

Archaeological evaluation at Bidford Grange Golf Course, Stratford Road, Bidford-on-Avon, Warwickshire



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Archaeological evaluation at Bidford Grange Golf Course, Stratford Road, Bidford-on-Avon, Warwickshire.

Andrew Mann

With contributions by Robert Hedge and Liz Pearson

Summary

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at Bidford Grange Golf Course, Stratford Road, Bidford-on Avon, Warwickshire (NGR 411440, 251785). It was undertaken on behalf of Daniel Broadhurst, who intends to construct 25 log cabins on part of the site of the former golf course, for which a planning application has been submitted.

Thirteen trenches were excavated across the site, the locations of which were informed by an earlier geophysical survey. The majority were blank but two trenches to the east of the site contained features of probable early medieval and medieval date. A small quantity of pottery of early medieval pottery was identified in a vertical, flat based linear feature, which has been tentatively identified as a large Sunken Featured Building (SFB), although no postholes were identified in association, and the very good state of preservation indicate that it might be of much later date.

Medieval remains were located approximately 80m to the south of the early medieval remains, and consisted of a wall foundation trench, a large rubbish pit and a shallow linear feature. These were located within 10m of each other and probably represent the remains of a medieval building which had been buried in to a large rubbish pit after demolished/collapse. The lack of pottery in these features may suggest the building was not domestic, and was possibly an agricultural building

Report

1 Background

1.1 Reasons for the project

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at Bidford Grange Golf Course, Stratford Road, Bidford-on-Avon, Warwickshire (NGR 411440, 251785; Fig 1). It was commissioned by Daniel Broadhurst who intends to change the use of the land from part of a golf course to a holiday complex, with the erection of 25 log cabins, with associated access and landscaping. A planning application has been submitted to Stratford-upon-Avon District Council (reference number 11/02625/FUL) and the development is considered by the Curator to have the potential to affect heritage assets with archaeological interest (HER ref MWA 4923), identified during a geophysical survey (Stratascan 2011).

No specific brief has been prepared by the Curator but this proposal conforms to the model brief *Generic Archaeological Fieldwork Guidelines* issued by Warwickshire County Council (dated December 2012). A project proposal (including detailed specification) was produced by Worcestershire Archaeology (WA 2015).

The project also conforms to the *Standard and guidance: Archaeological field evaluation* (ClfA 2014a).

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 Mann (BA (hons.); MSc), who joined Worcestershire Archaeology in 2004 and has been practicing archaeology since 2001, assisted by Jessica Wheeler (BA (hons.)) and Aiden Woodger (MSc). The project manager responsible for the quality of the project was Tom Vaughan (BA (hons.); MA; ACIfA). Illustrations were prepared by Laura Templeton (BA; PG Cert; MCIfA). Elizabeth Pearson (MSc; ACIfA) contributed the environmental report, Robert Hedge (MA Cantab) contributed the finds report.

3.2 Documentary research

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

3.3 List of sources consulted

Cartographic sources

- Ordnance Survey County Series Warwickshire 1884-1887
- Ordnance Survey County Series Warwickshire 1903-1905
- Ordnance Survey County Series Warwickshire 1923
- Ordnance Survey Plan 1955
- Ordnance Survey Plan 1966-69
- Ordnance Survey Plan 1971-78
- Ordnance Survey Plan 1978-1995

Aerial photographs

Google Earth 1945, 1999, 2005, 2006, 2007, and 2010

3.4 Fieldwork strategy

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

Fieldwork was undertaken between 30 November and 2 December 2015.

Twelve trenches amounting to around 260m in length, were excavated over the main site area of 1.9ha, representing a sample of 2.5%. The location of the trenches is indicated in Fig 2. Trenches 1, 4, 3, 5 and 7 were targeted to test geophysical anomalies identified in the geophysical report (Stratascan 2011, figures 2 and 3). A single 17m trench (Trench 13) was also excavated to the south of the main development area at the request of the client even though no archaeological planning condition had been placed on that area of the site. A number of trenches had to be moved from the proposed locations as some ground works, drainage and road construction had already been undertaken across the site (Fig 4).

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 2012). On completion of excavation, trenches were reinstated by replacing the excavated material.

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 Robert Hedge

3.6.1 Artefact recovery policy

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

3.6.2 Method of analysis

The finds work reported here conforms with the relevant sections of *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (ClfA 2014b), with archive creation informed by *Archaeological archives: a guide to the best practice in the creation, compilation, transfer and curation* (AAF 2011), and museum deposition by *Selection, retention and dispersal of archaeological collections* (SMA 1993).

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

Artefacts from environmental samples were examined and included in the assessment.

The pottery and ceramic building material was examined under x20 magnification and referenced as appropriate by fabric type and form according to the medieval and post-medieval fabric reference series published for Warwickshire by Soden and Ratkai (1998), and the Roman fabric reference series published by Lee *et al* (1994). Where fabrics not covered by the Warwickshire series were present, they have been identified using the fabric reference series maintained by Worcestershire Archaeology (Hurst and Rees 1992 and www.worcestershireceramics.org).

3.6.3 Artefact 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 material in general, and;
- generally where material has been specifically assessed by an appropriate specialist as having no obvious grounds for retention.

