Archaeological evaluation and watching brief for the Hereford Southern Link Road

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

Status:	Revision 2 (additional geotechnical monitoring)
Date:	16 October 2015
Author:	Pete Lovett (plovett@worcestershire.gov.uk) Simon Woodiwiss (swoodiwiss@worcestershire.gov.uk) and Graham Arnold (garnold@worcestershire.gov.uk)
Contributors:	Laura Griffin and Liz Pearson
Illustrator:	Carolyn Hunt and Laura Templeton
Project reference:	P4525
Report reference:	2249
HER reference:	EHE 80149 (eval) + EHE 80163 (wb)
Oasis identification	fieldsec1-226292

Contents

Archaeological evaluation and watching brief for the Hereford Southern Link Road

Pete Lovett, Simon Woodiwiss and Graham Arnold

With contributions by Laura Griffin and Elizabeth Pearson

Illustrations by Carolyn Hunt and Laura Templeton

Summary

An archaeological evaluation and watching brief was undertaken for the Hereford Southern Link Road (NGR SO 4900 3680). It was undertaken on behalf of Herefordshire Council and their agent Parsons Brinckerhoff, who intend to construct a new section of road to connect the A49 and the A465.

Geotechnical trial pits were also monitored following the evaluation. Only natural deposits were observed during this stage of works.

One area of significance was identified. Here at least one feature of early to middle Iron Age date had been identified and it was considered very likely that other features would be broadly contemporary. The site was dated through the few sherds of pottery present and it included evidence of metalworking from a pit containing smithing slag and a hearth bottom. The available artefacts suggested a short-lived period of activity for the site.

Report

1 Background

1.1 Reasons for the project

An archaeological evaluation and a watching brief on geotechnical works was undertaken at Hereford Southern Link Road, Herefordshire (NGR SO 4900 3680). It was undertaken on behalf of Herefordshire Council and their agent Parsons Brinckerhoff, who intend to construct a new section of road to connect the A49 and the A465, for which a planning application will be submitted, to Herefordshire Council.

The proposed development site is considered to include heritage assets and potential heritage assets, the significance of which may be affected by the application (HHER 24074, HHER 32436).

The project conforms to a brief prepared by Parsons Brinckerhoff (PB 2015a) and for which a project proposal (including detailed specification) was produced (WA 2015).

The project also conforms to the *Standard and guidance: Archaeological field evaluation* (CIfA 2014); *Standards for archaeological projects in Herefordshire: issue 1* (Herefordshire Archaeology 2004).

The event reference for this project, given by the HER is EHE 80149.

2 Aims

The aims of this project were:

- to describe and assess the significance of archaeological heritage assets;
- to establish the nature, importance and extent of the archaeological assets;
- to assess the impact of the application on the archaeological assets.

3 Methods

3.1 Personnel

The evaluation was undertaken by Peter Lovett (BSc (hons)), who joined Worcestershire Archaeology in 2012 and has been practicing archaeology since 2004. He was assisted in the field by James Spry (BA (hons), MA (hons)). The geotechnical pit monitoring was undertaken by Graham Arnold (BA (hons) MSc), Suzi Richer (BSc (hons), MSc, Phd) and Simon Woodiwiss (BA (hons); MCIfA). The project manager responsible for the quality of the project was Simon Woodiwiss (BA (hons); MCIfA). Illustrations were prepared by Carolyn Hunt (BSc (hons), PG Cert; MCIfA), and Laura Templeton (MCIfA). Elizabeth Pearson (MSc; ACIfA; MAEA) contributed the environmental report, Laura Griffin (BA (hons); PG Cert; ACIfA) finds report, Robert Hedge (MA Cantab) the finds processing. Additional text was prepared by Simon Woodiwiss (BA (hons); MCIfA).

3.2 Documentary research

An archaeological desk-based assessment (DBA) was undertaken by Parsons Brinckerhoff (PB 2015b). This included a search of the Herefordshire Historic Environment Record (HER). Reference numbers in this report prefixed by HA refer to references made to heritage assets in the DBA. The DBA considered two search areas; an inner and an outer study area. Seven heritage assets were identified within the inner study area, of which three would be physically impacted by the route of the proposed development. These were the line of a former tramway (HA09), potential brickworks within Brick Close Orchard (HA10) and a pre-1850 parish boundary hedgerow (HA12; *ibid*, 49).

3.3 List of sources consulted

Documentary sources

Published and grey literature sources are listed in the bibliography.

3.4 Fieldwork strategy

A detailed specification has been prepared by Worcestershire Archaeology (WA 2015).

Fieldwork for the evaluation was undertaken between 15th June 2015 and 24 August 2015, and was divided into three phases as access was agreed for the trenches. The HER event reference number for the evaluation is EHE 80149.

Twenty-nine trenches, amounting to 995m in total length and 1755m² in area, were excavated along the route of the proposed road (3.5km in length). The width of the proposed works area varies but the length of trenching gives a 28% sample of the road length. The location of the trenches is indicated in Figure 2a–e. Following a geophysical survey of the proposed site, some of the trenches were positioned to test specific features. Eight trenches were located to test potential archaeological features, as revealed by geophysical survey (GSB 2015, please note that the definitive report was not available during the preparation of this report). These were Trenches 5, 6, 13, 23, 24, 25, 26 and 27. Trench 29 was not excavated with the agreement of the archaeological advisor to Herefordshire Council.

Deposits considered not to be significant were removed using a 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.

The heavy clay soils that were encountered in a significant number of trenches were very difficult to remove, especially in dry conditions.

A further phase of geotechnical pit monitoring took place between 8 September and 29 September 2015, with negative results. The HER event number for the watching brief is EHE 80163.

The watching brief involved monitoring 34 trial pits and 12 pits excavated to undertake CBR tests. The trial pits were dug with a wheeled excavator employing a toothless bucket and under archaeological supervision.

3.5 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.

3.6 Artefact methodology, by Laura Griffin

3.6.1 Artefact recovery policy

The artefact recovery policy conformed to standard Service practice (WAAS 2012, appendix 4).

3.6.2 Method of analysis

All hand-retrieved finds were examined. Pottery sherds were identified, quantified and dated to period. A spot date was produced for each stratified context (see Table 2). All information was recorded on a *pro forma* Microsoft Access 2007 database. Where identified, pottery fabrics are referenced to the fabric reference series maintained by Worcestershire Archaeology (Hurst and Rees 1992; www.worcestershireceramics.org).

3.7 Environmental archaeology methodology, by Elizabeth Pearson

3.7.1 Parameters

The environmental project conforms to relevant sections of the *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (IfA 2014), *Environmental Archaeology: a guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation* (English Heritage 2010), and Environmental archaeology and archaeological evaluations (AEA 1995).

3.7.2 Sampling policy

Samples were taken according to standard Worcestershire Archaeology practice (2014). A total of 10 samples (each of up to 10 litres) were taken from the site (Table 1).

3.7.3 Processing and analysis

The samples were processed by flotation using a Siraf tank. The flots were collected on a 300μm sieve and the residue retained on a 1mm mesh. This allows for the recovery of items such as small animal bones, molluscs and seeds.

The residues were scanned by eye and the abundance of each category of environmental remains estimated. A magnet was also used to test for the presence of hammerscale. The flots were scanned using a low power MEIJI stereo light microscope and plant remains identified using modern reference collections maintained by Worcestershire Archaeology, and a seed identification manual (Cappers *et al* 2012). Nomenclature for the plant remains follows the *New Flora of the British Isles*, 3rd edition (Stace 2010).

The cell structure of all the charcoal samples was examined under a low-power microscope to distinguish between oak and non-oak species.

3.7.4 Discard policy

It is suggested that only items related to the Iron Age be retained. The brick waster may also be of interest to the museum.

3.8 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

For a more complete appraisal of the topography and archaeological context, please refer to the desk-based assessment (PB2015b).

The solid geology consists of Raglan Mudstone formation, of interbedded mudstone and siltstone, formed between 416 and 419 million years ago. Superficial deposits, where they exist, are alluvial clays, silts, sands, and gravels (BGS 2015).

4.2 Current land-use

The proposed site is a mixture of pasture and arable farmland, with the latter being predominant.

5 Structural analysis

The trenches and features recorded are shown in Figure 2a–e and descriptions are presented in Appendix 1. Photographs from the evaluation phase are shown in Plates 1 -13, whilst the watching brief phase is demonstrated in Plates 14-17.

5.1.1 Phase 1: Natural deposits

The nature of the geology varied across the length of the site, and often within trenches as well. The majority of that observed was a pink siltstone, though this would occasionally give way to more stony deposits. Trenches 1 to 3 in particular revealed ridges of bedrock emerging at shallow depths.

Where there were superficial deposits, they tended to extend to some depth, sometimes measuring greater than a metre below the current ground level.

The variation in the natural geology over the site can be seen in the geotechnical test pits, with mainly mudstone and siltstone present but also areas of river gravels, and solid sandstone.

Only naturally occurring deposits were encountered in the watching brief stage, with a soft grey clay layer found in Trial Pit 207, thought to be a naturally occurring tree pit, land drainage or a geological anomaly.

5.1.2 Phase 2: Iron Age

Trench 23 contained an oval pit (2307) that had a clear sequence of burning, relining, burning and sealing. This produced a single sherd of pottery in a poor, heavily abraded condition. Close to the pit was a feature that was originally thought to be a pit, but turned out to be a ditch (2310). It was not clear where it ran to, but the upper fill was made up entirely of charcoal. The lower fill was a light clay silt, and produced six sherds of pottery. Some of this was burnished, whilst the remainder was similar in condition to that retrieved from the fire pit. The pottery is of Early to Middle Iron Age date. Two fragments of ferrous waste were also retrieved from this fill.

The unexcavated feature was a small pit to the east (2312). It had a similar fill to the upper deposit in the fire pit, though no heat affected discolouration could be seen.

Two pits were revealed in Trench 24. Both had a similar upper fill, and so only one was excavated (2407 was not excavated). The upper fill of this sub-circular pit (2405) was probably a sealing deposit over a more charcoal rich lower fill. There were some fragments of fired clay, along with lumps of slag, though no in situ scorching around the cut. This suggests a rakeout/waste pit function. Whilst undated, it is considered likely that both pits are related to those Iron Age features observed in Trench 23.

The archaeological features appeared at depths of between 400–520mm.

5.1.3 Phase 3: post-medieval deposits

At the south-easterly end of Trench 5 there was a spread of soft grey clay (503) with a large amount of organic material within it. This was predominantly decaying wood, possibly old roots (a large tree was felled and its stump excavated in this field, within the lifetime of the current farmer). Sealing this layer was a soft grey clay, with occasional decaying roots within it. Post-medieval pottery and ceramic building material was retrieved from the clay, including a brick waster.

Within Trench 13 a small gully, containing a horseshoe, was excavated at the north-eastern end of the trench.

A small amount of pottery was found in the topsoil / ploughsoil of the trial pits which dated to the post-medieval period.

5.1.4 Phase 4: modern deposits

A thin dark sandy silt with frequent charcoal and clinker (601) was observed between the top and subsoils within Trench 6. This was a dump of waste material deposited in the 20th century.

