

Archaeological evaluation at Sycamore Close, Stockton, Warwickshire



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With contributions by Elizabeth Pearson and Dennis Williams

Summary

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at land off Sycamore Close, Stockton, Warwickshire (NGR SP 432 636). It was undertaken on behalf of Taylor Wimpey Midlands, who intend residential development of the site for which a planning application is in preparation.

The site lies on the western edge of Stockton and comprises an 'L' shaped area of 4ha within a large arable field adjacent to an existing housing estate. At the time of the evaluation the field was unploughed stubble.

A previous historic environment appraisal of the site identified that while there was no evidence of early prehistoric activity on or near the development site, substantial evidence of archaeological features dating from the Iron Age and Romano-British periods are recorded in the vicinity and that the archaeological potential for these periods was high. These features include a territorial boundary ditch and pit group recorded during evaluation of land to the west of the site. During the medieval and post-medieval periods the site would have been part of the agricultural hinterland of Stockton. The archaeological potential of these periods was deemed to be low.

Prior to the evaluation, a geophysical survey of the site was carried out. This survey identified the presence of furrows, the remnants of strip field agriculture crossing the majority of the site, some large linear features in the north of the site, a possible track-way and backfilled pond in the central part of the site and a number of weak anomalies in the south of the site which were interpreted as ditches.

The evaluation comprised the excavation of eighteen trenches, amounting to just over 1620m² in area, over the site area of c.4ha, representing a sample of 4%. The trenches targeted anomalies identified as potential features by the geophysical survey, as well as a number of negative areas.

Furrows were identified across the site, orientated north-west to south-east, correlating with the results of the geophysical survey. They also extended across the whole of the southern part of the site and may have masked or truncated earlier features in this part of the site.

At the southern end of the site, a small number of ditches and gullies were recorded. Few finds were recovered from sampling of these features, and they remain undated. A small pit or posthole also identified in this area contained disarticulated animal bone remains.

On the north western edge of the site, a sherd of Roman pottery was retrieved from a section excavated across a pair of small ditches. Roman pottery was also retrieved from a furrow and from the topsoil in this area.

The identification of the pond was confirmed in the central part of the site, as well as some other modern pits filled with farm debris. The possible trackway was also shown to have gone out of use relatively recently.

At the northern end of the site two large ditches (both c0.7m deep and c2.5m wide) were identified in separate trenches. These did not correspond to the strong geophysical anomalies recorded in this area but were on a broadly similar orientation. No datable material was retrieved from either ditch.

A series of three gullies or small ditches identified in the northern corner of the site are likely to have been drains.

It is concluded that there are two areas of possible archaeological interest; undated features to the south of the site may have a prehistoric origin and the small gullies to the west of the site may form part of a Romano-British field system.

Report

1 Background

1.1 Reasons for the project

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at land off Sycamore Close, Stockton, Warwickshire (NGR SP 432 636). It was commissioned by Taylor Wimpey Midlands, who intend residential development of the site, for which a planning application to Stratford on Avon District Council is in preparation.

A historic environment appraisal of the site identified the potential for the survival of archaeological assets within the site and a subsequent geophysical survey of the site was undertaken which identified some potential heritage assets. Development of the site was therefore considered by the Curator (Anna Stocks, Warwickshire County Council) to have the potential to affect heritage assets or potential heritage assets and archaeological evaluation of the site by trial trenching was advised. No brief was prepared but the project aimed to conform to standard requirements contained within briefs prepared by the Curator. A project proposal (including detailed specification) was produced (WA 2013) and approved by the curator. The project conforms to *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (IfA 2009)

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 AIfA FSA Scot; who joined Worcestershire Archaeology in 2013 and has been practicing archaeology since 2004 and Andrew Mann MSc who joined Worcestershire Archaeology in 2001 and has been practicing archaeology since 2001. They were assisted in the field by Pete Lovett BSc and Mike Nicholson BSc. The project manager responsible for the quality of the project was Tom Rogers MSc. Illustrations were prepared by Carolyn Hunt BSc MIfA. Dennis Williams BSc MA PhD CPhys, MInstP contributed the finds report and Elizabeth Pearson MSc the environmental report.

3.2 Documentary research

An Historic Environment Appraisal of the site (Somerville 2013) was undertaken and this was consulted prior to the evaluation.

3.3 Fieldwork strategy

A detailed specification was prepared by Worcestershire Archaeology (WA 2013).

Fieldwork was undertaken between the 9th and 17th December 2013.

Eighteen trenches, amounting to just over 1620m² in area, were excavated over the site area of c.4ha, representing a sample of 4% (Fig 2). The trenches targeted anomalies identified as potential features by the geophysical survey, as well as a number of negative areas.

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 methodology, by Dennis Williams

3.5.1 Artefact recovery policy

The artefact recovery policy conformed to standard Service practice (WA 2012a; appendix 2).

3.5.2 Method of analysis

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

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

3.5.3 Discard policy

The following categories/types of material will be discarded after a period of 6 months following the submission of this report, unless there is a specific request to retain them (and subject to the collection policy of the relevant depository):

- where unstratified
- post-medieval pottery, and;
- generally where material has been assessed as having no obvious grounds for retention.

See the environmental section for other discard where appropriate.

3.6 Environmental archaeology methodology, by Elizabeth Pearson

3.6.1 Sampling policy

Samples were taken according to standard Worcestershire Archaeology practice (2012a). A total of two samples (each of 10 litres) were taken from the site from an undated pit and a pond of modern date (Env Table 1).

3.6.2 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).

Animal bone was identified with the aid of modern bone reference collections housed at the Historic Environment and Archaeology Service and identification guides (Schmid 1972 and Hillson 1992).

3.6.3 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

A Historic Environment Appraisal (RSK 2013) was undertaken prior to the evaluation. The historical information below is derived and summarised from this report.

The geology of the site consists of Rugby Limestone Member (mudstone and limestone interbedded). The site is located on a steep south east facing hill, to the west of Stockton.

There are no designated archaeological assets within the development site, but eight listed buildings stand within 1km.

No prehistoric activity has been recorded on site although some Iron Age settlement activity was discovered during evaluation works about 70m to the west, including a territorial boundary ditch and a ditch and pit group (MWA10294). A small assemblage of worked flint was also found during the evaluation (MWA10295).

An enclosure and a linear feature are visible as cropmarks on aerial photographs 200m south of the church, to the east of the development site (MWA7253).

Within the village of Stockton, Romano-British activity was identified at School Street where a sequence of four Romano-British ditches and gullies, a further diagonal gully of the same date and an undated but probable Romano-British small pit or posthole was identified. (MWA13271). The ditches and gullies were interpreted as the boundary features of a farming settlement, with the larger ditches possibly forming enclosures surrounding areas of habitation.

Roman coins and a cup or urn were found slightly to the south east of the development site in 1968 (RSK site 23).

The appraisal suggested a high potential for the survival of prehistoric and Roman archaeological features.

During the medieval and post-medieval periods occupation in the area was likely to have focussed on the village of Stockton and the site was probably part of the agricultural hinterland. Ridge and furrow has been recorded widely in the area (RSK sites 24-26). The archaeological potential of these periods was deemed in the appraisal to be low.

Three possible animal pens marked on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map were noted within the appraisal in the field of which the development site is a part. One of these (RSK site 29) lay within the development site.

Prior to the evaluation, a geophysical survey was undertaken on the site. The survey identified number of weak anomalies in the south of the site which were interpreted as a narrow ditch, and an area of discrete activity, possibly a pond (Fry 2013). The survey also identified ridge and furrow cultivation across much of the site, as well as series of anomalies close to the northern site boundary which in the interpreted as strip field systems.

4.2 Current land-use

The site is currently used as arable farmland. The site was stubble when the evaluation was undertaken.

