

Archaeological evaluation at The Black Shed, Broadway Lane Fladbury, Worcestershire



© Worcestershire County Council

Worcestershire Archaeology
Archive and Archaeology Service
The Hive, Sawmill Walk,
The Butts, Worcester
WR1 3PD

Date: 1st May 2015
Authors: Graham Arnold – garnold@worcestershire.gov.uk
and Tom Rogers trogers@worcestershire.gov.uk
Illustrator: Steve Rigby and Laura Templeton
Project reference: P4494
Report reference: 2215
HER reference: WSM 66630

Contents
Summary

1

Report

1 Background.....	2
1.1 Reasons for the project	2
2 Aims.....	2
3 Methods.....	2
3.1 Personnel.....	2
3.2 Documentary research	2
3.3 Fieldwork strategy	2
3.4 Structural analysis	3
3.5 Artefact and environmental methodology	3
3.6 Statement of confidence in the methods and results	3
4 The application site	3
4.1 Topography, geology and archaeological context.....	3
4.2 Current land-use	4
5 Structural analysis.....	4
5.1.1 Phase 1: Natural deposits	4
5.1.2 Phase 2: modern deposits	4
5.1.3 Undated deposits.....	4
6 Synthesis	5
7 Publication summary	5
8 Acknowledgements	6
9 Bibliography.....	6

Archaeological Evaluation at The Black Shed, Broadway Lane, Fladbury, Worcestershire

Graham Arnold

Summary

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at The Black Shed, Broadway Lane, Fladbury, Worcestershire (NGR SO 9936 4603). It was undertaken on behalf of William Bedford of CgMs Consulting. Planning permission has been granted by Wychavon District Council for demolition of an existing building and the construction of a residential development of 18 dwellings, with associated landscaping and infrastructure works at land off Broadway Lane, Fladbury, Worcestershire (reference number W/14/2400).

Fladbury is a village in the Vale of Evesham on the west bank of the River Avon. To the west of the village a series of elongated enclosures, possibly cursi have been recorded as cropmarks. Similar examples excavated in Warwickshire have been Neolithic in date.

The village has Saxon origins, being the site of a Minster and Saxon settlement remains have been excavated within the village. Parts of a Roman cemetery have also been excavated and a Roman occupation site was recorded during a watching brief.

The site comprises part of a field on the eastern side of Broadway Lane which enters the village from the south west. The river is 300m distant at this point. The Black Shed is an irregular agricultural building built of corrugated iron which stands on the frontage to the lane.

Four trenches were opened in the footprint of the proposed development. Five small pits were recorded across three of the trenches and sections were excavated across them. No finds or dateable material was retrieved and it is concluded that the pits are agricultural or horticultural in origin probably relating to a large orchard depicted in this area on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map.

No significant archaeology was observed during the works. It is concluded that neither the complex recorded to the west of the village or activity associated with the river corridor extend into the site.

Report

1 Background

1.1 Reasons for the project

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at the Black Shed, Broadway Lane, Fladbury, Worcestershire (NGR SO 9936 4603). It was commissioned by William Bedford of CgMs Consulting.

Planning permission has been granted by Wychavon District Council for demolition of an existing building and construction of a residential development of 18 dwellings, with associated landscaping and infrastructure works at land off Broadway Lane, Fladbury, Worcestershire (reference number W/14/2400).

A geophysical survey was carried out prior to application. This did not identify evidence for sub-surface remains of archaeological significance

Planning permission was granted subject to conditions including a programme of archaeological works. A brief for archaeological evaluation of the site was prepared by Mike Glyde, Historic Environment Planning Officer, Worcestershire County Council (WCC 2014) prior to determination. This described a staged programme of works including fieldwalking and evaluation by trial trenching. Following correspondence between William Bedford and Mike Glyde, it was established that, due to site conditions, the fieldwalking element was not practical

A Written Scheme of Investigation (WA 2015) for evaluation of the site was produced by Worcestershire Archaeology and approved prior to evaluation.

The project conforms to *Standard and guidance: Archaeological field evaluation* (CIfA 2014) and *Standards and guidelines for archaeological projects in Worcestershire* (WCC 2010).

The event reference for this project, given by the HER is WSM 66630.

2 Aims

The aims of this 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.

The Brief indicated that significant deposits on site may be defined as those likely to be of Neolithic to Medieval date.

3 Methods

3.1 Personnel

Fieldwork was led by Pete Lovett who was assisted on site by Jess Wheeler. Graham Arnold wrote the report and the project manager responsible for the quality of the project was Tom Rogers. Illustrations were prepared by Steve Rigby and Laura Templeton.

3.2 Documentary research

Prior to fieldwork commencing a search was made of the Historic Environment Record (HER).

3.3 Fieldwork strategy

A detailed specification has been prepared by Worcestershire Archaeology (WA 2015). Fieldwork was undertaken between 13 April 2015 and 15 April 2015. The site reference number and site code is WSM 66630.

Four trenches, 3.6m wide amounting to just over 360m² were excavated over the site area of 0.7 ha. The location of the trenches is indicated in Figure 2. Some of the trenches were moved from their original co-ordinates due to site conditions. Trench 1 which was intended to be sited on the frontage with the lane was moved southward to avoid the exclusion zone around a badger sett.

