

ARCHAEOLOGICAL
EVALUATION
AT THE PROPOSED PLAY AREA
AND ROPE WALK,
SANDWELL VALLEY COUNTRY
PARK, WEST BROMWICH

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With contributions by Denis Williams

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11 May 2011

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Project3668
Report 1847
CHSVRW11

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Archaeological evaluation at the proposed play area and rope walk, Sandwell Valley Country Park, West Bromwich

Jo Wainwright

With contributions by Dennis Williams

Part 1 Project summary

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at the proposed play area and rope walk, Sandwell Valley Country Park, West Bromwich (NGR SP 0156 9153).

The archaeological evaluation was undertaken on behalf of Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council, who intends to construct a new play facility and rope walk with associated landscaping and car parking for which a planning application has been submitted.

This report on an archaeological evaluation describes and assesses the significance of a heritage asset with archaeological interest potentially affected by the application. The impact of the application on the significance is assessed.

Three trenches were excavated to determine the extent of ridge and furrow and a hollow-way registered on Sandwell Historic Environment Record. However, no evidence for the ridge and furrow was revealed in the trenches. Although earthworks can be seen in the north-western part of the field a low ridge visible on the ground, which runs south-east to north-west, could be a headland separating the medieval arable land from the pasture to the south-east.

On excavation, the slight depression which was interpreted as a hollow-way on the north-eastern boundary was a buried ditch which had silted up or was backfilled around 1900. It is possible that the depression in the ground here relates to an earlier pathway and the use of this path over time has created the slight hollow. If this was the case then presumably the ditch was excavated to aid drainage at a later date when the path went out of use.

In the south-western part of the site it is likely that dumping of soil and other material took place in the post-medieval period to create a garden or possibly allotments as the soil horizons here contained more inclusions than elsewhere on the site. A series of stake holes probably relate to vegetable gardening activities. Further cultivation/plough scars were also identified.

A ditch/gully although undated, excavated in the centre of the site was probably of a post-medieval date.

There is relatively little of archaeological interest in the site. However, the absence of the hollow-way and ridge and furrow does add our understanding of the landscape history of the Sandwell Valley.

Part 2 Detailed report

1. Planning background

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at the proposed play area and rope walk, (NGR SP 0156 9153), Sandwell Valley Country Park, West Bromwich (Fig 1), on behalf of Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council. The client intends to construct a new play facility and rope walk with associated landscaping and car parking and has submitted a planning application to Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (reference DC/11/53082).

The proposed development site is considered to include a heritage asset with archaeological interest, the significance of which may be affected by the application (HER 4047 and 4049).

The project conforms to the *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (IfA 2008).

The project also conforms to a brief prepared by Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council's Borough Archaeologist (Sandwell MBC 2011) and for which a project proposal (including detailed specification) was produced (HEAS 2011).

2. Aims

The aims of this archaeological evaluation are:

- to describe and assess the significance of the heritage asset with archaeological interest;
- to establish the nature, importance and extent of the archaeological site;
- to assess the impact of the application on the archaeological site

In particular the project has the following aims:

- to establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains within the development area;
- to determine the nature, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains encountered;
- to provide a profile of the hollow-way and a sample profile of the ridge and furrow;
- to provide further information on the origins and development of West Bromwich from the medieval period to the present day;
- to contribute to any existing corpus of academic knowledge;
- to make available to interested parties the results of the investigation subject to any confidentiality restrictions

3. Methods

3.1 Documentary search

In addition to the sources listed in the bibliography the following cartographic sources were also consulted:

- 1st edition 1889-90 Ordnance Survey 25":1 mile
- 1904 Ordnance Survey 25":1 mile
- 1918-19 Ordnance Survey 25":1 mile
- 1937-38 Ordnance Survey 25":1 mile

3.2 **Fieldwork methodology**

3.2.1 **Fieldwork strategy**

A detailed specification was prepared by the Service (HEAS 2011). It was decided on site by Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council's Borough Archaeologist that Trench 5 could be moved to investigate an earthwork visible on the ground. This trench was also shortened as trees in the south limited the area of excavation. For health and safety reasons Trenches 1 and 2 were not excavated as they were situated on the golf course.

Fieldwork was undertaken between 18 and 19 April 2011. The site reference number and site code is CHSVRW11.

Three trenches, amounting to just over 115m² in area were excavated. The location of the trenches is indicated in Figure 2.

Deposits considered not to be significant were removed using a 180° wheeled excavator, employing a toothless bucket and under archaeological supervision. Subsequent excavation was undertaken by hand. Clean surfaces were inspected and selected deposits were excavated to retrieve artefactual material and to determine their nature. Deposits were recorded according to standard Service practice (CAS 1995). An arbitrary bench mark of 100m AOD was established on the base of the northern pillar of the steps leading up to the pond (Fig 2). On completion of excavation, trenches were reinstated by replacing the excavated material.

A metal detector was used on the site by John Stokes (Senior Countryside Officer, Sandwell Valley Country Park) under the supervision of Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council's Borough Archaeologist.

3.2.2 **Structural analysis**

All fieldwork records were checked and cross-referenced. Analysis was effected through a combination of structural, and artefactual evidence, allied to the information derived from other sources.

3.3 **Artefact methodology, by Dennis Williams**

3.3.1 **Artefact recovery policy**

The artefact recovery policy conformed to standard Service practice (CAS 1995; appendix 2).

3.3.2 **Method of analysis**

All hand-retrieved finds were examined. They were identified, quantified and dated to period. A terminus post quem date was produced for each stratified context. The dates were used for determining the broad date of phases defined for the site. All information was recorded on pro forma sheets.

The pottery and ceramic building material was examined under x20 magnification and recorded by fabric type and form according to the fabric reference series maintained by the service (Hurst and Rees 1992; www.worcestershireceramics.org).

3.4 **Environmental archaeology methodology**

3.5 **Sampling policy**

The environmental sampling strategy conformed to standard Service practice (CAS 1995; appendix 4). No deposits excavated were deemed suitable for analysis.

3.6 **Statement of confidence in the methods and results**

The methods adopted allow a high degree of confidence that the aims of the project have been achieved, though only three of the five trenches were excavated.

4. **Topographical and archaeological context**

The site lies within Sandwell Valley Country Park to the north-east of the road from Salter's Lane leading to Sandwell Park Farm (Fig 1). The site consists of part of one field which is under grass with some tree cover in the north-western part of this field (plates 1 and 2). The other part of the site is on the edge of a golf course. Trenches 1 and 2, which were not excavated, were to be excavated in this part of the site. The site slopes gently down from the north-west before becoming flatter in the south-east.

The underlying geology of this part of the Sandwell Valley consists of Alveley Mudstone (www.bgs.ac.uk/opengeoscience). The soils within the area belong to the Clifton soil association (711n) comprising slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged reddish fine and coarse loamy soils, over reddish till (Soil Survey of England and Wales 1983).

There are two sites registered on the Sandwell HER that are located on the site (Fig 1). Medieval ridge and furrow, known as Lodgehill Road ridge and furrow (HER 4049; centred on SP 0150 9160) and a hollow-way (HER 4047) which runs along the north-eastern boundary. These earthworks were identified during a landscape survey of the Sandwell Valley in the 1980s (Hewitt and Hodder 1988).

The 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1889-90 (not illustrated) shows the area as a field with an avenue of trees following the north-eastern field boundary. This avenue was thought to follow the line of the hollow-way. On the later OS maps (1904 and 1918-19) part of the avenue of trees has disappeared and by the 1937-38 OS map it is only visible in the northern part of the field.

5. **Results**

5.1 **Structural analysis**

The trenches and features recorded are shown in Figure 3 and Plates 3-8. The results of the structural analysis are presented in Appendix 1.

5.1.1 **Phase 1: Natural deposits**

The natural deposits varied across the site from pinkish and yellowish clays to yellowish sands. These were revealed between 0.40m and 0.60m below the present ground surface.

5.1.2 **Phase 2: Post-medieval deposits**

Trench 3

A soil horizon 302, covering the whole of the trench, produced finds dating from about 1800. This was cut by a series of stakeholes, 303, which were concentrated in a band in the centre of the trench and were aligned north-east to south-west. The stakeholes were not one shape in plan but varied from sub-square and circular to oval.

Another soil horizon 301 overlay 302 and sealed the stakeholes 303. This produced a fragment of glass bottle dated to the 1920s. Several land drains cut this layer.