Two areas of burning (1305 and 1306) were revealed in Trench 13. These had scorched the subsoil and natural. Both of these instances of burning had shown up on the geophysical survey. The current farmer was aware that the previous tenant had cut down a large hedgerow and burnt it, with the line of the hedge close to the position of the evaluation trench.

Modern topsoil and ploughsoil was observed in the geotechnical pits. Anecdotal evidence from the tenant farmer said that some of the topsoil had been removed and natural clay material dumped 25 years previously, to raise levels following a road widening scheme, before the topsoil was replaced. This was in evidence with land drains encountered much deeper, at 1.20m below the ground level in the field containing TPs 201 – 206 and TP231. However, the use of local redeposited material and weathering over time meant that no distinction in geological strata was seen. This area is highlighted on figure 2d and 2e. Modern ceramic land drains were recorded in TP202, TP203 and TP206 and were restored.

5.1.5 Phase 5: undated deposits

Ditches and gullies

A ditch nearly 2m wide (404), was excavated at the northern end of Trench 4. It was filled by a homogeneous deposit similar to the surrounding subsoil. No finds were retrieved. Whereas it seems possible that this is post-medieval in date, there are characteristics that would argue for an earlier date. Firstly the fills are very similar to the surrounding natural and secondly it is not shown as a feature on any of the historic maps considered by the DBA (PB 2015b, figs 3-5). It does, however, run approximately parallel to the present northern field boundary.

There were two ditches in Trench 10. One (1002) was 1.4m wide and had vertical sides. It seems likely this was a machine dug trench, and it was backfilled with an undated mixed sediment. It was excavated to a depth of 0.72m, without the base being reached. The other ditch (1003) was wider but shallower, at 2.5m across. It was again undated but had a land drain cutting it. It seems likely that this was drainage feature.

A shallow (170mm) ditch (Trench 12; 1203), was filled with in-washed natural, though a moderate amount of charcoal had washed in as well. This lies close to the line of the tramway (HA09), but no conclusive association can reasonably be suggested.

Two small ditches were excavated in Trench 18 (1804 and 1806). One was running north-east to south-west, and was partially disturbed by an animal burrow. The other ran on a slightly different alignment, more to the east. Neither feature yielded any dating evidence.

A narrow and steep sided ditch, cut through colluvium in Trench 21 (2104). It was likely to be modern, but yielded no dating evidence.

A tightly curving gully in Trench 27 (2705) was very shallow (40mm) and contained no dating evidence. This was, however set within an area of geophysical anomalies indicative of archaeological features. Though the trench had been located specifically to test these anomalies it is tempting to suggest that this is not representative (that archaeological features may exist in the vicinity), and further to relate this area to the Iron Age features in Trenches 23 and 24.

Pits

Two features were observed in Trench 17 (1705 and 1707). Both were shallow pits with sterile and undated fills.

5.2 Artefact analysis, by Laura Griffin

The assemblage recovered from the site totalled 87 finds weighing 2391g (see Tables 1 and 2). The majority of material came from Trenches 23 and 24, with these finds dating to the Iron Age. Remaining material was found in smaller amounts from other trenches along the route and of post-medieval and modern date. Level of preservation was good, with finds displaying moderate levels of surface abrasion.

A very small assemblage of abraded post-medieval and modern domestic pottery and ceramic building material of 18th to 20th century date was recovered during the geotechnical monitoring phase. A single highly abraded 1g sherd of an unidentified oxidised quartz-tempered glazed medieval ware was recovered from the ploughsoil in the vicinity of test pit 231 (Pers Comm R Hedge).

period	material class	material subtype	object specific type	total	weight (g)
Iron Age	Slag	slag (Fe)		3	212
Iron Age	ceramic		Pot	13	32
Iron Age	ceramic	fired clay		21	27
Iron Age	Slag	hammerscale	smithing slag	frags	1
Iron Age	Slag	slag (Fe)	smithing slag	5	2
Iron Age	Slag	slag (Fe)	smithing slag (hearth bottom)	24	213
Iron Age	Slag	slag (Fe)	fuel ash slag	1	1
medieval	metal	Iron	Horseshoe	2	206
?medieval	metal	Iron	Horseshoe	3	82
post-medieval	ceramic		Pot	3	60
post-medieval	ceramic		roof tile(flat)	3	69
post-medieval	ceramic		Brick	3	1326
modern	ceramic		Pot	3	134
modern	metal	Tin		2	10
undated	Slag	slag (Fe)		1	16

Table 1: Quantification of the artefactual assemblage

5.3 Summary of artefactual evidence by period

Iron Age

All material of definite Iron Age date was retrieved from Trench 23. These finds included 13 sherds of pottery which were identified as being of Early-Middle Iron Age date (2303 and 2309). Two distinct fabric types were identified; a mudstone tempered ware (Fabric 9) similar to that identified within the assemblage from Clifton Quarry, Worcestershire (Mann *et al* 2011) and the second a fine sand and shell-tempered ware (Fabric 4.4) reminiscent of sherds from Beckford, Worcestershire (D Hurst pers comm).

Non-pottery material from two features (pit 2307 and ditch 2310) consisted of fired clay and fragments of iron smithing slag, which were dated to the same period by association. Burnt deposits and layers within pit 2307 may indicate that the slag and fired clay from this feature represent the remains of a smithing hearth.

Finds from Trench 24 came from a single pit fill (2404) and consisted of fragments of smithing slag and fired clay similar to that from Trench 23. In addition, fragments of hammerscale and possible hearth bottom were also identified. It is thought that this material is almost certainly contemporary with that from Trench 23.

Medieval

Two horseshoes of medieval form were retrieved from the fill of a small gully (1303) in Trench 13. Material from the only other excavated feature in this trench was of later date.

Post-medieval

Post-medieval material came from contexts in Trenches 5 (503) and 13 (1305). That from Trench 5 came from a layer and consisted of two sherds of domestic pottery and a brick. The pottery consisted of a small sherd from a slipware plate (Fabric 91) and the base of a locally produced bowl, both of which could be dated to the second half of the 17th century. The brick was bloated and warped. The thickness of this brick at <2 inches, indicates it to be of similar date to the pottery.

Finds from context 1305 were also of 17th century date and consisted of ceramic building material, a fragment of undiagnostic iron slag and a small sherd of locally produced glazed earthenware.

A very small assemblage of abraded post-medieval and modern domestic pottery and ceramic building material of 18th to 20th century date was recovered during the geotechnical monitoring phase. A single highly abraded 1g sherd of an unidentified oxidised quartz-tempered glazed medieval ware was recovered from the ploughsoil in the vicinity of test pit 231. (R Hedge pers comm).

Modern

A small quantity of modern material was retrieved from top- and sub-soil contexts.

context	material class	material subtype	object specific type	count	weight (g)	start date	end date	finds TPQ
503	ceramic		pot	1	25	M17C	18C	M17-18C
503	ceramic		pot	1	34	17C		
503	ceramic		brick	1	1308			
601	ceramic		pot	2	133	L19C	20C	20C
601	metal	Tin		2	10		20C	
1100	ceramic		pot	1	1	L19C	20C	20C
1100	ceramic		roof tile(flat)	2	25			
1303	metal	Iron	horseshoe	2	206			medieval

context	material class	material subtype	object specific type	count	weight (g)	start date	end date	finds TPQ
1303	metal	Iron	horseshoe	3	82			
1305	slag	slag(Fe)		1	16			16-17C
1305	ceramic		roof tile(flat)	1	44			
1305	ceramic		pot	1	1	16C	17C	
1305	ceramic		brick	2	18			
2303	ceramic		pot	1	2			Early-Middle Iron Age
2303	ceramic	fired clay		1	1			
2303	slag	slag(Fe)	smithing slag	5	2			
2304	ceramic	fired clay		7	18			Early-Middle Iron Age
2404	slag	hammerscale	smithing slag	frags	1			
2404	slag	slag(Fe)	smithing slag	24	213			
2305	ceramic	fired clay		4	1			Early-Middle Iron Age
2306	slag	slag(Fe)	fuel ash slag	1	1			
2308	ceramic	fired clay		9	7			
2309	slag	Slag(Fe)		3	212			Early-Middle Iron Age
2309	ceramic		pot	12	30			

Table 2: Summary of context dating based on the artefacts

5.4 Environmental analysis, by Liz Pearson

5.5 Iron Age

These samples, particularly those from a pit (2307), were all rich in charcoal that appears to be exclusively oak (*Quercus robur/petraea*). Charred cereal grain was also relatively abundant, consisting of a combination of predominantly spelt wheat (*Triticum spelta*) and free-threshing wheat (*Triticum* sp free threshing), with occasional grains of hulled barley (*Hordeum vulgare*) and oat (Avena sp). The spelt wheat grains were relatively plump, making distinction between spelt and free-threshing wheat difficult.

These remains were found in association with fired clay and occasional iron slag, suggesting the presence of hearths which were used for parching or drying cereal grain. The occasional iron slag may suggest multi-purpose hearths which were also used for metal working, but as the charred cereal remains were dominant, they are most likely to have been corn dryers. Of note is the presence of plump spelt wheat grains and free-threshing wheat grain. The latter is sometimes found in small quantities in prehistoric deposits, but in this case spelt and free-threshing type wheat

grains are similarly abundant. There also appears to have been specialized selection of oak wood fuel.

5.6 Post-medieval

One sample of this date, a layer (504), was rich in organic remains, presumably preserved as a result of waterlogging. Seeds of bramble, sedge and violet were identified but little interpretation could be made of the assemblage.

5.7 Modern

Charred stem fragments were found in a burnt feature (1305). These are non-oak, have large vessels, and may be a shrub or climber. No further identification has been carried out to date.

5.8 Undated

Only occasional charcoal fragments were identified in ditch fill 1202 and gully fill 2705.

6 Synthesis

6.1 Earlier prehistoric

The results of the evaluation complement those of the desk-based assessment (PB 2015b) with nothing to indicate the potential existence of sites of these periods. The only proviso that may be made is that the nature of the proposed scheme as a long narrow corridor makes the prospection for such sites difficult, given that they do tend to be less readily visible. It may be that the undated features in Trenches 4, 12, 17, 18 and 27 relate to these or later periods, though no more than the possibility may be reasonably expressed.

6.2 Iron Age

At least one feature of Iron Age date has been identified and it is very likely that other features in Trenches 23 and 24 are broadly contemporary. It is reasonable to expect that these features relate to a settlement, due to their number (from within a relatively small area sample), and presence of pottery (likely to relate to domestic occupation) and metalworking evidence (indicative of other activities that will assist with characterisation of the site). The available artefacts suggest a short lived period of activity for the site.

Environmental remains from the fire pit (2307) and a ditch (2308) show specialized collection of oak wood fuel, and parching of cereal grain in a fire pit or corn dryer. The presence of plump spelt wheat grains and free-threshing wheat grains is uncharacteristic of assemblages of this date locally. The results are suggestive of an arable producer site, or at least a settlement where cereal crops were being processed in bulk.

6.3 Roman and medieval

The results of the evaluation again complement those of the desk-based assessment (PB 2015b) with nothing to indicate the potential existence of sites of these periods. The only proviso that may be made is that the nature of the proposed scheme as a long narrow corridor makes the prospection for such sites difficult, though (with the exception of sites of post-Roman to early medieval date) they do tend to be more readily visible. It may be that the undated features in Trenches 4, 12, 17, 18 and 27 relate to these or later periods, though no more than the possibility may be reasonably expressed.