3.7 Environmental archaeology methodology, by Liz Pearson

3.7.1 Sampling policy

Samples were taken according to standard WA practice (WA 2012). A total of 3 samples (each of up to 20 litres) were taken from the site (Table 1).

context	sample	feature type	fill of	position of fill	sample volume (L)	period	volume processed (L)	residue assessed	flot assessed
402	1	colluvium			10	undated	10	yes	yes
704	2	ditch	715	primary	10	med	10	yes	yes
708	3	layer	705		20	med	20	yes	yes

Table 1: List of bulk samples

3.7.2 Processing and analysis

The samples were processed by flotation using a Siraf tank. The flots were collected on a 300mm 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 WA, 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).

3.7.3 Environmental 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.

3.8 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

The site lies on northern bank of the River Avon at approximately 47.0m AOD. The site rises gradually to the north (51.0m AOD) and steeply to the west (56.0m AOD). The soils are lime-rich loamy and clayey soils with impeded drainage which overlie Blue Lias mudstone.

Bidford Grange was named from the grange (a monastic farm estate) which is thought to have occupied the area and which belonged to the Abbots of Bordesley. A Roman farmstead of 1st to 4th century date has previously been excavated on the high ground to the west of the site and which the HER suggests may have covered the northern half of the development site (MWA 4923). Although no prehistoric sites are known in the surrounding area, prehistoric flints of Neolithic and Bronze Age date have been found on the high ground to the west of the development site. Bidford-on-Avon, approximately 1.5km to the west has early medieval origins and significant early medieval remains have been located in and immediately surrounding the village. Grange Mill is located to the south-east on the bank of the river, which is of medieval to post-medieval date. A previous archaeological evaluation to the east of the development site failed to identify any significant archaeological remains (Cotswold Archaeology 2010; EWA 10142).

4.2 Current land-use

The site was formerly part of a golf course which was constructed in the early 1990s. Prior to this it had been agricultural land.

5 Structural analysis

The trenches and features recorded are shown in Figs 2 and 4-6. The results of the structural analysis are presented in Appendix 1.

5.1.1 Phase 1: Natural deposits

Natural deposits were identified in all excavated trenches. The overlying dark brown clay loam topsoil was of variable thickness across the site but for the most part was little more than a turf matt overlying greyish clay subsoil. The natural was identified at between 0.10-0.77m below the ground surface. The natural was variable across the site but mostly consisted of buff coloured firm and cohesive silty clay. In places, specifically in Trenches 1, 4, 10 and 12, the silty clay natural was mid-greyish blue in colour. The laminated blue lias bedrock was also exposed in isolated places in Trenches 2, 4, 6, 9 and 10.

In Trenches 4 and 7 other natural deposits were identified. In Trench 4 layer (402) had filled a natural depression and is thought to be a colluvial deposit at the base of the hill to the west. In Trench 7 there was also an extensive firm green clay across most of the trench specifically where the natural sloped away to the east and south-east. The origin of this deposit is unclear but it sealed archaeological features of medieval date.

It was apparent that landscaping, probably associated with the construction of the golf course had occurred in Trenches 2 and 12. In Trench 12 a thin turf matt (1200) sat directly upon the natural (1202) suggesting it had been previously stripped while in Trench 2 a layer of re-deposited natural clay (202) containing frequent ceramic land drain fragments sat directly above the natural (203). This landscaping was also visible in the surrounding topography, specifically to the north of the site where it was apparent the natural hill slope had been terraced to form a level fairway.

Significant landscaping also appears to have occurred around Trench 13, where the hill had been terraced to produce a level building platform and brick hardcore sat directly on the natural clay.

5.1.2 Phase 2: Early medieval deposits

At the north-eastern end of Trench 1 were a number of features that contained early medieval pottery. The earliest stratigraphically was cut (115)/(109), which was linear in form aligned east to west (Fig 5, Plates 1-2). Only the southern edge of the cut was visible and its northern side extended beyond the north-eastern limits of the trench. Although the fills contained early medieval pottery sherds, the cut appeared to be of recent origin, having a vertical side and a flat base, as if it had been excavated by machine. It is however possible the feature is a large, well-preserved Sunken Featured Building (SFB), but as no associated postholes were identified this could not be confirmed. Cut through the backfill (107, 108 and 113) of this possible SFB were two further

features, possibly pits (106 and 112) which contained loamy fills, comparable to the topsoil, suggesting they are not particularly old.

At the south-western end of Trench 1 there was a spread of ceramic building material (CBM), fired clay and charcoal (103) that upon excavation appeared to lie at the base of the subsoil (101). This may represent the geophysical anomaly targeted at the south end of Trench 1, the other being scalping of a former golf buggy road.

5.1.3 Phase 3: Medieval deposits

Medieval deposits were identified in Trench 7, which targeted a group of linear and discrete geophysical anomalies. The largest of these was a large sub-oval pit, aligned north to south (705) (Fig 6, Plates 3-4). The pit crossed the evaluation trench and was 4.1m wide, 1.24m deep and, based on the geophysical survey, is around 5.0m long. The edges of the pit appeared slightly stepped, as if they had been excavated by spade and as these had not eroded it suggest the pit had been quickly backfilled after excavation. The pit contained a number of fills, with the earliest containing frequent ceramic and stone roof tile that had been tipped in from the east. These were subsampled for artefact analysis, with the better preserved examples being retained.

