

# Archaeological evaluation at Site adjacent to Martley C of E Primary School, Martley, Worcestershire



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## **Archaeological evaluation at Site adjacent to Martley C of E Primary School, Martley, Worcestershire**

Andrew Walsh

### **Summary**

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at Site adjacent to Martley C of E Primary School, Martley, Worcestershire (NGR SO 7585 5991). It was commissioned by CgMs Consulting Ltd on behalf of their client who intends to develop the site for housing, for which a planning application has been submitted.

Six trenches were excavated in a grid array across the site. The site lay on sloping ground and the works revealed a series of probable colluvial deposits built up against a field boundary in the lowest part of the site. This was consistent with the identification of a series of plough furrows which were orientated down the slope. The evaluation also revealed two undated postholes, which may relate to the site's former use as an orchard. No evidence of any other archaeological activity was identified during the evaluation and no finds were recovered during the works.

## Report

### 1 Background

#### 1.1 Reasons for the project

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at Site adjacent to Martley C of E Primary School, Martley, Worcestershire (NGR SO 7585 5991). It was commissioned by CgMs Consulting Ltd on behalf of their client who intends to develop the site for housing for which a planning application has been submitted to Malvern Hills District Council (references 13/00981/OUT and 14/00431/REM).

The proposed development site was considered to include heritage assets and potential heritage assets, the significance of which may have been affected by the application.

No brief was issued by the archaeological planning advisor but the works conformed to the standard brief for archaeological evaluation within Worcestershire. A written scheme of investigation was produced by Worcestershire Archaeology (WA 2015). The project conforms to the *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 WSM67185.

### 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.

### 3 Methods

#### 3.1 Personnel

The project was led by, Andrew Walsh (BSc; MSc; ACIfA; FSA Scot); who joined Worcestershire Archaeology in 2013 and has been practicing archaeology since 2004, assisted by Graham Arnold (BA; MSc) and James Spry (BA; MA). The project managers responsible for the quality of the project were Tom Rogers (BA; MSc) and Tom Vaughan, (BA; MA; ACIfA). Illustrations were prepared by Laura Templeton (BA; PG Cert; MCIfA).

#### 3.2 Documentary research

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

#### 3.3 Fieldwork strategy

A written scheme of investigation was prepared by Worcestershire Archaeology (WA 2015). Six trenches, amounting to around 270m<sup>2</sup> in area, were excavated in a grid array over the site area of 5200m<sup>2</sup>, representing a sample of 5%. The location of the trenches is indicated in Figure 2.

The fieldwork was undertaken between 2 September 2015 and 4 September 2015. The site reference number and site code is WSM67185.

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 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.

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### **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 methodology**

#### **3.5.1 Artefact recovery policy**

Artefact recovery was undertaken according to standard Worcestershire Archaeology practice (WA 2012). In the event no artefact were recovered from the site.

### **3.6 Environmental archaeology methodology**

#### **3.6.1 Sampling policy**

Sampling was undertaken according to standard Worcestershire Archaeology practice (WA 2012). Two samples were taken by the excavator from deposits considered to be of potential for the recovery of environmental remains. However, as no datable material associated with these contexts was retrieved, these samples have not been processed.

#### **3.6.2 Discard policy**

The samples will be discarded after a period of 6 months after the submission of this report, unless there is a specific request to retain them:

### **3.7 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 proposed development site occupies a rectangular-shaped field. The site is bounded by the car park for Martley C of E Primary School to the north, farmland to the east and south and by Martley C of E Primary School to the west. The site slopes gently from a height of 73m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) in the north to 67m aOD in the south. The underlying geology is mapped as Mercia Mudstone Group (BGS 2015). Superficial deposits are not mapped within the site.

The HER holds no records of archaeological activity on or near the site. However, the site is located to the east of the historic core of the medieval settlement of Martley. St Peter's Church (WSM03369), which dates to the early 12th century, is located 200m west of the site and to the north-east of the church, approximately 150m west of the site, is the timber framed Old Hall, a former Rectory dating to about AD1300 (WSM06780). To the south-east, south and west of the church there are extensive earthworks which may also date to the medieval period (WSM08209 and WSM08214).