5 Structural analysis

The trenches and features recorded are shown in Fig 2. The results of the structural analysis are presented in Appendix 1.

5.1.1 Phase 1: Natural deposits

The natural strata consisted of a pale yellow silty clay with occasional blue mottling and occasional exposed limestone brash bedrock. This was found between 0.45 - 0.72m below ground level.

5.1.2 Phase 2: Roman deposits

Whilst there was some residual pottery retrieved from features and topsoil, only one ditch, 904 could be dated as Roman although it is possible that the single sherd was residual in this context. A similarly sized ditch running parallel and to the west (906) is likely to be related, perhaps a redug boundary.

5.1.3 Phase 3: Medieval/Post-medieval deposits

A large number of the features revealed during the evaluation were furrows, the remnant of a strip field agriculture. The furrows uniformly ran north-west to south-east. One furrow (904) in Trench 9 contained a residual sherd of Roman pottery.

A linear feature excavated in Trench 13, 1305, was probably a medieval or post-medieval field boundary, and there was a continuation of this demarcation into the modern period, as it had been superseded by a now removed hedge line (1308).

5.1.4 Phase 4: modern deposits

A large pond (505) was uncovered in Trench 5 (Plate 5) which had been backfilled with local stone within living memory (pers. comm. the landowner). Features within Trench 8 were large modern pits filled with farm debris (fence wire etc). There were also a series of three gullies or small ditches identified at the eastern end of Trench 14 (Plate 4). They were on the same alignment as the ceramic field drains in this part of the site and may also be related to modern drainage. The hedge line 1308 discussed above lined in with the existing hedge that runs into north east-south west in the north of the site, and was filled with a relatively recent humic soil.

5.1.5 Undated deposits

In the north east of the site two large ditches; 1703 and 1805 were recorded. Whilst both were of a similar depth of about 0.75m deep, they had different profiles with 1703 2.5m wide and V-shaped, compared to the flatter bottomed 3.4m width of 1805. The fill material was also different, with an orange sandy clay filling 1805, compared to the yellow brown silty clays of 1703.

The geophysical survey shows large ditches running parallel NE-SW across the north of the site, but neither 1703 nor 1805 line in with them, or in fact to any anomalies revealed. This suggests that the surveyed linear features may have been within the top or subsoil, though none were observed during the removal of topsoil. Both features may be boundary or drainage ditches of a post-medieval date, though they would be particularly large examples or part of a larger field system of an earlier date.

Ditches 1404 and 1410, in the north of the site, were small linear features running NE-SW. Whilst 1404 had a steep sided and concave based profile, 1410 was shallower and flatter. Both also had ambiguous relationships with furrows. Despite the difference in profile, they were of a similar width (c. 0.8m), though 1404 was nearly twice as deep at 0.53m compared to the 0.28m of 1410.

Ditches 1104 and 1106 were both terminal ends of small linear features in the south of the site. One began just as the other ended, offset from each other by about 1.85m. Both were quite shallow, at 0.14m for 1104 and 0.3m for 1106, with similar widths of 0.92m and 1.3m respectively. They are probably contemporary, as part of a field system.

At the southern end of the site, within Trenches 2-4, 6, 7 and 11 were a number of archaeological features, mostly ditches and gullies. Features 204, 206, 215, 218 and 209 in Trench 2, whilst undated, were filled with sterile and homogenous soils. Trench 3 had a concave bottomed ditch, 304, that cut a furrow, and another similarly shaped ditch, 310, that was cut by that furrow. Ditch 304 may continue into Trench 4 in the form of ditch 406. Trench 6 had a small linear feature 604, and two features seen against the section edge, being either ditch termini or small pits (606 and 608). In Trench 7 there were three shallow and undated pits, 704, 706 and 708. All three were filled by sterile material.

No datable finds were recovered from these features, although one piece of undiagnostic fired clay from the fill of ditch 404 was recorded (Plate 1). Ditch 404 may be part of a curvilinear feature identified on the geophysical survey near the boundary of the site. A small pit or posthole [306], identified in Trench 3, contained disarticulated animal bone remains (Plate 2).

5.2 Artefactual analysis, by Dennis Williams

The artefactual assemblage, from 13 stratified contexts, consisted mainly of animal bone, pottery and ceramic building materials, as shown in Table 1. The pottery was in fair condition, with significant levels of abrasion and a mean sherd weight that was average (ie ≈ 10g).

period	material class	material subtype	object specific type	count	weight (g)
Roman	ceramic	-	pot	4	58
medieval	ceramic	-	pot	1	2
post-medieval	ceramic	-	brick/tile	1	82
post-medieval	ceramic	-	roof tile	6	232
undated	bone	animal bone	-	66	574
undated	ceramic	-	tile?	1	16
undated	ceramic	fired clay	-	2	24
undated	metal	copper alloy	-	1	1
undated	stone	-	-	1	26
totals:				83	1015

Table 1: Quantification of the assemblage

The pottery comprised Roman and medieval sherds as summarised in Table 2.

broad period	fabric code	fabric common name	count	weight (g)
Romano-British	13	Sandy oxidized ware	1	1
Romano-British	14	Fine sandy grey ware	1	24
Romano-British	32	Mancetter/Hartshill mortarium	1	32
Romano-British	43.1	Southern Gaulish samian ware	1	1
Medieval	99	Miscellaneous medieval wares	1	2
totals:			5	60

Table 2: Quantification of the pottery

Summary of artefactual evidence

The context finds summary, with *terminus post quem* date ranges, is shown in Table 3.

Pottery

Roman pottery was found in furrow fill 105, topsoil 900 and fill 903 (ditch 904), and included a rim sherd from a 2nd to early 4th century Mancetter-Hartshill mortarium (fabric 32) and a small undiagnostic sherd of 1st century samian from La Graufesenque (fabric 43.1). A small sherd with a hard, sandy fabric, found in topsoil, bore traces of a white slip and was probably medieval (fabric 99).

Other finds

Bone

Animal bone and teeth from cattle and sheep was recovered from various contexts, but was not examined in detail. The largest quantity of bone (from a cow) was found in fill 305 (pit 306), with a covering of stones, but no other finds were available to date this deposition.

Fired clay

Undiagnostic fragments of fired clay were recovered from fill 403 (ditch 404) and topsoil 1400.

Ceramic building materials

Small fragments of brick and tile found in furrow fills 105 and 307, and subsoil 1201, were probably all post-medieval.

Metal

The only metal find was a minute strip of copper alloy, recovered from fill 1405 (ditch 1406).

context	material class	material subtype	object specific type	fabric code	count	weight (g)	start date	end date	tpq date range
Unstrat.	bone	animal bone	-	-	6	114	-	-	-
	stone	heat cracked?	-	-	1	26	-	-	

105	ceramic	-	brick/tile	-	1	82	1600	1900	1600-1900
	ceramic	-	roof tile	-	2	42	-	-	
	bone	animal bone	-	-	1	14	-	-	
	ceramic	-	pot	14	1	24	43	400	
302	ceramic	-	roof tile	-	1	94	1600	1900	1600-1900
305	bone	animal bone	-	-	43	416	-	-	-
307	ceramic	-	roof tile	-	2	80	1600	1900	1600-1900
403	ceramic	fired clay	-	-	1	6	0	0	-
800	ceramic	-	tile?	-	1	16	1600	1900	1600-1900
900	ceramic	-	pot	32	1	32	100	350	100-350
903	ceramic	-	pot	43.1	1	1	43	100	43-100
	ceramic	-	pot	13	1	1	43	400	43-400
1201	ceramic	-	roof tile	-	1	16	1600	1900	1600-1900
	ceramic	-	pot	99	1	2	1066	1539	1066-1539
1400	ceramic	fired clay	-	-	1	18	-	-	-
1403	bone	animal bone	-	-	15	26	-	-	-
1405	metal	copper alloy	-	-	1	1	-	-	-
1803	bone	animal bone	-	-	1	4	-	-	-

Table 3: Summary of context dating based on artefacts

5.3 Environmental analysis, by Elizabeth Pearson

The environmental evidence recovered is summarised in Tables 4 and 5 (Appendix 2).