To the east of the pit was a shallow depression, of linear form, aligned east to west (715) (Plate 5). Initially this was thought to be a natural dip and a slot was machine excavated, but given the other features in Trench 7 it is of possible anthropogenic origin although of unknown function. It too contained ceramic roof tile, similar to those in pit (705) and is considered likely to represent the discrete geophysical anomalies targeted by Trench 7.

To the north of the trench there was also an east to west aligned wall foundation (712) but no associated floor surfaces were found (Plates 6-7). Although V-shaped in profile, the stone rubble fill of this feature suggest it was a wall foundation. The lack of eroded basal fills in the cut also indicates that it had been quickly backfilled after construction, which may also imply it was quickly and purposefully filled with stone rubble. A small corroded iron knife (Plates 12 and 13) was recovered from the foundation rubble. The feature is conjectured to be of medieval date based upon the associated finds and features in Trench 7.

5.1.4 Phase 4: Undated

Trench 4 targeted discrete geophysical anomalies aligned in an approximate east to west direction. No features were identified in the trench although the upper surface of (402) had been affected by heating, suggesting there had been a fire in the area. This heat affected spread is likely to represent the geophysical anomaly targeted and remains undated.

In Trench 6 there were a number of north to south aligned linear anomalies (603) (Plate 8). These were up to 0.50m wide, but only 1-2cm thick and are thought to be of agricultural origin (plough scars) or perhaps even machine track depressions.

The linear geophysical anomalies targeted in Trench 5 appeared to be variations in the natural.

6 Artefact analysis, by Robert Hedge

The artefactual assemblage recovered is summarised in Tables 2 and 3.

The assemblage came from 12 stratified contexts and could be dated from the Roman period onwards (see Table 2). Using pottery as an index of artefact condition, this was generally poor with the majority of sherds displaying high levels of abrasion, and the average sherd size, at 9g being slightly below average.

period	material class	material subtype	object specific type	count	weight(g)
Roman	ceramic		pot	2	3
early/mid-Saxon	ceramic		pot	3	61
medieval	ceramic		pot	4	10
medieval	ceramic		roof tile	1	24
medieval	ceramic		tile	1	15
medieval	metal	iron	arrowhead	1	7
medieval	metal	iron	knife	1	4
medieval/early post-medieval	ceramic		roof tile	15	1234
medieval/early post-medieval	ceramic		tile	1	10
medieval/post-medieval	ceramic		brick/tile	2	49
medieval/post-medieval	ceramic		roof tile	6	266
medieval/post-medieval	ceramic		tile	3	179
medieval/post-medieval	metal	iron	nail	1	5
medieval/post-medieval	stone	limestone	roof tile	3	135
late med/early post-med	ceramic		pot	1	2
late med/early post-med	ceramic		roof tile	1	26
post-medieval	ceramic		pot	1	21
post-medieval/modern	ceramic		roof tile	2	247
undated	bone	animal bone		2	31
undated	ceramic		fired clay	9	57
undated	organic	charcoal		1	1
undated	organic	shell	shell	3	4
undated	stone		unident	2	12
			Totals:	66	2403

Table 2: Quantification of the assemblage

Broad period	Worcs. fabric code	Warks fabric code (where available)	Fabric common name	count	weight(g)
Roman	12	DIA	Severn Valley ware	1	2
Roman	43		Samian ware	1	1
Early-mid Saxon	51		Quartz sandstone tempered ware	3	61
Medieval	63	SLM40	Brill/Boarstall ware	1	2
Medieval	99		Miscellaneous medieval wares	3	8
Medieval/Post-medieval	69	SLM01	Oxidized glazed Malvernian ware	1	2
Post-medieval	78		Post-medieval red ware	1	21
			Totals:	11	97

Table 3: Quantification of the pottery by fabric

6.1.1 Summary artefactual evidence by period

For the finds from individual features, including specific types of pottery, consult Tables 4 and 3 in that order and in combination.

Roman

Evidence for Roman activity was limited to two small, highly abraded residual sherds of pottery.

Early medieval (Saxon)

Three sherds of Early to Middle-Saxon quartz and sandstone-tempered pottery of mid-5th to mid-7th century date (Worcs fabric 51) were recovered from deposits associated with a possible SFB (115), including a large body/base sherd showing a rounded profile and sagging base (Plates 9-10). The presence of large fragments of Anglo-Saxon pottery is highly unusual, and given the fragility of this ware it is unlikely to have been disturbed from its point of deposition. Sherds of fabric 51 have been found in association with a SFB of 6th-7th century AD date at Aston Mill Farm, on a tributary of the River Avon about 25km to the south-west of the current site (Dinn and Evans 1990).

Fragments of fired clay were also found within subsoil (103) in the vicinity of feature (115), which are possibly contemporary with the pottery.

Medieval

Few sherds of medieval pottery were recovered; all were highly abraded, and are considered likely to reflect agricultural practices such as manuring rather than domestic occupation on the site.

In contrast to the paucity of pottery, substantial quantities of ceramic and stone roof tile were present, especially within the basal fills (706, 708) of pit (705) (Plates 3 and 4). Although the lack of a well-defined typology of ceramic building materials for the area means that a post-medieval date cannot be conclusively excluded, the fabric and forms bear similarities to other regional types of known medieval date. Several unusual forms are present, including a possible nib fragment which may be from a double-nibbed piece, and a fragment with an extremely large (19mm diameter) peg-hole (Plate 11).

