

Archaeological Evaluation  
of land at  
**CROKESWOOD WALK**  
**LAWRENCE WESTON, BRISTOL.**  
for  
Housing Services, Neighbourhoods, Bristol City Council



Report No. 2284A/2010  
BHER No. 24851



**Bristol and Region Archaeological Services**

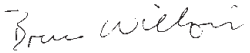

St. Nicholas Church, St. Nicholas Street, Bristol, BS1 1UE. Tel: (0117) 903 9010 Fax: (0117) 903 9011



Archaeological Evaluation  
of land at  
**CROKESWOOD WALK,**  
**LAWRENCE WESTON, BRISTOL.**

Centred on  
N.G.R. ST 54175 78280

Client: Housing Services, Neighbourhoods, Bristol City Council

<i>Author:</i>	Hefin Meara
<i>Approved by:</i>	Bruce Williams
<i>Signature:</i>	
<i>Date Issued:</i>	5 March 2010 

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### Abbreviations

AD	Anno Domini	c.	Circa
aOD	Above Ordnance Datum	Km	Kilometre
BaRAS	Bristol & Region Archaeological Services	m	Metre
BC	Before Christ	MoB	Museum of Bristol
BCC	Bristol City Council	NGR	National Grid Reference
BCL	Bristol Central Library	NMR	National Monuments Record
BCMAG	Bristol City Museum & Art Gallery	OS	Ordnance Survey
BHER	Bristol Historic Environment Record		
BRO	Bristol Record Office		
BSMR	Bristol Sites & Monuments Record		

### NOTE

Notwithstanding that Bristol and Region Archaeological Services have taken reasonable care to produce a comprehensive summary of the known and recorded archaeological evidence, no responsibility can be accepted for any omissions of fact or opinion, however caused.

March, 2010.

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## **SUMMARY**

An archaeological evaluation was carried out as a condition on a planning application relating to the construction of residential housing on a redundant domestic garage site on land off Crokeswood Walk, in the suburb of Lawrence Weston, Bristol.

No features or deposits of archaeological significance were observed during the evaluation.

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Bristol and Region Archaeological Services (BaRAS) were commissioned by Housing Services, Neighbourhoods, Bristol City Council to undertake a second phase of archaeological evaluation on a former garage site on land off Crokeswood Walk, Lawrence Weston, Bristol in order to comply with the condition of a planning proposal for the construction of residential housing on the site.
- 1.2 The evaluation was conducted in accordance with a Brief for Archaeological Evaluation (BCC 2010) prepared by Mr R. Jones (City Archaeologist) of Urban Design & Conservation, City Development, Bristol City Council, and a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by Bristol and Region Archaeological Services (BaRAS 2010). The work was monitored by Mr R. Jones (City Archaeologist) on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2010.
- 1.3 The fieldwork was undertaken over eight days between 17 and 26 February under the supervision of Hefin Meara who also compiled this report.
- 1.4 The project archive will be deposited with Bristol City Museum & Art Gallery under the Accession Number BRSMG2010/13 and a copy of the report will be sent to the National Monuments Record maintained by English Heritage. The project has been entered in the Bristol Historic Environment Record as: BHER 24851 and in the OASIS Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations as: bristola1-72145.

## **2. THE SITE**

- 2.1 The site (centred on NGR ST 54175 78280) is located in the suburb of Lawrence Weston. The site covers an area of 0.2565 hectares and is bounded on nearly all sides by the rear gardens of residential properties, specifically Nos. 2-12 Crokeswood Walk (alternate), Nos. 26-46 Saltmarsh Drive (alternate), Nos. 4-8 Burycourt Close (consecutive) and Nos. 187-191 (alternate) Long Cross and by landscaped areas of grass on Crokeswood Walk and Burycourt Close. The site was formerly an area of domestic garages associated with the nearby housing and is comprised of hard standing and the footings and slabs of the recently demolished garages, along with the associated orbital access road. The site is currently unoccupied.
- 2.2 The area lies at approximately 12.63 m aOD and comprises an area of fairly level ground.
- 2.3 The geology of the study area comprises Mercia Mudstone of the Triassic period (British Geological Survey 1967).