6.4 Post-medieval and modern

The burnt area exposed in Trench 13 (1305) may relate to recent burning of a hedge by a previous tenant but it is possible that it relates to a brick kiln. The trench is in the area of HA10 with the fieldname Brick Close Orchard/Meadow, and it may be argued that this implies the presence of a kiln. This interpretation is unlikely for the following reasons: there are very few brick finds from the

trench, there is no structural evidence for a kiln, the fieldname is not a definitive reference to a kiln (the HER lists 66 entries for the less unequivocal "brick kiln" field name (http://htt.herefordshire.gov.uk/27.aspx accessed 27 August 2015), and it is common for brick kilns to be located close to the building for which their products were intended (Heywood Lodge or the railway are the closest though the former is at some distance and the latter does not appear to have any brick structures in this vicinity). The evidence for a kiln in Trench 13 is therefore discounted. Though the sample of trenches and geophysical survey produced no clear evidence for brick production, it is still possible that a kiln exists in this vicinity, but the likelihood has been reduced.

No other features from these periods are of any great interest.

6.5 Research frameworks

This section has been prepared with reference to the research framework provided by *Archaeology of the West Midlands* (Watt 2011).

Iron Age

Though few Iron Age settlements have been excavated an initial model has been suggested as their being characterised as having little change to their layout (Hurst 2011, 10), though whether this is for extensive periods or reflecting movement to new sites is uncertain. Whether this is the case for the site on the Hereford SLR, as evidenced from Trenches 23 and 24 would be of interest. The DBA (PB 2015b, section 4.1.14) draws attention to two excavated sites at Moorcroft Farm and Cold Furrow. Both of these are late Iron Age and later, whereas that at the Hereford SLR has been provisionally dated to the Early to Middle Iron Age, but comparison between these sites will add to a developing knowledge of the Iron Age in Herefordshire.

Hurst has also drawn attention to the potential for significant sites on clay soils to exist (Hurst 2011, 108), which are more difficult to locate, and that at Hereford SLR may be a further example. Attention has also been drawn to the potential for significant quantities of environmental evidence through plant macrofossils (Hurst 2011, 108), and that potential has been established for the Hereford SLR site. Comparison of the ironworking activity at Hereford SLR would also be of interest, especially as Herefordshire has a well-known centre for iron production at, what was to become in the Roman period, Ariconium.

Should the site at Hereford SLR prove to provide a significant quantity of contexts, ecofacts and artefacts Hurst (2011, 119) has drawn attention to the need to build in a reasonable level of synthesis into briefs, placing the site is its context rather than viewing it in isolation.

The Iron Age in Herefordshire is most well-known for its hillforts, though other settlement types are less readily visible, and also likely to be a significant part of the landscape. This is emphasised in the DBA (PB 2015, section 4.1.15).

7 Significance

7.1 Nature of the archaeological interest in the site

Iron Age settlement

The archaeological evidence of settlement consists of pits and ditches to a fair level of survival (80-340mm in depth). There is structural and artefact evidence of iron working, together with the existence of significant environmental plant macrofossil assemblages, and artefacts. The low potential for residuality within the artefact assemblage enhances is quality. Though no definitive Iron Age site was identified in the DBA the significance of this period to Herefordshire and the potential for sites to exist was identified (PB 2015b, sections 4.1.12-15), and has been bourn-out in the results of this evaluation.

7.2 Relative importance of the archaeological interest in the site

Iron Age settlement

The archaeological site is rare within Herefordshire, with few sites being excavated (outside of hillforts). The research frameworks section above outlines some initial questions to be answered but in view of the relative paucity of existing information this site is highly likely to contribute considerable to knowledge of this period. The research potential of this site is therefore considerable.

7.3 Physical extent of the archaeological interest in the site

Iron Age settlement

Definition of an area of archaeological activity is problematic, but the following case is made to aid design. To the west of Trench 23, if it is assumed that the absence of significance in Trench 22 is indicative that Iron Age activity did not extend this far an indicative boundary may be drawn equidistant between the two trenches. Trench 21 lies close by and again contained no significant archaeological features, lending support to Trench 22 being indicative of absence.

Establishing an eastern boundary is more difficult. Trench 27 did not produce an unequivocal negative result and it is possible that the geophysical anomalies are more representative. Here an indicative boundary can be drawn just to the west of Trench 28.

The survival of features is fairly good (see section 7.1 above) though there is no suggestion that any considerable stratigraphic sequence will exist for this site. Occasional inter-cutting of features may be expected. Existing just below topsoil these deposits are very vulnerable to construction activity, not only through bulk excavation of soils but also tracking of plant across exposed surfaces.

8 The impact of the development

8.1 Impacts during construction

Iron Age settlement

The site is suggested to lie approximately between chainage 250 and 600 (PB 2015b, fig 3.3) and the road lies on an embankment to the east and in cutting to the west. Any significant deposits will be removed in the area of cutting, and are very likely to be at least adversely affected in the area of embankment unless is possible to produce and implement a design that preserves them. As regards the area under embankment, though it may be theoretically possible to design a successful scheme for preservation, this will effectively remove the opportunity for further investigation of the site for the lifetime of the road, and not be a reasonably cost effective strategy.

8.2 Impacts on sustainability

The historic environment is a non-renewable resource and therefore cannot be directly replaced. However mitigation through recording and investigation also produces an important research dividend that can be used for the better understanding of the area's history and contribute to local and regional research agendas (cf NPPF, DCLG 2012, section 141).

9 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 Hereford Southern Link Road (NGR SO 4900 3680, HER reference EHE 80149; EHE 80163*). It was undertaken on behalf of Herefordshire Council and their agent Parsons Brinckerhoff, who intend to construct a new section of road to connect the A49 and the A465.*

Geotechnical trial pits were also monitored following the evaluation. Only natural deposits were observed during this stage of works.

One area of significance was identified. Here at least one feature of Early to Middle Iron Age date had been identified and it was considered very likely that other features would be broadly contemporary. The site was dated through the few sherds of pottery present and it included evidence of metalworking from a pit containing smithing slag and a hearth bottom. The available artefacts suggested a short-lived period of activity for the site.

10 Acknowledgements

Worcestershire Archaeology would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project, Alison Plummer, Elizabeth Murray and Charlotte Vallance, of Parsons Brinckerhoff, Dean Neale of Balfour Beatty Living Places, and Julian Cotton, Archaeological Advisor for Herefordshire Council.

11 Bibliography

BGS 2014 *Geology of Britain Viewer*, http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html, British Geological Survey, accessed 10th August 2015

Cappers, R T G, Bekker, R M , Jans, J E A, 2006 *Digital seed atlas of the Netherlands*. Groningen Archaeological Studies, **4**, Barkhuis Publishing and Groningen University Library, Groningen

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

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

English Heritage 2010 *Environmental archaeology: a guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation*, Centre for Archaeology Guidelines

GSB 2015 *Interim geophysical survey report G1556 South Wye Transport Package: Southern Link Road,* GSB Prosepction, unpublished document dated 3rd June 2015

Herefordshire Archaeology 2004 *Standards for archaeological projects in Herefordshire: issue 1*, Herefordshire Council Planning Services, document dated 27 August 2004

Hurst, D, 2011 Middle Bronze Age to Iron Age: a research assessment overview and agenda, in Watt 2011

Hurst, J D, and Rees, H, 1992 Pottery fabrics; a multi-period series for the County of Hereford and Worcester, in S G Woodiwiss (ed), *Iron Age and Roman salt production and the medieval town of Droitwich*, CBA Res Rep, 81, 200-9

Mann, A, Clapham, A and Griffin, L 2011 *Excavation and Salvage Recording at Clifton Quarry, Severn Stoke, Worcestershire,* Historic Environment and Archaeology Service, Internal Report, **1779**

PB 2014 *South Wye Transport Package: Southern Link Road Archaeological watching brief written scheme of investigation,* Parsons Brinckerhoff, unpublished document dated November 2014

PB 2015a *South Wye Transport Package: Southern Link Road Archaeological field evaluation written scheme of investigation,* Parsons Brinckerhoff, unpublished document dated January 2015

PB 2015b *South Wye Transport Package: Southern Link Road Cultural heritage desk-based assessment,* Parsons Brinckerhoff, unpublished document dated April 2015

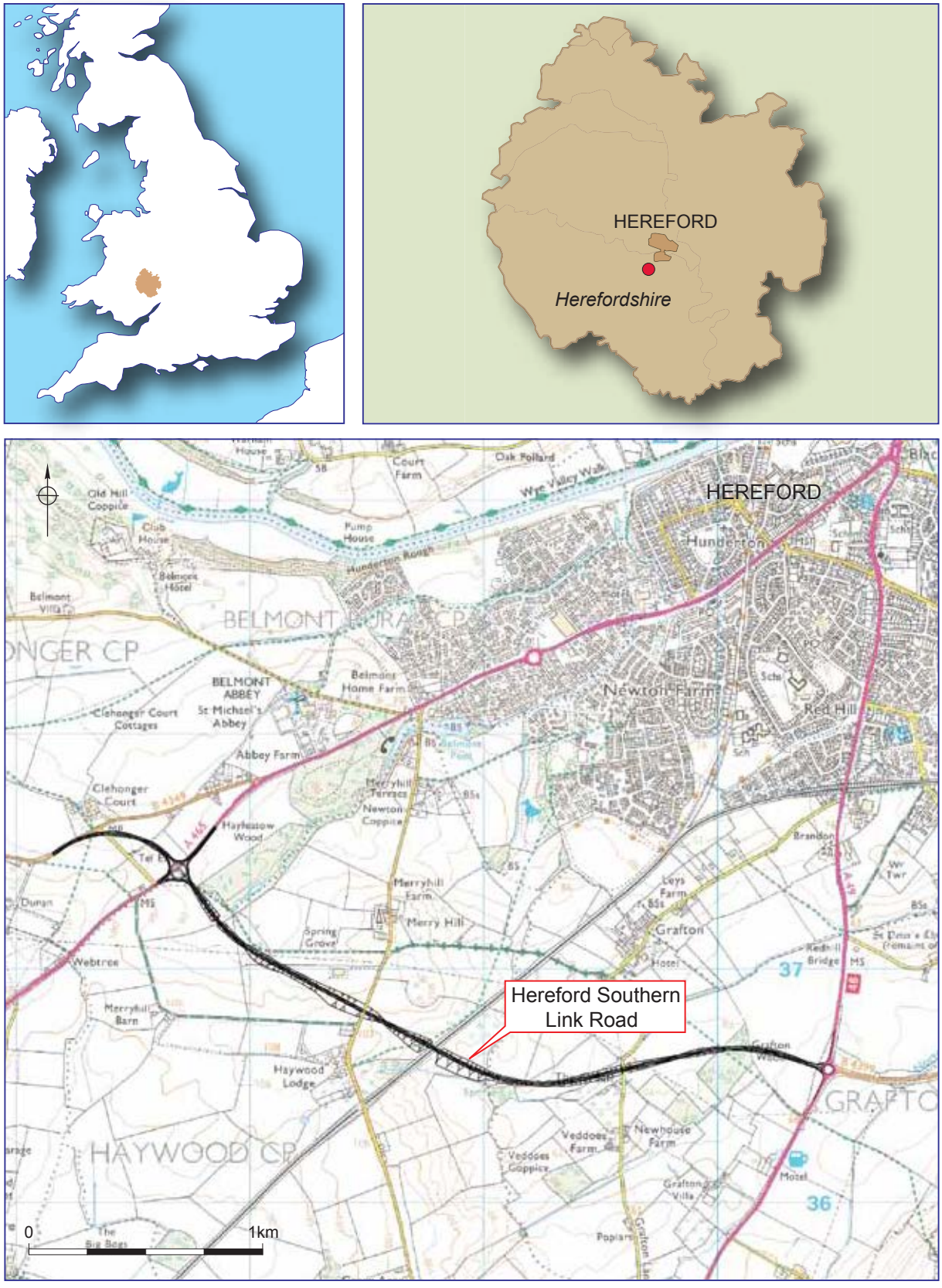
Stace, C, 2010 *New flora of the British Isles*, Cambridge University Press, (3rd edition)