Other finds from Trench 7 include a partial whittle-tang iron knife from the rubble wall foundation fill (714) (Plates 12-13). Although incomplete, this resembles examples from Deansway (Crummy 2004) of 11th to 15th century date. An iron arrowhead recovered from single fill (704) of linear

depression (715) broadly corresponds to Jessop's Type MP2 (Jessop 1996, 194), also 11th to 14th century in date (Plates 14-15). The function of this type of arrowhead is uncertain: its classification as 'multi-purpose' reflects the possibility of hunting or military use.

Post-medieval

Post-medieval finds were limited to several fragments of later ceramic building material from made ground deposit (202) and a single sherd of redware from subsoil (103). It is possible that some of the roof tile identified elsewhere on the site may stretch into the early post-medieval period.

context	material class	material subtype	object specific type	count	weight(g)	start date	end date	TPQ date range
103	ceramic		fired clay	9	57			1600-1800
	organic	charcoal		1	1			
	stone		unident	2	12			
	ceramic		pot	1	2	450	650	
	ceramic		brick/tile	2	49	1200	1800	
	ceramic		pot	1	21	1600	1800	
105	ceramic		pot	1	47	450	650	450-650
113	ceramic		pot	1	12	450	650	450-650
202	ceramic		roof tile	2	247	1700	1900	1700-1900
402	ceramic		roof tile	1	68	1200	1700	1200-1700
	ceramic		pot	1	2	43	400	
703	organic	shell	shell	3	4			1300-1700
	ceramic		tile	1	10	1200	1700	
	ceramic		pot	1	1	1066	1600	
	ceramic		pot	1	4	1066	1600	
	bone	animal bone		2	31			
	ceramic		tile	1	15	1200	1600	
	ceramic		pot	1	2	1300	1630	
704	ceramic		pot	1	3	1066	1600	1200-1800
	ceramic		roof tile	3	82	1200	1800	
	metal	iron	arrowhead	1	7	1000	1400	
706	ceramic		roof tile	1	151	1200	1700	1200-1700
	ceramic		roof tile	9	836	1200	1700	
708	ceramic		pot	1	1	43	220	1200-1800
	ceramic		tile	2	115	1200	1800	
	stone	limestone	roof tile	2	123	1200	1800	
	ceramic		roof tile	3	184	1200	1800	
	ceramic		tile	1	64	1200	1800	
	ceramic		pot	1	2	1400	1500	
	stone	limestone	roof tile	1	12	1200	1800	
	metal	iron	nail	1	5	1066	1800	
711	ceramic		roof tile	4	179	1200	1700	1200-1700
714	metal	iron	knife	1	4	1066	1400	1066-1400
1001	ceramic		roof tile	1	26	1450	1700	1450-1700
	ceramic		roof tile	1	24	1200	1600	

Table 4: Summary of context dating based on artefacts

7 Environmental analysis, by Liz Pearson

Results are summarised in Table 5 and 6.

context	large mammal	small mammal	fish	mollusc	charcoal	charred plant	uncharred plant	comment
402		occ		occ	occ		occ*	* = probably modern
704	occ		occ	occ	occ		abt*	occ oyster shell, pot, Fe arrowhead, * = probably modern
708	occ	occ	occ		occ	occ	occ*	occ snail shell., CBM, Fe nail, roof tile, * = probably modern

Table 5: Summary of environmental remains; occ = occasional, mod = moderate, abt = abundant

context	sample	preservation type	category remains	quantity/diversity	species detail	comment
402	1	?wa	seed	+/low	<i>Chenopodium glaucum/rubrum</i>	
402	1	?wa	misc	++/low	unidentified root fragments	probably modern and intrusive
402	1	ch	misc	+/low		small unidentifiable fragments of charcoal
402	1	other	misc	+/low		?coal fragments
402	1	other	molluscs	+/low		
402	1	?wa	beetles	+/low		probably modern and intrusive
704	2	ch	misc	+/low		small unidentifiable fragments of charcoal
704	2	undecayed	molluscs	+/low		
704	2	?wa	misc	+++/low	unidentified root fragments	probably modern and intrusive
708	3	ch	misc	+/low		small unidentifiable fragments of charcoal
708	3	ch	misc	+/low	<i>Triticum aestivo-compactum</i> grain, <i>Hordeum vulgare</i> grain (hulled)	
708	3	?wa	misc	+/low	unidentified stem fragments, leaf fragments, and root fragments	probably modern and intrusive

Table 6: Environmental remains from bulk samples

Key for Table 6	
preservation	quantity
ch = charred	+ = 1 - 10
min = mineralised	++ = 11- 50
wa = waterlogged	+++ = 51 - 100
?wa = waterlogged or uncharred	++++ = 101+
	* = fragments

7.1.1 Medieval

Remains from (704), the fill of linear depression (715) and fill (708) of pit (705) were poorly preserved. Low levels of charred cereal grains were recorded in fill (708), consisting of free-threshing wheat (*Triticum* sp free-threshing) and hulled barley (*Hordeum vulgare*). It is uncertain whether these remains are residues from crop processing, domestic hearths or storage products. Only small unidentifiable fragments of charcoal and occasional molluscs were recorded from ditch fill (704).