Deposits considered not to be significant were removed using a 360° tracked 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 environmental samples, as well as to determine their nature. Deposits were recorded according to standard Worcestershire Archaeology practice (WA 2012a). On completion of excavation, trenches were reinstated by replacing the excavated material.

3.4 Structural analysis

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

3.5 Artefact and environmental methodology

Only post-medieval and later material was found within the topsoil during the evaluations, relating to manuring of the site and later activity. These had little significance so no further analysis took place and the finds were discarded. No significant environmental deposits were uncovered during the works.

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.

4 The application site

4.1 Topography, geology and archaeological context

The site lies on a low lying flat river terrace of mixed Wasperton sands and gravels with sandy, free-draining soils, over bedrock geology of Blue Lias and Charmouth Mudstone (BGS 2015).

An English Heritage project to identify the potential for Palaeolithic Archaeology within Worcestershire identified a large deposit within the search area, including the site, with the potential for remains dating to 83050 BP (WSM25842; WSM41696; WSM49813, Daffern & Russell 2014).

Fladbury is a small village, in the Vale of Evesham. The site lies on the eastern side of Broadway Lane which enters the village from the south-west. The River Avon lies some 300m distant from the site to the east of the village.

The village has Saxon origins. St John the Baptist's church (WSM02699) is the site of a minster and Broadway Lane is thought to represent a section of a Saxon road (WSM30402) and Saxon settlement remains (WSM07819) were excavated at the junction of the lane and the Church Street in the centre of the village in the 1960s. The possible site of a Bishop's Palace (WSM07820) was also recorded.

There are a number of historic buildings of medieval and post medieval date within the village, but these largely stand in the historic core to the north-east of the site. Historic farmsteads are recorded across the landscape.

On the first edition Ordnance Survey map, the site is shown as part of a large orchard, which covers land to the east of Broadway Lane and south of the village.

The village is situated amongst an area of intense Prehistoric and Roman ritual and settlement activity including a number of elongated enclosures or cursi (WSM33721, WSM33722, WSM33962, and WSM34923) situated on ground to the west of the village. A rectilinear enclosure

(WSM23351) was recorded to the south west of the site as a cropmark. Fragments of a Romano-British cemetery have also been recorded at various times in the village (WSM07822) and a Romano-British settlement was recorded during a watching brief carried out in Chequers Lane (WSM34923).

There have been a number of archaeological investigations completed locally, specifically a number of small watching briefs within Fladbury itself (WSM22103; WSM23768; WSM27102; WSM30518; WSM39873; WSM40825) and metal detecting activity across the wider area (WSM32356; WSM32383). A study has also been made of the recorded Neolithic Cursi, by the University of Worcester (WSM49654). Finds from metal detecting (WSM32356) including an Iron Age coin are recorded from an area immediately south of the site.

Overall there is good evidence for well-preserved below ground archaeology within the search area and therefore potential for further buried archaeology of the Prehistoric, Roman and Saxon periods.

4.2 Current land-use

The site is in agricultural use as pasture and arable crop. The Black Shed which stands on the frontage of the site with the lane, (Plate 1) is an irregular agricultural building built of corrugated iron.

5 Structural analysis

The trenches and features recorded are shown in Fig 3. The results of the structural analysis are presented in Appendix 1.

5.1.1 Phase 1: Natural deposits

The geological deposits consisted of a soft orange sand with frequent gravels, which was found at between 0.57m – 0.68m below the ground level. This was sterile and at a fairly consistent level of between 25.59m and 25.83m AOD.

5.1.2 Phase 2: modern deposits

Natural sand and gravels were overlain by a typical soil profile of topsoil and subsoil (Plate 1 sample section). The topsoil was particularly thick and humic due to being used for arable crops. The four features found in trenches 2 and 3 were identified as rooting from trees and other vegetation on site or modern agricultural usage of the site (plate 5 and 6).

5.1.3 Undated deposits.

Within Trench 2, pit 205 (Plate 5) was a sub-circular feature with rounded corners, 1.05m in diameter and 0.22m deep. Two fills were recorded. The lower fill 204 was a firm mid yellow brown sand and the upper fill was a moderately compact mid orange brown clay sand with frequent sub-rounded pebbles.,

Two pits were recorded within Trench 3. Pit 303 was sub-circular with concave sides and a irregular base and a diameter of 0.65m. It was filled by 304, a loose, dark orangey brown clayey sand with frequent sub-angular gravels. Pit 306 (Plate 6) was oval with a sharp break of slope concave sloping sides and a flat, level base. It was filled by 305, a loose dark greyish brown clayey sand with frequent sub-rounded pebbles and gravelly clasts. A modern post hole (308) immediately adjacent suggests a modern origin.

Within Trench 4 a single sub circular pit (404) was 0.88m in diameter and 0.67m deep. It contained two fills. The primary fill 406 was a soft mid greyish brown sand with frequent sub-rounded pebbles and an upper fill, 403 possibly a representing a recut of the pit, was recorded as a soft dark brownish black silty sand with occasional sub-rounded pebbles.

6 Synthesis

The evaluation demonstrated a typical soil profile across site as would be expected in an arable field.

Five small pits were recorded within three of the trenches. No dateable material was recovered from the pits and as one pit (306) was in close association with a modern post hole and it is concluded that these relate to relatively modern agricultural or horticultural activity, probably the large orchard depicted in this area on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map.