### 3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The site lay in the historic tithing of Lawrence Weston in the parish of Henbury in Henbury Hundred (until the C13th known as Brentry Hundred) in the county of Gloucestershire until 1935, when the village and parish was incorporated into the City and County of Bristol. Henbury is not yet covered in the *Victoria History of the Counties of England*. Early descriptions of the Parish and the Hundred include those by Atkins (1712) and Rudder (1779), with more recent accounts by Kerslake (1883), HHWI (1958), Layzell (1984) and Tonkin (1999).
- 3.2 An initial phase of evaluation was conducted on this site in December 2009, while the garages were still extant (BaRAS 2009b) This phase consisted of the excavation of a single trench, which measured 5 m by 2 m, located in the south of the site. No significant archaeological features or deposits were observed within this trench.
- 3.3 The following historical and archaeological information has been sourced partly from a desk-based assessment of land in and around Lawrence Weston (BaRAS 2008) and from an assessment of a nearby site on Barrowmead Drive (BaRAS 2002).
- 3.4 The archaeological desk-based assessments indicate that the study area is located in an area of high archaeological potential that is rich in prehistoric (Palaeolithic, Neolithic, Bronze Age and Iron Age) and Romano-British remains with a number of sites in relatively close proximity to the study area.
- 3.5 In the 1940s George Boon conducted a large programme of archaeological recording during the construction of the present housing estate. This work included the discovery of the Kings Weston Roman Villa (Boon 1950).
- 3.6 Several Historic Environment Record (HER) entries for Romano-British sites/finds lie relatively close to the application area including 'Roman occupation. Masonry and pottery' (HER 764) recorded near Saltmarsh Drive and the 1st-4th century AD Romano-British farm found at St Bede's R. C. School (HER 20235). These entries strongly suggest that the land between the higher ground to the south-east (including Kings Weston Hill and Blaise Castle) and the former salt marsh (Henbury Levels) to the north-west appears to have been a focus for occupation and farming during the Romano-British period.
- 3.7 Some 2km to the south of the study area was the Roman port, town and fortress of *Abonae* (modern Sea Mills). Road links connected the latter settlement with both *Glevum* (Gloucester) and *Aquae Sulis* (Bath).
- 3.8 The earliest documented reference to Henbury dates from AD 691 when Oftfor, Bishop of Worcester was granted land (30 *cassati*) in Henbury by Aethelred, King of Mercia. It is thought that the Bishops of Worcester may have later had a palace near the present site of Blaise Castle House.
- 3.9 Following the Norman Conquest of 1066 the manor of Henbury remained in the ownership of the Bishops of Worcester, a situation that remained unaltered until it was surrendered to the Crown in 1544 and granted to Sir Ralph Sadlier in 1547.
- 3.10 In the 12th century King Henry II (reigned 1154-89) granted the estate of Kings Weston to Robert FitzHarding. Following a charter of 1208 King John (1199-1216), who was a patron of the leper Hospital of St Lawrence, which stood near Old Market in Bristol, granted dues (rents) from crown lands at '*Weston Sancti Laurencii*' (Lawrence Weston) to the leper hospital and to the Church of St Lawrence, which stood at the north end of Broad Street in Bristol.