5.4 Animal bone

A total of 66 fragments (574g) of animal bone was recovered from the site (Table 6). This was a small assemblage, with most of the bone having been recovered from an undated pit fill (305). The latter consisted of disarticulated cattle mandible bone and teeth. There was no indication as to whether this was associated with a particular activity or whether it had been deliberately placed into the pit. No further work was carried out on the animal bone.

5.5 Macrofossil remains

Environmental remains from the fill of a pond (504), possibly of modern date, consisted of occasional plant remains which reflect bankside vegetation, such as sedges (*Carex* sp) and crowfoot (*Ranunculus* sbgen *Batrachium*), or disturbed ground (Env Table 7).

The only identifiable environmental remains recovered from an undated pit (305) were uncharred seeds of nettle (*Urtica dioica*). These may not be contemporary with the feature as there was no indication of the waterlogged or anoxic (oxygen reduced) conditions which would be expected for their long-term survival.

5.6 Recommendations

The environmental remains are of low significance as only limited interpretation can be made of these assemblages. No further work is recommended on these samples.

6 Synthesis

The features revealed by the archaeological evaluation do not appear to correlate well with the results of the geophysical survey, with the exception of the furrows. The reason behind this is not clear although magnetometry surveys are not ideally suited to heavy clay soils such as those at Stockton.

Most of the potential archaeological features appear to be located in the southern part of the site, and in the area around trench 9-14.

6.1 Roman

The earliest dated feature recorded during the evaluation was a small Roman ditch which ran parallel to a similarly sized ditch to which it is probably contemporary. Furthermore two Roman sherds were recovered for topsoil in this area. The features recorded are not of sufficient density or materially productive enough to suggest occupation in the Roman period, but may be suggestive of a field system peripheral to a settlement, perhaps situated on the rise to the north or to the east in the village itself where features interpreted as boundaries of a settlement were recorded at School Street (MWA13271). Other ditches in this area such as 1703, 1805, 1404 and 1410 may potentially be a part of this field system.

6.2 Medieval/post-medieval

The medieval and post-medieval activity on site is restricted to agricultural practice, with furrows running north-west to south-east across the site. Furrows such as these are the surviving element of former ridge and furrow earthworks following truncation by the plough. Ridge and furrow is the product of the medieval and post medieval strip field system of agriculture. Ploughed out furrows are not generally considered to be archaeologically significant.

A number of boundary ditches and old hedge lines were also recorded. These are not archaeologically significant. There was no indication of the survival of features related to the possible animal pen which is marked within the site on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map (RSK site 29).

6.3 Modern

Various pits were observed, and are known to have been created for the disposal of agricultural waste. A pond was back filled with rubble by the current farmer's father and a trackway appeared to have gone out of use recently.

6.4 Undated

Undated features were widespread and the majority are probably related to post medieval farming. However a series of linear features, pits and a possible posthole with animal bone in the south of the site are suggestive of a prehistoric date. These features are predominantly shallow, and would at best represent peripheral settlement activity, possibly related to the Iron Age ditch and pit group recorded in an evaluation to the west of the site (MWA10294), or the enclosure and linear feature identified from cropmarks to the east (MWA7253).

Undated features in the vicinity of Trench 14, in particular ditches 1703 and 1805 may be contemporary with and/or form a part of the same field system as ditch 904.

7 Significance

7.1 Nature of the archaeological interest in the site

Archaeological interest in the site is focussed on two areas. To the south of the site a scatter of undated features including small ditches and a posthole may represent early, possibly prehistoric activity. In the north western part of the site, one small ditch from which a sherd of Roman pottery was retrieved may represent part of a field system. Other undated features in the northern half of the site may be a part of this system.

7.2 Relative importance of the archaeological interest in the site

The relative importance of the site cannot be determined on current evidence. Were the features recorded to be of prehistoric or Romano-British date they would be archaeologically significant.

7.3 Physical extent of the archaeological interest in the site

Potential archaeological features observed are predominantly on the southern and north-western parts of the development site. The horizon at which these deposits are found is on average about 0.5m below the current ground surface. The full extent of these features is currently unknown.

8 The impact of the development

The development of the site for residential purposes including associated ground works (foundations, services and landscaping etc.) has the potential to affect or destroy buried heritage assets including archaeological features (pits, ditches etc.) cut into the natural substrate.

8.1 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 land off Sycamore Close, Stockton, Warwickshire (NGR SP 432 636). It was undertaken on behalf of Taylor Wimpey Midlands, who intend residential development of the site for which a planning application is in preparation.

The site lies on the western edge of Stockton and comprises an 'L' shaped area of 4ha within a large arable field adjacent to an existing housing estate. At the time of the evaluation the field was unploughed stubble.

A previous historic environment appraisal of the site identified that while there was no evidence of early prehistoric activity on or near the development site, substantial evidence of archaeological features dating from the Iron Age and Romano-British periods are recorded in the vicinity and that the archaeological potential for these periods was high. These features include a territorial boundary ditch and pit group recorded during evaluation of land to the west of the site. During the medieval and post-medieval periods the site would have been part of the agricultural hinterland of Stockton. The archaeological potential of these periods was deemed to be low.

Prior to the evaluation, a geophysical survey of the site was carried out. This survey identified the presence of furrows, the remnants of strip field agriculture crossing the majority of the site, some large linear features in the north of the site, a possible track-way and backfilled pond in the central part of the site and a number of weak anomalies in the south of the site which were interpreted as ditches.

The evaluation comprised the excavation of eighteen trenches, amounting to just over 1620m² in area, over the site area of c.4ha, representing a sample of 4%. The trenches targeted anomalies identified as potential features by the geophysical survey, as well as a number of negative areas.

Furrows were identified across the site, orientated north-west to south-east, correlating with the results of the geophysical survey. They also extended across the whole of the southern part of the site and may have masked or truncated earlier features in this part of the site.

At the southern end of the site, a small number of ditches and gullies were recorded. Few finds were recovered from sampling of these features, and they remain undated. A small pit or posthole also identified in this area contained disarticulated animal bone remains.

On the north western edge of the site, a sherd of Roman pottery was retrieved from a section excavated across a pair of small ditches. Roman pottery was also retrieved from a furrow and from the topsoil in this area.

The identification of the pond was confirmed in the central part of the site, as well as some other modern pits filled with farm debris. The possible trackway was also shown to have gone out of use relatively recently.

At the northern end of the site two large ditches (both c0.7m deep and c2.5m wide) were identified in separate trenches. These did not correspond to the strong geophysical anomalies recorded in this area but were on a broadly similar orientation. No datable material was retrieved from either ditch.

A series of three gullies or small ditches identified in the northern corner of the site are likely to have been drains.

It is concluded that there are two areas of possible archaeological interest; undated features to the south of the site may have a prehistoric origin and the small gullies to the west of the site may form part of a Romano-British field system.

10 Acknowledgements

Worcestershire Archaeology would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project, Rob Beattie and James Bradshaw from Taylor Wimpey Midlands, William Brearly of Cerda Planning and Anna Stocks, Planning Archaeologist, Warwickshire County Council.