Although there is extensive prehistoric activity including what appears to be a landscape of elongated enclosures or cursi in the vicinity of Fladbury, this is largely located to the west of the site and there is little recorded between Broadway Lane and the river.

Saxon and Roman remains have been recorded in the village itself, but the site lies considerably outside the historic core being linked to the village by relatively modern development.

7 Publication summary

Worcestershire Archaeology has a professional obligation to publish the results of archaeological projects within a reasonable period of time. To this end, Worcestershire Archaeology 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 at The Black Shed, Broadway Lane, Fladbury, Worcestershire (NGR SO 9936 4603). It was undertaken on behalf of William Bedford of CgMs Consulting. Planning permission has been granted by Wychavon District Council for demolition of an existing building and the construction of a residential development of 18 dwellings, with associated landscaping and infrastructure works at land off Broadway Lane, Fladbury, Worcestershire (reference number W/14/2400).

Fladbury is a village in the Vale of Evesham on the west bank of the River Avon. To the west of the village a series of elongated enclosures, possibly cursi have been recorded as cropmarks. Similar examples excavated in Warwickshire have been Neolithic in date.

The village has Saxon origins, being the site of a Minster and Saxon settlement remains have been excavated within the village. Parts of a Roman cemetery have also been excavated and a Roman occupation site was recorded during a watching brief.

The site comprises part of a field on the eastern side of Broadway Lane which enters the village from the south west. The river is 300m distant at this point. The Black Shed is an irregular agricultural building built of corrugated iron which stands on the frontage to the lane.

Four trenches were opened in the footprint of the proposed development. Five small pits were recorded across three of the trenches and sections were excavated across them. No finds or dateable material was retrieved and it is concluded that the pits are agricultural or horticultural in origin probably relating to a large orchard depicted in this area on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map.

No significant archaeology was observed during the works. It is concluded that neither the complex recorded to the west of the village nor activity associated with the river corridor extend into the site.

8 Acknowledgements

Worcestershire Archaeology would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project, William Bedford, CgMs Consulting, and Mike Glyde, Historic Environment Planning Officer, Planning Advisory Service, Worcestershire County Council.

9 Bibliography

BGS 2014 *Geology of Britain Viewer*, <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>, British Geological Survey, accessed 28 April 2015

CIfA 2014 *Standard and guidance: Archaeological field evaluation*, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

Daffern, N., Russell, O. 2014. Putting the Palaeolithic into Worcestershire's HER: creating an evidence base and toolkit. Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service..

DCLG 2012 *National Planning Policy Framework*, Department for Communities and Local Government

DCLG/DCMS/EH 2010 *PPS5 Planning for the historic environment: historic environment planning practice guide*, Department for Communities and Local Government/Department for Culture, Media and Sport/English Heritage

Soil Survey of England and Wales, 1983 *Midland and Western England*, sheet 3, scale 1:250,000 + Legend for the 1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales (A brief explanation of the constituent soil associations)

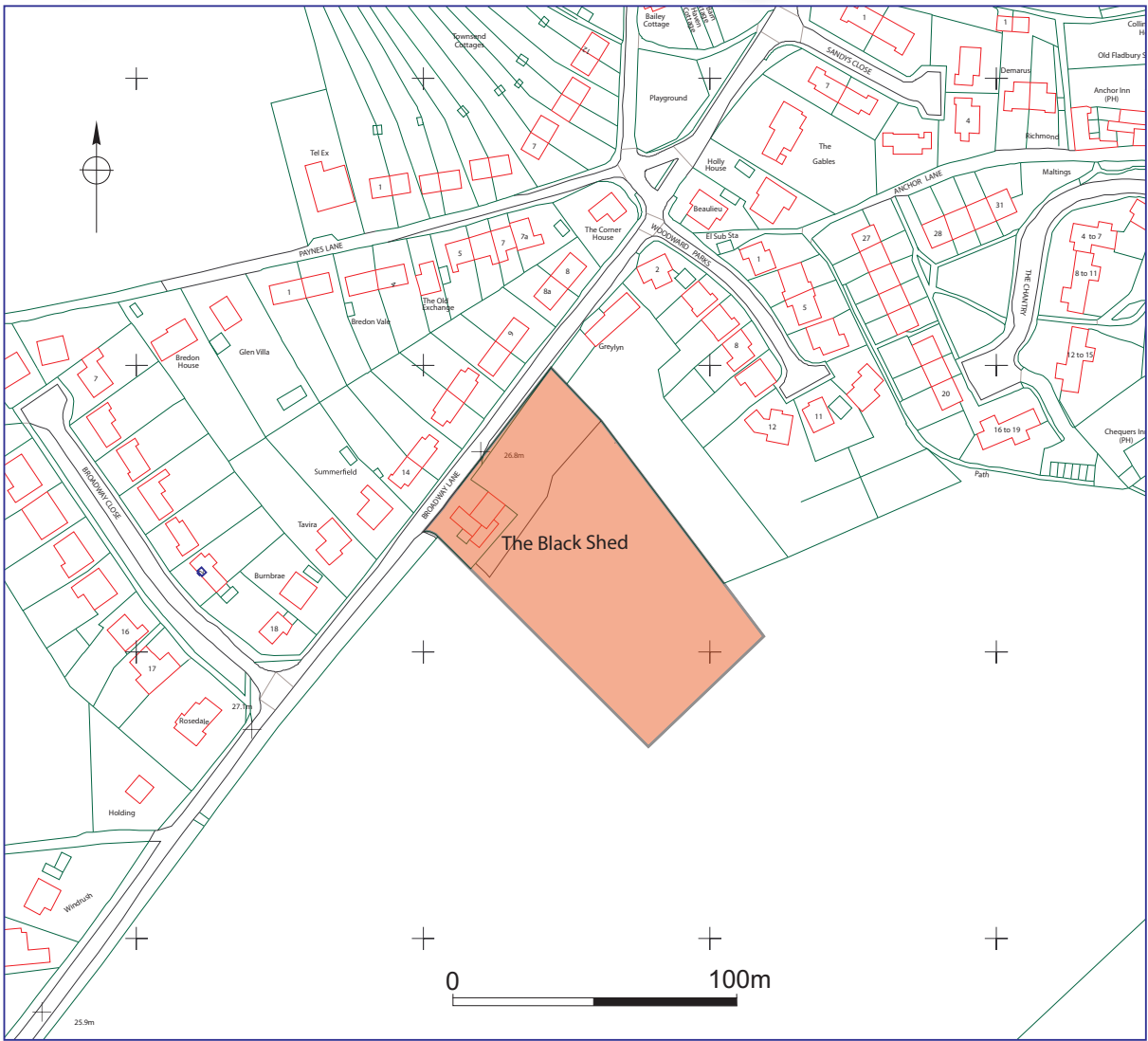
WA 2012 *Manual of service practice, recording manual*, Worcestershire Archaeology, Worcestershire County Council, report **1842**