- 3.11 In 1386 the Kings Weston estate was sold to Sir Maurice Berkeley. In the early 14th century, during the reign of King Edward II (1307-27), the manor of Lawrence Weston was granted to Nicholas Caldicot. He levied an entry fine on John and Isabel Bradley entitling them to a copyhold or leasehold of the manor. They, in turn, levied fines on lands at Lawrence Weston, and other manors, to John de Westbury and his brothers.
- 3.12 The manor of Lawrence Weston was acquired by Sir William Berkeley in the 15th century, on whose death it passed to his son John.
- 3.13 The Kings Weston estate was later sold to Sir William Wyntour in 1570, who had a mansion (Kings Weston House) built and formal gardens laid out.
- 3.14 By the early 17th century, in the reign of King James I (1603-25), Henry Lewis was lord of the manor of Lawrence Weston. In 1614 the Kings Weston estate was sold to Humphry Hook, an alderman of Bristol, whose son, in 1679, sold it to Sir Robert Southwell.
- 3.15 Edward Capel bought the manor of Henbury, including the manor house (now Blaise Castle House), from the Sadlier family in 1653 and he, in turn, sold it to Sir Samuel Astry in 1680.
- 3.16 Sir Samuel Astry's father had built 'the Great House' on some land in Henbury purchased from the Sadliers about ten years earlier. In c.1700 the estate passed to the Smyth family of Ashton Court, Long Ashton, Somerset who owned it until 1760. The estate was bought by Thomas Farr, a Bristol merchant, in 1762. In 1789 it again changed hands when it was purchased by John Harford, a local banker and Quaker.
- 3.17 Blaise Castle House, built in 1795 to a design by the architect William Paty replaced the old manor house, a mainly seventeenth century building that may have incorporated medieval elements. The grounds, remodelled by Humphrey Repton in the late eighteenth century, largely comprise parkland to the north of the ridge and woodland on the ridge and to the south.
- 3.18 The Kings Weston estate remained in the ownership of the Southwell family until 1833, when it was sold to Philip John Miles, Gent. In 1881 the estate was inherited by his grandson Sir Philip Napier Miles.
- 3.19 The Blaise Castle House Estate remained in the ownership of the Harford family until 1926, when it was sold to Bristol Corporation. After the death of Sir Philip Napier Miles in 1935 his widow, Lady Sybil Miles, began to sell the estate piecemeal to Bristol Corporation. The house and remaining land was sold in 1938 in order to pay death duties.
- 3.20 Following the purchase of land in the area by the Corporation of Bristol, construction work started on the Lawrence Weston housing estates and related infrastructure in November 1947.

#### **4. AIMS AND METHODOLOGY**

- 4.1 The fieldwork complied with the methodology contained within the Written Scheme of Investigation (BaRAS 2010) and the brief prepared by Mr R. Jones, City Archaeologist (BCC 2010). The evaluation was carried out in accordance with the IfA's Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations (IfA 2008) and Management of Archaeological Projects (MAP II) issued by English Heritage (EH 1991).
- 4.2 It was the aim of the evaluation to establish if archaeological deposits lay within the application area and to determine their extent, date, preservation and character. The results of the evaluation will inform the subsequent conditional archaeological planning response for the site.
- 4.3 A total of three evaluation trenches were excavated using an 180° mechanical excavator utilising a toothless grading bucket to the first significant archaeological or geological strata. After the machine excavation the trenches were cleaned using hand tools.
- 4.4 Geological and archaeological features were excavated and recorded in accordance with the BaRAS Site Recording Manual (BaRAS 2009a). Recording was carried out using BaRAS single context recording system. Plans were drawn at a scale of 1:20 and sections at scales of 1:20. A full photographic record comprising all stratigraphic units and working shots was kept on 35mm monochrome film and colour digital format.
- 4.5 All levels were taken from the site TBM reading of 12.59 m aOD, which was transferred from an Ordnance Datum benchmark of 12.25 m aOD located on the wall of the house at 247 Long Cross.
- 4.6 The fieldwork was undertaken at the same time as the excavation of land at Saltmarsh Drive, Lawrence Weston, Bristol (HER event no. 24850).

## **5. RESULTS**

### **Trench 4**

- 5.1 Trench 4 was located in the north-east of the evaluation area, on level ground at a height of approximately 12.31 m aOD. The trench was located over concrete slabs, which formed the bases of the now demolished garages, within the orbital access road. The trench measured 26 m by 1.6 m and was oriented in a NE-SW direction.
- 5.2 The natural substrata (4006) was encountered at 11.78 m aOD and was overlain by a 0.1 m thick orange-brown sandy clay buried soil (4005) which contained patches of mid grey sand. This deposit was in turn overlain by a 0.13 m thick yellow-grey sandy silt (4004) with common small stones and occasional charcoal flecks. The trench was sealed by a 0.2 m thick layer of hardcore (4003), which was overlain by the concrete slabs (4001). A build up of modern topsoil (4002) abutted the concrete slabs in between the garage footings.
- 5.3 No archaeological features or deposits were observed within this trench.