Trench 5

A layer 501 excavated across the south-western part of the trench and overlying natural 502 produced pottery dating from the 18th century. In the eastern end of the trench a ditch 504 aligned north-west to south-east cut the natural. The ditch was about 0.45m deep and 1.30m wide. The fill 503 was a mid grey brown sandy silt and contained finds dating from about 1900. A land drain was cut into this ditch and followed the same alignment.

5.1.3 **Phase 3: Modern deposits**

Topsoil and turf were excavated in all three trenches 300, 400 and 500. In Trench 5 the topsoil, 500, was thicker above ditch 504 where the hollow was visible on the ground surface. Finds recovered from these deposits dated from the post-medieval to the modern periods.

5.1.4 **Phase 4: Undated deposits***Trench 3*

Two linear cuts, 305 and 307, were excavated that cut the natural. Both were aligned north-east to south-west. No finds were produced from the fills, 304 and 306. It was unclear at what depth these features were cut from and it is possible that they cut later deposits.

Trench 4

Cutting the natural, 402, in the centre of the trench was a ditch/gully, 404, aligned north-east to south-west. This had concave sides and base and was about 0.15m deep. No finds were recovered from the fill 403. Above this feature and the natural was a soil horizon, 401, which also produced no finds.

5.2 **Artefact analysis, by Dennis Williams**

The artefactual assemblage, recovered from seven stratified contexts, is summarised in Table 1. All finds dated from the post-medieval or modern periods. The pottery consisted of 16 sherds, weighing 152g, with fragments of brick, clay pipes, tile and glass bottles accounting for most of the remainder of the assemblage. The level of preservation was generally good, with the majority of pottery and glass sherds displaying only moderate levels of abrasion.

period	material class	material subtype	object specific type	count	weight (g)
post-medieval	ceramic	earthenware	clay pipe	3	10
post-medieval	ceramic	earthenware	pot	8	123
post-medieval	ceramic	fired clay	brick/tile	2	7
post-medieval	ceramic	fired clay	roof tile	3	55
post-medieval	glass	-	bottle	5	110
post-medieval	metal	copper alloy	button	1	1
modern	ceramic	earthenware	pot	8	29
modern	glass	-	vessel	1	2
modern	glass	-	bottle	1	428
modern	mineral	coal	-	1	1
modern	plastic	-	golf ball	1	49
totals				34	815

Table 1: Quantification of the assemblage

Pottery

All sherds were grouped and quantified according to fabric type (Table 2). In the absence of any form sherds that were clearly diagnostic, the pottery was dated by fabric type to general periods or production spans.

period	fabric code	fabric common name	count	weight (g)
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post-medieval	78	post-medieval red wares	5	101
post-medieval	84	creamware	2	19
post-medieval	85	china	1	3
modern	85	china	8	29
totals			16	152

Table 2: *Quantification of the pottery by period and fabric-type*

Post-medieval red wares (fabric 78) were found in contexts 300, 400 and 501. All but one of these sherds had coarse, poorly-mixed fabrics with thick walls and black glazes on the internal surfaces only. These were typical of large bowls or pancheons made during the 17th and 18th centuries but may have been produced later than this. Two base sherds from this group were too small and fragmentary for vessel sizes to be accurately determined. The remaining red ware sherd had a much finer, purplish-red fabric, was black-glazed internally and externally, but was too small to be diagnostic in term of form, although this could have been from the body of a jar or jug.

Creamware sherds (fabric 84) from contexts 500 and 501 were undiagnostic in terms of form, but worthy of note, since these were likely to date from the late 18th century. The remaining pottery sherds (from contexts 300, 302, and 400) comprised glazed china (fabric 85), 19th or 20th century in date. Familiar decorations such as blue willow were observed among these sherds, which were mass-produced. A possible exception was a beaded rim sherd with a pale bluish glaze, found in context 300, which may have been pearlware dating from the late 18th to early 19th century.

Other artefacts

Three clay tobacco pipe sherds were recovered: an undiagnostic stem fragment from context 400, and parts of bowls from 300. One of the latter bowls incorporated a distinct spur, below a shape typical of an early 19th century pipe (Ayto 2002; Oswald 1975).

Glass finds included an intact milk bottle, embossed 'Birmingham Co-operative Society', found in context 301 and dating from the mid 20th century. Two necks of bottles, both hand-made, were recovered from 300. Both were probably 19th century in date, with one of them, in green glass with a chamfered lip, likely to have been produced during the early part of that century.

Small samples of roughly-made flat roof tile, recovered from contexts 300, 302 and 501, were tentatively assigned to a broad post-medieval production period, although a possible earlier medieval date could not be entirely ruled out for their sandy oxidised fabrics.

Other finds from context 300 comprised a flat, oval brass button, probably manufactured in the mid 19th century, and a modern golf ball.

Overview of artefactual evidence

The small assemblage from this site was unremarkable, since all finds appeared to be either post-medieval or modern in date. The lack of any medieval (or earlier) pottery was noted, suggesting use of the area had been agricultural until the post-medieval period. The finds were typical of material discarded close to an area of domestic occupation, with the topsoil (context 300) yielding a mix of finds ranging in date from red ware pottery to modern refuse. The *terminus post quem* dates deduced for the contexts are shown in Table 3.

context	material class	object specific type	fabric code	count	weight (g)	start date	end date	terminus post quem
300	ceramic	roof tile	-	1	1	1600	1850	1900
	ceramic	pot	78	1	31	1600	1800	
	ceramic	pot	78	1	16	1600	1800	
	ceramic	pot	78	1	10	1600	1800	
	ceramic	pot	85	3	16	1800	1950	
	ceramic	pot	85	1	3	1780	1820	
	organic	coal	-	1	1	-	-	
	ceramic	clay pipe	-	1	4	1820	1850	
	ceramic	clay pipe	-	1	5	1800	1900	
	plastic	golf ball	-	1	49	1900	2000	
	glass	bottle	-	1	85	1800	1830	
	ceramic	pot	85	2	2	1800	1950	
	metal	button	-	1	1	1820	1850	
glass	bottle	-	1	21	1800	1900		
301	glass	bottle	-	1	428	1920	1970	1920
302	ceramic	pot	85	1	7	1800	1950	1800
	ceramic	roof tile	-	1	15	1600	1850	
400	ceramic	pot	78	1	15	1600	1800	1800
	ceramic	pot	85	1	3	1800	1950	
	ceramic	pot	85	1	1	1800	1950	
	ceramic	brick/tile	-	1	1	1600	1900	
	ceramic	clay pipe	-	1	1	1600	1900	
500	ceramic	pot	84	1	17	1760	1820	1760
	ceramic	brick/tile	-	1	6	1600	1950	
501	ceramic	roof tile	-	1	39	1600	1850	1760
	ceramic	pot	78	1	29	1600	1800	
	ceramic	pot	84	1	2	1760	1820	
503	glass	bottle	-	3	4	1850	1950	1900
	glass	vessel	-	1	2	1900	2000	

Table 3: Summary of context dating based on artefacts

Significance

The finds from this evaluation were of limited significance, insofar as they were all typical of domestic activity in the post-medieval and modern periods, with no clear evidence of earlier occupation and use of the site.

6. Synthesis

6.1 Post-medieval

The earlier soil horizon in Trench 5 is of a post-medieval date though it probably built up over many centuries before this.

In the area of Trench 3 it is likely that dumping of soil and other material took place to create a garden or possibly allotments as the soil horizons here contain more inclusions than elsewhere on site. A series of stake holes probably relate to vegetable gardening activities.

Trench 5 was situated to investigate the slight depression in the ground believed to be a hollow-way (HER 4047). The excavation uncovered a ditch which had been filled in by about 1900. It is possible that the depression in the ground here relates to an earlier pathway and the use of this path over time has created a slight hollow. If this was the case then presumably the ditch was excavated at a later date when the path went out of use to aid drainage.

Trenches 3 and 4 were situated to investigate ridge and furrow which was believed to be situated in this part of the field. However, no evidence was identified in the trenches and although earthworks can be seen in the north-western part of the field a low ridge just to the north of Trench 4, which runs south-east to north-west, could be a headland separating the medieval arable land from the pasture to the south-east (Fig 2).

6.2 Modern

The topsoil and land drains date from this period.

6.3 Undated

In Trench 3 the two features excavated that cut natural are more than likely scarring from ploughing/cultivation. The ditch/gully excavated in Trench 4 could be earlier than the post-medieval, though there is no evidence to support this. It is likely that the earlier soil horizon in this trench dates from the post-medieval period.