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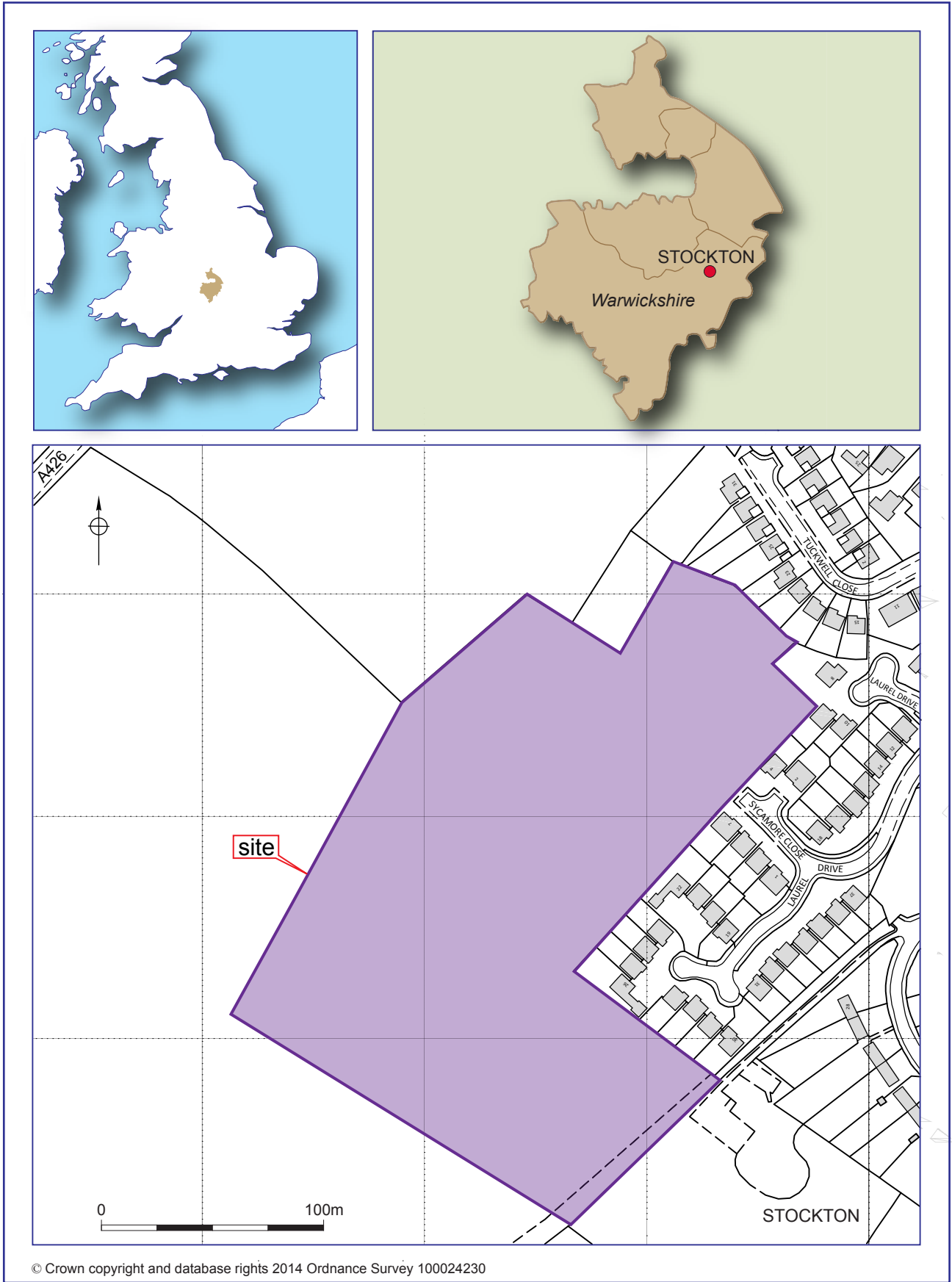
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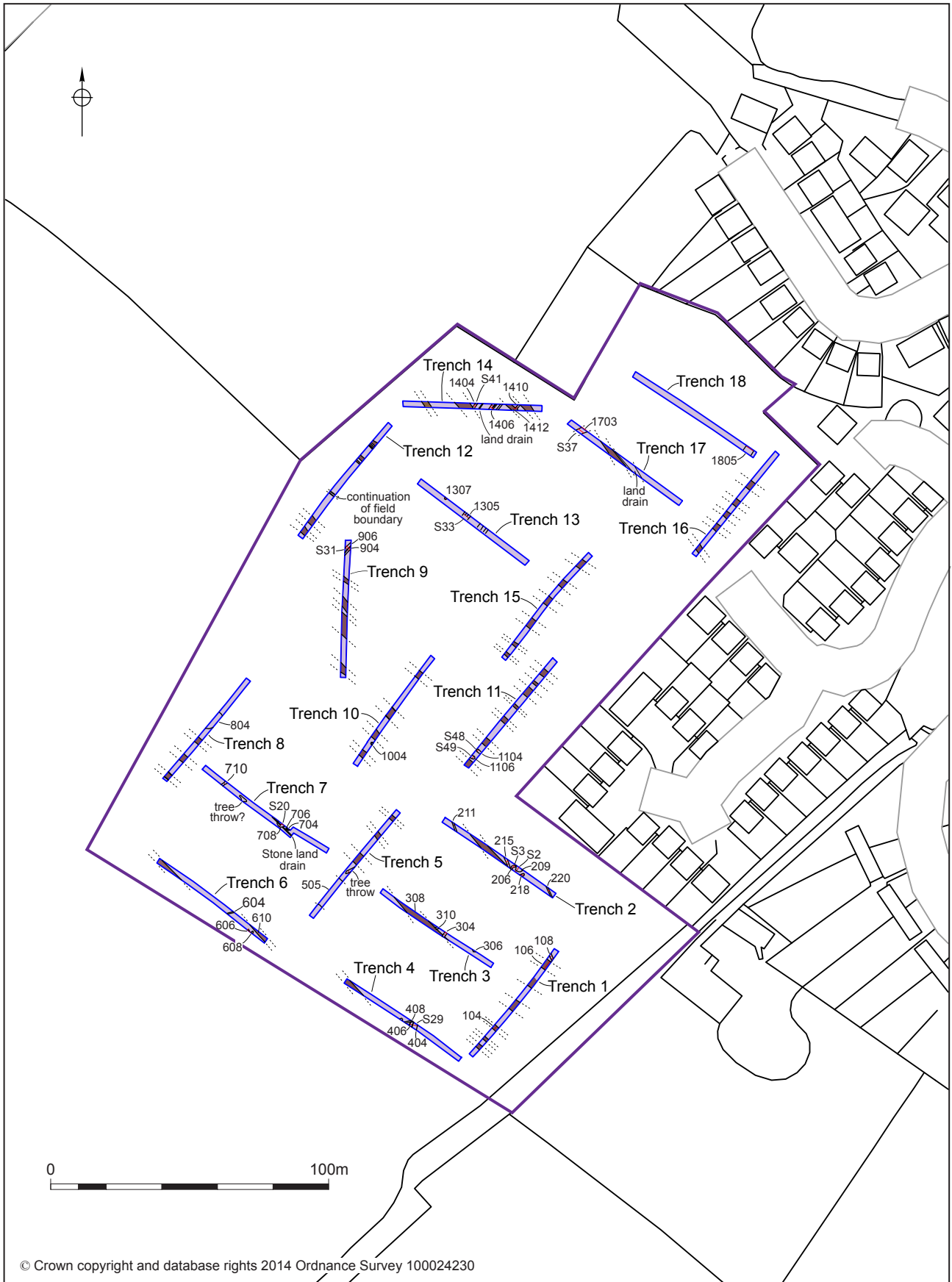
Figures





