

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
PROGRAMME OF WORKS  
AT  
HANLEY MEAD, HANLEY  
CASTLE, WORCESTERSHIRE

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Illustrated by Carolyn Hunt

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## **An archaeological programme of works at Hanley Mead, Hanley Castle, Worcestershire**

**James Goad, Erica Darch and Paul Williams**

### **Part 1 Project summary**

An archaeological project was undertaken at Hanley Mead, Hanley Castle, Worcestershire (NGR SO 8380 4243). It was undertaken on behalf of Misters Construction Ltd., who intended to develop houses on the site and for which a planning application had been submitted. The project followed an evaluation which had detected a series of archaeological features, and further work was deemed necessary to reveal more of these and to determine their date, nature and location.

The excavation revealed a ditch, a posthole and a pit. Whilst the pit went undated, the ditch was dated to the Roman period and the posthole to the medieval period. The evaluation had previously revealed medieval, 18<sup>th</sup> century and modern features, and so the programme of works both supplemented and extended these results.

In addition to the above fieldwork, a building recording survey was undertaken on an L-shaped building in the south-west corner of the site. This building was a hay barn of four phases, the earliest dating to the early 17<sup>th</sup> century.

## Part 2 Detailed report

### 1. Background

#### 1.1 Reasons for the project

A programme of archaeological works was undertaken at Hanley Mead, Hanley Castle, Worcestershire (NGR SO 8380 4243), on behalf of Misters Construction Ltd. The client intended to develop housing on the site and has submitted a planning application to Malvern Hills District Council (reference MH/01/1452), who considered that a site of archaeological interest was affected (WSM 25284).

#### 1.2 Project parameters

The project conforms to the *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (IFA 1999a) and the *Standard and guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures* (IFA 1999b).

The project also conforms to a brief prepared by Planning Advisory Service (AS 2002a) and for which a project proposal (including detailed specification) was produced (AS 2002b).

#### 1.3 Aims

The aims of the excavation were from the brief – to locate archaeological deposits and determine, if present, their extent, state of preservation, date, type, vulnerability and documentation. The purpose of this was to establish their significance, since this would add to the archaeology already found during the evaluation to create a clearer picture of the settlement present on the site.

## 2. Topographical and archaeological context

### *Geology and topography*

The site at Hanley Mead lies 0.4km to the north of the centre of Hanley Castle village, 6.5km south-east of Great Malvern and 2km north-west of Upton-upon-Severn. It lies at a height of around 24m AOD and is situated on a gravel terrace 0.75km to the west of the River Severn. The soils belong to the Ludford soil association (571x) of argillic brown earths. They comprise deep well-drained non-calcerous fine loamy, coarse loamy and sandy soils, locally flinty, over clays with clay-enriched subsoil and in places over gravel (Ragg *et al* 1984, 281-3; Soil Survey of England and Wales 1984; Soil Survey of England and Wales 1984). The solid geology of the site is Triassic Mercian Mudstone, formerly known as Keuper marl (Barclay *et al* 1988).

### *Historical background*

The settlement of Hanley is first recorded in the 1086 Domesday Survey as *Hanlie* or *Hanlege*. A castle was built during the reign of King John, and this served as the administrative centre of the medieval Chase of Malvern, which occupied the western half of the medieval parish and stretched southwards to just north of Gloucester. Hanley Castle parish was associated with a substantial medieval pottery industry, probably centred on Hanley Swan to the west (WSM 27001). Documentary sources record the existence of potters in the later 13<sup>th</sup> century (Mawer and Stenton 1927, 201-201) and archaeological evidence indicates that they remained in business into the early 17<sup>th</sup> century. Despite this longevity and the evident scale of the industry only one kiln site has so far been identified (Hurst 1994).

The area to the north of the site is identifiable as *Boothill Green* (1751 glebe terrier) or *Boothall Green* (1795 enclosure map). The Booth- element is usually explained as being indicative of a market site where booths were erected on a temporary basis, and it's possible that this was the former site of Hanley market, which was documented in the medieval period. The 1795 enclosure map indicates that the site lay within a plot taken over by the "new vicarage" (Vaughan 2002).

#### *Archaeological background*

There are a number of cruck-framed black-and-white buildings surrounding the site to the north (WSM 5821 and 5822). They are potentially of medieval origin. Additionally a medieval wayside cross existed on the north-east side of the road (WSM 7833), while the stray find of a medieval dagger chape has been made to the north (WSM 05846). Traces of ridge and furrow exist in fields to the south (Vaughan 2002).

### 3. **Methods**

#### 3.1 **Documentary search**

Prior to fieldwork commencing a search was made of the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR). In addition the following sources were also consulted:

##### *Cartographic sources*

- Reproduced 1:500 Ordnance Survey map, 2000
- 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey map, 1887
- 2<sup>nd</sup> edition Ordnance Survey Map, 1905
- 3<sup>rd</sup> edition Ordnance Survey map, 1930

##### *Documentary sources*

- Place-names (Mawer and Stenton 1927, 201-2)
- County histories (VCH IV, 89-101)
- Domesday (Thorn and Thorn 1982)
- 1751 glebe terrier (WRCO)

#### 3.2 **Fieldwork methods**

##### 3.2.1 **Fieldwork strategy**

Fieldwork was undertaken between on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2002.