6.4 Research frameworks

The hollow-way and ridge and furrow in the south-eastern part of the site were not identified. The research aims of the project were to locate these earthworks which are registered on the HER and this negative evidence can be added to the knowledge of the landscape history of the Sandwell Valley. In the wider area the West Midlands Research Framework identifies research priorities for landscape-focused approaches to research and the results, although negative, can be discussed within this wider framework (Hunt 2011).

7. Significance

7.1 Significance of a heritage asset with archaeological interest

The aim of an archaeological evaluation is to provide the client and the planning authority (and its advisors) with sufficient information to assess the significance of a heritage asset with archaeological interest, in line with *Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment* (DCLG 2010: Policy HE6). More detailed guidance on assessing the significance of site with archaeological interest is set out in the *Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide*, which advises that an on-site evaluation should establish the nature, importance and extent of the archaeological interest in order to provide sufficient evidence for confident prediction of the impact of the proposal (DCLG/DCMS/EH 2010: Section 5, Development Management).

7.2 Assessment of significance

The on-site evaluation has provided new evidence on a site with archaeological interest. As a result, an assessment of the significance of this site can be made in terms of the nature, importance and extent of the archaeological interest.

Nature of the archaeological interest in the site

The hollow-way and ridge and furrow in the south-eastern part of the site were not identified. The research aims of the project were to locate these earthworks which are registered on the HER. The archaeological features and deposits excavated on the site are all of a probable post-medieval date and mainly relate to garden activities or drainage.

Relative importance of the archaeological interest in the site

There is relatively little of archaeological interest in the site. However, the absence of the hollow-way and ridge and furrow does add to our understanding of the landscape history of the Sandwell Valley.

Physical extent of the archaeological interest in the site

The archaeological deposits and features survive at a minimum of 0.35m below the present ground surface. The features and deposits associated with gardening are situated in the area of Trench 3 and a ditch/gully is within Trench 4.

8. **Recommendations**

There is relatively little of archaeological interest in the site and although the potential impact of the proposed development is not at present known, it is recommended that no further archaeological work should take place.

9. **Publication summary**

The Service has a professional obligation to publish the results of archaeological projects within a reasonable period of time. To this end, the Service intends to use this summary as the basis for publication through local or regional journals. The client is requested to consider the content of this section as being acceptable for such publication.

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken on behalf of Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council at the proposed play area and rope walk, Sandwell Valley Country Park, West Bromwich (NGR SP 0156 9153).

Three trenches were excavated to determine the extent of ridge and furrow and a hollow-way registered on Sandwell HER. However, no evidence for the ridge and furrow was revealed in the trenches and although earthworks can be seen in the north-western part of the field a low ridge visible on the ground, which runs south-east to north-west, could be a headland separating the medieval arable land from the pasture to the south-east.

On excavation, the slight depression which was previously interpreted as a hollow-way on the north-eastern boundary was a buried ditch which had silted up or was backfilled around 1900. It is possible that the depression in the ground here relates to an earlier pathway and the use of this path over time has created a slight hollow. If this was the case then presumably the ditch was excavated at a later date when the path went out of use to aid drainage.

In the south-western part of the site it is likely that dumping of soil and other material took place in the post-medieval period to create a garden or possibly allotments as the soil horizons here contained more inclusions than elsewhere on the site. A series of stake holes probably relate to vegetable gardening activities. Further cultivation/plough scars were also identified.

A ditch/gully, although undated, excavated in the centre of the site was probably of a post-medieval date.

There is relatively little of archaeological interest in the site. However, the absence of the hollow-way and ridge and furrow does add to our understanding of the landscape history of the Sandwell Valley.

10. **Acknowledgements**

The Service would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project, Dr Graham Eyre-Morgan (Sandwell MBC Borough Archaeologist), John Stokes (Senior Countryside Officer Sandwell Valley Country Park), Chris Moore (Sandwell Valley Country Park) and Gary Dowie (Sandwell MBC Landscape Architect).

11. Personnel

The fieldwork and report preparation was led by Jo Wainwright. The project manager responsible for the quality of the project was Tom Vaughan. Fieldwork was undertaken by Jo Wainwright, Tegan Cole and Tim Cornah, finds analysis by Dennis Williams and illustration by Laura Templeton.

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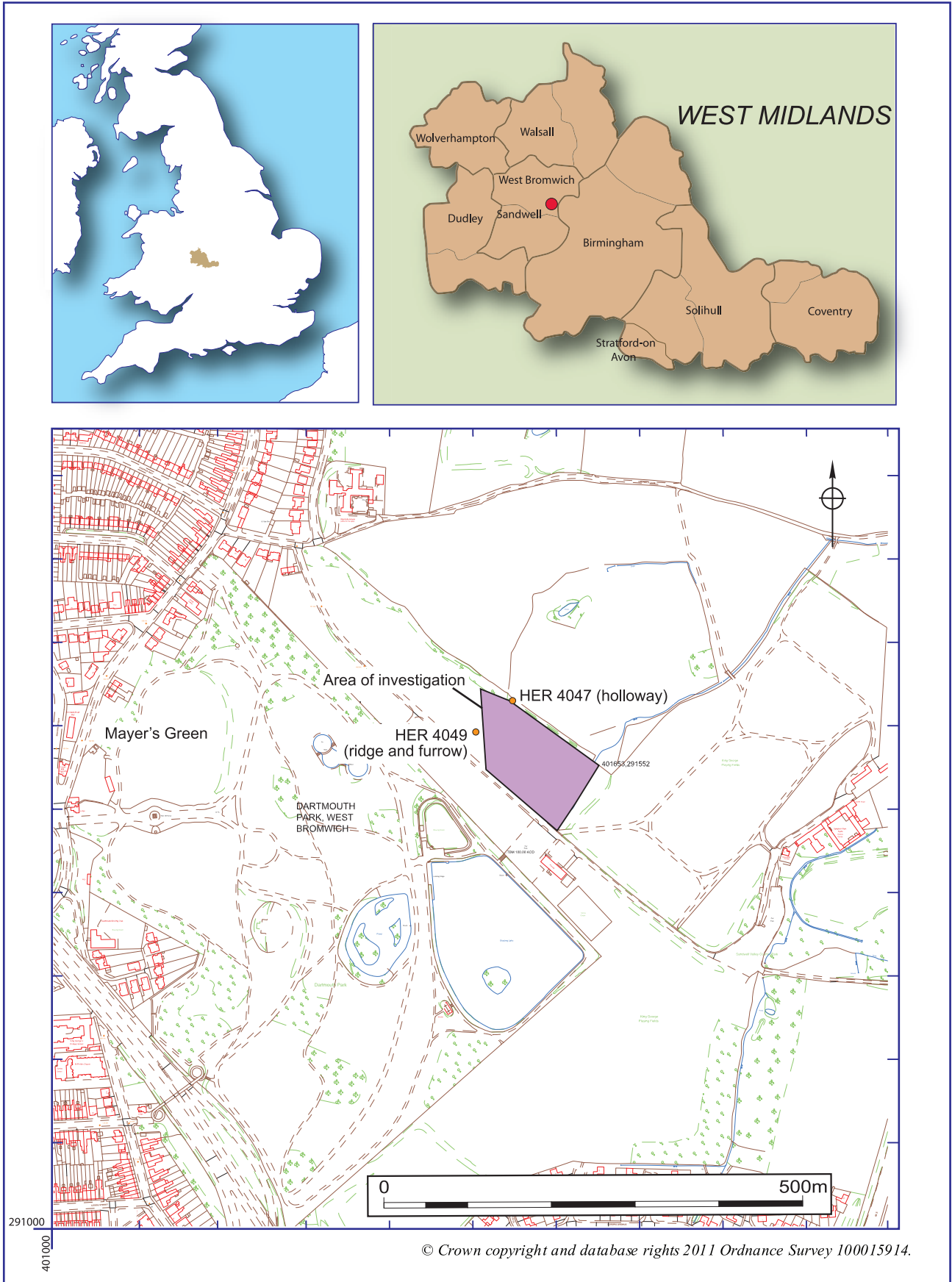
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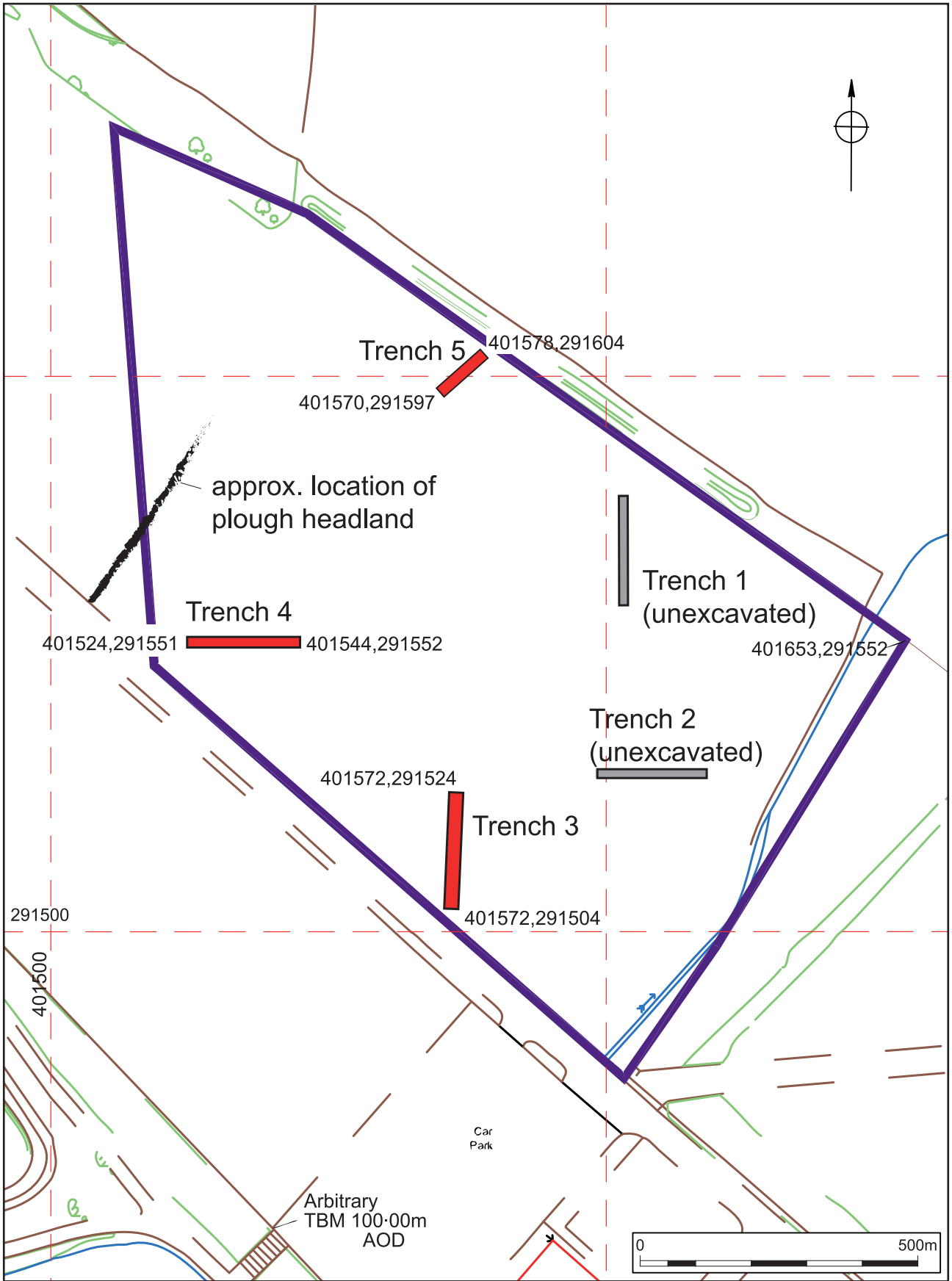
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Figures