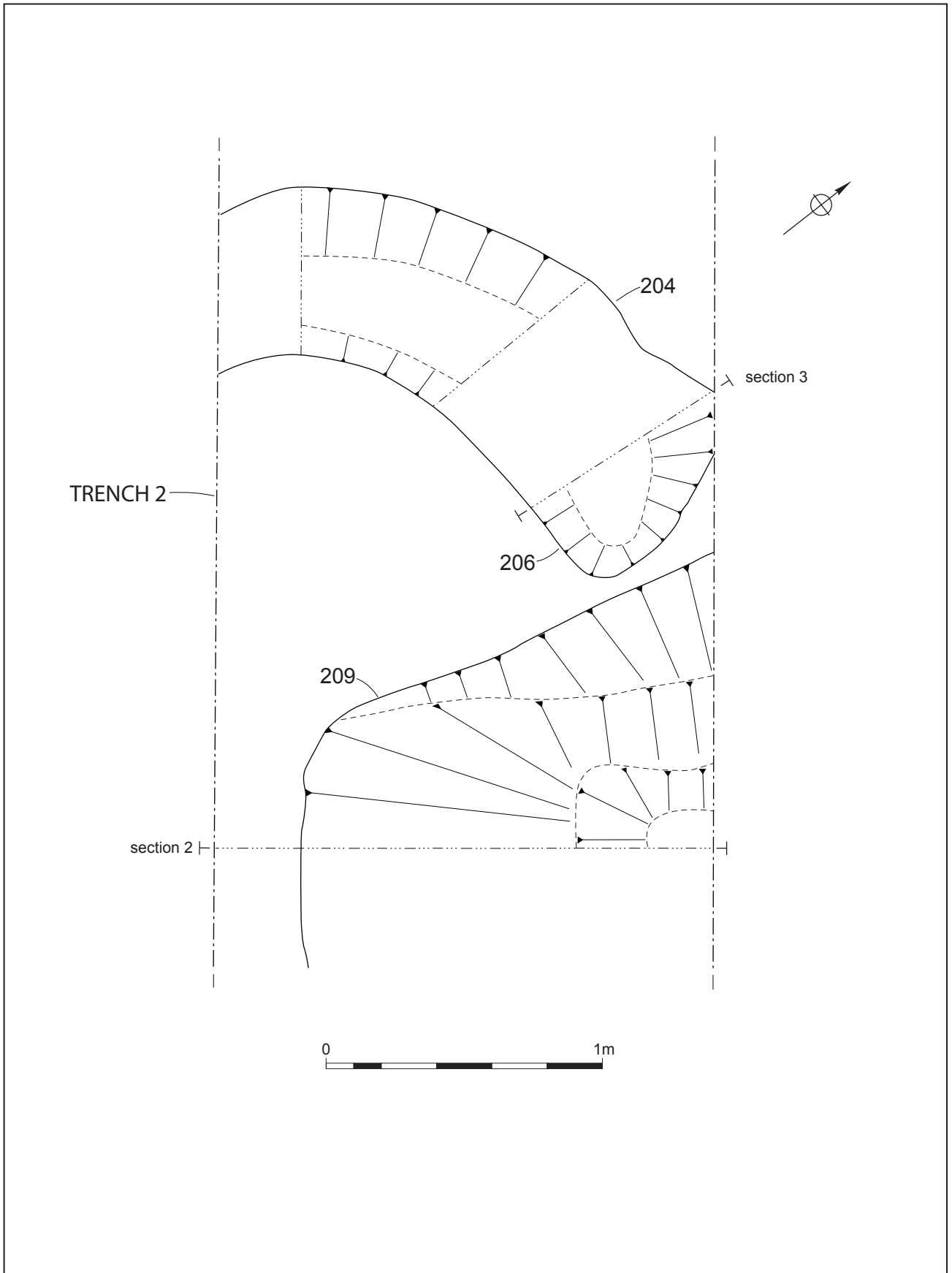
Location of the site

Figure 1



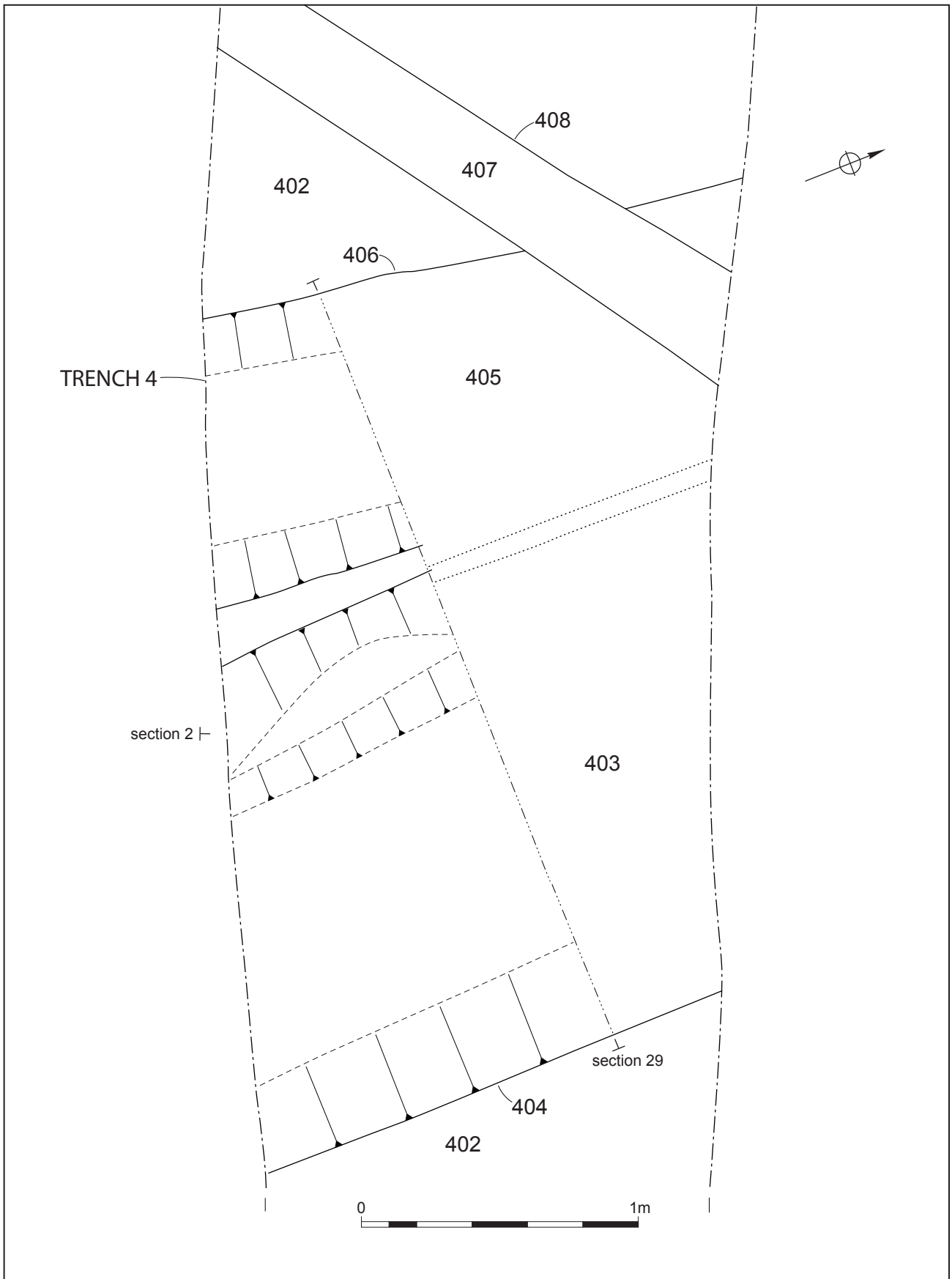
Trench location plan

Figure 2



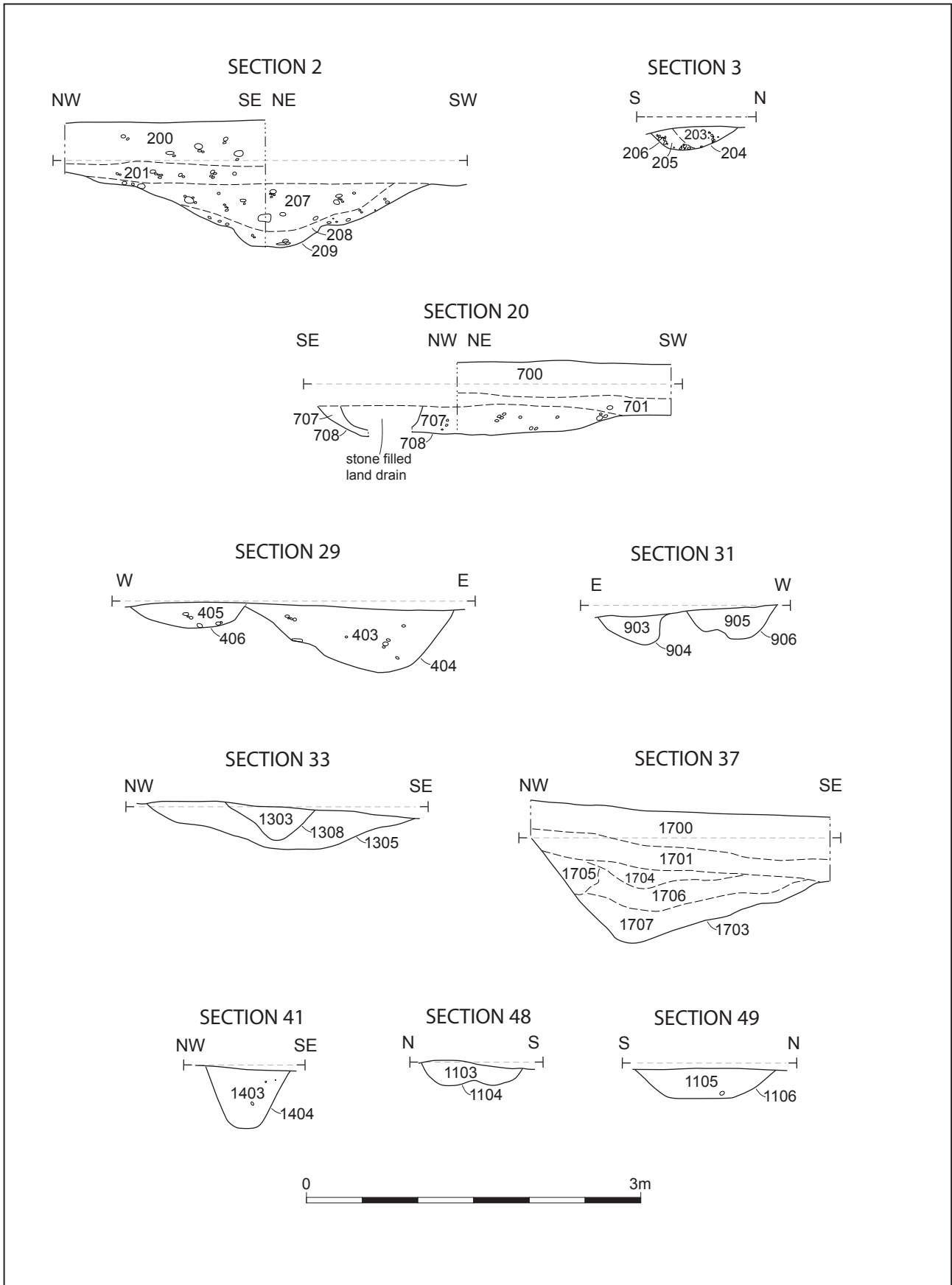
Trench 2: detail plan of 206 and 209

Figure 3



Trench 4: detail plan of 404 and 406

Figure 4



Sections

Figure 5

Plates



Plate 1. Ditch 404, which contained a piece of fired clay, on the right. To the left is ditch 406, which was one of a number of undated linear features identified in the southern part of the site.



Plate 2. Pit or posthole 306, which yielded a quantity of animal bone



Plate 3. Ditch 1703 may be related to a series of geophysical anomalies which were interpreted as strip fields



Plate 4. Ditch 1406 was one of a series of undated features in Trench 14 which were on the same alignment as ceramic field drains and may also be related to drainage in this part of the site



Plate 5 Pond 505 backfilled with local stone within living memory. View North-west.

Appendix 1 Trench descriptions

Trench 1

Maximum dimensions: Length: 50m Width: 1.80m Depth: 0.80m

Orientation: SW-NE

Main deposit description

Context	Feature type	Context type	Description	Height/Depth	Interpretation
100	Topsoil	Layer	Soft dark greyish brown silt loam		
101	Subsoil	Layer	Friable mid greenish brown silty clay		
102	Natural	Layer	Compact light yellowish grey clay		
103	Furrow	Fill	Friable mid greenish brown silty clay	0.08	Fill of furrow 104
104	Furrow	Cut		0.08	Furrow
105	Furrow	Fill	Compact mid greenish brown silty clay	0.07	Fill of furrow 106
106	Furrow	Cut		0.07	Furrow
107	Linear	Fill	Compact mid greenish brown silty clay	0.1	Fill of linear 108
108	Linear	Cut			Linear running n-s, field boundary/drainage ditch

Trench 2

Maximum dimensions: Length: 50m Width: 1.80m Depth: 0.48m

Orientation: NW -SE

Main deposit description

Context	Feature type	Context type	Description	Height/Depth	Interpretation
200	Topsoil	Layer		0 - 0.34	Topsoil, same as 100
201	Subsoil	Layer		0.34 - 0.48	Subsoil
202	Natural	Layer		0.48 +	Natural