7.1.2 Undated

A sample was taken from a burnt deposit on the surface of layer (402) thought to be colluvium at the base of a hill to the west of Trench 4. No archaeological features were identified beneath the alluvium. Only small unidentifiable fragments of charcoal and molluscs and a possible coal fragment were identified. Little interpretation of the layer could be made from these remains. However, should further fieldwork be carried out on the site, geoarchaeological assessment of the deposits may determine whether the deposit is colluvial, and if so, consideration of any settlement or activity on and around the hill to the west may identify causes of soil erosion.

Uncharred plant remains in all three samples are likely to be modern and intrusive as they are unlikely to have survived for long in the soil on site without charring or waterlogged and anoxic (oxygen-reduced) conditions.

7.1.3 Environmental Synthesis

Only limited evidence for the use of cereal crops was recorded from the medieval features, although presumably as the site lies within an area where the medieval open field system operated (medieval ridge and furrow is listed within 'landscapes' within the Warwickshire Historic Landscape Characterisation for the local area), arable agriculture is likely to have been an important part of the economy.

Undated sediments may be of interest should further excavation be carried out. Deposits in Trench 4 may be colluvial, whereas the process resulting in a clay layer sealing medieval features in Trench 7 is unknown. Geoarchaeological assessment may contribute to interpretation of depositional processes and the activities which resulted in these deposits.

8 Synthesis

8.1 Early medieval

No confirmed early medieval features were identified on the site, although early medieval pottery and fired clay fragments, potentially of a similar date were identified in Trench 1. The pottery was thought to be re-deposited in a machine excavated (modern?) linear feature and as such the feature was not sampled for environmental analysis. It is possible however that the pottery may have been in a well preserved Sunken Featured Building of early medieval date. Early medieval features and finds are well represented in and around Bidford-on-Avon and include a 6th–7th century cemetery and the mid to late Saxon settlement of Bidford itself. Substantial quantities of Anglo-Saxon metalwork have also been found through metal detecting on a site some 500m to the north-west, and lying immediately to the east of the current village (Richards and Naylor 2010). The fabric 51 pottery has been dated to the (?5th) 6th-7th century in Droitwich (Lentowicz 1997, 77), and should the SFB be confirmed, then this would be more evidence for the earlier dispersed settlement pattern which generally gives way to a more nucleated settlement around present-day Bidford by the late Saxon period, a typical pattern in the region (Richards and Naylor 2010, 197).

8.2 Medieval

Medieval deposits were confined to Trench 7 and appear to consist of a small building of unknown form or function, with a tiled roof. After its demolition/collapse it appears that some of the building remains were purposefully buried in a large pit. The presence of substantial quantities of medieval

roof tile within Trench 7 is unusual in the light of the paucity of typical domestic pottery, and may indicate that the building had a non-domestic function.

9 Significance

9.1 Nature of the archaeological interest in the site

The most significant archaeological remains are of early medieval and medieval date. The early medieval finds in Trench 1, were recovered from a large vertical sided feature with little indication of erosion. The condition of the pottery indicates that they are within their original place of deposition, in which case the feature may be a Sunken Featured Building of Anglo-Saxon date. However if they are residual, then the feature may well be of much later origin.

The medieval building foundation in Trench 7 is likely to be associated with the grange, under the control of Bordesley Abbey. The form or function of this building could not be established in the evaluation, but the lack of pottery finds indicates that it was non domestic.

9.2 Relative importance of the archaeological interest in the site

Both the early medieval and medieval archaeological remains in Trenches 1 and 7 are of importance. If early medieval SFBs are located here it may indicate the most easterly extent of dispersed domestic occupation surrounding Bidford-on-Avon during the period identified to date. Given the apparent importance of Bidford-on-Avon during this period (Richards and Naylor 2010) any archaeological remains that can contribute to the understanding of this area at that time are of at least regional importance.

As highlighted by Della Hooke in the *West Midlands regional research framework*, early Saxon pottery is almost entirely absent from most of the region, and even in the middle Saxon period it is confined largely to urban sites and royal palaces (Hooke 2011, 156). Sites such as this, along the Avon valley, appear to have the potential to greatly enhance our understanding of Anglo-Saxon material culture and trade, especially in the light of discoveries of contemporary pottery at nearby sites including Broom, Bretforton, Ripple (see Hooke 2011, 156) and Kemerton (Dinn and Evans 1990). In this context, the recovery of even a small amount of Anglo-Saxon pottery from this site is significant.

The medieval structure and associated pits identified in Trench 7 are also of importance as they may relate to the medieval grange. The associated finds including CBM, metalwork and occasional pottery sherds are also of interest.

9.3 Physical extent of the archaeological interest in the site

The areas of interest at the site are limited to around Trench 1 and Trench 7. No other archaeological remains were identified during the evaluation. The northern area around Trenches 2 and 12 appears to have been landscaped, limiting the possibility that archaeological remains survive in those areas.

10 The impact of the development

10.1 Impacts during construction

The deposits identified at the north eastern end of Trench 1 are unlikely to be impacted by the development as they are located outside of the core development area. However if linear in form it may extend to the east and be effected by log cabin plots 17, 18 and 19 (Fig 4).

It is possible that the medieval features identified in Trench 7 will be affected by the construction of plot 1 (Fig 4), depending upon how much landscaping and soil removal is required during construction. It is also possible that further remains survive beneath the road which has already been constructed to the east of Trench 7. Although not observed the road was approximately a foot thick (Dan Broadhurst pers comm), with archaeological remains in that area being between 0.45-0.50m below ground surface.