WA 2015 *Proposal for an archaeological evaluation at The Black Shed, Broadway Lane, Fladbury, Worcestershire*, Worcestershire Archaeology, Worcestershire County Council, unpublished document dated 27 March 2015 (revised 8 April 2015), **P4494**

WCC 2010 *Standards and guidelines for archaeological projects in Worcestershire*, Planning Advisory Section, Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service, Worcestershire County Council unpublished report **604**, amended July 2012

WCC 2014 *Brief for an archaeological evaluation at The Black Shed, Broadway Lane, Fladbury, Worcestershire*, Information and Advisory Section, Archive and Archaeology Service, Worcestershire County Council unpublished document dated 4 December 2014

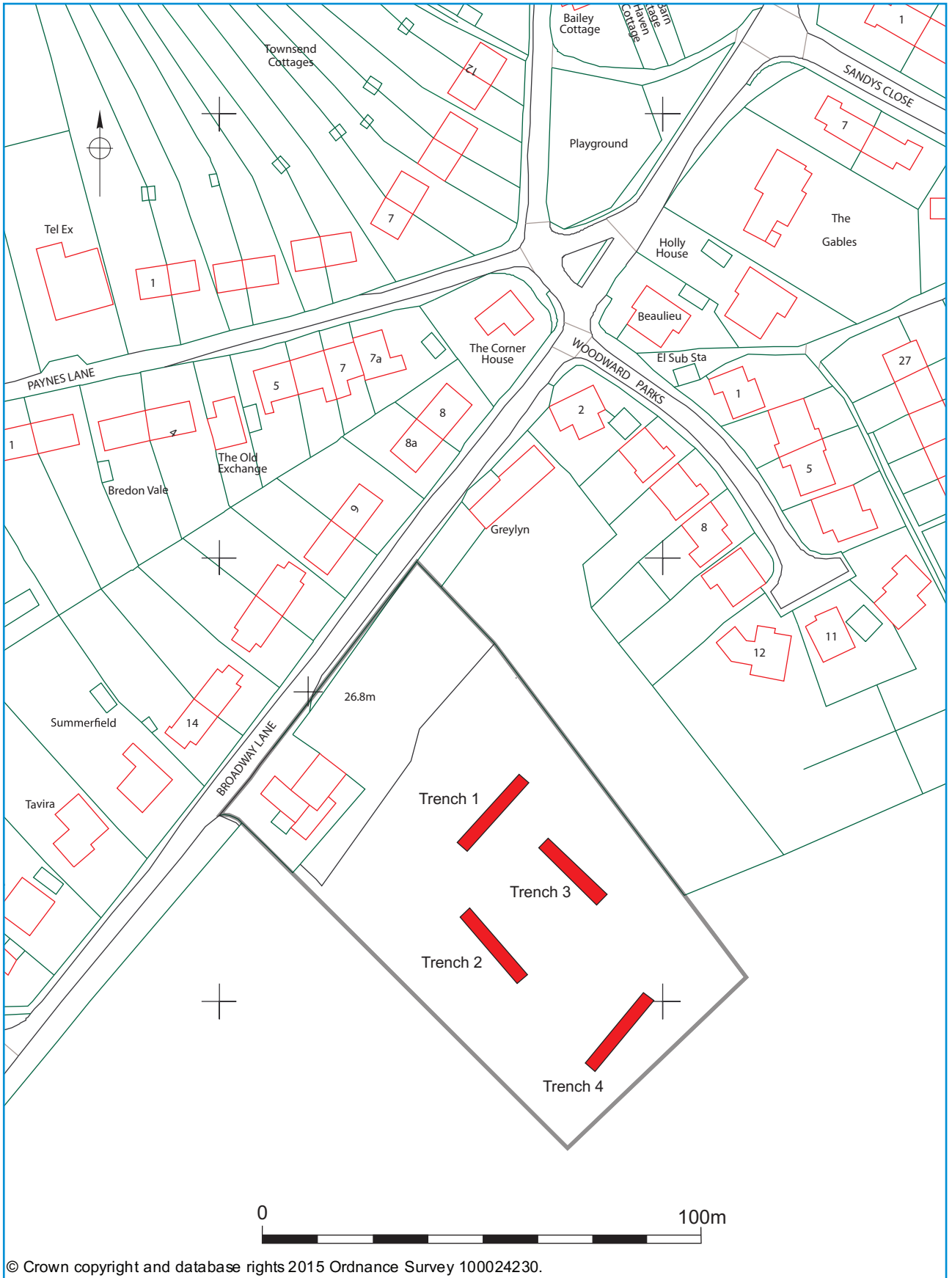
Figures



© Crown copyright and database rights 2015 Ordnance Survey 100024230.

Location of the site

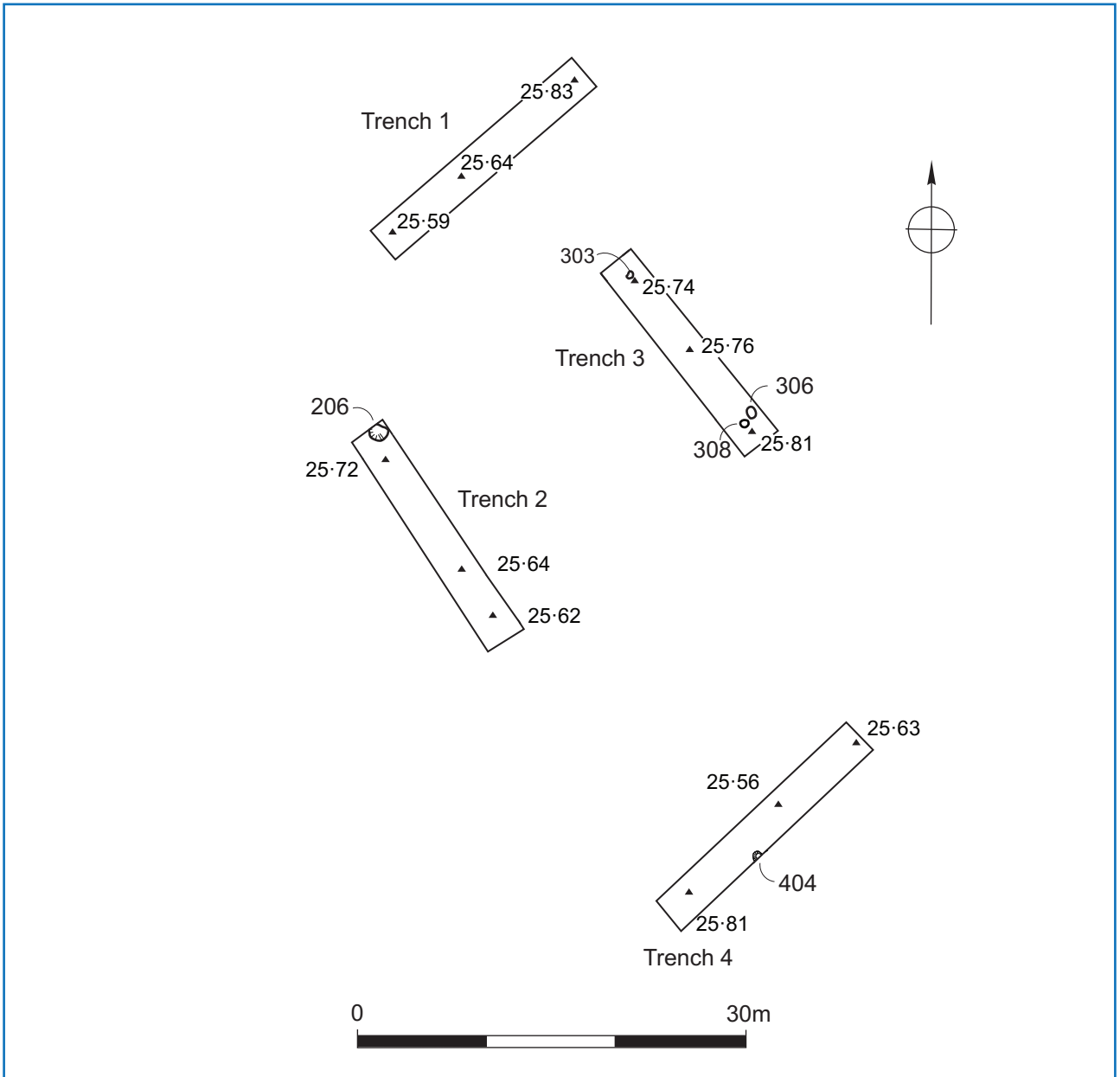
Figure 1



© Crown copyright and database rights 2015 Ordnance Survey 100024230.