A detailed specification had been prepared by the Service (AS 2002b).

One 11m x 13.50m area was opened, amounting to just over 153m<sup>2</sup>. The area of development as a whole amounted to 0.41ha, representing a sample of 3.75%. The location of the area is located in Figure 2.

The fieldwork was undertaken in the middle of a building site with one large house recently erected adjacent to the area of excavation. Services installed for this building, along with the deposition of building material on the site, necessitated moving the location of the trench over 5m to the south-west from the originally intended position. Due to space constraints around the area demarcated for the trench, the space required for the dumping of spoil was limited, and no provision had been made for transporting the spoil to a different part of the site. Consequently it was decided to strip the area in three phases. When one length (approximately 3.7m wide) was stripped investigation and recording of deposits would take place. The next strip would expose an identically sized adjacent area and the spoil from this strip would be deposited in the area already opened and recorded.

The deposits considered not to be significant were removed using a JCB wheeled excavator with a toothless bucket and under archaeological supervision. Subsequent excavation was undertaken by hand. Clean surfaces were inspected and any features spotted were sectioned to determine their nature, as well as to retrieve artefactual material. Deposits were recorded according to standard Service practice (AS 1995).

### 3.2.2 **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.

## 3.3 **Artefacts**

### 3.3.1 **Artefact recovery policy**

All artefacts were retrieved by hand and retained in accordance with the service manual (CAS 1995 as amended).

### 3.3.2 **Method of Analysis**

All hand-retrieved finds were examined. Artefacts were identified, quantified, dated and recorded on a Microsoft Access 97 database. A *terminus post quem* (TPQ) date was assigned to each stratified context. The pottery was examined and recorded by fabric type according to the fabric reference series maintained by the Service (Hurst and Rees 1992).

## 3.4 **Building recording**

The project conformed to the specification for a photographic/level X survey as defined by the Royal Commission on the Historic Monuments of England (RCHME 1996). The project also conformed to the conditions of the brief (AS 2002a).

## 3.5 **The methods in retrospect**

The methods adopted allow a high degree of confidence that the aims of the project have been achieved.

## 4. **Fieldwork results**

### 4.1 **Building recording**

The building (now demolished) lay in the south-west corner of the site. It was an L-shaped agricultural building comprising three elements: a three bay hay storage barn; animal shelter



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shed and a small workshop (Plates 1-10). The building had been extensively altered, repaired and extended since its erection probably in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, although possibly earlier. The materials used in the construction included stone, brick, tile timber and iron.

The hay storage barn (building 1) was a three bay part timber-frame construction with brick panel in-fills and a brick plinth at the southern end. The roof structure had been totally altered and comprised a low pitched corrugated iron roof above side purlins and a ridge piece.

It is unclear if this structure was formerly a threshing barn, or if it was primarily a storage facility. There was a cart entrance to the north of the eastern end bay, the opposing door is a single door, which entered the attached shelter shed. Later alteration here may have concealed evidence for cart-doors on this side.

The shelter shed (building 2) is open to the south-west with a stone north-eastern elevation. It stands below a pitched clay tile roof. A small workshop (building 3) has been added to the south-eastern side of the shelter shed. This was a brick construction below a pitched clay tile roof. At the time of the survey the buildings were in a fair condition. There were no obstructions and the survey achieved the aims set out in the brief (AS 2002a).

*Phase one: circa early 17<sup>th</sup> century*

The dating of timber-framed structures is problematic, especially when they have been altered and 'modernised'. The hay barn was constructed on a rough stone plinth, which included sections of 2" brick. Bricks of this size can usually date from late 16<sup>th</sup> century and until the last decades of the 17<sup>th</sup>. However, without detailed survey it cannot be determined if the plinth was in its original form or has been repaired. Timber members dating to at least the early 18<sup>th</sup> century survive within the timber-frame. These included three jowled corner posts, the north-eastern post having been replaced. The mortises in these posts and within the surviving studs demonstrate that the structure was originally square panelled with three rows of panels and short diagonal braces from corner posts to wall plates on the side elevations. Typologically this style of panelling dates from around the 16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries, the earlier structures normally had substantial timbers, whereas the timbers within the hay barn's structure were fairly slender, being around 0.15m square. There were stone flags in the cart bay, and again it cannot be determined if these were original, or whether they were part of a threshing floor or simply to provide traction for the carts.