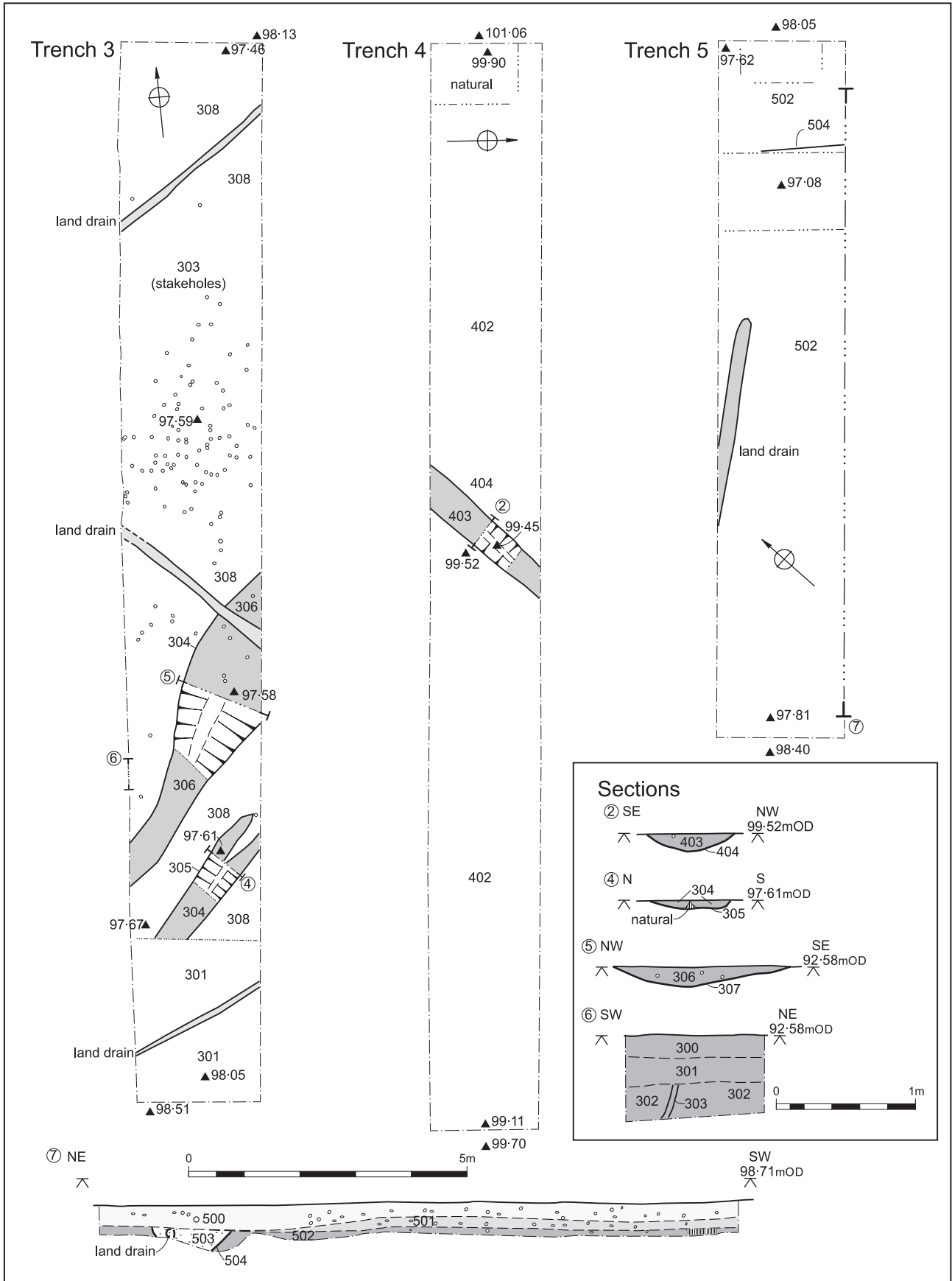
Location of the site

Figure 1



Trench locations

Figure 2



Trench plans and sections

Figure 3

Plates



Plate 1 Trench 4 excavation with location of Trench 3 in the background. View south-east