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

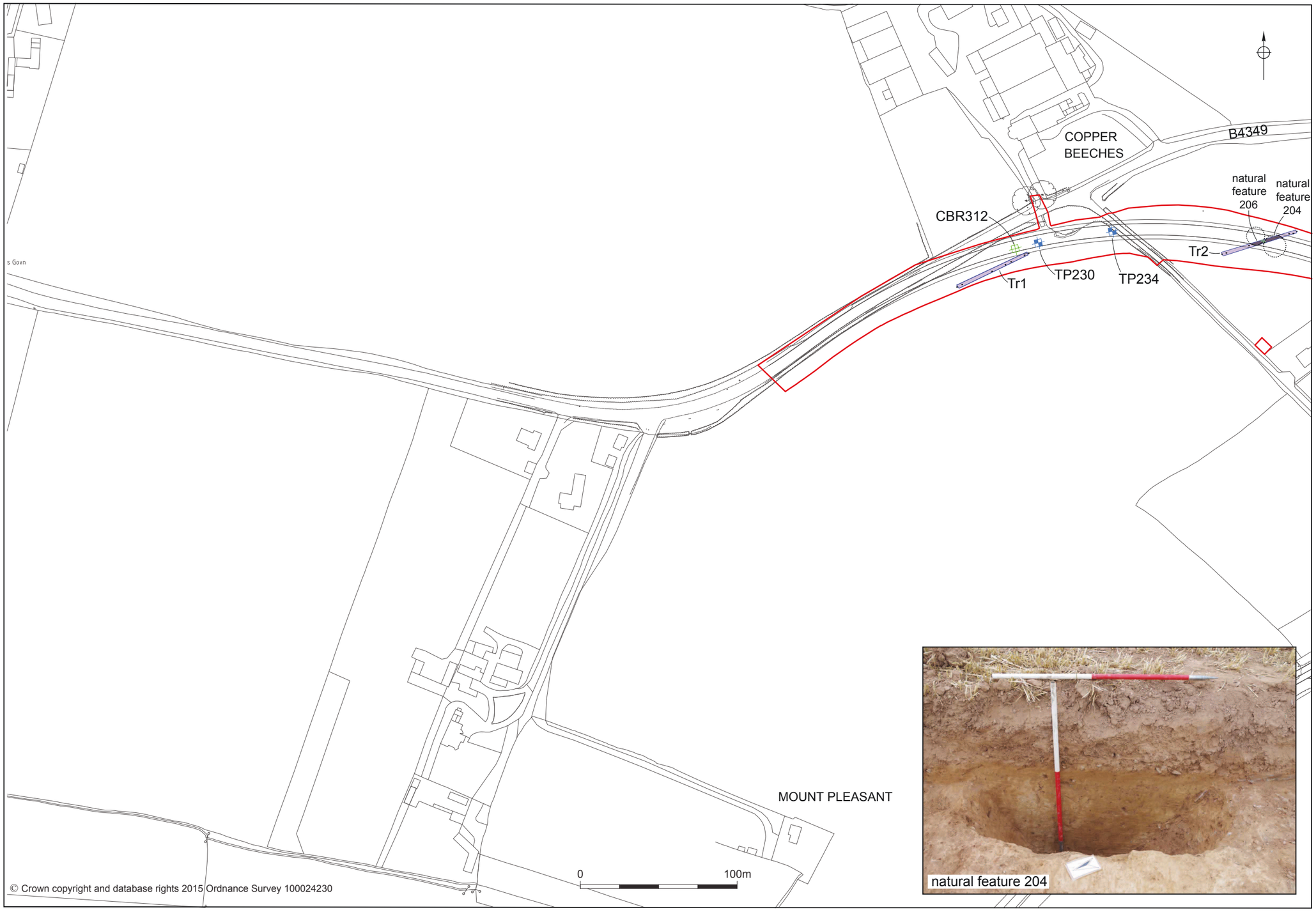
WA 2015 *Proposal for an archaeological evaluation of the Hereford Southern Link Road*, Worcestershire Archaeology, Worcestershire County Council, unpublished document dated 6th February 2015, **P4525**

Watt, S, 2011 The archaeology of the West Midlands. A framework for research, Oxford and Oakville, Oxbow Books

Figures



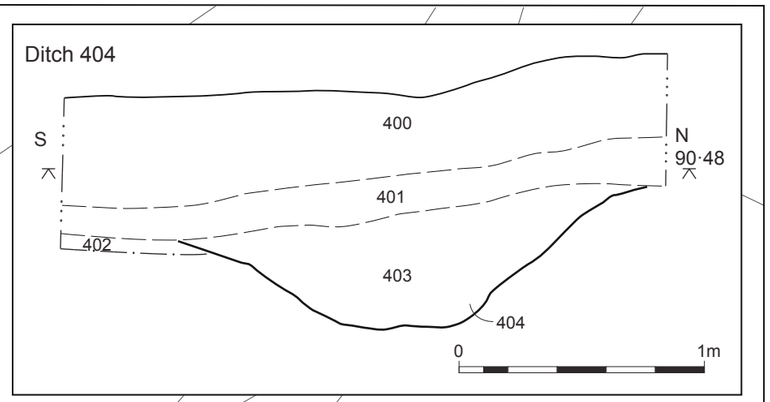
Location of the HSLR *Figure 1*



Trench locations (based upon Parsons Brinckerhoff Figure 2a)

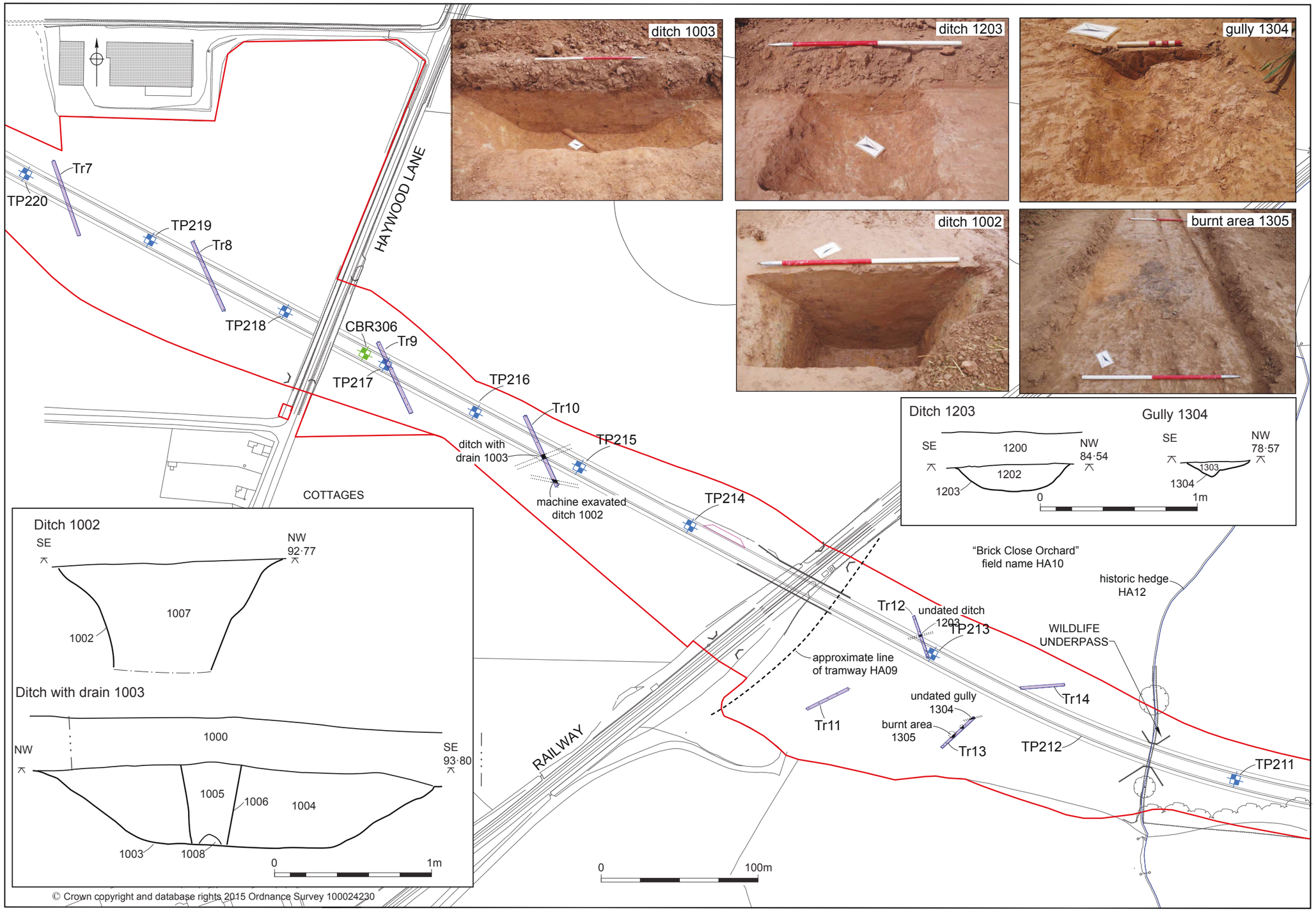
Figure 2a

Tr2
TP229
CBR311
CBR307
TP233
Tr3
TP228
A465
PYKEWAYS
GOLDEN POST HOUSE
GOLDEN POST COTTAGE
CBR310
TP227
post-medieval ditch 404
Tr4
TP226
Tr5
20th century spread 503
WILDLIFE UNDERPASS
TP225
TP232
TP224
TP223
Tr6
CBR309
TP222
CBR308
TP221
Tr7
FTL
0
100m
© Crown copyright and database rights 2015 Ordnance Survey 100024230