### **Trench 5a**

- 5.4 Trench 5a was located in the centre of the evaluation area, on level ground, at a height of approximately 12.05 m aOD. The trench was located in an area of overgrown grassland adjacent to the central group of demolished garages within the orbital access road. The trench measured 8 m by 1.6 m and was orientated in an E-W direction. It was originally intended to excavate a 16 m long trench in this area but the presence of a suspected live electrical cable made it necessary to excavate two shorter trenches in order to avoid the cable. Trench 5a is the westernmost of the two shorter trenches.
- 5.5 The natural substrata (5005) was encountered at 11.38m aOD and was overlain by a 0.08 m thick mid orange-brown silty clay buried soil layer (5004), which was in turn overlain by a 0.3-0.4 m thick hardcore deposit (5003). A 0.06 m thick deposit of highly degraded tarmac (5002) overlay the hardcore deposit. The trench was sealed by topsoil (5001) which was up to 0.32 m thick in places.
- 5.6 A single sherd of Romano-British pottery was recovered from the buried soil layer (5004) within this trench. The sherd was highly abraded and is most likely residual.
- 5.7 No archaeological features or deposits were observed within this trench.

### **Trench 5b**

- 5.8 Trench 5b was located in the centre of the evaluation area, on level ground, at a height of approximately 12.30 m aOD. The trench was located in an area of overgrown grassland adjacent to the central group of demolished garages within the orbital access road. The trench measured 4.3 m by 1.6 m and was orientated in an E-W direction. It was originally intended to excavate a 16 m long trench in this area but the presence of a suspected live electrical cable made it necessary to excavate two shorter trenches in order to avoid the cable. Trench 5b is the easternmost of the two shorter trenches.
- 5.9 The natural substrata (5010) was encountered at 11.62 m aOD and was overlain by a 0.14-0.20 m thick mid orange-brown silty clay buried soil layer (5009), which was in turn overlain by a 0.26 m thick hardcore deposit (5008). The patchy remains of a 0.03 m thick highly degraded tarmac (5007) overlay the hardcore deposit. The trench was sealed by topsoil (5006) which was up to 0.3 m thick in places.

- 5.10 No archaeological features or deposits were observed within this trench.

**Trench 6**

- 5.11 Trench 6 was located in the west of the evaluation area, on level ground, at a height of approximately 12.32 m aOD. The trench was located across the orbital access road, at the entrance to the site. The trench measured 12 m by 1.6 m and was orientated in an approximately N-S direction.
- 5.12 The natural substrata (6007) was encountered at 11.82 m aOD and was overlain by a 0.14 m thick mid orange-brown sandy clay buried soil layer (6006), which was in turn overlain by a 0.13 m thick pale orange-brown sandy silt buried soil layer (6005). A 0.14 m thick mid brown clay silt levelling deposit (6004) overlay buried soil 6005. Levelling deposit 6004 was overlain by a 0.04 m thick deposit of degraded tarmac (6003). A modern linear feature (6008), probably a storm drain, was cut through tarmac deposit 6003. The drain was 0.35 m wide and more than 0.3 m deep, and was filled with gravel with concrete at its base. The trench was sealed by a 0.2 m thick layer of hardcore which was overlain by a 0.06 m thick layer of tarmac, which formed the surface of the garage access road.
- 5.13 No archaeological features or deposits were observed within this trench.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

- 6.1 The evaluation identified no archaeological remains within the excavated trenches. The lack of archaeological deposits may indicate that any structural remains related to the nearby Romano-British settlement activity recorded during the construction of the estate in the 1940s did not extend into the application area or that they may have been truncated by the construction of the garages.

## **7. PROJECT TEAM**

- 7.1 The fieldwork was undertaken by Hefin Meara who also produced this report. The archaeological assistants working on the project were Ray Ducker and Heather Hirons. The illustrations were prepared and the report compiled by Ann Linge. The project was managed by Bruce Williams.

## **8. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND SOURCES CONSULTED**

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BaRAS 2010 *Written Scheme of investigation for Archaeological Evaluation of Land at Crokeswood Walk, Lawrence Weston, Bristol.*

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### **Maps**

British Geological Survey 1967 *Geological Survey of England & Wales (Solid & Drift) Bristol Region.*

## **9. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

BaRAS would like to thank Jonathan Quinn (Priority Stock Team, Renewal & Investment, Housing Services, Neighbourhoods) of Bristol City Council, Bob Jones MifA (City Archaeologist, Urban Design & Conservation, City Development) of Bristol City Council, and Kate Iles (Assistant Curator for Archaeology, Museums & Archives Service, City Development) of Bristol City Council for their assistance and cooperation, as well as Matt Park and Chris Ralph (JCB drivers) of Farmtrac for excavating/back filling the trenches.