Much of the timber structure had been repaired with re-used timber. Notably, one section of purlin had been scarfed in from a former bridging beam, which most likely originated from a domestic building. There were diminished haunch tenons to take floor joists on both faces of this substantial timber, these tenons generally date to the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

*Phase two: Late 18<sup>th</sup> /early 19<sup>th</sup> century*

The barn was subjected to extensive repairs and alterations during this period. The roof structure and wall plates were all replaced. The purlins were by now supported on short twin queen struts above the tie beams, which also date from this period. The lowered pitch of the roof has dispensed with the requirement for collars and a central ridge-piece carries the common and principal rafters. The panel in-filling from this period was of brick and mortar, there is no evidence of the former in-fill method. A partition of timber-frame was inserted between the cart bay and the remainder of the barn. The external weather board cladding is most likely to come mainly from this period.

*Phase three: Early-mid 19<sup>th</sup> century*

The shelter shed was constructed against the south-eastern elevation of the hay barn sometime during this time span. This replaced a former lean-to building of which only a shadow remains on the wall of the barn. The shelter shed is open to the south-west and the

rear wall was constructed of Malvernian stone with occasional half bricks. This building also incorporates much re-used timbers, with open mortises and unused peg holes. The roof structure makes extensive use of steel tie bars. Most of the structure is pegged together with small pegs. The purlins are scarfed together from five individual timber members. The northern ends of the purlins are supported on the wall plate of the hay barn. The floor of the shelter shed was of random brickwork, some laid on end. This showed extensive wear in the areas visible. There were also sections of concrete floor within the structure.

#### *Phase four: 20<sup>th</sup> century*

The south-western gable lower section was rebuilt during the 20<sup>th</sup> century using brick and mortar. This encompassed trimming the original north-western corner post and inserting a new post on the opposite corner. Some internal bracing was nailed to the internal framework sometime during this period. The brick built workshop was also added to the southernmost end of the shelter shed during the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

## 4.2 Structural evidence

The contexts recorded are presented in Table 1, with the trenches and features recorded shown in Figs 2 and 3.

### 4.2.1 Discussion

#### **Natural deposits**

The natural deposits encountered on this project were composed of sandy gravels.

#### **Roman**

One feature, a ditch orientated north-east to south-west, was dated to the Roman period by a single sherd of Severn valley ware pottery. Only about 4m of the ditch was clearly visible and its terminus was unclear. It was not detected in the evaluation trench which it appears to abutt in plan. This short length of ditch indicates the possible presence of an enclosure, and seems to be the only indicator of Roman activity in the area which points to the presence of a Roman settlement or field system. Unfortunately, the limited amount of the ditch that was revealed during the strip does not give us very much information as to the form such a settlement might take. The possibility remains that the single sherd of pot could have been redeposited and that the ditch dates to a later period.

#### **Medieval**

An additional posthole (associated with medieval pottery) was discovered, located next to a couple of pits/postholes found during the evaluation of this site. The similarity of these features in the form of a single homogenous fill, and the discovery within one of them of a thirteenth to fourteenth century pottery sherd, indicates there could be a relationship between them. The limited area stripped, however, meant that no definite structure could be defined. A large pit located a couple of metres north of the posthole, could have belonged to this period but no artefacts were recovered from it.

## 4.3 Artefactual evidence

The assemblage came from two contexts, and consisted of two sherds of pottery and one small, abraded fragment of tile. The single sherd of pottery from context 108 weighed 38g. It was a Severn Valley ware (fabric 12) body sherd, dating from the mid 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> century. The small piece of tile, also from this context is unidentified. The single sherd from context 106 (22g), was a very unusual, micaceous medieval rim sherd, possibly a variant of fabric 56, Malvernian unglazed ware (V Bryant, pers comm).

The assemblage is too small to draw many conclusions. Medieval material was recovered during the evaluation of this site (Vaughan 2002) and the results of the excavation confirm medieval activity on the site, as well as suggesting a very low level of Roman activity (J D Hurst, pers comm).

## 5. **Publication summary**

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

*An archaeological programme of works was undertaken on behalf of Misters Construction at Hanley Mead, Hanley Castle, Worcestershire (NGR SO 8380 4243; WSM 31924). In addition to building recording on an L-shaped barn an area was stripped to reveal several archaeological features: a pit (undated), a post hole (medieval) and a ditch (Roman). These features supplemented the medieval postholes discovered during the evaluation, as well as extending the chronological range of the site. The Roman evidence was particularly significant as it is the first "structural" evidence of Roman date ever excavated in Hanley Castle.*

## 6. **The archive**

The archive consists of:

6	Context records AS1
1	Fieldwork progress records AS2
1	Photographic records AS3
2	Colour transparency film
2	Black and white photographic films
4	Scale drawings
1	Box of finds
1	Computer disk

The project archive is intended to be placed at:

Worcestershire County Museum

Hartlebury Castle

Hartlebury

Near Kidderminster

Worcestershire DY11 7XZ

Tel Hartlebury (01299) 250416

## 7. **Acknowledgements**

The Service would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project, Derek Misters of Misters Construction Ltd. and Mike Glyde of Worcestershire County Council Planning Advisory Section.