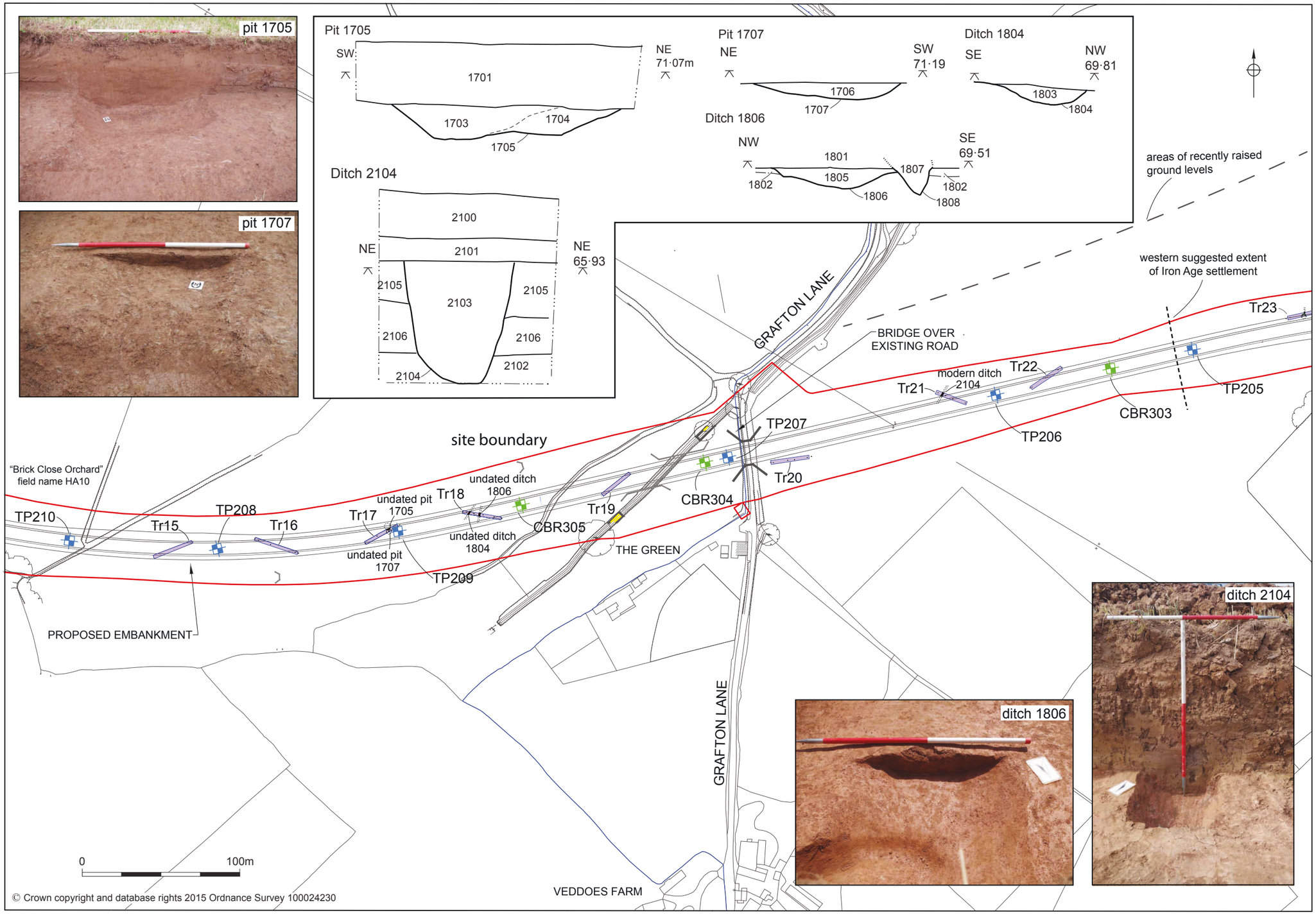
Trench locations (based upon Parsons Brinckerhoff Figure 2b)

Figure 2b



Trench locations (based upon Parsons Brinckerhoff Figure 2c)

Figure 2c



HSLR (based upon Parsons Brinckerhoff Figure 2d)

Figure 2d

areas of recently raised ground levels

DRAINAGE ATTENUATION POND

TP231

Tr26

Tr25

suggested northern extent of Iron Age settlement

?Iron Age pit 2405

Iron Age ditch 2310

pit 2407

Tr24

TP204

Tr23

pit 2312

Iron Age hearth 2307

GRAFTON WOOD

suggested eastern extent of Iron Age settlement

TP203

CBR302

TP202

Tr27

undated gully 2705

Tr28

TP201

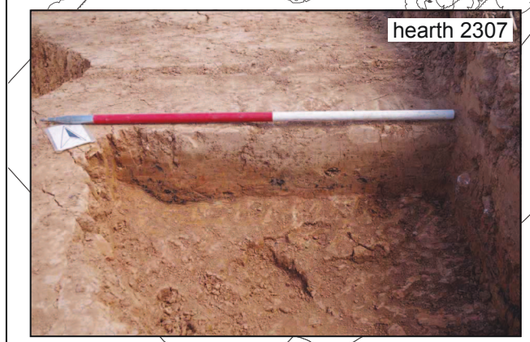
Tr30

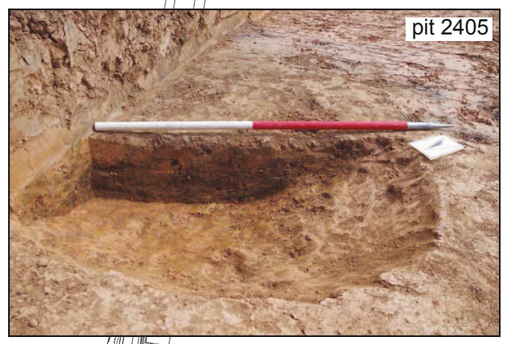
CBR301

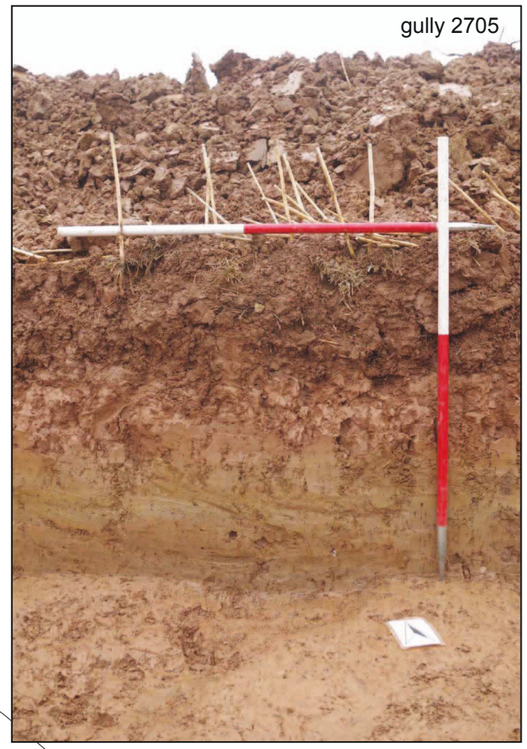
ETL

A49T

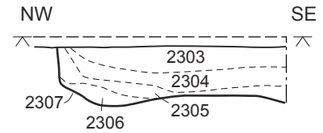
0 100m



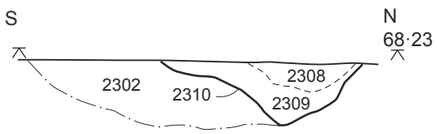




Hearth 2307



Ditch 2310



Pit 2405

Trench locations (based upon Parsons Brinckerhoff Figure 2e)

Figure 2e

Plates

Plate 1 Ditch 404, looking west

Plate 2 spread of organic rich material 504/505

Plate 3 Ditch 1002, looking north-west

Plate 4 Ditch 1003, looking north-east

Plate 5 Gully 1203, looking south-west

Plate 6 Area of burning in Trench 13, 1305. Looking north-west

Plate 7 Pit 1705, looking north-east

Plate 8 Ditch 1806, looking north-east

Plate 9 Ditch 2104, looking south-east

Plate 10 Charcoal fill in hearth 2307

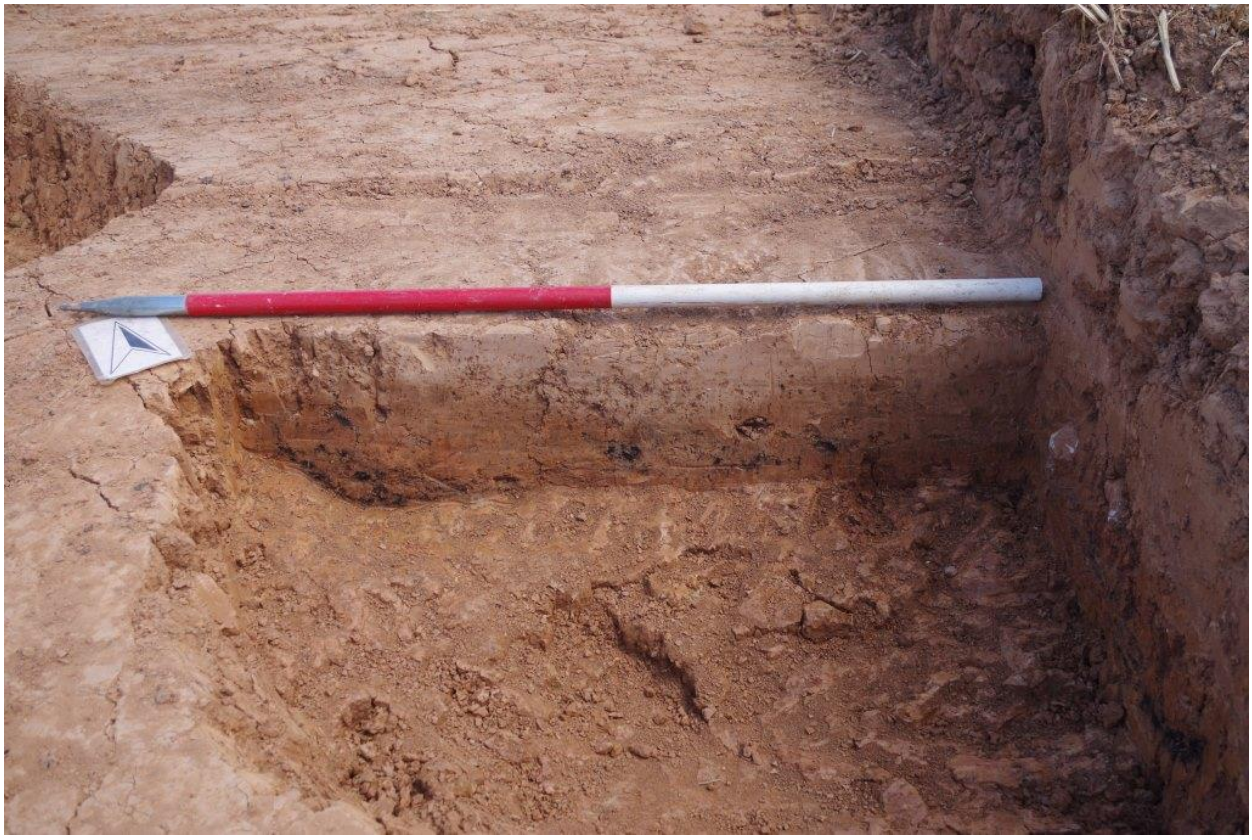


Plate 11 Hearth 2307, with heated affected edge

Plate 12 Ditch 2310, seen in section

Plate 13 Charcoal-rich pit 2405

Plate 14 Undertaking geotechnical pitting

Plate 15 Example of topsoil, marl and solid Mercian mudstone sandstone in geotechnical pit

Plate 16 Grey clay in TP207 overlain by clay and topsoil.