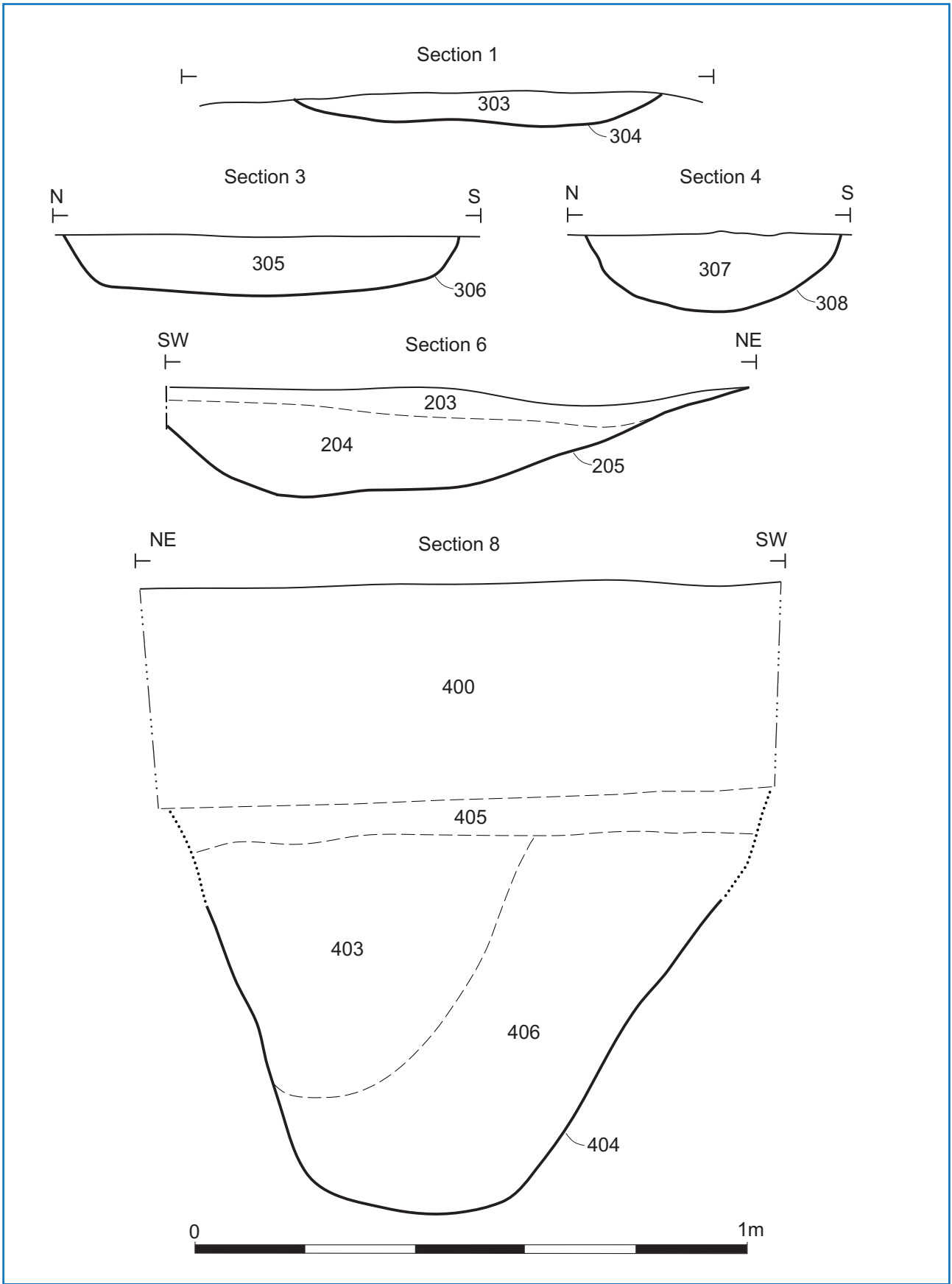
Location of trenches

Figure 2



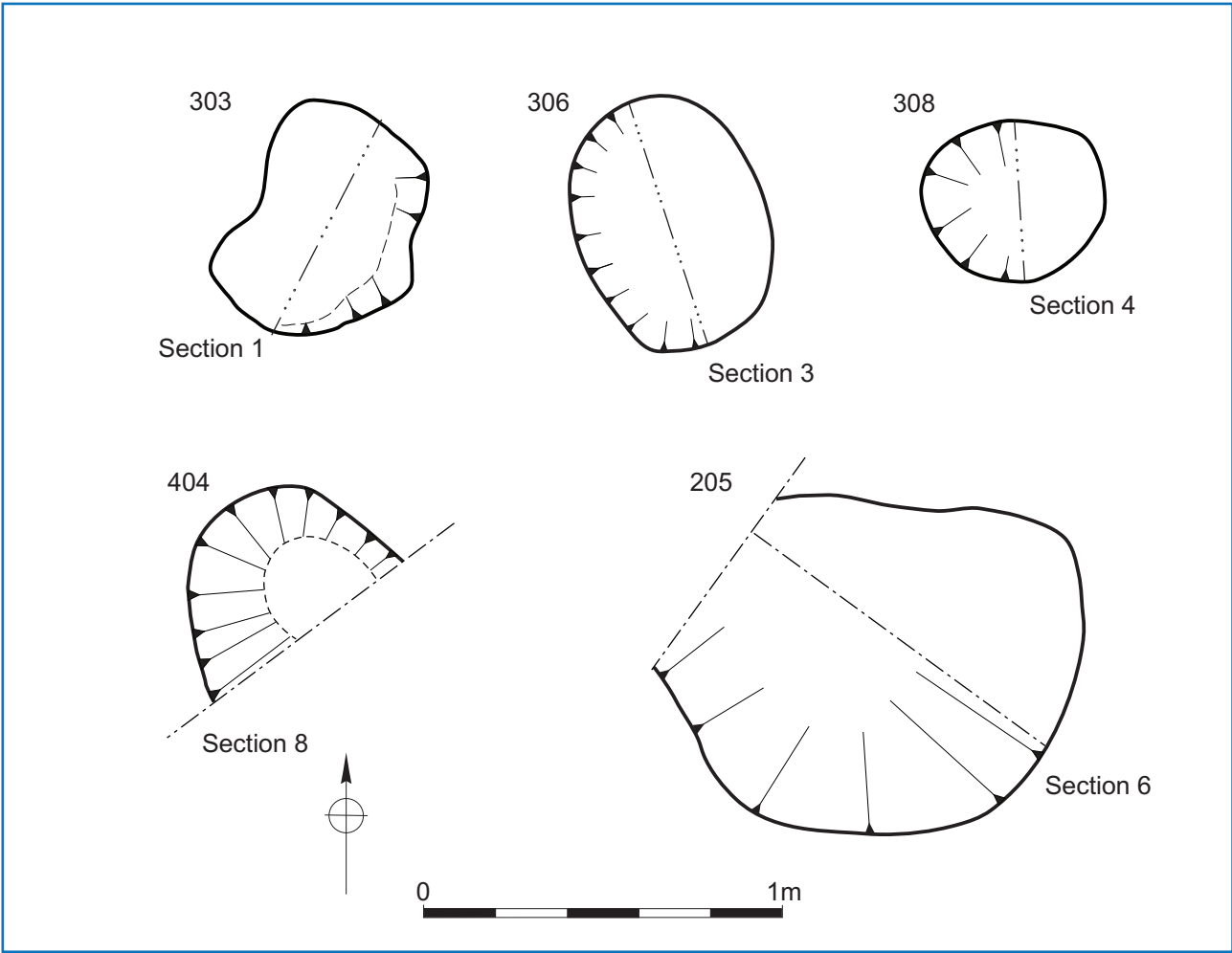
Excavated features

Figure 3



Sections

Figure 4



Plans

Figure 5

Plates



Plate 1 The Black Shed on site



Plate 2 Sample section showing thick topsoil, subsoil and natural gravels



Plate 3 Trench 2 plan shot looking northwest



Plate 4 Trench 3 plan shot looking northwest



Plate 5 Pit 205, view northeast.

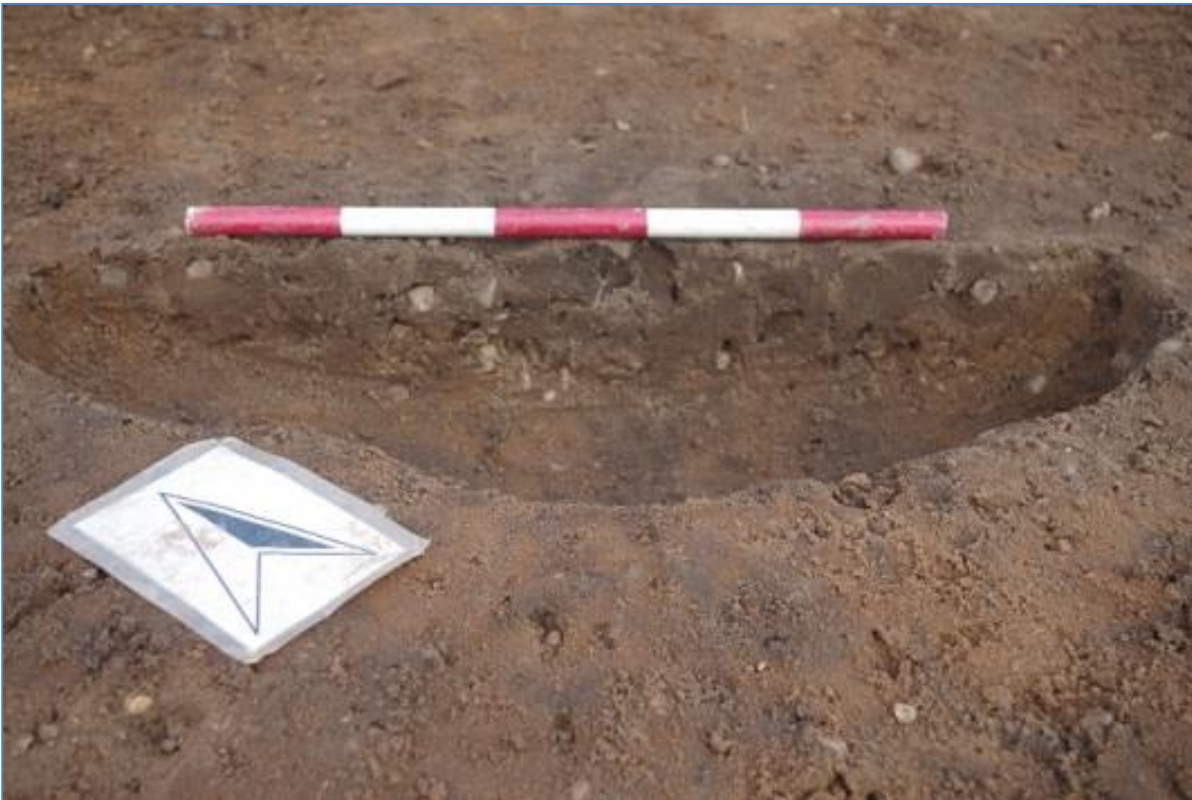


Plate 6 Southwest facing section of pit 306

Appendix 1 Trench descriptions

Trench 1

Maximum dimensions: Length: 25.00m Width: 3.50m Depth: 0.79m

Orientation: NE - SW

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
100	Topsoil	Loose humic, dark blackish brown clayey sand with occasional sub-rounded stones.	0.00 – 0.48m
101	Subsoil	Moderately compacted mid orangeish brown clayey sand with frequent sub-rounded pebbles.	0.48 – 0.64m
102	Natural	Light brownish orange sand with abundant sub-rounded gravels	0.64 – 0.79m