The client has indicated that there is limited landscaping required during the construction of the cabins (Daniel Broadhurst *pers comm*), and in some cases the ground will be raised. This may provide an opportunity to preserve *in situ* the remains in Trenches 1 and 7.

11 Recommendations

It is recommended that archaeological mitigation be undertaken around Trenches 1 and 7 should the development design, specifically the depth of topsoil stripping, foundations, service trenches and landscaping required, be shown to impinge upon the features identified.

12 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 on behalf of Daniel Broadhurst at Bidford Grange Golf Course, Stratford Road, Bidford-on Avon, Warwickshire (NGR SP 1440, 1785).

The majority of the site did not contain any archaeological features, but to the east of the site there were remains of early medieval and medieval date. Occasional pottery of early medieval date was identified in a vertical, flat based linear feature, the profile of which may indicate that it was of modern origin, having been excavated by machine, making the pottery residual. It is however possible the feature was a large, well preserved Sunken Featured Building (SFB).

Medieval remains were located approximately 80m to the south of the early medieval remains and consisted of a wall foundation trench, a large rubbish pit and a shallow linear feature. These were located within 10m of each other and probably represent the remains of a medieval building which had been buried in to a large rubbish pit after demolished/collapse. The lack of pottery in these features may suggest the building was not domestic, and was possibly an agricultural building.

13 Acknowledgements

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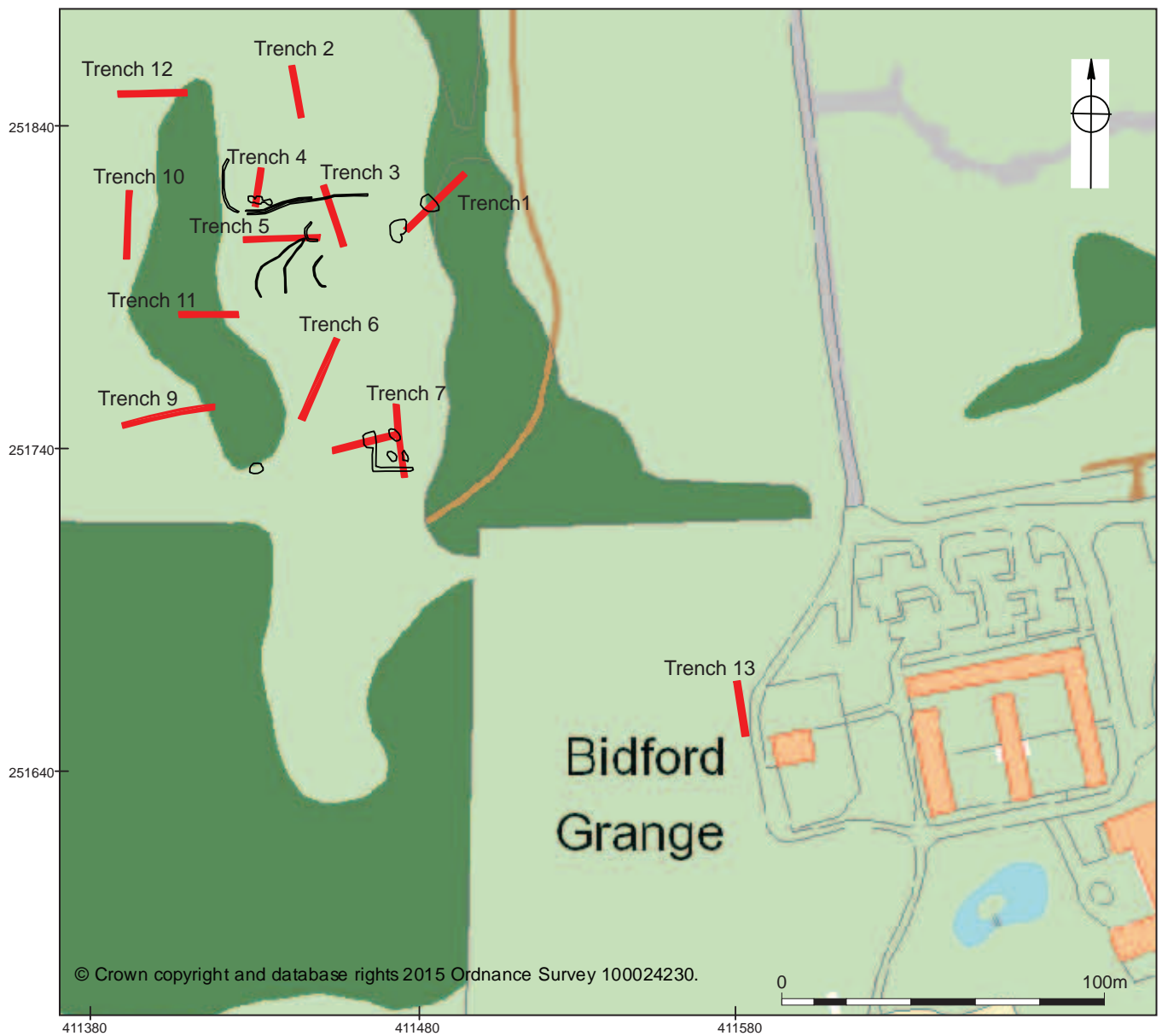
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Figures