8. **Personnel**

The fieldwork and report preparation was led by James Goad. The project manager responsible for the quality of the project was Derek Hurst. The fieldwork was undertaken by James Goad and the building recording by Paul Williams. The finds analysis was by Erica Darch, and illustration by Carolyn Hunt.

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10. **Abbreviations**

BSB            Break of slope to the base

BST            Break of slope from the top

WSM	Numbers prefixed with 'WSM' are the primary reference numbers used by the Worcestershire County Sites and Monuments Record.
WCRO	Worcestershire County Records Office.
NMR	National Monuments Record.
SMR	Sites and Monuments Record.

## **Table 1**

Maximum dimensions: Length: 11.50m Width: 13.50m Depth: 0.50-0.60m

Orientation: North-east to south-west

Main deposit descriptions

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
100	Total excavated area	Machine cut	
101	Topsoil	A dark brown sticky silty sand. Abundant light rooting	0.30-0.35m
102	Subsoil	A mid greyish brown sandy silt. Abundant small to medium-sized stones, both sub-rounded and sub-angular	0.30-0.55m
103	Natural	Sandy gravels	
104	Pit fill of 105	Mid grey friable sandy silt. Moderate small to medium sized rounded stones	0.50-0.65m
105	Pit cut, filled by 104	BST-Gradual SIDES-Concave BSB-Imperceptible BASE-Concave  A large sub-ovular pit approximately 2.50m north of a cluster of pits and post holes	
106	Post hole fill of 107	Mid grey friable sandy silt. Moderate small to medium sub-rounded stones.	0.50-0.63m
107	Post hole cut, filled by 106	BST-Sharp SIDES-Concave BSB-Gradual BASE-Concave  The feature appears ovular and might be associated with adjacent cluster of pit/post hole features located in the evaluation trench.	
108	Ditch fill of ditch 109	A friable mid-brown sandy silt. Moderate medium sized rounded stones, moderate	0.50-0.80m
109	Ditch cut, filled by 108	BST-Sharp (north side)  -Gradual (south side)	

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		<p>SIDES-Steep (north side)</p> <p>-Irregular (south side)</p> <p>BSB-Sharp (north side)</p> <p>-Gradual (south side)</p> <p>BASE-Concave</p> <p>A rather irregularly-shaped north-east to south-west orientated linear. The fill 108 appeared totally homogenous but it remains possible that the ditch has been re-cut at some stage, hence its profile. On the surface the ditch was clearly visible up the location of the evaluation trench, then became very hard to see. It's possible that the ditch terminates at the edge of the evaluation or just within it, but the location of this terminus could not be determined.</p>	
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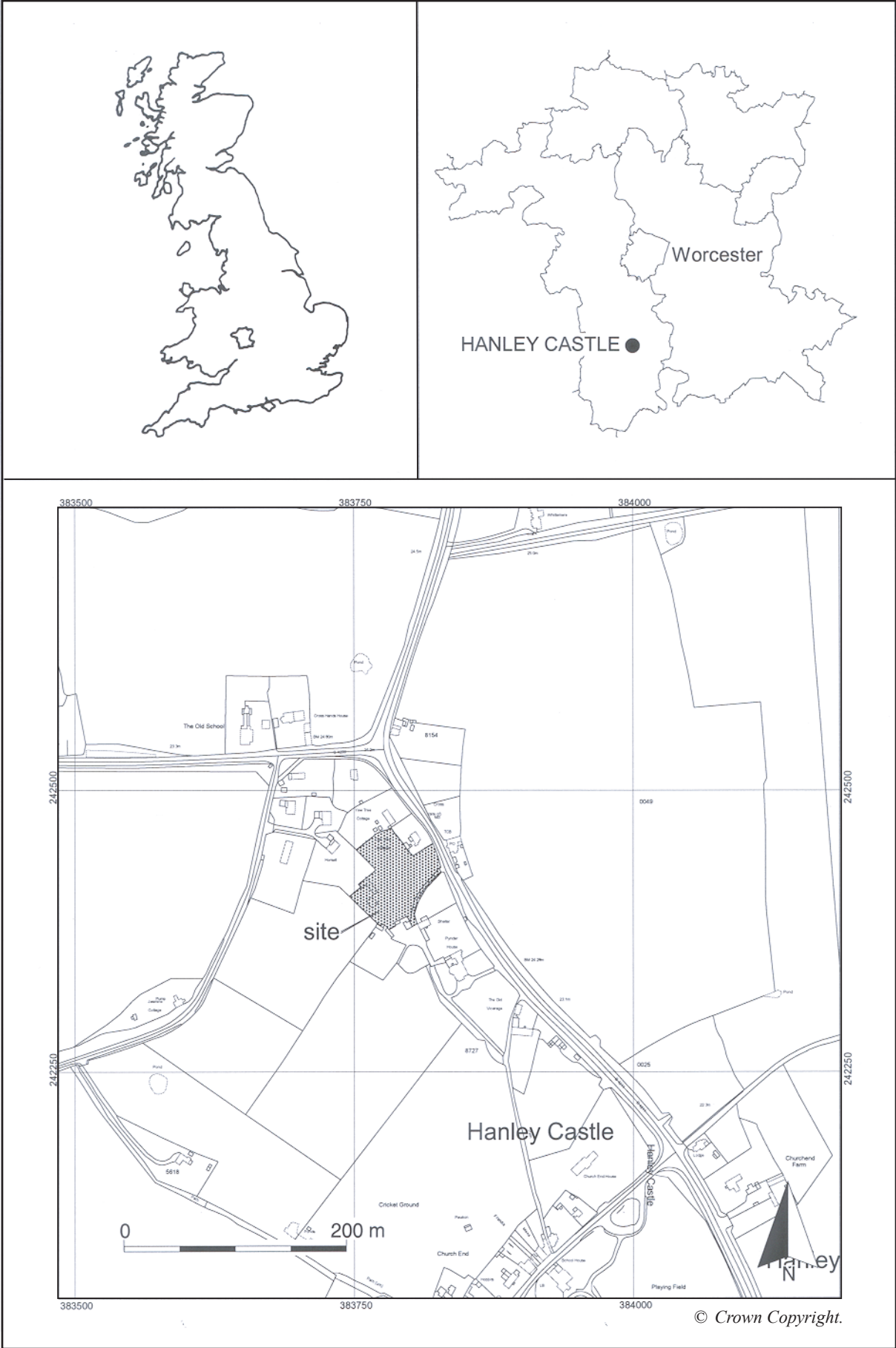