203	Curvilinear	Fill	Compact light reddish brown silty clay	0.2	Fill of curvilinear. No dating. Naturally deposited
204	Curvilinear	Cut		0.2	Curvilinear feature, cuts 206. May either respect or be respected by pit 209.
205	Post Hole	Fill	Compact light reddish brown silty clay	0.18	Fill of possible post hole/pit 206. Frequent stone in fill suggests possible packing material.
206	Post Hole	Cut		0.18	First thought to be a posthole, now known to be same as 206, just differing fills.
207	Pit	Fill	Moderately Compact light reddish brown silty clay	0.44	Upper fill of 209. Sterile fill, no dating. Naturally deposited, low energy.
208	Pit	Fill	Moderately Compact light yellowish brown silty clay	0.59	Fill of pit 209. Sterile fill, naturally deposited.
209	Pit	Cut		0.59	Large sub-circular pit, with undefined relationship with 204/206
210	Furrow	Fill	Soft mid brownish brown silt loam	0.06	Fill of furrow 211
211	Furrow	Cut		0.06	Remnant of furrow
212	Curvilinear	Fill		0.19	Fill of curvilinear. No finds
213	Curvilinear	Cut		0.22	Originally thought to be two separate features, 204 and 206, it now looks like one feature with differing fills. Possible respect for pit 209 suggests contemporaneous construction. Has a relationship with 215, but

Context	Feature type	Context type	Description	Height/Depth	Interpretation
					right on the edge of the trench so not explorable.
214	Ditch	Fill	Firm dark yellowish brown silty clay	0.2	
215	Ditch	Cut		0.2	Small ditch. No dating. Has relationship with 213 as they exit the trench.
216	Ditch	Fill	Firm mid yellowish brown silty clay	0.28	Main fill of ditch terminus 218
217	Ditch	Fill	Soft light yellowish brown silty sand	0.08	Primary fill of ditch terminus
218	Ditch	Cut		0.28	Steep sided probable ditch terminus
219	Ditch	Fill	Soft mid yellowish brown sandy clay	0.2	Secondary ditch fill. One tiny fragment of very abraded Samian found, but not retained.
220	Ditch	Cut		0.2	Small N-S ditch.
221	Curvilinear	Fill		0.22	Lower fill of small curvilinear 213. No finds