Plate 2 Location of Trench 5 after backfilling. View north-east



Plate 3 Trench 3 post excavation. View south



Plate 4 Trench 3, stakeholes 303. View east



Plate 5 Trench 4 post excavation. View east



Plate 6 Trench 4, ditch/gully 404. View north-east



Plate 7 Trench 5 post excavation. View south-west



Plate 8 Trench 5, section showing ditch 504. View south-east

Appendix 1 Trench descriptions

Trenches 1 and 2 were not excavated

Trench 3

Maximum dimensions: Length: 19m Width: 2.5m Depth: 0.70m

Orientation: NW-SE

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
300	Topsoil	Friable dark grey brown sandy silty clay with occasional sub-rounded pebbles. Occasional lenses of cleanish clay and coal	0-0.15m
301	Earlier soil horizon	Friable dark brown black sandy silty clay with frequent lenses of coal, occasional sub-rounded pebbles. Possibly more coal within top part of this deposit. Cut by land drains	0.15-0.36m
302	Earlier soil horizon	Moderately compact mid orange brown sandy silt with moderate small to large sub-rounded and rounded pebbles, coal and charcoal	0.36-0.60m
303	Stakeholes	Series of circular, sub-square and oval stakeholes cutting 302. Concentrated in centre of trench aligned roughly E-W. Probable associated with allotments/gardens	0.35-c 0.55m
304	Fill	Moderately compact mid orange brown silt with moderate sub-rounded pebbles. Occasional charcoal and clay patches. Fill of 305	0.60-0.65m
305	Cut	Probable linear cut which is probably more than one cut. Concave sided running E-W	0.60-0.65m
306	Fill	Compact mid greyish brown sandy silty clay with frequent sub-rounded and rounded pebbles and occasional charcoal. Fill of 307	0.60-0.70m
307	Cut	Linear cut with irregular sides and flattish base. Runs E-W	0.60-0.70m
308	Natural	Natural pink clays and occasional sands	0.60m+

Trench 4

Maximum dimensions: Length: 19.5m Width: 2m Depth: 0.65m

Orientation: NE-SW

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
400	Topsoil	Loose Dark grey black sandy clay silt with occasional small rounded pebbles	0-0.21m
401	Earlier soil horizon	Mid orange red soft to loose sandy clay silt. Frequent small rounded pebbles	0.21-0.50m
402	Natural	Light to mid orange yellow loose clay with frequent small rounded pebbles	0.50m+
403	Fill	Soft light orange and pinkish brown clay sand silt with occasional small rounded pebbles	0.50-0.65m
404	Cut	Linear cut with concave sides and a concave base	0.50-0.65m

Trench 5

Maximum dimensions: Length: 12.5m Width: 2.3m Depth: 1m

Orientation: NE-SW

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
500	Topsoil	Friable dark brown grey sandy silt clay with frequent sub-rounded and rounded small to large pebbles, charcoal and coal. Thicker in NE	0-0.21m
501	Earlier soil horizon	Moderately compact mid brown yellow sandy silty clay with moderate sub-rounded and rounded pebbles, Frequent charcoal and occasional coal.	0.21-0.48m
502	Natural	Yellow sands and gravels and occasional yellow clay. Frequent manganese	0.40m+
503	Fill	Friable mid grey brown sandy silt with occasional charcoal and sub-rounded and rounded pebbles. Truncated by land drain	0.40-0.85m
504	Cut	Linear cut with concave sides and a rounded base	0.40-0.85m

Appendix 2 Technical information

The archive (site code: CHSVRW11)

The archive consists of:

6	Context records AS1
2	Field progress reports AS2
1	Photographic records AS3
46	Digital photographs
1	Drawing number catalogues AS4
8	Scale drawings
1	Levels records AS19
3	Trench record sheets AS41
1	Box of finds
1	CD-Rom/DVD
1	Copy of this report (bound hard copy)

The project archive is intended to be placed at:

Community History and Archives Service
Smethwick Library
High Street
Smethwick
West Midlands
B66 1AB
Tel 0121 5582561

Appendix 3 Summary sheet

SANDWELL MBC SMR

SUMMARY SHEET

Site name/Address: Rope walk and adventure play area Sandwell Valley	
Borough: Sandwell	NGR: SP 0156 9153
Type of Work: Archaeological Evaluation	Site Code: CHSVRW11
Contractor: Worcestershire Historic Environment and Archaeology Service	Date of Work: 18 and 19 April 2011
Location of Finds/Curating Museum: Sandwell	
Title of Report: Archaeological evaluation at the proposed play area and rope walk, Sandwell Valley Country Park, West Bromwich	
SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:	
<p>An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at the proposed play area and rope walk, Sandwell Valley Country Park, West Bromwich (NGR SP 0156 9153).</p> <p>The archaeological evaluation was undertaken on behalf of Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council, who intends to construct a new play facility and rope walk with associated landscaping and car parking for which a planning application has been submitted.</p> <p>This report on an archaeological evaluation describes and assesses the significance of a heritage asset with archaeological interest potentially affected by the application. The impact of the application on the significance is assessed.</p> <p>Three trenches were excavated to determine the extent of ridge and furrow and a hollow-way registered on Sandwell Historic Environment Record. However, no evidence for the ridge and furrow was revealed in the trenches. Although earthworks can be seen in the north-western part of the field a low ridge visible on the ground, which runs south-east to north-west, could be a headland separating the medieval arable land from the pasture to the south-east.</p> <p>On excavation, the slight depression which was interpreted as a hollow-way on the north-eastern boundary was a buried ditch which had silted up or was backfilled around 1900. It is possible that the depression in the ground here relates to an earlier pathway and the use of this path over time has created the slight hollow. If this was the case then presumably the ditch was excavated to aid drainage at a later date when the path went out of use.</p> <p>In the south-western part of the site it is likely that dumping of soil and other material took place in the post-medieval period to create a garden or possibly allotments as the soil horizons here contained more inclusions than elsewhere on the site. A series of stake holes probably relate to vegetable gardening activities. Further cultivation/plough scars were also identified.</p> <p>A ditch/gully although undated, excavated in the centre of the site was probably of a post-medieval date.</p> <p>There is relatively little of archaeological interest in the site. However, the absence of the hollow-way and ridge and furrow does add our understanding of the landscape history of the Sandwell Valley.</p>	
Author of Summary: Jo Wainwright	Date of Summary: 11 May 2011

Appendix 4 Brief

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

**PROPOSED PLAY AREA and ROPE WALK, SANDWELL VALLEY,
WEST BROMWICH**

SANDWELL MBC

March 2011



Site: The Area Proposed for a Rope-Walk and Play Area, Sandwell Valley, West Bromwich

Planning Application: DC/11/53082

Agent: Gary Dowie Corporate Property Division, Sandwell M.B.C. (0121 569 4649)

Planning Officer: John Dadd (0121 569 4269)

Borough Archaeologist: Graham Eyre-Morgan (0121 569 4025)

This archaeological brief is only valid for six months. After this period the Borough Archaeologist should be contacted. Any written scheme of investigation resulting from this brief shall only be considered for the same period. The contractor is strongly advised to visit the site before completing their written scheme of investigation, as there may be implications for accurately costing the project.

1. Introduction

The brief for this site has been prepared by the Borough Archaeologist of Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council. The brief sets out the requirements for an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching. The purpose of evaluation is to determine the presence/absence of archaeological features within the application area so that an informed decision can be made on their preservation or otherwise. This Brief and any resulting Contractors' Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) will ensure that the requirements of the Condition can be adequately discharged.

2. Site Location and Description

The proposed location for the play barn is set within the Sandwell Valley Country Park, north-east of the Pavilion on the road to Sandwell Park Farm and adjacent to this road. The proposed development area is a neatly grassed field that forms part of the green frame to the road to Park Farm.

3. Planning Background

New play facility and rope-walk with associated landscaping and car parking.

The site is within the Green Belt and therefore PPG2 – Green Belts and Policy OS3 apply.

Green Belts fundamental aim is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the most important attribute of Green Belts is their openness.

PPG2 indicates that the construction of new buildings within the Green Belt is appropriate where there are essential facilities for outdoor sport and recreation.

3.2 Based on the advice given in *Planning Policy Statement 5*:

The evaluation is designed to provide sufficient information on the presence/absence, nature, quality and extent of any below ground remains. If intact, these deposits are likely to be of both local and regional importance and a programme of archaeological evaluation is therefore needed in order to assess their state of preservation; this being in accordance with Policies HE6, HE9, HE10, HE11, HE12 of *Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment* (Department for Communities and Local Government 2010):

If present, the investigation will identify any archaeological remains thereby enabling the formulation, if appropriate, of an additional programme of excavation; should the deposits be of 'national importance' there would be a presumption in favour of their in-situ preservation.

3.3 This Brief and any resulting Contractors' Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) will ensure that the requirements of any future Condition can be adequately discharged.