Plate 17 River gravels present in TP228, TP229 and TP233

Appendix 1 Trench descriptions

Trench 1

Length: 50m Width: 1.8m Orientation: North-east to south-west

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
100	Topsoil	Layer	Firm mid yellowish brown sandy silt	0.35m	
101	Subsoil	Layer	Firm mid brownish yellow sandy silt	0.7m	
102	Natural	Layer			Stoney firm mid orange red silt

Trench 2

Length: 50m Width: 1.8m Orientation: North-east to south-west

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
200	Topsoil	Layer	Firm light reddish grey sandy silt	0.4m	
201	Subsoil	Layer	Firm light yellowish brown sandy silt	0.22m	
202	Natural	Layer			Stoney firm mid orange red silt
203	Tree root hole	Fill	Soft light whitish grey sandy silt		Sterile fill of tree root hole
204	Tree root hole	Cut			Natural feature
205	Tree root hole	Fill			Fill of tree root hole
206	Tree root hole	Cut			Natural feature

Trench 3

Length: 50m Width: 1.8m Orientation: North-west to south-east

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
300	Topsoil	Layer	Firm mid yellowish brown sandy silt	0.24m	
301	Subsoil	Layer	Firm mid brownish yellow sandy silt	0.18m	
302	Natural	Layer			Very stony with sandstone bedrock

Trench 4

Length: 50m Width: 1.8m Orientation: North to south

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
400	Topsoil	Layer	Moderately compact light yellowish brown clay silt	0.46m	
401	Subsoil	Layer	Firm mid yellowish brown clay silt	0.55m	
402	Natural	Layer	Firm mid reddish brown siltstone		
403	Ditch	Fill	Moderately compact mid reddish brown clay silt	0.5m	Sterile fill of ditch 404
404	Ditch	Cut		0.5m	E-W ditch, of no known date. Probable post-med field ditch.

Trench 5

Length: 50m Width: 1.8m Orientation: North-west to south-east

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
500	Topsoil	Layer	Moderately compact light yellowish brown clay silt	0.32m	
501	Subsoil	Layer	Firm mid yellowish brown clay silt	0.24m	
502	Natural	Layer	Firm mid reddish brown clay silt		
503	Layer	Layer	Soft light greyish brown silty clay	0.25m	Spread of soft clay. Some tree roots rotted within. Uncertain of age or process of formation.
504	Layer	Layer	Soft dark brownish grey silty clay	0.11m	Spread of clay with a high concentration of wood fragments in it. May be decaying roots. Under 503.

Trench 6

Length: 50m Width: 1.8m Orientation: North-west to south-east

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
600	Topsoil	Layer	Moderately compact light yellowish brown clay silt	0.36m	
601	Modern Layer	Layer	Firm dark greyish black sandy silt	0.12m	Spread of dumped material. C20th
602	Subsoil	Layer	Firm mid yellowish brown clay silt	0.1m	
603	Natural	Layer	Moderately compact mid reddish brown clay silt		

Trench 7

Length: 50m Width: 1.8m Orientation: North-west to south-east

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
700	Topsoil	Layer	Moderately compact light yellowish brown clay silt	0.34m	
701	Subsoil	Layer	Firm mid reddish brown clay silt	0.2m	
702	Natural	Layer	Compact mid brownish red siltstone		

Trench 8

Length: 50m Width: 1.8m Orientation: North-west to south-east

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
800	Topsoil	Layer	Moderately compact light yellowish brown clay silt	0.4m	
801	Subsoil	Layer	Firm mid reddish brown clay silt	0.08m	
802	Natural	Layer	Compact mid brownish red siltstone		

Trench 9

Length: 50m Width: 1.8m Orientation: North-west to south-east

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
900	Topsoil	Layer	Moderately compact light yellowish brown clay silt	0.45m	
901	Subsoil	Layer	Firm mid reddish brown clay silt	0.4m	
902	Natural	Layer	Compact mid reddish brown silty clay		

Trench 10

Length: 50m Width: 1.8m Orientation: North-west to south-east

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
1000	Topsoil	Layer	Moderately compact light yellowish brown clay silt	0.34m	
1001	Natural	Layer	Compact mid brownish red clay silt		
1002	Ditch	Cut		0.72m	Probably machine dug ditch, undated. Not bottomed.
1003	Ditch	Cut		0.52m	Wide flat bottomed ditch. Undated. Had land drain cutting it.
1004	Ditch	Fill	Firm mid reddish brown clay silt	0.52m	Sterile fill of ditch 1003
1005	Field drain	Fill			Fill of land drain cut 1006
1006	Field drain	Cut			Cut for land drain
1007	Ditch	Fill	Firm mid reddish black clay silt	0.72m	Mixed backfill of ditch
1008	Field drain	Fill			Land drain

Trench 11

Length: 30m Width: 1.5m Orientation: North-east to south-west

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
1100	Topsoil	Layer	Moderately compact light yellowish brown clay silt	0.3m	
1101	Subsoil	Layer	Firm mid orangey brown silty clay	0.6m	
1102	Natural	Layer	Firm mid reddish brown clay		

Trench 12

Length: 30m Width: 1.5m Orientation: North-west to south-east

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
1200	Topsoil	Layer	Moderately compact mid yellowish brown clay silt	0.35m	
1201	Natural	Layer	Compact mid pinkish brown clay silt		
1202	Ditch	Fill	Compact mid pinkish black clay silt	0.17m	In-washed natural filling of ditch. Moderate charcoal flecks
1203	Ditch	Cut		0.17m	Small ditch running NE-SW. Undated

Trench 13

Length: 30m Width: 1.5m Orientation: North-east to south-west

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
1300	Topsoil	Layer	Moderately compact light yellowish brown clay silt	0.27m	
1301	Subsoil	Layer	Firm light orangey brown silty clay	0.16m	
1302	Natural	Layer	Moderately compact mid reddish brown siltstone		
1303	Gully	Fill	Firm light yellowish pink silty clay	0.1m	Fill of small gully.
1304	Gully	Cut		0.1m	Shallow gully
1305	Burnt Feature	Layer	Compact mid orangey brown silty clay		Area of burning, thought to have occurred when the previous farmer burnt a hedgerow within the last 50 years.
1306	Burnt Feature	Layer	Compact mid orangey brown silty clay		Area of burning similar to 1305
1307	Layer	Layer			Spread of clay silt with brick and burnt clay, associated with 1305

Trench 14

Length: 30m Width: 1.5m Orientation: North-east to south-west

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
1400	Topsoil	Layer	Moderately compact light yellowish brown clay silt	0.26m	
1401	Subsoil	Layer	Compact mid yellowish brown clay silt	0.3m	
1402	Natural	Layer	Compact mid yellowish brown clay silt		

Trench 15

Length: 25m Width: 1.8m Orientation: North-east to south-west

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
1500	Topsoil	Layer	Moderately compact mid greyish brown silt loam	0.42m	
1501	Natural	Layer	Firm mid reddish brown clay		

Trench 16

Length: 25m Width: 1.8m Orientation: North-west to south-east

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
1600	Topsoil	Layer	Moderately compact mid greyish brown silt loam	0.33m	
1601	Natural	Layer	Firm mid orangey brown clay		

Trench 17

Length: 25m Width: 1.8m Orientation: North-east to south-west

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
1700	Topsoil	Layer	Moderately compact light greyish brown silt loam	0.35m	
1701	Subsoil	Layer	Firm mid orangey brown silty sand	0.4m	
1702	Natural	Layer	Firm mid pinkish red siltstone		
1703	Pit	Fill	Firm dark orangey brown silty clay	0.22m	Fill of pit. Undated
1704	Pit	Fill	Firm mid pinkish brown silty	0.18m	Sterile fill of pit
1705	Pit	Cut		0.22m	Oval pit. Undated
1706	Pit	Fill	Firm mid pinkish brown silty sand	0.11m	Fill of pit/ditch
1707	Pit	Cut		0.11m	Cut of pit or possible ditch terminus. Undated
1708	Field drain	Fill			

Trench 18

Length: 25m Width: 1.8m Orientation: North-west to south-east

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
1800	Topsoil	Layer	Moderately compact mid brownish grey sandy loam	0.37m	
1801	Subsoil	Layer	Firm mid reddish brown silty clay	0.26m	
1802	Natural	Layer	Firm mid brownish red clay		
1803	Ditch	Fill	Firm mid orangey brown silty clay	0.11m	Fill of ditch. Undated
1804	Ditch	Cut		0.11m	Shallow gully
1805	Ditch	Fill	Firm mid orangey brown silty clay	0.13m	Undated fill of ditch
1806	Ditch	Cut		0.13m	Shallow ditch
1807	Animal disturbance	Fill		0.18m	Fill of animal burrow
1808	Animal disturbance	Cut			Animal burrow into ditch 1806.
1809	Field drain	Cut			

Trench 19

Length: 25m Width: 1.8m Orientation: North-east to south-west

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
1900	Topsoil	Layer	Moderately compact mid brownish grey sandy loam	0.27m	
1901	Subsoil	Layer	Compact light yellowish brown silty clay	0.4m	
1902	Natural	Layer	Firm mid pinkish red clay		

Trench 20

Length: 25m Width: 1.8m Orientation: East to west

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
2000	Topsoil	Layer	Firm mid greyish brown clay silt	0.37m	
2001	Subsoil	Layer	Firm mid yellowish brown sandy silt	0.42m	
2002	Natural	Layer	Firm mid pinkish red silt		

Trench 21

Length: 25m Width: 1.8m Orientation: North-west to south-east

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
2100	Topsoil	Layer	Firm mid greyish brown clay silt	0.3m	
2101	Subsoil	Layer	Firm mid yellowish brown sandy silt	0.28m	
2102	Natural	Layer	Firm mid pinkish red silt		
2103	Ditch	Fill	Firm dark yellowish brown sandy clay	0.54m	Probably modern ditch fill
2104	Ditch	Cut		0.54m	Probably modern field
2105	Natural	Layer	Firm dark yellowish brown sandy clay	0.34m	Colluvial subsoil
2106	Natural	Layer	Firm light yellowish brown silty clay	0.32m	Colluvial layer

Trench 22

Length: 25m Width: 1.8m Orientation: North-east to south-west

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
2200	Topsoil	Layer	Firm mid greyish brown sandy silt	0.38m	
2201	Natural	Layer			Pinky siltstone