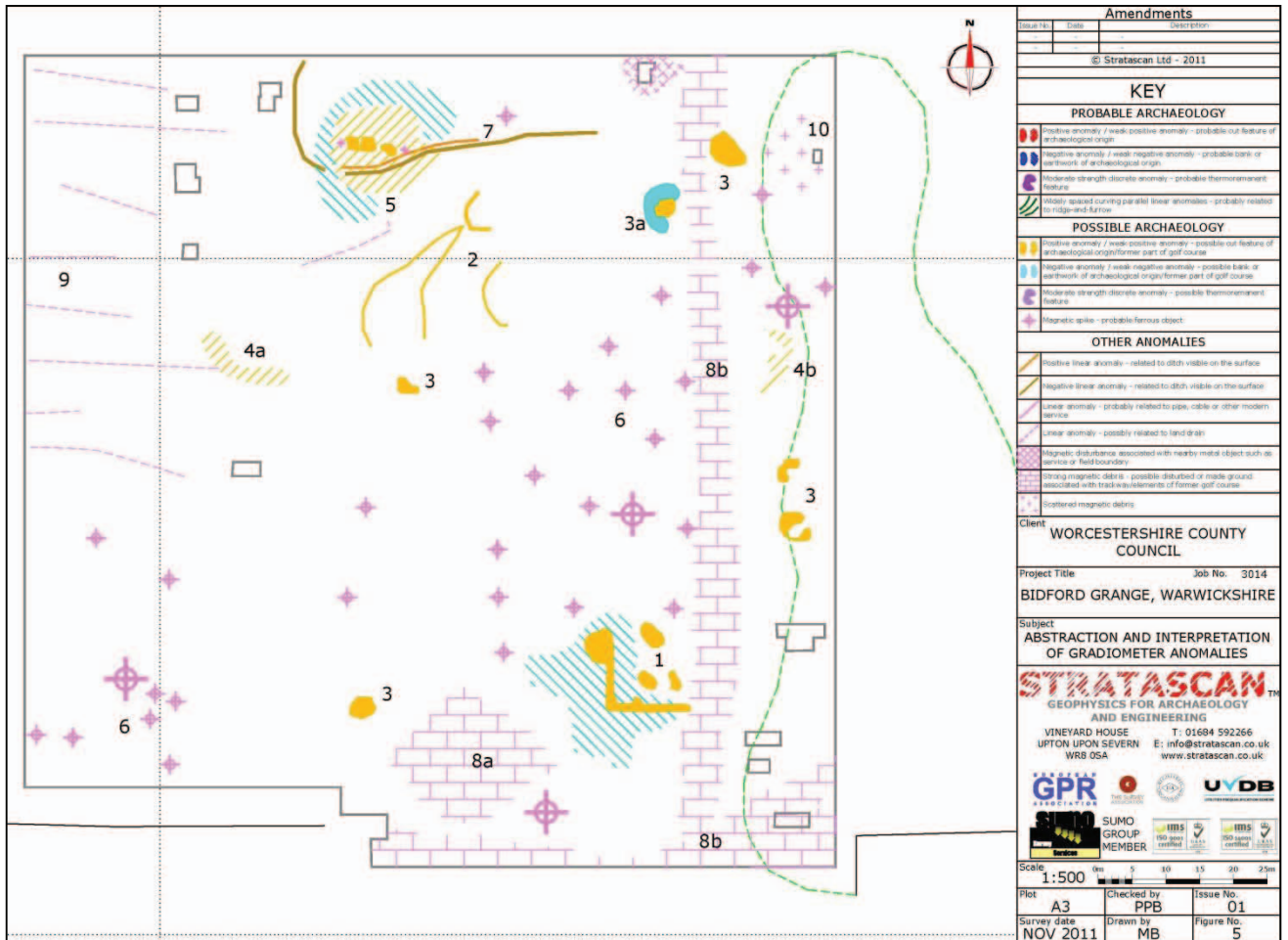
Location of the site

Figure 1



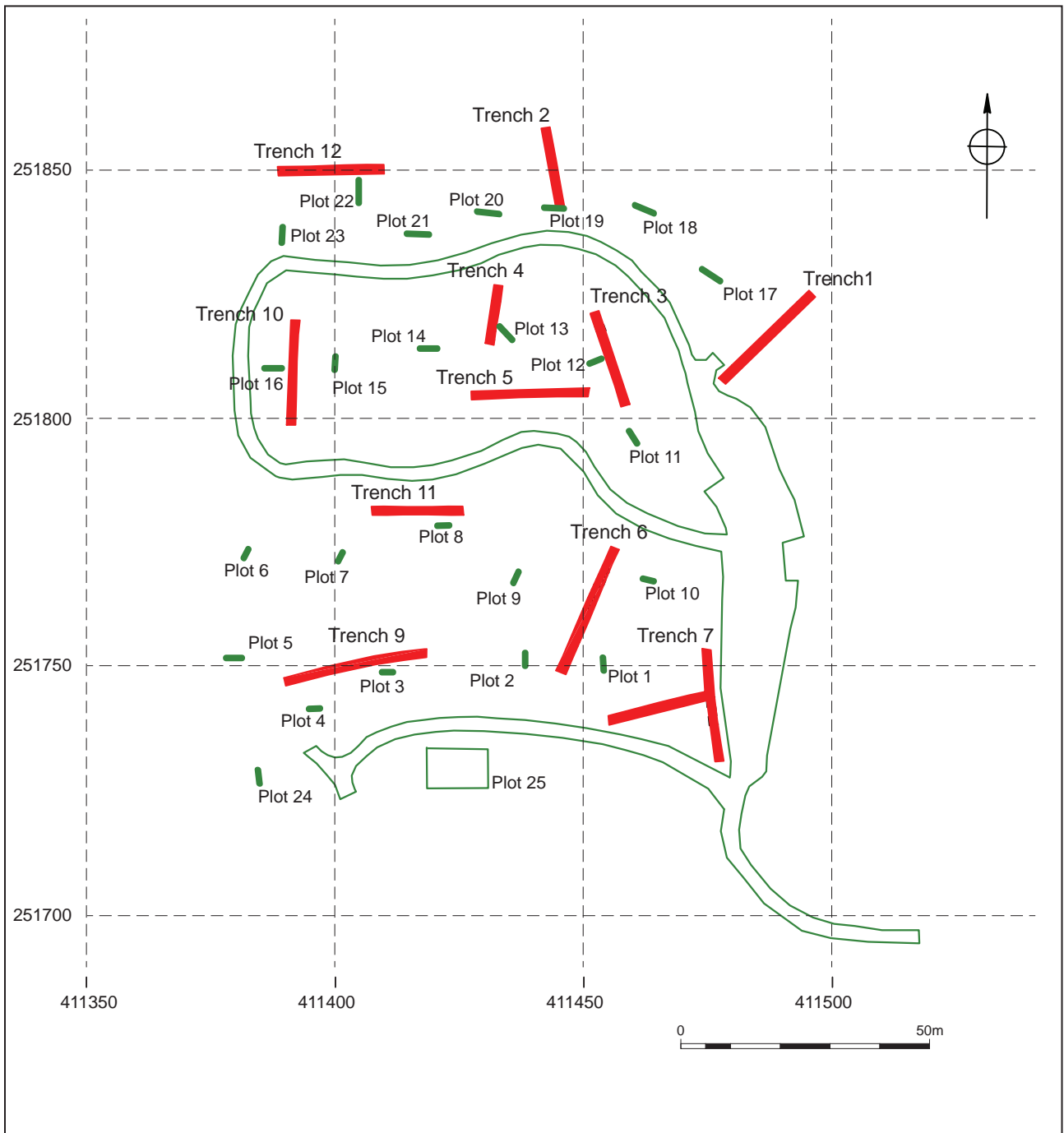
Trench locations (red) and targeted