## **APPENDIX 1: Policy Statement**

This report is the result of work carried out in the light of national and local authority policies.

### **NATIONAL POLICIES**

Statutory protection for archaeology is enshrined in the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979), amended by the National Heritage Act, 1983. Nationally important sites are listed in the Schedule of Ancient Monuments (SAM). Scheduled Monument consent is required for any work which would affect a SAM.

### **ODPM PLANNING POLICY GUIDANCE**

The Planning Policy Guidance of Archaeology and Planning (PPG 16) consolidates advice to planning authorities. The Guidance stresses the non-renewable nature of the archaeological resource, details the role of the County Sites and Monuments Record (SMR), encourages early consultation with county and district archaeological officers and sets out the requirement for developers to provide sufficient information on the archaeological impact of development to enable a reasonable planning decision to be made.

PPG 16 also indicates the circumstances where further work would be necessary and outlines the use of agreements and conditions to protect the archaeological resource.

### **DISTRICT POLICY**

Bristol City Council Supplementary Planning Document (2006) states (policy SPD No.7, p4):

- (i) There will be a presumption in favour of preserving any archaeological features or sites of national importance, whether scheduled or not.
- (ii) Development which could adversely affect sites, structures, landscapes or buildings of archaeological interest and their settings will require an assessment of the archaeological resource through a desktop study, and where appropriate a field evaluation. Where there is evidence of archaeological remains, development will not be permitted except where it can be demonstrated that the archaeological features of the site will be satisfactorily preserved in situ, or a suitable strategy has been put forward to mitigate the impact of development proposals upon important archaeological remains and their settings; or, if this is not possible and the sites are not scheduled or of national importance, provision for adequately recording the site prior to destruction is made, preferably by negotiating a planning agreement to ensure that access, time and financial resources are available to allow essential recording and publication to take place.



## APPENDIX 2: Context Descriptions

Context No.	Description
4001	Concrete slab
4002	Dark grey-brown clay silt. Topsoil
4003	Hardcore
4004	Mid grey-yellow sandy silt with common small stones. Buried soil layer
4005	Orange-brown sandy clay with patches of grey sandy clay. Buried soil layer
4006	Orange-red clay. Natural geology
5001	Dark grey-brown silty loam. Topsoil
5002	Degraded Tarmac
5003	Hardcore
5004	Mid orange-brown silty clay. Buried soil layer
5005	Orange-red clay. Natural geology
5006	Dark grey-brown silty loam
5007	Degraded Tarmac
5008	Hardcore
5009	Mid orange-brown silty clay. Buried soil layer
5010	Orange-red clay. Natural geology
6001	Tarmac
6002	Hardcore
6003	Degraded tarmac
6004	Mid brown clay silt with stone, rubble and tarmac frags. Levelling deposit
6005	Pale orange-brown sandy silt. Buried soil layer
6006	Mid orange-brown sandy clay with occasional stones. Buried soil layer
6007	Orange-red clay. Natural geology
6008	Modern drain
6009	Fill 1/1 of drain 6008.

## APPENDIX 3: The Finds

By Heather Hirons

Only one find was recovered from the evaluation at Crokeswood Walk, a single sherd of pottery from a layer in Trench 5 (5004). The pottery sherd was datable to the later Romano-British period.

The find was stored in a labelled and pierced grip-seal polythene bag also containing tyvek labels.

The find was identified and catalogued according to material type and catalogued according to type using reference material at the Bristol and Region Archaeological Services offices. The results are indicated below.

The pottery is important at a local level only, for possible site identification purposes.