The Martley tithe map (1843) records the field name of the site as Barbers O[rchard] and OS mapping records the site as an orchard during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Historic mapping also indicates that a trackway or holloway ran eastwards from the church past the southern boundary of the site.

### **4.2 Current land-use**

The site was, until recently, an orchard, although the trees have now been removed and the site is rough grassland.

## 5 Structural analysis

The trenches and features recorded are shown in Figure 2. The detailed results of the structural analysis are presented in Appendix 1 and a summary of the archive is presented in Appendix 2.

### 5.1.1 Phase 1: Natural deposits

The underlying natural deposit in all trenches was a brownish red weathered mudstone with occasional patches of grey cobbles.

### 5.1.2 Phase 2: Undated deposits

In Trench 1 and the southern half of Trench 2 the natural strata (107/203) a series of probable colluvial deposits (102, 109 and 202) which had been built up at the lower part of the site against the southern field boundary. These deposits contained a number of irregular lenses or patches of charcoal material including deposit (105). A charcoal rich colluvial deposit also filled a possible gully (104) which cut a possible natural deposit (108; Plate 1). No finds were recovered from any of these deposits or features.

In Trench 4 two small possible postholes (404) and (406; Plate 2) were identified. Both were filled by light, yellowish brown silty clay deposits which contained occasional charcoal flecks. No finds were recovered from the postholes. Shallow furrows orientated north to south were identified in Trenches 3 and 6.

### 5.1.3 Phase 3: Modern deposits

The deposits in all trenches were sealed by light yellowish or orangey brown sandy clay measuring 0.25-0.40m in depth. This was overlaid by a mid greyish brown clayey silt topsoil measuring 0.15-0.30m in depth. A number of ceramic field drains cut the subsoil and earlier deposits.

## 6 Synthesis

The evaluation revealed a series of probable colluvial deposits built up against the southern field boundary in the lowest part of the site. This is consistent with the identification of a number of plough furrows which were orientated from north to south down the slope. The evaluation also revealed two undated postholes, which may relate to the site's former use as an orchard. No evidence of any other archaeological activity was identified during the evaluation and no finds were recovered during the works.

## 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 Site adjacent to Martley C of E Primary School, Martley, Worcestershire (NGR SO 7585 5991). It was commissioned by CgMs Consulting Ltd on behalf of their client who intends to develop the site for housing for which a planning application has been submitted.*

*Six trenches were excavated in a grid array across the site. The site lay on sloping ground and the works revealed a series of probable colluvial deposits built up against a field boundary in the lowest part of the site. This was consistent with the identification of a series of plough furrows which were orientated down the slope. The evaluation also revealed two undated postholes, which may relate to the site's former use as an orchard. No evidence of any other archaeological activity was identified during the evaluation and no finds were recovered during the works.*



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## 8 Acknowledgements

Worcestershire Archaeology would like to thank the following for their assistance in the successful conclusion of this project, Will Bedford of CgMs Consulting Ltd for commissioning the project, Adrian Scruby of Worcestershire County Council for monitoring the project, and Brian Pearce of Kendrick Homes for his assistance on site.

## 9 Bibliography

BGS 2015 *Geology of Britain Viewer*, <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>, British Geological Survey, accessed 8 September 2015

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

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

WA 2015 *Written Scheme of Investigation for an archaeological evaluation of the site adj Martley C of E Primary School, Martley, Worcestershire*, Worcestershire Archaeology, Worcestershire County Council, unpublished document dated 27 August 2015, **P4634**