Trench 2

Maximum dimensions: Length: 25.00m Width: 3.50m Depth: 0.86m

Orientation: NW - SE

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
200	Topsoil	Loose humic, dark blackish brown clayey sand with occasional sub-rounded stones.	0.00 – 0.52m
201	Subsoil	Moderately compacted dark orangeish brown clayey sand with frequent sub-rounded pebbles.	0.52 – 0.68m
202	Natural	Soft mid orangey yellow sands with abundant sub-rounded gravels.	0.68 – 0.86m
203	Upper fill of pit	Moderately compact mid orange brown clay sand with frequent sub-rounded pebbles. Sterile. Interpreted as a subsoil remnant overlying a small pit	0.63 – 0.68m
204	Lower fill of pit	Firm mid yellow brown sands with frequent gravels and moderate rooting. Sterile. Root disturbed natural from modern arable usage of	0.68 – 0.86m

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
		the site.	
205	Cut of pit / rooting	Sub-circular feature with rounded corners, a gradual slope, shallow sides and a flat base. Root disturbance of the natural ground.	0.68 – 0.86m

Trench 3

Maximum dimensions: Length: 25.00m Width: 3.50m Depth: 0.76m

Orientation: NW - SE

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
300	Topsoil	Loose, humic, dark blackish brown clayey sand with occasional sub-rounded stones.	0.00 – 0.40m
301	Subsoil	Moderately compacted mid orangeish brown clayey sand with frequent sub-rounded pebbles.	0.40 – 0.57m
302	Natural	Soft, light brownish orange sand with abundant gravels.	0.57 – 0.76m +
303	Cut of pit	Sub-circular pit with concave sides and a irregular base. Possible natural root disturbance due to irregular shape and form.	0.76 – 0.85m
304	Fill of pit	Loose dark orangey brown clayey sand with frequent sub-angular gravels. Infill of pit or rooting. Sterile.	0.76 – 0.85m
305	Fill of pit	Loose dark greyish brown clayey sand with frequent sub-rounded pebbles and gravelly clasts. Rare charcoal flecks from roots. Distinct fill of pit from natural. Similar to topsoil and subsoil.	0.76 – 0.87m
306	Cut of pit	Oval pit with a sharp break of slope concave sloping sides and a flat, level base. In proximity to smaller post-hole with similar fill so presumably associated. Unknown date.	0.76 – 0.87m
307	Fill of post	Loose dark greyish brown clayey sand, similar to topsoil and subsoil with frequent sub	0.76 – 0.90m

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
	hole	rounded pebbles and gravelly clasts. Sterile fill of possible post-hole feature associated with pit 306.	
308	Modern post-hole / fence post	Circular posthole with a sharp break of slope concave sides and a concave base. Small post-hole / fence post feature possibly truncated by rooting. In close proximity to pit 306 at South east end of trench.	0.76 – 0.90m

Trench 4

Maximum dimensions: Length: 25.00m Width: 3.50m Depth: 0.76m

Orientation: NE - SW

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
400	Topsoil	Loose, humic, dark blackish brown clayey sand with occasional sub-rounded stones.	0.00 – 0.42m
401	Subsoil	Moderately compacted dark orangeish brown clayey sand with frequent sub-rounded pebbles.	0.42 – 0.62m
402	Natural	Soft mid orangey yellow sands with abundant sub-rounded gravels.	0.62m +
403	Fill of pit 404	Soft dark brownish black silty sand with occasional sub-rounded pebbles. Sterile dark fill of possible pit.	0.50 – 1.08m
404	Cut of pit	Sub-circular pit with steep sides and a concave base.	0.42 – 1.08m
405	Upper fill sealing pit 404	Soft mid yellow brown silty sand. Material similar to subsoil sealing or in top of pit. In wash of material before top of pit is ploughed out.	0.42 – 0.50m
406	Fill of pit 404	Soft mid greyish brown sands and gravels with frequent sub-rounded pebbles. Natural material disturbed by roots and slipping into pit.	0.50 – 1.17m

Appendix 2 Technical information

The archive (site code: WSM 66630)

The archive consists of:

13	Context records AS1
1	Field progress reports AS2
1	Photographic records AS3
122	Digital photographs
1	Drawing number catalogues AS4
9	Scale drawings
1	Context number catalogues AS5
1	Sample number catalogues AS18
4	Trench record sheets AS41
1	CD-Rom/DVDs
1	Copy of this report (bound hard copy)

The project archive is intended to be placed at:

Worcestershire County Museum
Museums Worcestershire
Hartlebury Castle
Hartlebury
Near Kidderminster
Worcestershire DY11 7XZ
Tel Hartlebury (01299) 250416