### The Pottery

Context	Description	Date	Quantity	Weight (grams)
5004	Local cooking pot, a course, hard, dark brownish grey sand tempered ware, probably hand formed locally. The sherd is highly abraded so probably residual.	3rd or 4th century AD	1	3



Fig.1 Location of study areas, scale:1:5000

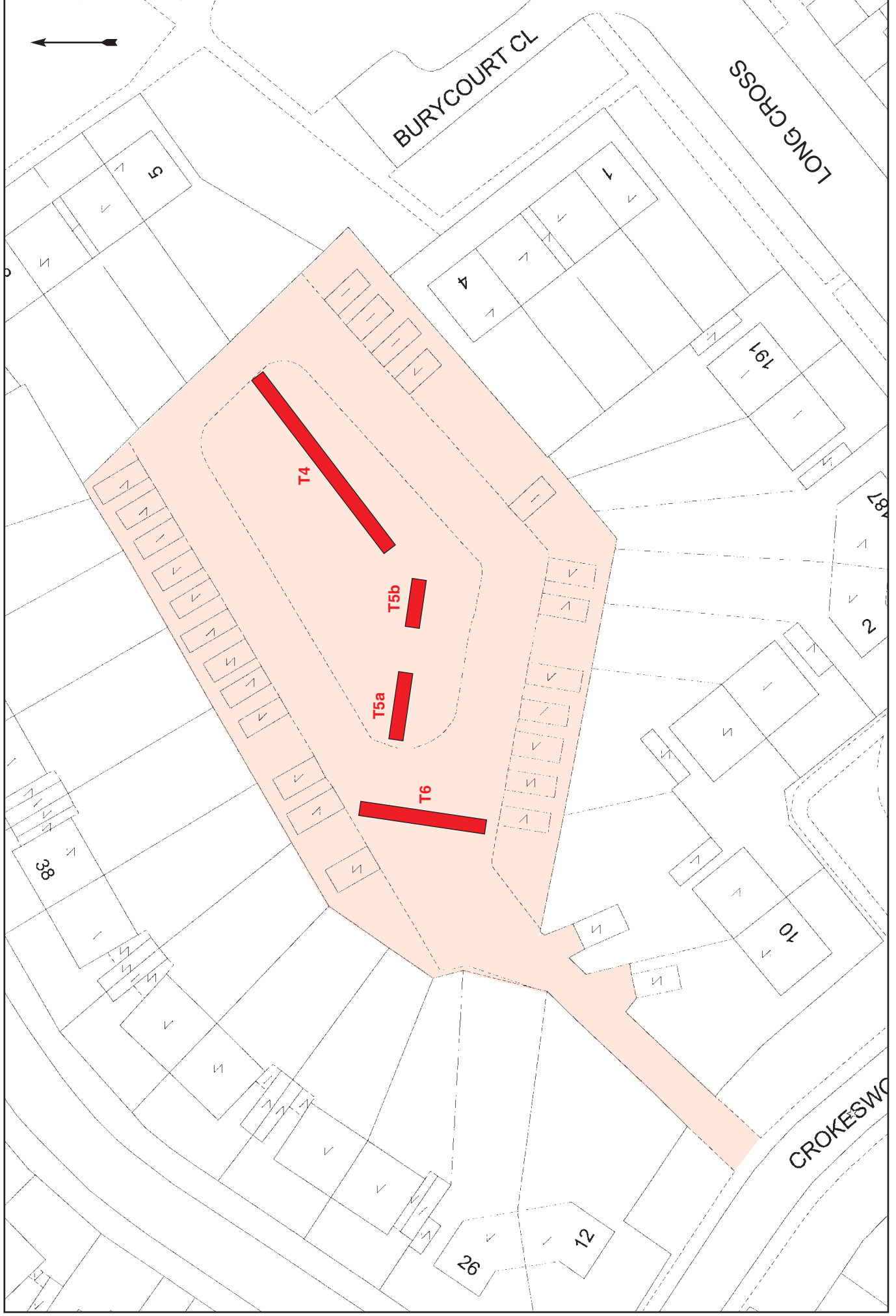


Fig.2 Trench location plan, scale 1:500

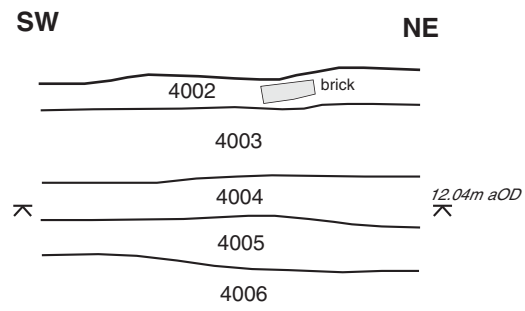


Fig.3 Trench 4 sample section, scale 1:20

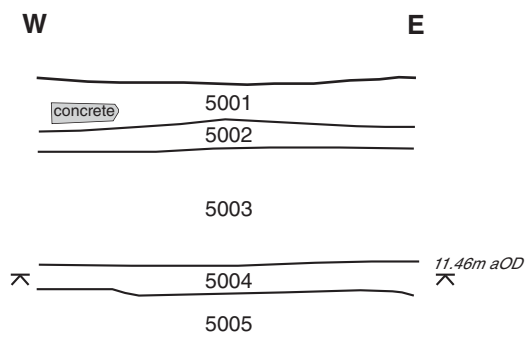


Fig 4: Trench 5a sample section, scale 1:20