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



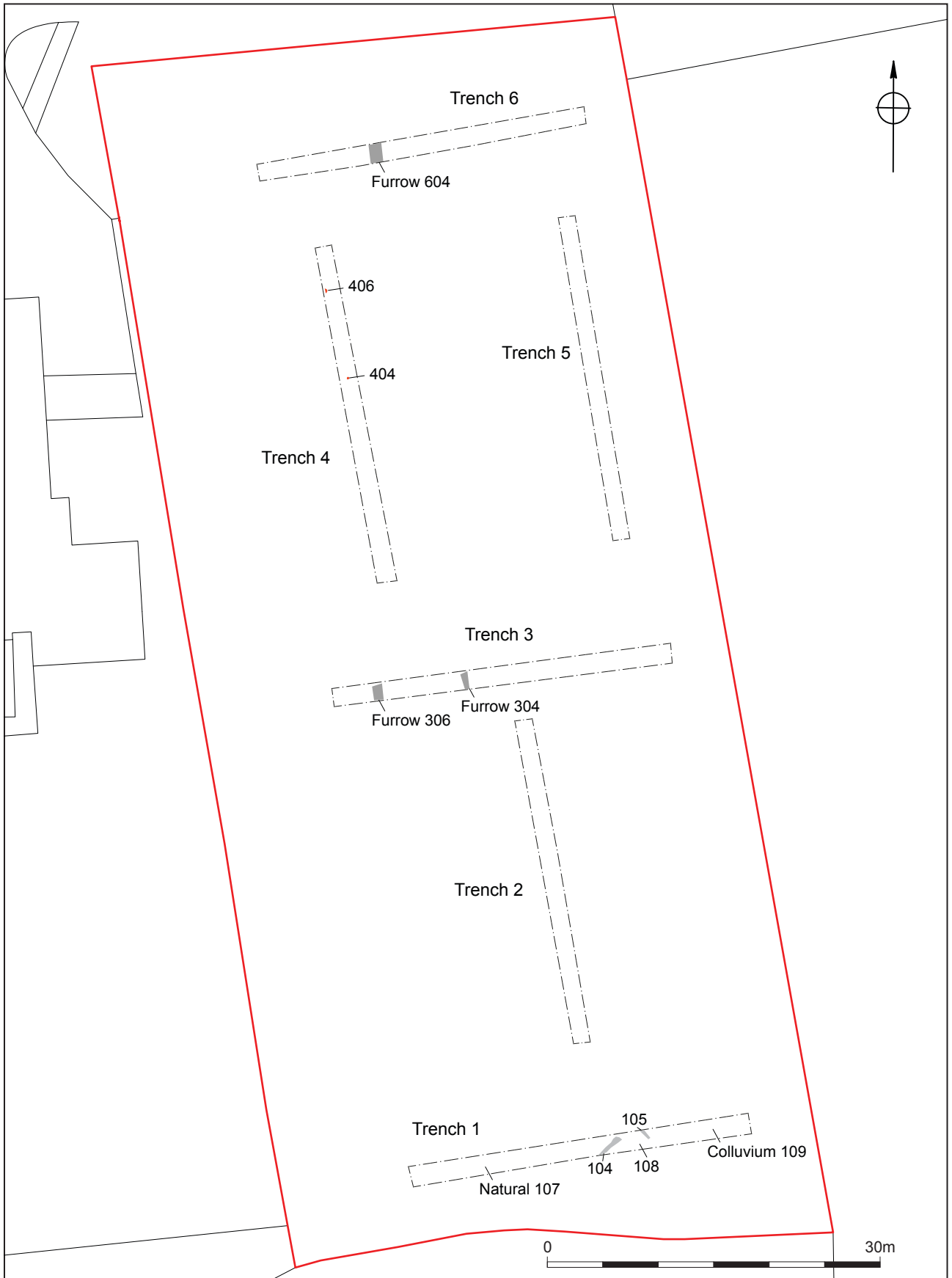


## Figures



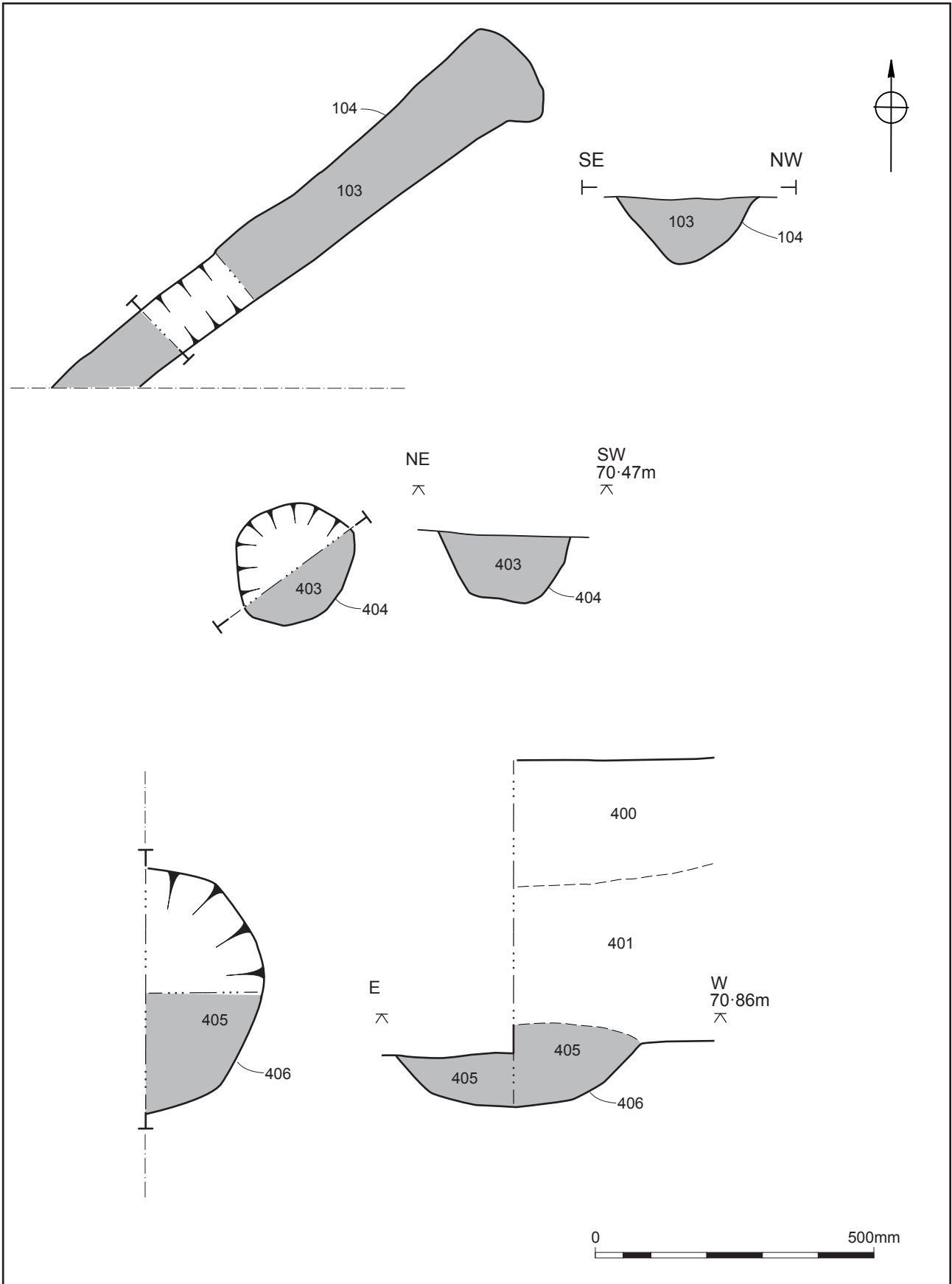
Location of the site

Figure 1



Plan of trenches

Figure 2



Archaeological features

Figure 3



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## Plates



*Plate 1: A deep layer of colluvium (102) was located at the southern end of the site. This contained a number of irregular lenses or patches of charcoal material which also filled a possible gully (104)*



*Plate 2: Posthole (404) was one of two undated postholes identified on the site.*

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## Appendix 1 Trench descriptions