Trench 3

Maximum dimensions: Length: 50m Width: 1.80m Depth: 0.68m

Orientation: NW-SE

Context	Feature type	Context type	Description	Height/Depth	Interpretation
300	Topsoil	Layer			
301	Subsoil	Layer			
302	Natural	Layer			
303	Ditch	Fill	Firm mid yellowish brown silty clay	0.43	Sterile fill of ditch 304
304	Ditch	Cut		0.43m	
305	Pit	Fill	Moderately Compact dark greyish brown silty clay	0.38m	Contained disarticulated remains of a cow, placed in the base of the feature and covered with large stones.
306	Pit	Cut		0.38m	In section pit 306 possibly cuts subsoil 301 potentially giving it a relatively late date, although the characteristics of the pit filled with disarticulated animal bone suggest a prehistoric date
307	Furrow	Fill	Firm mid greenish brown silty clay	0.25m	Fill of furrow
308	Furrow	Cut		0.25m	Cut of furrow
309	Ditch	Fill	Firm mid yellowish brown silty clay	0.19	Fill of ditch
310	Ditch	Cut		0.19	Cut of ditch

Trench 4

Maximum dimensions: Length: 50m Width: 1.80m Depth: 0.68m

Orientation: NW-SE

Context	Feature type	Context type	Description	Height/Depth	Interpretation
400	Topsoil	Layer			

Context	Feature type	Context type	Description	Height/Depth	Interpretation
401	Subsoil	Layer			
402	Natural	Layer			
403	Ditch	Fill	Firm mid yellowish brown silty clay	0.59m	Homogenous material, possibly derived from surrounding top and subsoil. ?prehistoric pot, bone and fire cracked stone present
404	Ditch	Cut		0.59m	Possibly part of curvilinear feature identified on geophysics. Part of an enclosure?
405	Ditch	Fill	Firm mid yellowish brown silty clay	0.24m	Homogenous fill of flat bottomed ditch 406. Cut by later ditch /gully 408. Could be same as ditch fill 303 seen in Tr3 to the northeast.
406	Ditch	Cut		0.24	Flat bottomed, with a bedrock base. Probably the same ditch as 304 in tr 3.

Trench 5

Maximum dimensions: Length: 50m Width: 1.80m Depth: 0.42m

Orientation: SW-NE

Context	Feature type	Context type	Description	Height/Depth	Interpretation
500	Topsoil	Layer		0.29	
501	Subsoil	Layer		0.13	
502	Natural	Layer			
503	Pond	Fill	Loose mid orangey brown silty clay	0.40m	Modern backfill of pond feature. Done in living memory according to farmer. Contained brick fragments.
504	Pond	Fill	Firm mid greenish brown silty clay	0.60m	Primary backfill of modern pond. Not very organic.
505	Pond	Cut			Cut of large pond. Deliberately backfilled by 503 and 504 at the end of use by the current farmer in living memory. Gradual sloped cut with concave sides. Not fully excavated.

Trench 6

Maximum dimensions: Length: 50m Width: 1.80m Depth: 0.44m

Orientation: NW-SE

Context	Feature type	Context type	Description	Height/Depth	Interpretation
600	Topsoil	Layer		0.3	
601	Subsoil	Layer		0.1	
602	Natural	Layer			
603	Ditch	Fill	Soft mid orangey brown silty sand	0.08m	Sterile fill, homogenous throughout. No finds or dating evidence recovered. No tip / dump lines or laminations seen within fill. Deposited through natural processes. Silting up. Lack of cultural evidence suggests that little or no occupational activity was present as this fill was accumulating within the feature.
604	Linear	Cut		0.08	Cut of E-W linear, possible boundary ditch or drainage gully. Date unknown.
605	Linear	Fill		0.2	Same as 607
606	Linear	Cut		0.2	Ditch terminus. Unknown date or function
607	Ditch	Fill	Soft mid orangey brown silty sand	0.11m	Sterile fill, homogenous throughout. No finds or dating evidence recovered. No tip / dump lines or laminations seen within fill. Deposited through natural processes. Silting up. Lack of cultural evidence suggests that little or no occupational activity was present as this fill

Context	Feature type	Context type	Description	Height/Depth	Interpretation
					was accumulating within the feature.
608	Ditch	Cut		0.11	Ditch terminus
609	Furrow	Fill	Moderately Compact mid greenish brown silty clay	0.14m	Very similar to subsoil 601
610	Furrow	Cut		0.14	Medieval furrow aligned east-west with a slightly concave slope and flat base.

Trench 7

Maximum dimensions: Length: 50m Width: 1.80m Depth: 0.45m

Orientation: NW-SE

Context	Feature type	Context type	Description	Height/Depth	Interpretation
700	Topsoil	Layer		0.3	
701	Subsoil	Layer		0.15	
702	Natural	Layer			
703	Pit	Fill	Firm mid orangey brown sandy clay	0.22m	Fill of small pit. No finds or dating evidence.
704	Pit	Cut		0.22	Small sterile pit, cutting a slightly smaller but no less sterile, similarly shaped pit 706.
705	Pit	Fill			Fill of small pit 706, cut by 704
706	Pit	Cut		0.15	Small pit, cut by similar pit 704.
707	Pit	Fill		0.26	Very sterile, no finds, homogenous throughout.
708	Pit	Cut		0.26	Large oval pit, date and function unknown. About 1m N of pits 704 and 706. May be tree throw.
709	Ditch	Fill	Moderately Compact mid pinky red silty clay	0.13	Probable field boundary ditch fill.
710	Ditch	Cut			Probable field boundary ditch. Heavily truncated

Trench 8

Maximum dimensions: Length: 50m Width: 1.80m Depth: 0.72m

Orientation: SW-NE

Context	Feature type	Context type	Description	Height/Depth	Interpretation
800	Topsoil	Layer		0.34	
801	Subsoil	Layer		0.38	
802	Natural	Layer			

Trench 9

Maximum dimensions: Length: 50m Width: 1.80m Depth: 0.45m

Orientation: N – S

Context	Feature type	Context type	Description	Height/Depth	Interpretation
900	Topsoil	Layer		0.3	
901	Subsoil	Layer		0.15	
902	Natural	Layer			
903	Ditch	Fill	Firm mid yellowish brown silty clay	0.26	Ditch fill. Undated
904	Ditch	Cut		0.26	Small n-s linear running parallel to similar ditch 906
905	Ditch	Fill	Firm mid yellowish brown silty clay	0.28	Fill of ditch 906. Possible rooting in base.
906	Ditch	Cut		0.28	N-S linear, parallel to ditch 904. Base disturbed by rooting.

Trench 10

Maximum dimensions: Length: 50m Width: 1.80m Depth: 0.46m

Orientation: SW-NE

Context	Feature type	Context type	Description	Height/Depth	Interpretation
1000	Topsoil	Layer		0.31	
1001	Subsoil	Layer		0.15	
1002	Natural	Layer			
1003	Ditch	Fill	Firm mid reddish brown silty clay	0.24	Secondary fill of probable ditch terminus. Undated
1004	Ditch	Cut		0.24	Ditch terminus. Undated

Trench 11

Maximum dimensions: Length: 50m Width: 1.80m Depth: 0.45m

Orientation: SW-NE

Context	Feature type	Context type	Description	Height/Depth	Interpretation
1100	Topsoil	Layer		0.28	
1101	Subsoil	Layer		0.17	
1102	Natural	Layer			
1103	Ditch	Fill	Firm mid greyish brown silty clay	0.14	Fill of ditch terminus
1104	Ditch	Cut		0.14	Cut of shallow ditch. Base is slightly irregular, suggesting it is more than one feature, though fill is uniform, and feature is regular in plan.
1105	Ditch	Fill	Moderately Compact mid orangey	0.3	Fill of field boundary

Context	Feature type	Context type	Description	Height/Depth	Interpretation
			brown silty clay		
1106	Ditch	Cut		0.3	field boundary ditch terminus?