Figure 1: Location of the site.

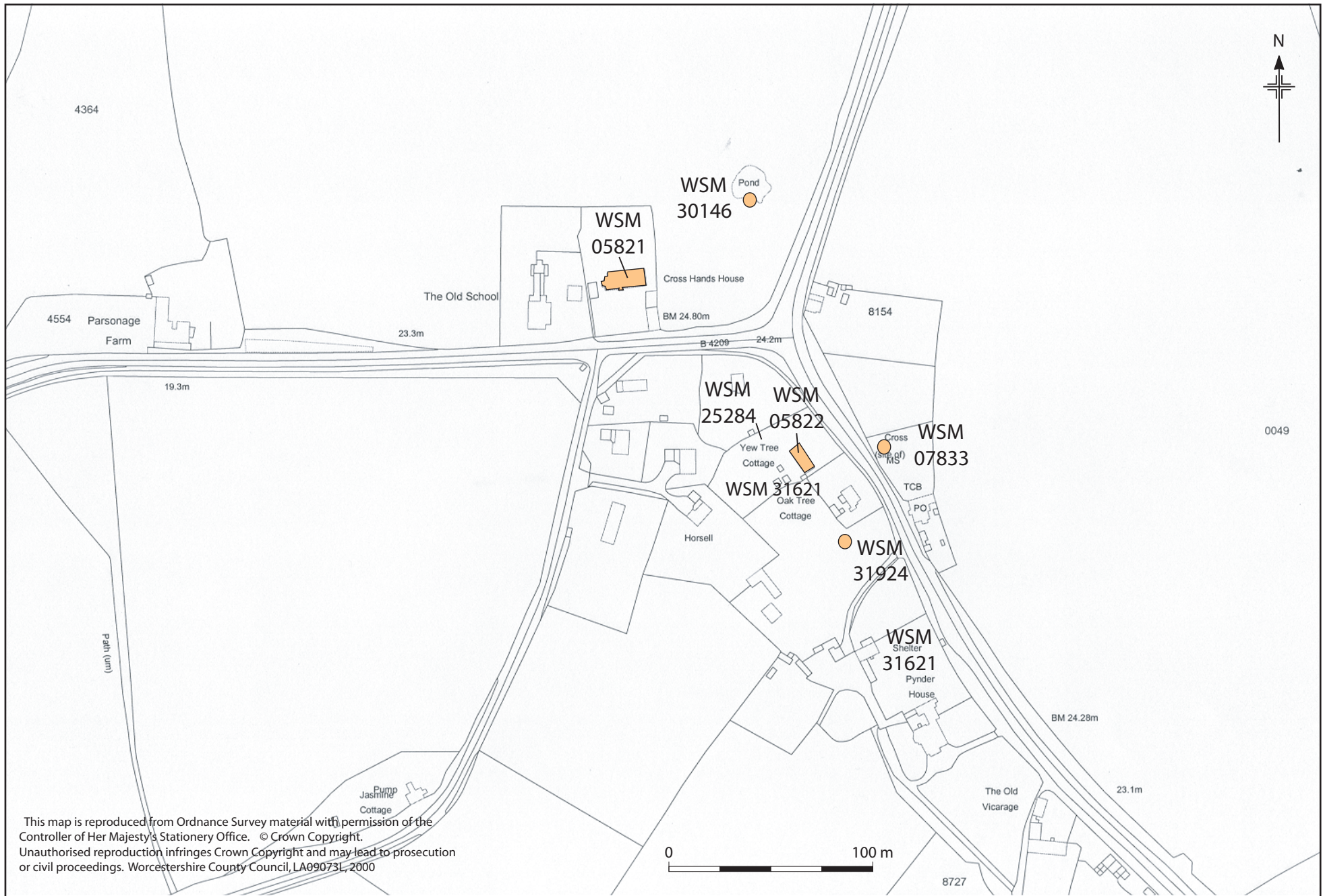


Figure 2: Sites