4. Archaeological Background

The Sandwell Valley is important archaeologically containing several well-preserved archaeological sites of all periods. The absence of disturbance of the Valley by modern residential or extensive industrial development means that the known sites are not isolated but together form a total historic landscape of regional importance, and that other sites, as yet undiscovered may be present. **It is therefore essential that future management policies ensure the preservation of these sites. The archaeological sites are complementary to the natural aspects of the Valley and should be afforded the due attention to ensure their preservation.**

Other archaeological remains could also be revealed. **Should archaeology be discovered it is possible that further archaeological work may be required at the site before any development may take place.**

The proposed development site is on the Sandwell HER as the location of what is described as medieval ridge and furrow earthwork HER 4049 that is bounded on eastern side by a medieval holloway HER 4047. The HER states the ridge and furrow is centred on SP 0150 9160 and known as Lodgehill Road ridge and furrow. Reference: Hewitt NR and Hodder M A. 1988. A landscape survey of Sandwell Valley, 1982-1987. 28. TSSAHS. 28. The Holloway is described as a dispersed earthwork centred on SP 0155 9163 reference: Hewitt NR and Hodder M A. 1988. A landscape survey of Sandwell Valley, 1982-1987. 28. TSSAHS. 28

5. Requirement for Work

5.1 The purpose of the archaeological investigation is to locate and identify any surviving remains within the constraint area and to ensure that the proposed development does not impose upon the medieval holloway and its impact is minimised on the remnant medieval field system; in this particular instance this office wishes to know the extent, the date, nature and state of preservation of any archaeological deposits, which may be present under the area, proposed for development. The work must also assess the relative importance of these deposits and the potential loss of any archaeological information by the development, therefore substantiating any need for further excavation or change in the planning consent

5.2 It is proposed that 5x20x2m trial trenches are excavated at the development area, a trench plan must be appended to the specification.

5.3 The site-specific aims are:

- To establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains within the development area
- To determine the nature, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains encountered
- To provide a profile of the holloway and a sample profile of the ridge and furrow
- To provide further information on the origins and development of West Bromwich from the medieval period to the present day
- To contribute to any existing corpus of academic knowledge
- To make available to interested parties the results of the investigation subject to any confidentiality restrictions

5.4 The evaluation recommended above is only the first stage in the archaeological investigation of each of the sites recommended. The scope of any further archaeological recording on each of the sites will depend on the results of the preliminary (and second phase if appropriate) evaluation of surviving archaeological deposits.

5.5 If evaluation indicates that significant archaeological evidence survives on the site, and would be negatively impacted by the proposed redevelopment, a further stage of detailed archaeological excavation and recording will be carried out, in accordance with a site-specific Written Scheme of Investigation approved by the Borough Archaeologist, which sets out specific aims of further recording work.

6.0 General Methodology

6.1 The evaluation shall be supported by a written scheme of investigation.

6.2 The contractor is expected to follow the Code of Conduct of the Institute of Field Archaeologists.

6.3 Details including the name, qualifications and experience, of the site director and all other project personnel (including specialist staff) shall be supplied to the Borough Archaeologist as part of the written scheme of investigation.

6.4 Notification of the supervisor/project manager's name and the members of the team shall be provided in writing to Borough Archaeologist at least one week in advance of commencement of work.

6.5 The site code for this project is **CHSVRW11**

6.6 All the latest Health and Safety guidelines shall be followed on site.

6.7 Should the client wish to curtail the investigation for any reason at any point in advance of its completion the contractor will still be expected to produce a full report including specialist finds assessments within the timetable set out below.

6.8 The IFA's *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations* should be used for additional guidance in the production of the written scheme of investigation, the content of the report, and the general execution of the project.

7. Evaluation Methodology

7.1 The contractor shall ensure a detailed study of all mains service locations and avoid damage to these.

7.2 Prior to the commencement of on-site works the contractor must consult the Sandwell Sites and Monuments Record and undertake a rapid map regression exercise based on the sources held at the Local Studies Section of Smethwick Library. This information will assist in on-site interpretation.

7.3 It is recommended that 5 x20mx2m trenches of the area to be developed is investigated by trial trenching. The trial trenches will be machine excavated using a toothless ditching bucket, and under the supervision and to the satisfaction of a professional archaeologist. The exposed sub-soil or archaeological horizon will be hand cleaned in all trenches and any archaeological deposits or negative features planned.

7.4 At least 50% of all contained features shall be excavated. A stated percentage of structural and linear features to be excavated shall be provided in the WSI. For those trenches where substantial nineteenth and twentieth century masonry remains are encountered hand dug test pits will be excavated within the trench in order to examine the presence/absence of earlier remains. NOTE: In some circumstances it may be necessary to use shoring to support the sides of the trench, but advice must be sought from the Borough Archaeologist before employing this methodology.

7.5 Details of how all archaeological contexts and artefacts will be excavated, surveyed, recovered and recorded shall be provided. The site grid will be tied to the national grid.

7.6 Details of the site planning policy shall be given in the WSI. The normal preferred policy for the scale of archaeological site plans is 1:20 and sections at 1:10, unless circumstances indicate that other scales would be more appropriate.

7.7 The photographic record shall consist of high quality digital colour and black and white copies. This shall include both general and feature specific photographs; a photographic scale (including north arrow) shall be included in the case of detailed photographs. A photographic register and supporting plan detailing as a minimum feature number, location, and direction of shot shall accompany the photographic record.

7.8 The contractor must arrange, through a suitably qualified specialist, the assessment of the environmental and metallurgical potential of the site through the examination of suitable deposits. Guidance should be sought from the appropriate English Heritage Regional Advisor in Archaeological Science and details of the methodology included within the WSI.

8.0 Finds

8.1 All finds, where appropriate, shall be washed and marked with both the site code and context number.

8.2 The WSI shall include an agreed list of specialist consultants who might be required to conserve and/or report on finds, and advise or report on other aspects of the investigation.

8.3 Finds work should be to accepted professional standards and adhere to the Institute of Field Archaeologists *Guidelines for Finds Work*. Details of the finds retrieval policy must be included within the WSI.

8.4 The requirements for conservation and storage shall be agreed with Wednesbury Museum prior to the start of work, and confirmed in writing with the Borough Archaeologist.

9.0 Results

9.1 The draft full report including all specialist assessments of artefact assemblages shall be submitted to the Borough Archaeologist within six weeks of completing the fieldwork for approval. Once approved a total of **six** copies plus a copy on CD-ROM are to be supplied to the Borough Archaeologist for general distribution.

9.2 The report must contain:

- The aims and methods adopted during the course of the evaluation.
- Detailed results including a suitable conclusion and discussion. This must be linked to the research objectives cited above and consider the sites in their local, regional and national context.
- An assessment of the local, regional national importance of the site.
- Impact Assessment and recommended mitigation strategy will be used to assess the impact of the proposal on the surviving archaeological resource.
- The contractor is also expected to formulate a mitigation strategy and future research programme. The latter should be based on national/regional/local research frameworks and identify the aims/objectives of any future excavation.
- Although the emphasis should be on those deposits that are likely to be destroyed, the wider potential the site must also be considered
- A concise non-technical summary of the project results
- All specialist reports and assessments

- Site location plan, copies of any historical maps and a representative sample of the photographs including colour prints
- Location plan of trenches in relation to the proposed development. All corners of each trench shall be given a 10 figure grid reference
- A section/s within each trench showing the depth of deposits including the present ground level with Ordnance Datum, vertical and horizontal scale
- Sufficient plans by period and area to aid interpretation
- Artefact illustrations that would be submitted in any future publication

9.3 The following appendices should also be included:

- Location and summary of the archive contents
- Completed summary sheet (copy attached to brief)
- Photographic register
- Archaeological brief, the approved contractors' written scheme of investigation together with the completed pro-forma and site location plan which were submitted as part of the planning application

9.4 The proposed format of the report will be described within the WSI.

10.0 Archive

10.1 Before commencing any fieldwork, the Contractor must contact the Community History and Archives Service, Smethwick Library (High Street, Smethwick, West Midlands B661AB. Tel. 0121 5582561), to determine the requirements for the deposition of the archive.

10.2 The archive should include the record photographs and digital information together with a copy of the Report.

10.3 Photographic prints should be re-produced at a minimum of five by four inches and labelled on the back using indelible ink with the frame number, date, photographers name together with the site code, name and grid reference; the photographs being mounted in archival quality sleeves.

10.4 It is the responsibility of the Contractor to meet the Community History and Archives Service requirements with regard to the preparation of material for deposition.

10.5 Written notification of the commencement of fieldwork shall be given to Community History and Archives Service at the same time as the Borough Archaeologist.