Trench 12

Maximum dimensions: Length: 50m Width: 1.80m Depth: 0.60m

Orientation: SW-NE

Context	Feature type	Context type	Description	Height/Depth	Interpretation
1200	Topsoil	Layer		0.3	
1201	Subsoil	Layer		0.2	
1202	Natural	Layer			

Trench 13

Maximum dimensions: Length: 50m Width: 1.80m Depth: 0.56m

Orientation: NW-SE

Context	Feature type	Context type	Description	Height/Depth	Interpretation
1300	Topsoil	Layer		0.34	
1301	Subsoil	Layer		0.22	
1302	Natural	Layer			
1303	Linear	Fill	Soft dark greyish brown silty clay loam	0.3	Loamy fill of old hedgeline, but recent enough that the soil is quite humic.
1304	Linear	Fill	Firm mid yellowish brown silty clay	0.4	Fill of old boundary ditch. Cut by redundant but much more recent hedge line 1308, representing continuation of field boundary.
1305	Linear	Cut		0.4	Old boundary ditch, replaced by later hedge cut 1308
1306	Linear	Fill	Soft dark yellowish brown silty clay	0.08	Fill of possible ditch terminus
1307	Linear	Cut		0.08	Very shallow feature, quite possibly a slight depression filled with subsoil rather than a real feature.
1308	Linear	Cut		0.3	Relatively recent (post-Med/Victorian?) hedgeline, cutting older boundary ditch on the same alignment.

Trench 14

Maximum dimensions: Length: 50m Width: 1.80m Depth: 0.54m

Orientation: E-W

Context	Feature type	Context type	Description	Height/Depth	Interpretation
1400	Topsoil	Layer		0.32	
1401	Subsoil	Layer		0.22	
1402	Natural	Layer			
1403	Ditch	Fill	Firm mid greyish brown silty clay	0.53	Single, uniform fill of gully
1404	Ditch	Cut		0.53	Cut of gully or possibly a steep sided ditch with a flat base. One of a series of features on the same ne-sw alignment, which are probably all related and for drainage in this part of the site. Has unclear relationship with furrow to the southwest. The furrow appears

Context	Feature type	Context type	Description	Height/Depth	Interpretation
					to cut 1404 but not enough is visible to see in plan or excavate a full slot.
1405	Ditch	Fill	Firm mid yellowish brown silty clay	0.40	Fill of drainage ditch
1406	Ditch	Cut			Post-medieval drainage ditch, later replaced with land drain [1408] to the east. One of several drainage ditches in this trench.
1407	Drain	Fill			Fill of land drain with ceramic drain at base
1408	Drain	Cut			Cut of modern land drain.
1409	Ditch	Fill		0.28	Fill of drainage ditch
1410	Ditch	Cut		0.28	Cut of probable drainage ditch
1411	Furrow	Fill			Fill of furrow
1412	Furrow	Cut			Cut of furrow

Trench 15

Maximum dimensions: Length: 50m Width: 1.80m Depth: 0.47m

Orientation: SW-NE

Context	Feature type	Context type	Description	Height/Depth	Interpretation
1500	Topsoil	Layer		0.32	Topsoil
1501	Subsoil	Layer		0.32m - 0.47m	
1502	Natural	Layer	Firm light yellow silty clay	0.47m +	

Trench 16

Maximum dimensions: Length: 50m Width: 1.80m Depth: 0.57m

Orientation: NW-SE

Context	Feature type	Context type	Description	Height/Depth	Interpretation
1600	Topsoil	Layer		0.36	
1601	Subsoil	Layer			
1602	Natural	Layer		0.57m +	

Trench 17

Maximum dimensions: Length: 50m Width: 1.80m Depth: 0.59m

Orientation: NW-SE

Context	Feature type	Context type	Description	Height/Depth	Interpretation
1700	Topsoil	Layer			
1701	Subsoil	Layer			
1702	Natural	Layer		0.56m+	
1703	Linear	Cut		0.76	Large V-shaped ditch, probably post-Med drainage. Undated
1704	Linear	Fill	Soft dark yellowish brown silty clay	0.18	Tertiary fill of large ditch. Very similar to the overlying subsoil.
1705	Linear	Fill	Firm mid greyish blue silty clay	0.3	Slumped natural down NW side of ditch
1706	Linear	Fill	Firm light yellowish brown silty clay	0.28	Secondary fill of large ditch
1707	Linear	Fill	Firm mid yellowish brown silty clay	0.33	First fill of large ditch 1703. Low energy silting. Undated.

Trench 18

Maximum dimensions: Length: 50m Width: 1.80m Depth: 0.50m

Orientation: NW-SE

Context	Feature type	Context type	Description	Height/Depth	Interpretation
1800	Topsoil	Layer			
1801	Subsoil	Layer			
1802	Natural	Layer			
1803	Ditch	Fill	Moderately Compact mid orangey brown sandy clay	0.50	Upper fill of post-medieval or modern ditch orientated East West.
1804	Ditch	Fill	Soft light blueish grey clay	0.25m	Gleyed lower primary fill of ditch. Evidence of waterlogging.
1805	Ditch	Cut		0.75m	Large steep sided ditch, with no dateable evidence but thought to be post-medieval or modern earthworks.

Appendix 2 Technical information

The archive

The archive consists of:

- 82 Context records AS1
- 3 Field progress reports AS2
- 4 Photographic records AS3
- 185 Digital photographs
- 1 Drawing number catalogues AS4
- 49 Scale drawings
- 1 Sample number catalogues AS18
- 18 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:

Warwickshire Museum
The Butts
Warwick
CV34 4SS
Tel. Warwick (01926) 412500

Appendix 3 Environmental tables

Context	Sample	Feature type	Fill of	Position of fill	Sample volume (L)	Volume processed (L)	Period	Residue assessed	Flot assessed
504	1	Pond	505	Primary	10	10	Modern	Yes	Yes
305	2	Pit	306	Primary	10	10	Undated	Yes	Yes

Table 4: List of environmental samples

Context	Sample	large mammal	mollusc	charcoal	Waterlogged plant remains	Comment
305	2	occ	occ	occ	occ*	
504	1			occ	occ - mod	occ CBM, unidentified metal slag

occ = occasional, mod = moderate * = possibly intrusive

Table 5: Summary of environmental remains from selected samples

context	material subtype	count	weight(g)	feature type	period
Unstratified	animal bone	1	2		undated
Unstratified	animal bone	5	112		undated
105	animal bone	1	14	Furrow	Post-medieval to modern
305	animal bone	43	416	Pit	undated
1403	animal bone	15	26	Ditch	undated
1803	animal bone	1	4	Ditch	undated

Table 6: hand-collected animal bone

Latin name	Family	Common name	Habitat	305	504
<i>Ranunculus acris/repens/bulbosus</i>	Ranunculaceae	buttercup	CD		+
<i>Ranunculus sbgen Batrachium</i>	Ranunculaceae	crowfoot	E		+ /+++
<i>Urtica dioica</i>	Urticaeae	common nettle	ABCD	+	+
<i>Sambucus nigra</i>	Caprifoliaceae	elderberry	BC		+
<i>Carex</i> sp (3-sided) nutlets	Cyperaceae	sedge	CDE		++
unidentified fruit	unidentified				+
unidentified herbaceous fragments	unidentified			+++	

Table 7.: Plant remains from environmental samples