in the vicinity.

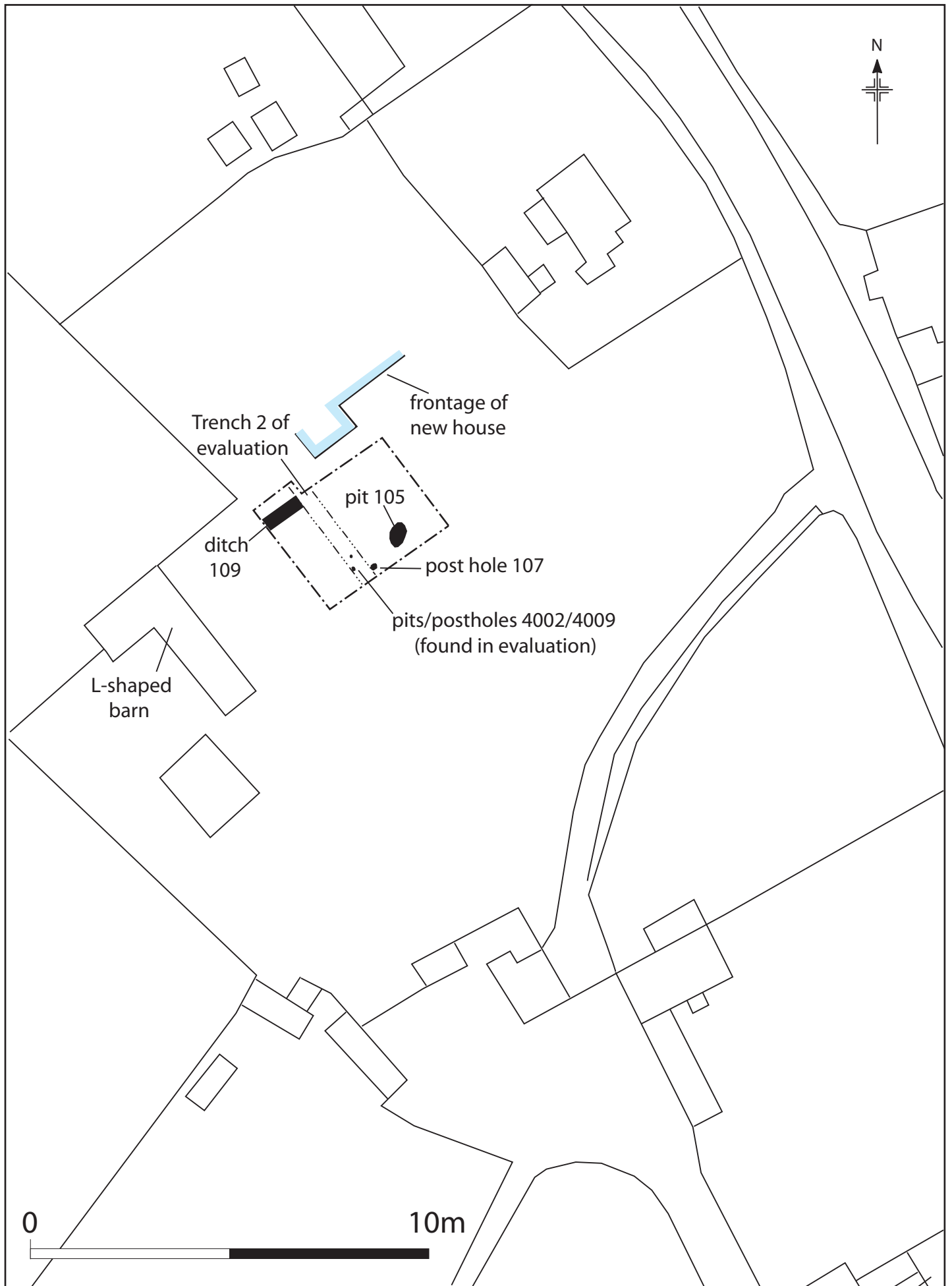


Figure 3: Trench location plan.