10.6 A summary of the contents of the archive shall be supplied to Borough Archaeologist at the time of deposition.

10.7 Sandwell MBC supports the Online Access to Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) project. The overall aim of the OASIS project is to provide an online index to the mass of archaeological grey literature that has been produced as a result of the advent of large-scale developer funded fieldwork. The archaeological contractor must therefore complete the online OASIS form at <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/>. Contractors are advised to contact Sandwell MBC Sites and Monuments Record prior to completing the form. Once a report has become a public document by submission to or incorporation into the SMR, Sandwell MBC Sites and Monuments Record may place the information on a web-site. Please ensure that you and your client agree to this procedure in writing as part of the process of submitting the report to the case officer at Sandwell MBC.

11.0 Monitoring

11.1 The Borough Archaeologist will be responsible for monitoring progress and standards throughout the project and should be kept regularly informed during fieldwork, interpretation and reporting stages.

11.2 Written Notification of the start date will be given to the Borough Archaeologist at least one week before the commencement of work and once the fieldwork stage of the investigation has been completed.

12.0 Contractors Written Scheme of Investigation

12.1 Any variations to the WSI shall be agreed in writing with the Borough Archaeologist before being implemented.

12.2 This Brief has been written following a cursory examination of the site by the Borough Archaeologist, potential contractors are therefore strongly advised to carry out their own inspection before submitting a written quotation.

12.3 If on first visiting the site or at any time during the recording exercise, it appears that:

- i) part or the whole of the site is not amenable to the recording programme outlined above, and/or
 - ii) an alternative approach may be more appropriate or likely to produce more informative results, and/or
 - iii) any features that should be recorded as having a bearing on the interpretation of the site have been omitted,
- then it is expected that the Contractor will contact the Borough Archaeologist as a matter of urgency.

For further information regarding the content of this Brief please contact the author at the address below. As part of our desire to provide a quality service, we would welcome any comments you may have on the content and presentation of this Archaeological Brief.

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Development House
Lombard Street
West Bromwich
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Email: graham_eyremorgan@sandwell.gov.uk

Appendix 5 Written Scheme of Investigation

**Written Scheme of Investigation for
an archaeological evaluation at the
proposed
Play Area and Rope Walk site,
Sandwell Valley Country Park,
West Bromwich**

Project reference: P3668

HER site code: CHSVRW11

Date: 14 March 2011

Status:

Contact: Tom Vaughan, tvaughan@worcestershire.gov.uk,

or Tom Rogers, trogers@worcestershire.gov.uk, 01905 855471

Historic Environment and Archaeology Service,

Worcestershire County Council

Woodbury,

University of Worcester,

Henwick Grove,

Worcester

WR2 6AJ



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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As a Registered Archaeological Organisation of the Institute for Archaeologists we deliver a quality service to our clients, users and partners. We have a commitment to providing clients with projects to a high standard and which are on time and within budget. Through information and education we provide the present and future communities of Worcestershire with a well managed archaeological heritage. To the Service's partners we will initiate ideas and seek their implementation in areas such as research.

Written Scheme of Investigation for an archaeological evaluation at the proposed Play Area and Rope Walk, Sandwell Valley Country Park, West Bromwich

1 Project specific design

1.1 Background

The Field Section of the Historic Environment and Archaeology Service (the Service) has been requested to prepare a proposal for an evaluation on an archaeological site.

The proposal has been requested by Graham Eyre-Morgan, Sandwell MBC Borough Archaeologist (the Client) in response to a brief (the Brief) also prepared by Graham Eyre-Morgan (the Curator), dated March 2011. The Brief results from the submission of a planning application to Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (ref. DC/11/53082). This proposes the construction of a new play facility and rope-walk with associated landscaping and car parking. This is considered by the Curator to have the potential to affect archaeological remains registered with Sandwell Historic Environment Record (HER 4047 and 4049).

The archaeological background to the site (National Grid ref. SP 015 915) is given in the Brief (Section 4). The Client should be aware that buried archaeological evidence can be very variable, and that neither the Brief, nor this proposal, can always accurately specify what may exist on this particular site. This proposal is based on an existing state of knowledge as summarised in the Brief.

1.2 Aims and objectives

The aims and scope of the project are given in the Brief (Section 5).

The Brief indicates that significant deposits may be defined as those likely to be of medieval date.

In particular the project will have the following aims:

- To establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains within the development area;
- To determine the nature, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains encountered;
- To provide a profile of the holloway and a sample profile of the ridge and furrow;
- To provide further information on the origins and development of West Bromwich from the medieval period to the present day;
- To contribute to any existing corpus of academic knowledge;
- To make available to interested parties the results of the investigation subject to any confidentiality restrictions

1.3 Methods

The project will conform to the Brief and to the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (2008b).

Prior to fieldwork commencing existing information on the site will be collected. Relevant sources listed in the Brief will be consulted. They will be derived from those given by the Sandwell HER and will include a rapid map regression exercise based on the sources held at the Local Studies Section of Smethwick Library.

Stage 1 Fieldwork

Five trenches, 20m by 2m, will be excavated in the approximate positions shown on the enclosed plan. These will cover an area of approximately 200m² and have been positioned to avoid existing trees. Please note that the final locations of trenches may alter, following preparation (HER search and map regression as specified by the Brief) and site inspection, to allow any documented, earthwork or topographic features to be investigated.

The HER site code for the project is CHSVRW11.

Professional standards and Service methodologies are detailed in Section 2.

Stage 2 Report

Following completion of fieldwork, a report will be prepared for submission to the Client and Curator as specified in Section 2.

Contingency

A contingency has been allowed to be applied to either fieldwork or report stages where necessary. The contingency is to allow for the appropriate treatment of the archaeological resource where this cannot be accommodated within the original costs. The contingency will be implemented in one or more of the following circumstances.

- The circumstances described in the Brief (eg shoring).
- The further recording and analysis of archaeological remains of a date and nature as indicated in the Brief.
- Where possible to cover or offset the additional costs for circumstances excluded from the cost given in Section 3.

1.4 Personnel

The Project Manager will be the first point of contact in all matters relating to the project.

- The Project Manager for this project will be Tom Vaughan (a profile is appended).
- The Project Leader for this project will be Fiona Keith-Lucas (a profile is appended).

All staff will be appropriately qualified and with an established record of expertise. Profiles of key members of the team will be made available to the Client and Curator on request. The team will comprise the following, as required.

- Project Manager Responsible for the project.
- Project Leader Direct fieldwork and prepare report.
- Field Archaeologists Undertake fieldwork and associated tasks.
- Specialist coordination and support Finds and environmental assessment and illustration

In-house specialist support may be provided in a number of broad areas common to this type of project.

- Artefacts - Derek Hurst, Laura Griffin, Jane Evans, Angus Crawford, Dennis Williams.
- Environmental archaeology - Elizabeth Pearson and Alan Clapham (plant macrofossils, wood and charcoal), Nick Daffern (pollen), Andrew Mann (molluscs).

In-house specialist support is also available in further more specialised areas (details will be supplied on request).

The Service has worked previously with a range of specialists in other fields (details will be supplied on request).

1.5 Programme

The project will commence on a date to be mutually agreed in writing. The Service would prefer a period of three weeks to complete the project (fieldwork, post-excavation analysis and reporting). The Service will meet externally imposed deadlines wherever possible (for instance dates of planning committee meetings). Please inform the Service of specific commencement dates and date requirements for submission of the report.

The table below is for the purposes of demonstrating that an adequate level of resources has been committed to the project and variation may occur due to staff availability and the nature of the archaeological site. Any such variation will not compromise the quality or standard of the project.

Periods for report production and the contingency are dependent on the quantity and complexity of information retrieved and cannot be quantified at present. Provision equivalent to 39% of fieldwork (Stage 1) costs has been allowed for report production (Stage 2), and 23.3% of estimated fieldwork costs for contingencies. By way of illustration the resources identified for the report would allow for 5½ person days (including specialist contributions). The resources identified for the contingency would allow for two person days in the field and a further 1½ person days for the report.

Worcestershire County Council
Historic Environment and Archaeology Service

Programme	Stage name Stage number	Fieldwork Stage 1	Report Stage 2	Contingency
staff				
Project Manager	person days			
Project Leader	person days	5	3	1.5
Field Archaeologists	person days	4	-	1
Specialists	person days	-	2.5	1

2 Standard project design

2.1 Quality

The Service is part of Worcestershire County Council and is subject to the Council's policies, safeguards, practices and audit procedures.

The Service is registered as an archaeological organisation with the Institute for Archaeologists, and as such is bound to the IfA's *Code of Conduct* and bylaws.

The following are relevant to this project:

- *Code of approved practice for the regulation of contractual arrangements in field archaeology* (2008a);
- *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (2008b); and
- *Guidelines for finds work*.