Trench 23

Length: 25m Width: 1.80m Orientation: North-east to south-west

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
2300	Topsoil	Layer	Firm mid greyish brown sandy silt	0.30m	
2301	Subsoil	Layer	Firm mid yellowish brown sandy silt	0.07m	
2302	Natural	Layer			Pinky siltstone
2303	Pit	Fill	Firm mid yellowish brown clay silt	0.10m	Last silting of fire pit
2304	Pit	Fill	Moderately compact dark brownish black clay silt	0.08m	Charcoal rich fill of fire pit
2305	Pit	Fill	Firm mid reddish orange clay silt	0.14m	Fired clay fill/lining of
2306	Pit	Fill	Soft dark greyish black charcoal	0.08m	Charcoal fill of fire pit, only present around the outer edges of the base.
2307	Pit	Cut		0.34m	Fire pit, with some light heat colouration around edges. Probably had two phases, with 2305 being a new lining and some of 2306 having been removed.
2308	Ditch	Fill	Soft dark greyish black charcoal	0.11m	Charcoal fill of small ditch
2309	Ditch	Fill	Firm light yellowish grey clay silt	0.16m	Fill of small ditch
2310	Ditch	Cut		0.27m	Small ditch, not seen properly in plan, originally thought to be a pit
2311	Pit	Fill	Firm light yellowish grey clay silt		Fill of small pit,
2312	Pit	Cut			Small pit, unexcavated

Trench 24

Length: 25m Width: 1.80m Orientation: North to south

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
2400	Topsoil	Layer	Firm mid greyish brown clay silt	0.34m	
2401	Subsoil	Layer	Firm mid yellowish brown clay silt	0.10m	
2402	Natural	Layer			Pinky siltstone
2403	Pit	Fill	Firm mid yellowish brown clay silt	0.14m	Sealing fill of pit, covering charcoal and slag fill
2404	Pit	Fill	Firm dark yellowish grey clay silt	0.12m	Charcoal and slag rich fill. Possibly rake-out of fire pit
2405	Pit	Cut		0.24m	Oval pit, filled with metalworking waste
2406	Pit	Fill	Firm mid yellowish brown clay silt		Unexcavated fill of pit, similar to 2403
2407	Pit	Cut			Unexcavated pit. Similar fill to 2405

Trench 25

Length: 25m Width: 1.8m Orientation: East to west

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
2500	Topsoil	Layer	Firm mid greyish brown clay silt	0.35m	
2501	Subsoil	Layer	Firm mid yellowish brown clay silt	0.48m	
2502	Natural	Layer			Pinky siltstone

Trench 26

Length: 25m Width: 1.8m Orientation: North-east to south-west

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
2600	Topsoil	Layer	Firm mid greyish brown clay silt	0.34m	
2601	Subsoil	Layer	Firm mid yellowish brown clay silt	0.30m	
2602	Natural	Layer			Pinky siltstone

Trench 27

Length: 25m Width: 1.8m Orientation: East to west

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
2700	Topsoil	Layer	Firm mid greyish brown clay silt	0.32m	
2701	Subsoil	Layer	Firm mid brownish red clay	0.26m	
2702	Natural	Layer			Firm reddish brown clay
2703	Colluvium	Layer	Firm mid greenish grey clay silt	0.35m	Colluvial layer
2704	Gully	Fill	Firm mid brownish grey clay silt	0.04m	Charcoal rich fill of shallow curvilinear
2705	Gully	Cut		0.04m	Shallow tightly curved

Trench 28

Length: 25m Width: 1.8m Orientation: North-west to south-east

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
2800	Topsoil	Layer	Firm mid greyish brown clay silt	0.34m	
2801	Subsoil	Layer	Firm mid brownish yellow clay silt	0.23m	
2802	Natural	Layer			Pinky siltstone

Trench 30

Length: 25m Width: 1.8m Orientation: North-west to south-east

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
3000	Topsoil	Layer	Firm mid greyish brown clay silt	0.30m	
3001	Subsoil	Layer	Firm mid brownish yellow clay silt	0.06m	
3002	Natural	Layer			Pinky siltstone

Geotechnical trial pits

TP 201

Length: 2.5m Width: 0.6m Orientation: North-west to south-east

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
2010	Topsoil	Layer	Firm mid greyish brown clay silt	0.5m	
2011	Subsoil	Layer	Firm mid brownish yellow clay silt	0.5- 1.8m	
2012	Natural	Layer	Pinky siltstone / sandstone with clay lenses	1.8- 2.4m	

TP 202

Length: 2.5m Width: 0.6m Depth 2.4m Orientation: North-west to south-east

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
2020	Topsoil	Layer	Firm mid reddish brown clayey silt	0.5m	
2021	Subsoil	Layer	Firm mid brownish yellow clay silt	0.5- 1.8m	
2022	Natural	Layer	Pinky siltstone/sandstone	1.8- 2.4m	

TP 203

Length: 2.5m Width: 0.6m Depth 3.2m Orientation: North-west to south-east

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
2030	Topsoil	Layer	Firm mid reddish brown clayey silt	0.5m	
2031	Subsoil	Layer	Firm mid brownish yellow clay silt	0.5- 1.8m	
2032	Natural	Layer	Pinky siltstone / sandstone	1.8- 2.4m	

TP 204

Length: 2.5m Width: 0.6m Depth 2.0m Orientation: North-west to south-east

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
2040	Topsoil	Layer	Firm mid reddish brown clayey silt	0.4m	
2041	Subsoil	Layer	Firm mid brown red sandy clay	0.4- 0.8m	
2042	Natural	Layer	Natural red sands and gravels	0.80- 2.0m	

TP 205

Length: 2.5m Width: 0.6m Depth 2.4m Orientation: East to west

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
2050	Topsoil	Layer	Firm mid reddish brown silty	0.0 – 0.30	
2051	Subsoil	Layer	Firm brownish red sandy clay	0.3- 1.3m	
2052	Natural	Layer	Sands and sandstone geology	1.3- 2.4m	

TP 206

Length: 2.5m Width: 0.6m Depth 2.4m Orientation: East to west

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
2060	Topsoil	Layer	Firm mid reddish brown silty sandy clay	0.40m	
2061	Natural	Layer	Firm brownish red sandy clay including land drain	1.1m	
2062	Natural	Layer	Sands gravels and sandstone		1.1m

TP 207

Length: 2.6m Width: 0.6m Depth 2.6m Orientation: North to south

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
2070	Topsoil	Layer	Firm mid brown silty clay	0.20m	
2071	Subsoil	Layer	Firm mid brownish yellow sandy clay	0.20m	
2072	Natural	Layer	Friable reddish brown mottled sandy gravelly clay	0.80m	
2073	Natural	Layer	Soft light greyish brown clay	0.30m	Tree rooting/geological
2074	Natural	Layer	Mudstone and siltstone	1.40m	

TP 208

Length: 2.5m Width: 0.8m Depth 3.10m Orientation: North-east to south-west

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
2080	Topsoil	Layer	Firm mid brown clayey silt	0.10m	
2081	Subsoil	Layer	Firm light orangey brown clay	0.30m	
2082	Natural	Layer	Firm mid reddish brown clay	0.20m	
2083	Natural	Layer	Mudstone and sandstone	2.50m	

TP 209

Length: 2.5m Width: 0.6m Depth 2.10m Orientation: East to west

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
2090	Topsoil	Layer	Firm mid brown clayey silt	0.25m	
2091	Subsoil	Layer	Firm light orangey brown clay	0.15m	
2092	Natural	Layer	Compact mid reddish brown clay	0.60m	
2093	Natural	Layer	Mudstone and sandstone	1.10m	

TP 210

Length: 2.5m Width: 0.6m Depth 1.20m Orientation: East to west

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
2100	Topsoil	Layer	Firm mid brown sandy clay	0.30m	
2101	Subsoil	Layer	Firm mid yellowish brown clay	0.10m	
2102	Natural	Layer	Compact dark reddish brown clay	0.30m	
2103	Natural	Layer	Mudstone and sandstone	0.50m	

TP 211

Length: 2.5m Width: 0.6m Depth 1.20m Orientation: East to west

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
2110	Topsoil	Layer	Firm mid brown sandy clay	0.30m	
2111	Subsoil	Layer	Firm mid yellowish brown clay	0.20m	
2112	Natural	Layer	Bright orange red sandy clay	0.60m	
2113	Natural	Layer	Dark reddish brown Mudstone	0.50m	

TP 212

Length: 2.5m Width: 0.6m Depth 1.20m Orientation: East to west

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
2120	Topsoil	Layer	Firm mid brown sandy clay	0.30m	
2121	Subsoil	Layer	Firm mid reddish brown clay	0.20m	
2122	Natural	Layer	Bright orange red sandy clay	0.60m	

TP 213

Length: 2.5m Width: 0.6m Depth 2.00m Orientation: North-west to south-east

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
2130	Topsoil	Layer	Firm mid reddish brown sandy clay	0.40m	
2131	Natural	Layer	Firm brownish red clay with blue mottling	1.60m	
2132	Natural	Layer	Siltstone and Mudstones		

TP 214

Length: 2.5m Width: 0.6m Depth 1.70m Orientation: North-west to south-east

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
2140	Topsoil	Layer	Firm mid reddish brown sandy clay	0.40m	
2141	Natural	Layer	Firm brownish red clay with blue mottling	1.30m	
2142	Natural	Layer	Interbedded Silt / sandstones		

TP 215

Length: 2.5m Width: 0.6m Depth 2.10m Orientation: East to west

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
2130	Topsoil	Layer	Firm mid reddish brown sandy clay	0.30m	
2131	Natural	Layer	Friable brownish red silty clay	1.80m	
2132	Natural	Layer	Siltstone and Mudstones		

TP 216

Length: 2.5m Width: 0.6m Depth 3.50m Orientation: North-west to south-east

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
2160	Topsoil	Layer	Moderately compact mid brown Clayey silt	0.30m	
2161	Natural	Layer	Firm brownish red clay with becoming redder at depth	1.60m	Located within small valley post glacial infill build up

TP 217

Length: 2.5m Width: 0.6m Depth 2.70m Orientation: East to west

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
2170	Topsoil	Layer	Firm mid brown clayey silt	0.10m	
2171	Subsoil	Layer	Firm reddish brown clayey silt	0.30m	
2172	Natural	Layer	Firm brownish red silty clay	2.30m	
2173	Natural	Layer	Mudstone and siltstone		

TP 218

Length: 3.0m Width: 0.6m Depth 1.90m Orientation: East to west

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
2180	Topsoil	Layer	Firm mid brown clayey silt	0.30m	
2181	Subsoil	Layer	mid reddish brown clay	0.30m	
2182	Natural	Layer	Dark reddish brown clay	0.40m	
2183	Natural	Layer	Mudstone and siltstone	0.90m	

TP 219

Length: 3.0m Width: 0.6m Depth 2.00m Orientation: East to west

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
2190	Topsoil	Layer	Firm mid brown clayey silt	0.30m	
2191	Subsoil	Layer	Firm mid reddish brown clay	0.10m	
2192	Natural	Layer	Red Mercian Mudstone	1.60m	

TP 220

Length: 2.9m Width: 0.6m Depth 2.80m Orientation: East to west

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
2200	Topsoil	Layer	Firm mid brown clayey silt	0.30m	
2201	Subsoil	Layer	Firm mid reddish brown clay	0.10m	
2202	Natural	Layer	Red Mercian Mudstone	1.60m	

TP 221

Length: 2.9m Width: 0.6m Depth 2.80m Orientation: East to west

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
2210	Topsoil	Layer	Firm mid brown clayey silt	0.30m	
2211	Natural	Layer	Firm mid reddish brown clay	0.70m	
2212	Natural	Layer	Red Mercian Mudstone	3.00m	