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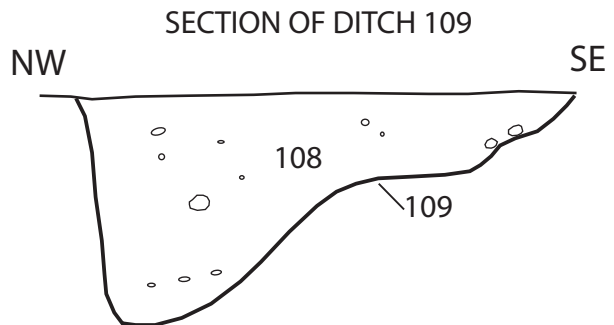
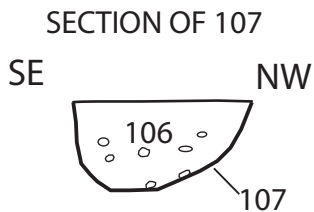
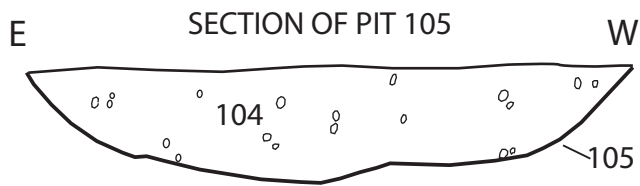
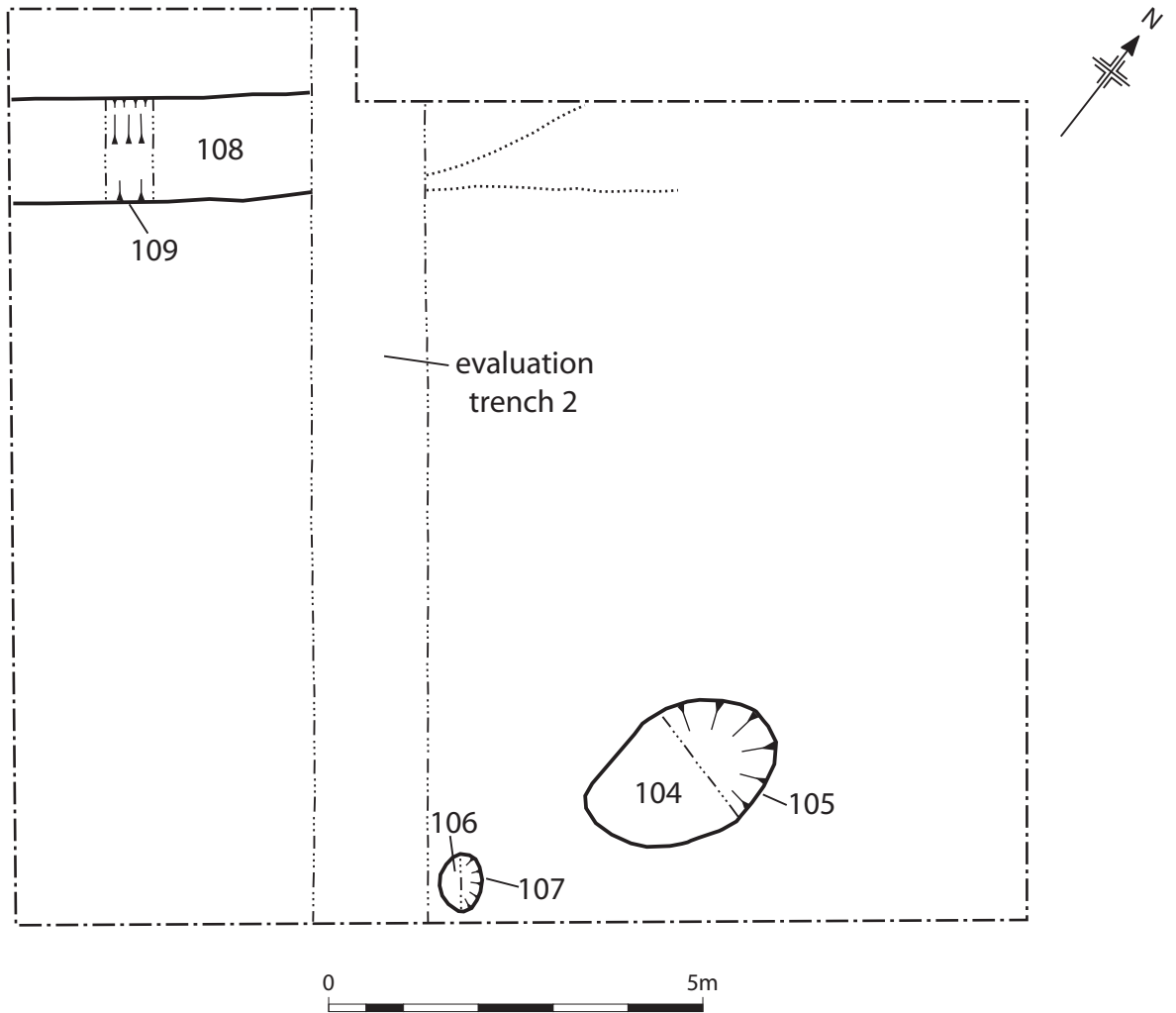


Figure 4: Trench plan and sections.