The project and any recommendations will conform to the government advice contained in *Planning Policy Statement 5* (PPS5: DCLG 2010) and *Planning for the Historic Environment: Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide* (DCLG/DCMS/EH 2010).

2.2 Standard methods

The project will follow the procedures of the *Manual of Service Practice: fieldwork recording manual*, 1995 as amended, County Archaeological Service internal report, **399**. Of particular importance here are the *Guidelines on evaluation*, *Finds recovery policy*, and *Guidelines for environmental sampling*. Copies of the guidelines will be supplied to the Client and Curator on request.

Stage 1 Fieldwork

Sandwell Historic Environment Record (HER) and Smethwick Library Local Studies Section will be consulted before fieldwork starts, with the aim of refining the project strategy as presented in this proposal.

Before commencing fieldwork, the Service will contact the Community History and Archives Service, Smethwick Library (High Street, Smethwick, West Midlands, B661AB. Tel. 0121 5582561), to determine the requirements for the deposition of the archive.

Hears fencing will be used to make the working areas safe from unauthorised access.

After the trenches have been opened by machine (using a toothless bucket and under archaeological supervision), excavation will be by hand. Please note that the precise location and size of trenches will vary according to health and safety and archaeological requirements and the proximity of standing or buried structures. The Client may wish to be consulted by the Service on the location of trenches before they are excavated.

- Clean surfaces will be inspected.
- Selected deposits will be fully or partially excavated to determine their nature and retrieve artefactual material and environmental samples.

- Deposits will be selected for excavation on the basis of the minimum required to meet the aims of the Brief. 50% of all contained features (excluding those of obvious modern/20th century date) and 20% of all linear and structural features will be excavated.
- Where substantial 19th and 20th century masonry remains are encountered, hand dug test pits will be excavated within the trench in order to examine the presence/absence of earlier remains beneath.
- Where possible less significant deposits will be excavated in order to define the nature and extent of those, which are likely to be of greater significance.
- Recognisable human remains, structured deposits, and areas of complex stratigraphy likely to be a significant part of the site will not be removed as part of the evaluation.
- Selection for excavation will be on the judgement of the Project Leader.
- The Service welcomes the assistance of the Curator in selection of deposits for excavation.
- The Service's specialist staff in artefacts and environmental evidence will be available for on-site advice.
- Recording of deposits will be undertaken and will follow standard Service practice (*Manual of Service Practice: fieldwork recording manual*, 1995 as amended, County Archaeological Service internal report, **399**). Site plans will generally be drawn at 1:20 and sections at 1:10, unless circumstances indicate that other scales would be more appropriate.
- Unless otherwise specified reinstatement shall consist of simple replacement of the excavated material.
- The Brief requires that the Curator is invited to monitor fieldwork, and the Service will normally arrange visits. Any requirements of the Curator must be notified to the Service before fieldwork commences.

Stage 2 Reporting

The results of all fieldwork will be presented as a report in the Service's internal report series.

The report will contain:

- a non-technical summary;
- background;
- aims;
- methods;
- location and size of archive;

- discussion of results; and
- assessment of the significance of deposits

Assessment will usually employ the criteria for the scheduling of ancient monuments used by the Department for Culture Media and Sport as a guide (DoE, PPG 16 1990, Annex 4). Where the Curator has provided other criteria (such as those prepared by English Heritage for the Monuments Protection Programme or contained in structure or local plans) these may also be used.

In assessing the state of deposit preservation, physical, artefactual and environmental aspects will all be considered. An assessment of the quantity and range of artefactual and environmental material will be presented. Appropriate specialists will be consulted or contracted where appropriate.

The Service will normally supply three copies of the report to the Client (or agent if they are coordinating the project on the Client's behalf). One of these copies may be forwarded to the Curator. A reasonable number of extra reports will be supplied to the Client on request. Where requested, the Service will forward a copy directly to the Curator (in the interests of speed).

The Service has a professional obligation to make archaeological information available within a reasonable period (outside of any period of confidentiality reasonably required by the Client). The report will be submitted to the HER with a short summary to be published in one or more regional journals (eg West Midlands Archaeology) where appropriate. The report will be submitted to the HER within three months of completion of the fieldwork, unless the Service is notified to the contrary.

Following submission of the report to the Curator, the Service will complete the online OASIS form at <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/>

All artefacts, except articles defined as treasure under the Treasure Act 1996 (or other legal requirements), discovered in the course of the archaeological project shall be the property of the Client (or landowner if not the Client). The Service will encourage the Client to donate any artefacts to an appropriate museum where they may be curated and made available for research and education. The Service will approach the Client after completion of the project with regard to the deposition of artefacts.

The record archive will be offered to an appropriate museum (usually the same as that for the deposition of artefacts) and security copies kept by the Service (or other appropriate arrangement).

2.3 Health and safety

The current (available through the County Council's intranet) conditions and requirements of the County Council's health and safety policies and procedures cover the Service.

- *Health and Safety, corporate health and safety policy.*
- *Corporate Services safety policy (Cultural Services).*

The County Council also produces supplementary guidance (for example).

- *Accidents, emergencies, fire and first aid.*
- *Action in unbearably hot workplaces.*
- *Display screen equipment*
- *General risk assessment.*
- *How to set up your workstation.*
- *Lone working.*
- *Moving and handling of objects.*
- *No smoking policy.*
- *Personal protective equipment.*
- *The handling, storage and use of hazardous substances.*
- *Violence and personal safety.*
- *Workplace (health safety and welfare).*

The Service has issued *Manual of Service practice: safe working practice* (2005 as amended, internal report, **461**) which are guidelines drawn from its risk assessments of common situations. The following guidelines are relevant to this project, and all staff will be aware of them.

- *Working out of doors and working with soils.*
- *Travelling.*
- *Working with tools and small equipment.*
- *Lone working.*
- *Sharing the site with other contractors.*

In addition provision has been made within the guidelines for assessing further risks which may be encountered during the project (*The specific circumstances of the site*).

All these documents may be viewed at the Service's offices, and may be copied to the Client and Curator on request.

The Client must notify the Service of any hazards within the archaeological site before the project commences. These include the location of existing services, unsafe parts of any structure (eg unstable walls, rotten floors), hidden voids, contaminated ground, material or any agricultural chemicals.

The project is for the purposes of survey (partly to establish site conditions) and is considered to fall outside of the *Construction (Design and Management) Regulations*

1994. Should the Service be asked to participate in any development programme it will fulfil its responsibilities both as an archaeological designer and contractor, where requested.

- Protective clothing will consist of hard hat, protective boots, and high visibility jacket.
- All staff will be appropriately certified in the use of any equipment used during the project. Any equipment or plant (including scaffolding) provided by the Client will be inspected before use by Service staff.

2.4 Conditions

The project is undertaken under the provisions of one or more of the following:

- *Local Government Act, 1972, section 111,*
- *Local Authorities (Goods and Services) Act, 1970,*
- *Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act, 1979,*
- any other relevant legislation

In undertaking an archaeological project Worcestershire County Council's support (or otherwise) cannot be assumed or expected for any development proposal unless specifically indicated.

Worcestershire County Council will not have, or obtain any tenancy, or other estate, or interest in the archaeological site other than the access granted for the purposes of the archaeological project.

The Client will be responsible for obtaining all necessary permissions for undertaking the project. Of particular importance may be any consents for sites scheduled (or areas of archaeological importance) under the *Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979*, or listed buildings legislation.

The Client must inform the Service of any non-archaeological constraints to the site, which, in addition to those related to safety, include the presence of any legally protected species, tree preservation orders, Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

Access to the site is the responsibility of the Client. Permissions for access must be arranged by the Client, with the landowner and tenant, as appropriate.

The project will only be undertaken when supported by a written agreement between Worcestershire County Council, the Client and/or the landowner (as appropriate). Forms of agreement or a draft agreement are enclosed with this proposal.

The Service is covered by public and employer's liability insurance (with a limit of £40 million), and professional indemnity insurance (with a limit of £2 million). Insurance is with AIG Europe (UK) Ltd (Policy Number 21005095, expires 29 September 2011).

The Service will retain full copyright of the report under the *Copyrights, Designs and Patents Act 1988* with all rights reserved. Excepting that it shall provide an exclusive licence to the Client in all matters directly relating to the Report as described in this

proposal, and provided that both the author and the Service are acknowledged. This licence will only become effective on payment of the agreed costs to Worcestershire County Council described in this proposal.

