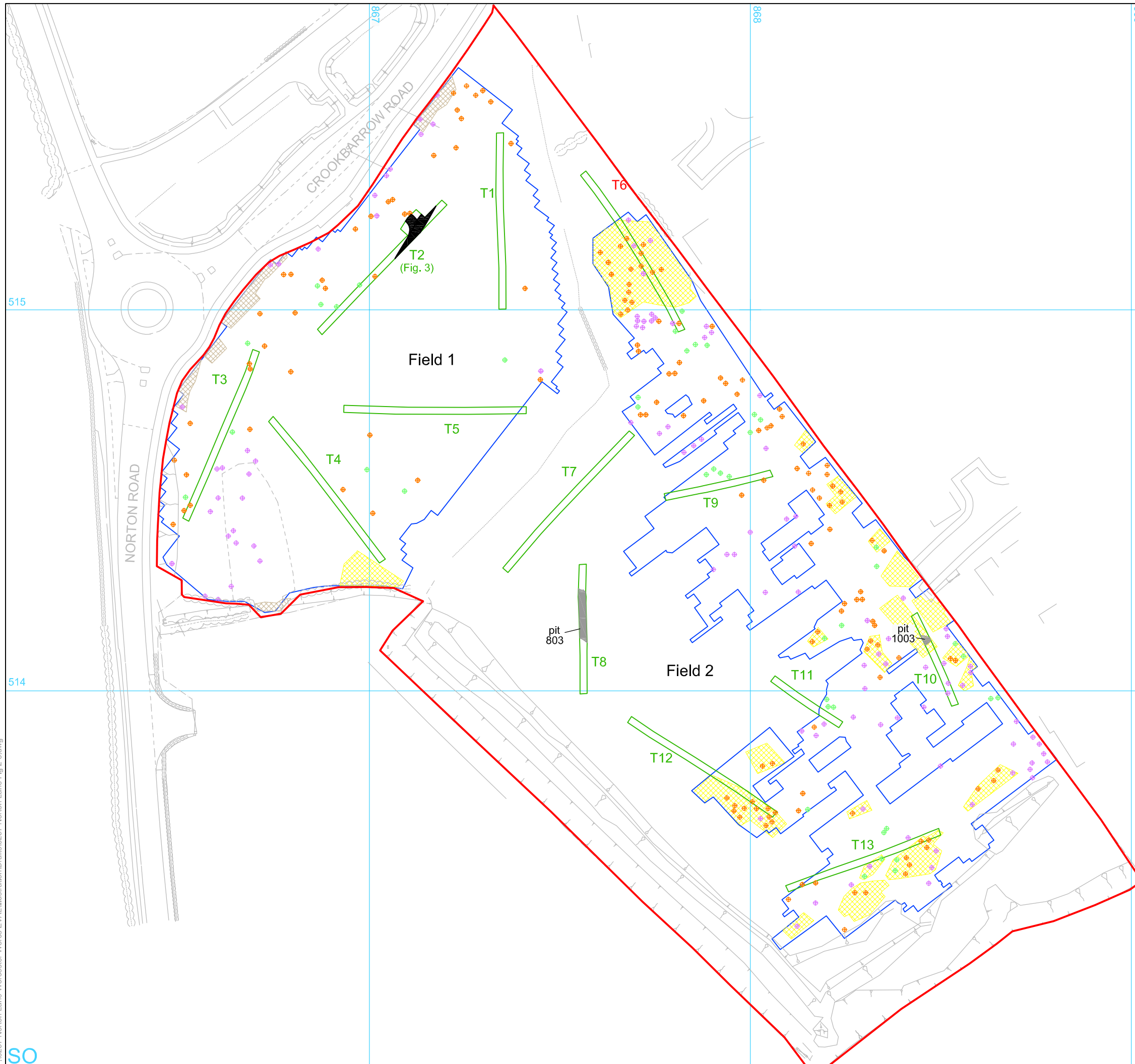


 **COTSWOLD ARCHAEOLOGY**

PROJECT TITLE
**Norton Lane, Worcester
 Worcestershire**

FIGURE TITLE
Site location plan

DRAWN BY	SCALE	PROJECT NO.	FIGURE NO.
LG	1:25,000@A4	3257	1



- site
- evaluation trench
- archaeological feature
- modern feature
- geophysical survey results
- geophysical survey area
- Areas of high metal content
- Influence of above ground structures
- Locations of test pits
- + observed: no object found
- + observed: ferrous object present (non-archaeological)
- + unexcavated

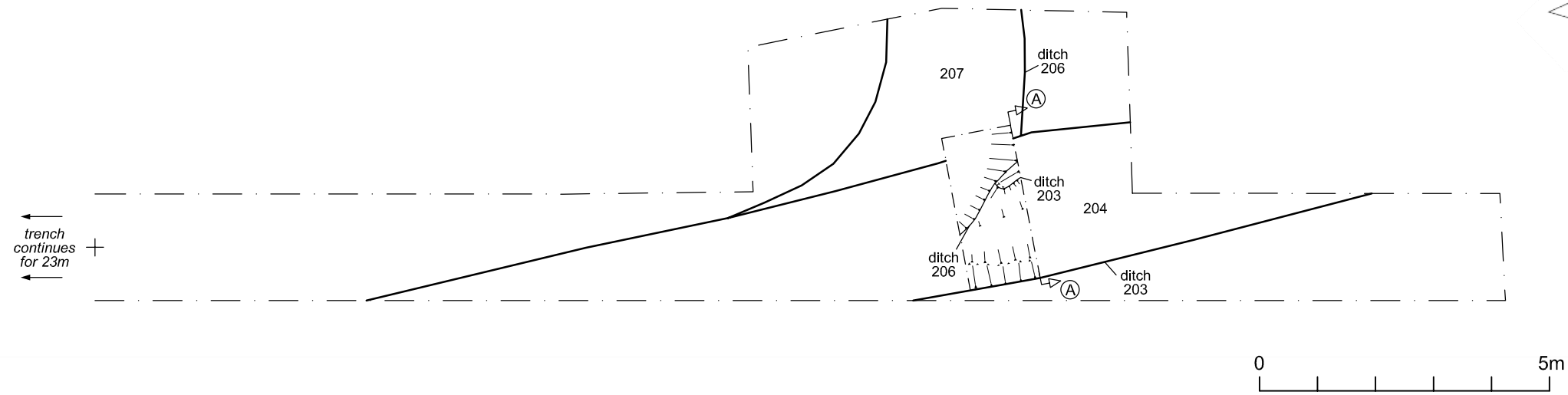


PROJECT TITLE
**Norton Lane, Worcester
 Worcestershire**

FIGURE TITLE
**Trench location plan, showing
 archaeological features**

DRAWN BY	SCALE	PROJECT NO.	FIGURE NO.
LG	1:1000@A3	3257	2

Trench 2; plan



Section AA



Trench 2, looking east, showing ditches 203 and 206