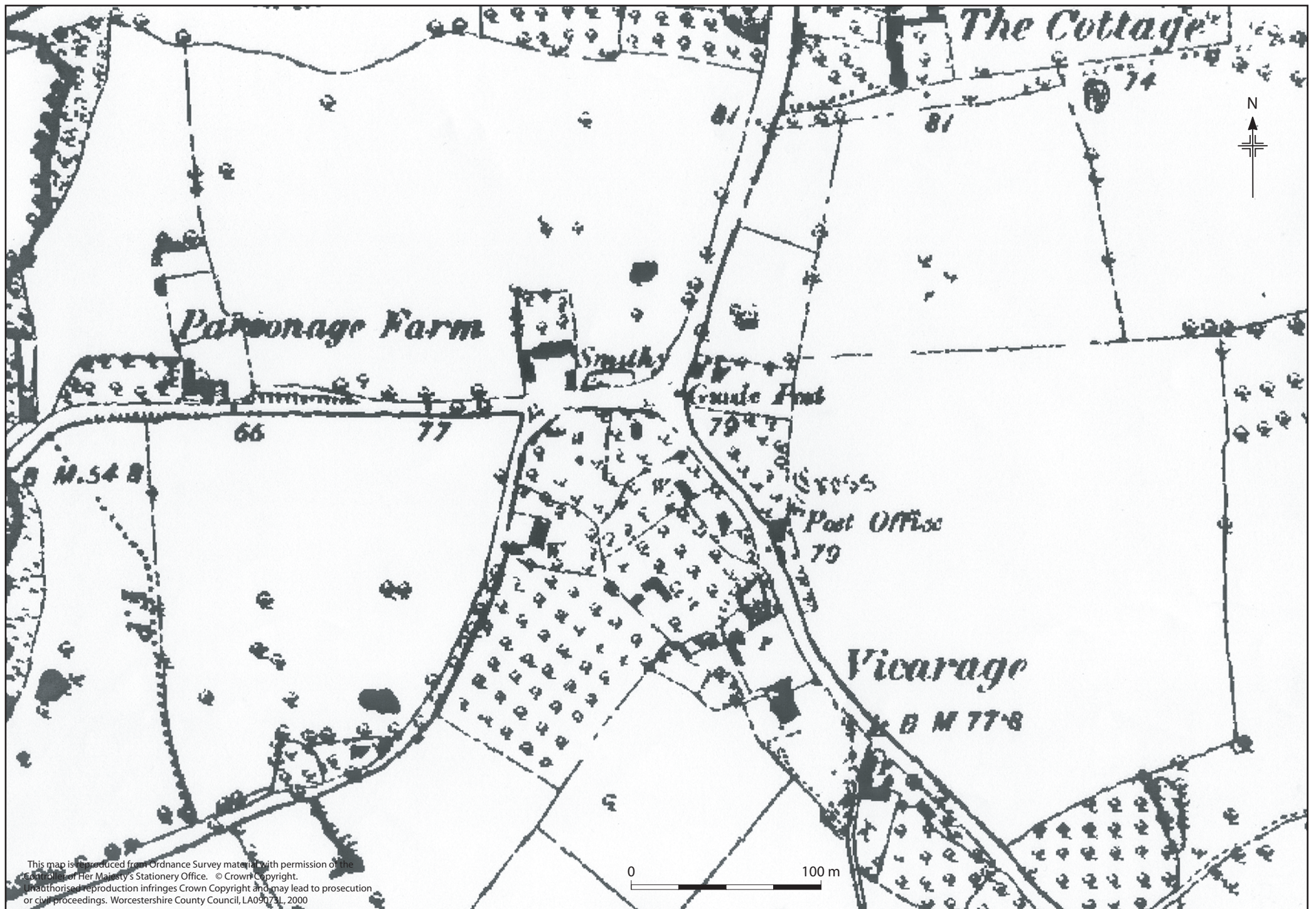


Figure 5: Extract from First Edition Ordnance Survey Map (1887).



*Plate 1: Animal shelter shed (building 1) and hay storage barn (building 2), northeast elevation.*



*Plate 2: Hay storage barn (building 2), northeast elevation.*

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*Plate 3: Workshop (building 3), southeast elevation.*



*Plate 4: Animal shelter shed (building 2) and workshop (building 3), southwest elevation.*



*Plate 5: Hay storage barn (building 1), southwest elevation.*



*Plate 6: Hay storage barn (building 1), southwest elevation.*

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*Plate 7: Hay storage barn (building 1), northwest elevation.*



*Plate 8: Hay storage barn (building 1), internal detail.*



*Plate 9: Hay storage barn (building 1), internal detail.*



*Plate 10: Animal shelter shed (building 2), internal detail.*