TP 222

Length: 2.8m Width: 0.6m Depth 2.40m Orientation: East to west

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
2220	Topsoil	Layer	Firm mid brown clayey silt	0.40m	
2221	Natural	Layer	Firm mid reddish brown clay	1.00m	
2222	Natural	Layer	Red Mercian Mudstone	1.00m	

TP 223

Length: 2.7m Width: 0.6m Depth 2.10m Orientation: North to south

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
2230	Topsoil	Layer	Firm mid brown clayey silt	0.30m	
2231	Subsoil	Layer	Firm mid yellowish brown silty clay	0.10m	
2232	Natural	Layer	Firm mid reddish brown clay	1.40m	
2233	Natural	Layer	Mudstone and sandstone	0.30m	

TP 224

Length: 3.30m Width: 0.6m Depth 2.10m Orientation: North to south

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
2240	Topsoil	Layer	Firm mid brown sandy clay	0.30m	
2241	Subsoil	Layer	Firm mid reddish brown sandy clay	0.10m	
2242	Natural	Layer	Firm mid reddish brown clay	1.60m	
2243	Natural	Layer	Mudstone and sandstone	0.10m	

TP 225

Length: 2.00m Width: 0.6m Depth 3.40m Orientation: East to west

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
2250	Topsoil	Layer	Friable dark brown clayey silt	0.30m	
2251	Subsoil	Layer	Firm mid reddish brown sandy clay	0.20m	
2252	Natural	Layer	Firm mid reddish brown clay	0.40m	
2253	Natural	Layer	Mudstone and sandstone	0.60m	
2254	Natural	Layer	Gravelly clay	1.90m	

TP 226

Length: 2.70m Width: 0.6m Depth 3.30m Orientation: East to west

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
2260	Topsoil	Layer	Firm mid brown sandy clay	0.30m	
2261	Natural	Layer	Firm mid reddish brown	1.20m	
2262	Natural	Layer	Firm mid reddish brown clay	1.80m	

TP 227

Length: 3.30m Width: 0.6m Depth 2.10m Orientation: East to west

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
2270	Topsoil	Layer	Firm mid brown sandy clay	0.30m	
2271	Natural	Layer	Firm mid reddish brown sandy clay	1.00m	
2272	Natural	Layer	Firm blue green clay lens	0.20m	
2273	Natural	Layer	Mudstone and siltstone	0.60m	

TP 228

Length: 2.50m Width: 0.6m Depth 4.00m Orientation: East to west

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
2280	Topsoil	Layer	Firm brown sandy silt	0.10m	
2281	Subsoil	Layer	Firm mid reddish brown sandy silt	0.30m	
2282	Natural	Layer	Brownish red sandy silt with abundant large uncompacted river pebbles	3.60m	Natural river terrace

TP 229

Length: 2.50m Width: 0.6m Depth 4.00m Orientation: East to west

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
2290	Topsoil	Layer	Firm brown sandy silt	0.10m	
2291	Subsoil	Layer	Firm mid reddish brown sandy silt	0.30m	
2292	Natural	Layer	Brownish red sandy silt with abundant large uncompacted river pebbles	3.40m	Natural river terrace

TP 230

Length: 2.50m Width: 0.6m Depth 4.00m Orientation: East to west

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
2300	Topsoil	Layer	Firm brown clayey silt	0.10m	
2301	Subsoil	Layer	Firm dark brown clayey silt	0.30m	
2302	Natural	Layer	Reddish orange sandy clay including sandstone pebbles	3.40m	

Soak away tests

TP 231

Length: 2.50m Width: 0.60m Depth 2.00m Orientation: East to west

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
2310	Topsoil	Layer	Light brown clayey silt	0.40m	
2311	Subsoil	Layer	Firm reddish brown silty clay	0.40m	
2312	Natural	Layer	Compact red mudstone	1.20m	

TP 232

Length: 2.10m Width: 0.60m Depth 1.70m Orientation: North to south

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
2320	Topsoil	Layer	Firm mid brown clayey silt	0.30m	
2321	Subsoil	Layer	Firm mid yellowish brown clay	0.10m	
2322	Natural	Layer	Firm mid reddish brown clay	0.80m	
2323	Natural	Layer	Sold red mudstone	0.30m	
2324	Natural	Layer	Solid strong green sandstone	0.20m	

TP 233

Length: 2.00m Width: 0.60m Depth 2.00m Orientation: East to west

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
2330	Topsoil	Layer	Firm brown sandy silt	0.10m	
2331	Subsoil	Layer	Firm mid reddish brown	0.30m	
2292	Natural	Layer	Brownish red sandy silt with abundant large uncompacted river pebbles	3.40m	Natural river terrace

TP 234

Length: 2.50m Width: 0.60m Depth 4.00m Orientation: East to west

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
2300	Topsoil	Layer	Firm brown sandy clayey silt	0.30m	
2301	Subsoil	Layer	Firm dark brown sandy clay	1.40m	
2302	Natural	Layer	Reddish orange sandy clay	0.30m	

CBR tests

CBR 301

Length: 1.50m Width: 0.60m Depth 0.50m Orientation: North-west to south-east

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
3010	Topsoil	Layer	Reddish brown clayey silt	0.40m	
3011	Subsoil	Layer	Firm dark brown sandy clay		

CBR 302

Length: 1.50m Width: 0.6m Depth 0.50m Orientation: North-west to south-east

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
2030	Topsoil	Layer	Firm mid reddish brown clayey Silt	0.50m	

CBR 303

Length: 1.50m Width: 0.6m Depth 0.50m Orientation: East to west

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
3030	Topsoil	Layer	Firm mid reddish brown silty sandy clay	0.40m	
3031	Subsoil	Layer	Firm brownish red sandy clay	0.10m	

CBR 304

Length: 1.50m Width: 0.60m Depth 0.50m Orientation: North to south

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
3040	Topsoil	Layer	Mid brown silty clay	0.40m	
3041	Subsoil	Layer	Firm mid brown silty clay	0.10m	Increased clay content

CBR 305

Length: 1.50m Width: 0.60m Depth 0.50m Orientation: North-east to south-west

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
3050	Topsoil	Layer	Reddish brown clayey silt	0.15	
3051	Subsoil	Layer	firm brownish red silty clay	0.35	

CBR 306

Length: 1.50m Width: 0.60m Depth 0.50m Orientation: North-west to south-east

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
3060	Topsoil	Layer	mid brown clayey silt	0.30m	
3061	Subsoil	Layer	Firm brownish red silty clay	0.20m	

CBR 307 – Plate test

Length: 2.50m Width: 1.00m Depth 0.50m Orientation: North-east to south-west

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
3070	Topsoil	Layer	Firm brown sandy silt	0.10m	
3071	Subsoil	Layer	Firm mid reddish brown sandy silt	0.30m	
3072	Natural	Layer	Brownish red sandy silt with abundant large uncompacted river pebbles	0.10m	Natural river terrace

CBR 308

Length: 1.20m Width: 0.6m Depth 0.50m Orientation: North-west to south-east

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
3080	Topsoil	Layer	Firm mid brown clayey silt	0.30m	
3081	Natural	Layer	Firm mid reddish brown clay	0.20m	

CBR 309

Length: 1.20m Width: 0.60m Depth 0.50m Orientation: North-west to south-east

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
3090	Topsoil	Layer	Firm mid brown clayey silt	0.30m	
3091	Natural	Layer	Firm mid reddish brown clay	0.20m	

CBR 310

Length: 1.20m Width: 0.60m Depth 0.50m Orientation: North-west to south-east

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
3100	Topsoil	Layer	Firm mid brown clayey silt	0.30m	
3101	Natural	Layer	Firm mid reddish brown clay	0.20m	

Plate tests

CBR 311

Length: 2.50m Width: 1.0m Depth 0.50m Orientation: North-east to south-west

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
3110	Topsoil	Layer	Firm brown sandy silt	0.10m	
3111	Subsoil	Layer	Firm mid reddish brown sandy silt	0.30m	
3112	Natural	Layer	Brownish red sandy silt abundant large uncompacted river pebbles	0.10m	Natural river terrace

CBR 312

Length: 2.50m Width: 1.0m Depth 0.50m Orientation: East to west

Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
2300	Topsoil	Layer	Firm brown clayey silt	0.30m	
2301	Subsoil	Layer	Light brown sandy clay	0.10m	
2302	Natural	Layer	Reddish orange sandy clay	0.10m	

Appendix 2 Technical information

The evaluation archive (site code: EHE 80149)

The archive consists of:

31	Field progress reports AS2
4	Photographic records AS3
304	Digital photographs
1	Drawing number catalogues AS4
13	Scale drawings
1	Sample number catalogues AS18
30	Trench record sheets AS41
1	Box of finds
1	CD-Rom/DVDs
1	Copy of this report (bound hard copy)

The watching brief archive (site code: EHE 80163)

The archive consists of:

6	Field progress reports AS2
197	Digital photographs
46	Trench record sheets AS41
1	Box of finds
1	CD-Rom/DVDs
1	Copy of this report (bound hard copy)

The project archive is intended to be placed at:

Herefordshire Museum

The archive will not be deposited until a decision is taken on whether there will be any further fieldwork or not.

Summary of data for Herefordshire SMR

Report name and title	An archaeological evaluation of the Hereford Southern Link Road
Contractor's name and address	Worcestershire Archaeology, The Hive, Sawmill Walk, The Butts, Worcester, WR1 3PD
Site name	Hereford Southern Link Road
Grid Reference (8 fig)	NGR SO 4900 3680 | **Planning Application Number** Pending
SMR number/s of site	EHE 80149
Date of fieldwork	15th June to 24th August 2015
Date of report	28th August 2015
	Number and type of finds
Pottery	**Period** **17-18th century 2 number of sherds** 20th 3 16-17th century 3 Early-Middle Iron Age 20
Other finds	**Period** **Quantity** CBM P-M 6 Tin 20th C 2 Horseshoes P-M 5 Slag P-M 1 Fired clay Iron Age 14 Slag Iron Age 33 Iron Age Hammerscale a small quantity
	Number and type of samples collected 9 10 litre samples and one bag. Whole earth.
Sieving for charred plant remains	Number of features sampled: Number of buckets:
C14/scientific dates	Number and type: None Result:
Pollen	No of columns/spot samples: none Name of pollen specialist
Bone	Number of buckets sieved for bone None *Quantity recovered* *Period*
Insect	No of columns/spot samples None Name of pollen specialist
Other	Type and specialist none

Summary of the report	*An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at Hereford Southern Link Road (NGR SO 490368, HER reference* EHE 80149*). It was undertaken on behalf of Herefordshire Council and their agent Parsons Brinckerhoff, who intend to construct a new section of road to connect the A49 and the A465.* *Geotechnical trial pits were also monitored following the evaluation. Only natural deposits were observed during this stage of works.* *One area of significance was identified. Here at least one feature of Early to Middle Iron Age date had been identified and it was considered very likely that other features would be broadly contemporary. The site was dated through the few sherds of pottery present and it included evidence of metalworking from a pit containing smithing slag and a hearth bottom. The available artefacts suggested a short-lived period of activity for the site.*