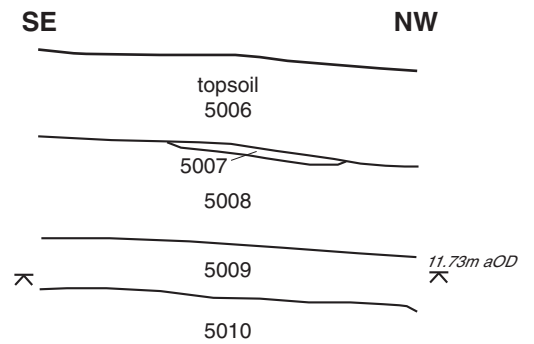


Fig 5 : Trench 5b sample section, scale 1:20

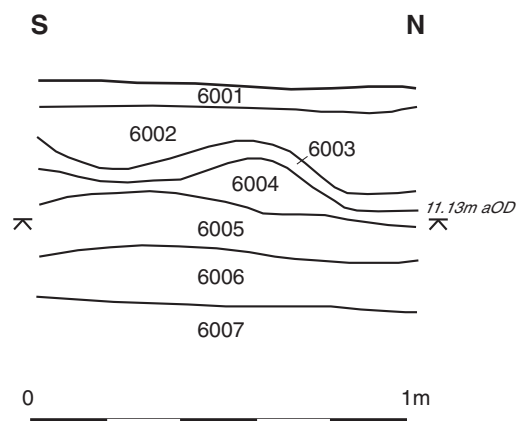


Fig 6: Trench 6 sample section, scale 1:20



Plate 1 Trench 4, view to north-east



Plate 2 Trench 5a, view to east



Plate 3 Trench 5b, view to east



Plate 4 Trench 6, view to north



Plate 5 Trench 4 sample section, view to north-west

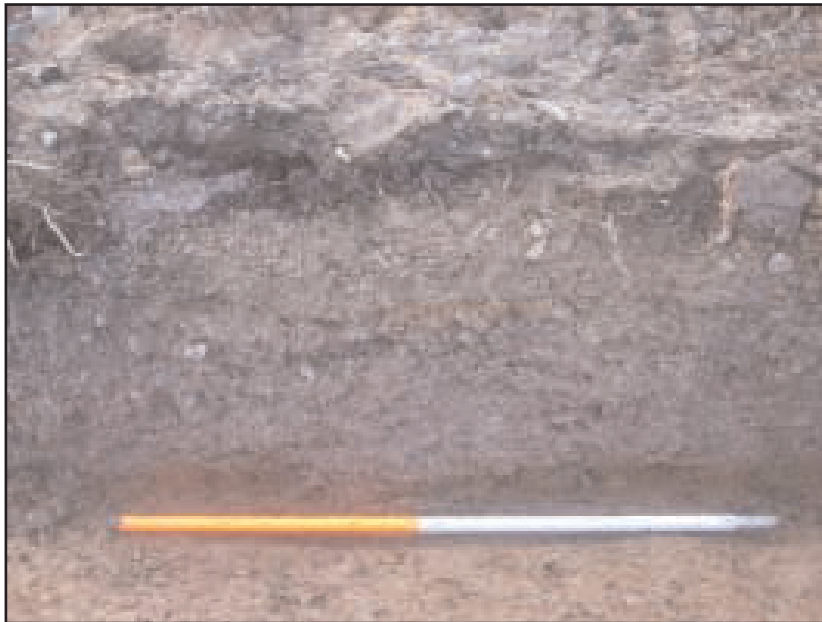


Plate 6  
Trench 5a sample section,  
view to south



Plate 7  
Trench 5b sample section,  
view to south



Plate 8  
Trench 6 sample section,  
view to west