### Trench 1

Maximum dimensions: Length: 30.8m Width: 1.5m Depth: 1.20m

Orientation: East-west

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
100	Topsoil	Mid greyish brown clayey silt	0-0.3m
101	Subsoil	Light orangey brown sandy clay	0.3-0.6m
102	Colluvium	Light orangey brown clay	0.6-1.2m+
103	Deposit	Charcoal rich clay fill of feature (104)	1.2-1.3m
104	Cut	Possible gully cutting (108)	1.2-1.3m
105	Deposit	Layer or lens of charcoal between deposits (109) and (108)	1.25m
107	Natural	Mid reddish brown clay mudstone at west end of trench	1.2m+
108	Natural?	Dark reddish brown clay in central part of trench	1.2m+
109	Alluvium/ colluvium	Dark greyish brown clay with frequent charcoal flecking at east end of trench	1.2m+

### Trench 2

Maximum dimensions: Length: 29.6m Width: 1.5m Depth: 0.8-1.1m

Orientation: North-south

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
200	Topsoil	Mid greyish brown clayey silt	0-0.3m
201	Subsoil	Light orangey brown sandy clay	0.3-0.6m
202	Colluvium	Light orangey brown clay at southern end of trench only. Same as (102).	0.6-1.1
203	Natural	Mid reddish brown clay mudstone	0.6m+

### Trench 3

Maximum dimensions: Length: 30.8m Width: 1.5m Depth: 0.7m

Orientation: East-west

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
300	Topsoil	Dark orangey brown clayey silt	0-0.3m
301	Subsoil	Light yellowish brown sandy clay	0.3-0.64m
302	Natural	Mid reddish brown clay mudstone	0.64m+
303	Deposit	Light yellowish brown sandy clay fill of furrow (304)	0.64-0.72m
304	Cut	Cut of N-S aligned furrow	0.64-0.72m
305	Deposit	Light yellowish brown sandy clay fill of furrow (306)	0.64-0.69m
306	Cut	Cut of N-S aligned furrow	0.64-0.69m

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**Trench 4**

Maximum dimensions: Length: 30.8m    Width: 1.5m    Depth: 0.5m

Orientation:                    North-south

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
400	Topsoil	Dark orangey brown clayey silt	0-0.15m
401	Subsoil	Light yellowish brown sandy clay	0.15-0.40m
402	Natural	Mid reddish brown clay mudstone	0.40m+
403	Deposit	Light yellowish brown silty clay fill of posthole (404)	0.40-0.52m
404	Cut	Cut of posthole	0.40-0.52m
405	Deposit	Light yellowish brown silty clay fill of posthole (406)	0.64-0.69m
406	Cut	Cut of posthole	0.64-0.69m

**Trench 5**

Maximum dimensions: Length: 29.5m    Width: 1.5m    Depth: 0.45-0.68m

Orientation:                    North-south

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
500	Topsoil	Dark orangey brown clayey silt	0-0.20m
501	Subsoil	Light yellowish brown sandy clay	0.20-0.60m
502	Natural	Mid reddish brown clay mudstone	0.40m+

**Trench 6**

Maximum dimensions: Length: 29.9m    Width: 1.5m    Depth: 0.75m

Orientation:                    East-west

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
600	Topsoil	Dark orangey brown clayey silt	0-0.25m
601	Subsoil	Light yellowish brown sandy clay	0.25-0.75m
602	Natural	Mid reddish brown clay mudstone	0.75m+
603	Deposit	Light yellowish brown sandy clay fill of furrow (604)	0.75-0.85m
604	Cut	Cut of N-S aligned furrow	0.75-0.85m

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## **Appendix 2 Technical information**

### **The archive (site code: WSM67185)**

The archive consists of:

- 8 Context records AS1
- 1 Field progress reports AS2
- 1 Photographic records AS3
- 55 Digital photographs
- 1 Drawing number catalogues AS4
- 3 Permatrace scale drawings AS34
- 1 Sample number catalogues AS18
- 6 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

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