geophysical anomalies (black)

Figure 2

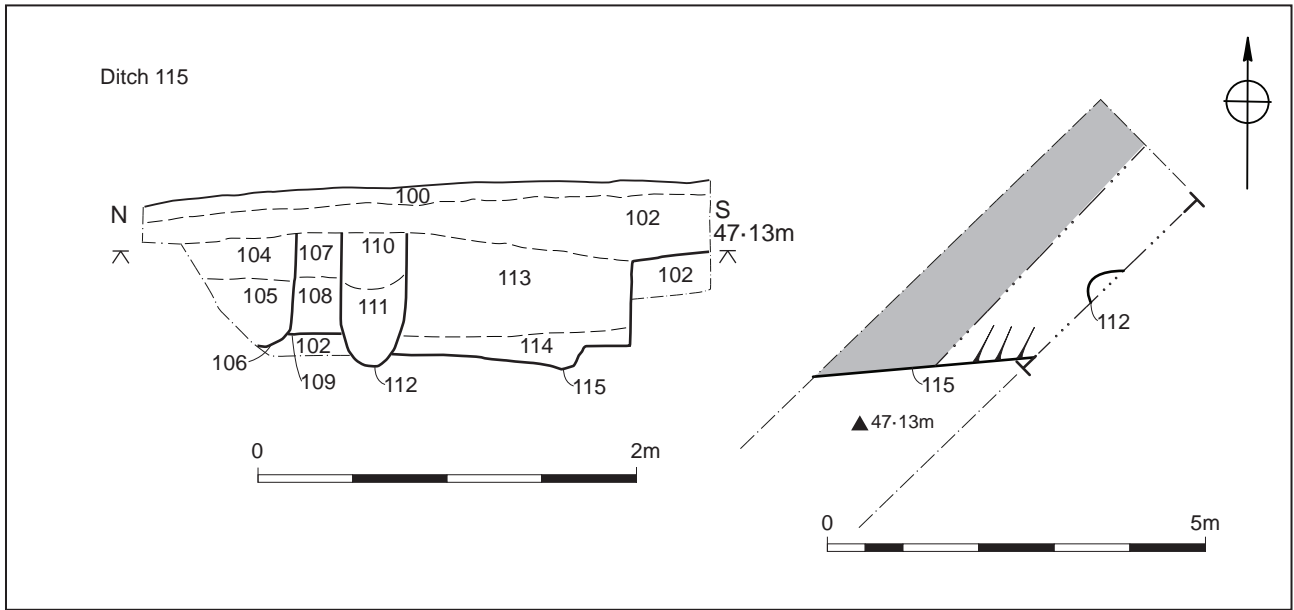


Geophysical survey interpretation (from Stratascan 2011)

Figure 3

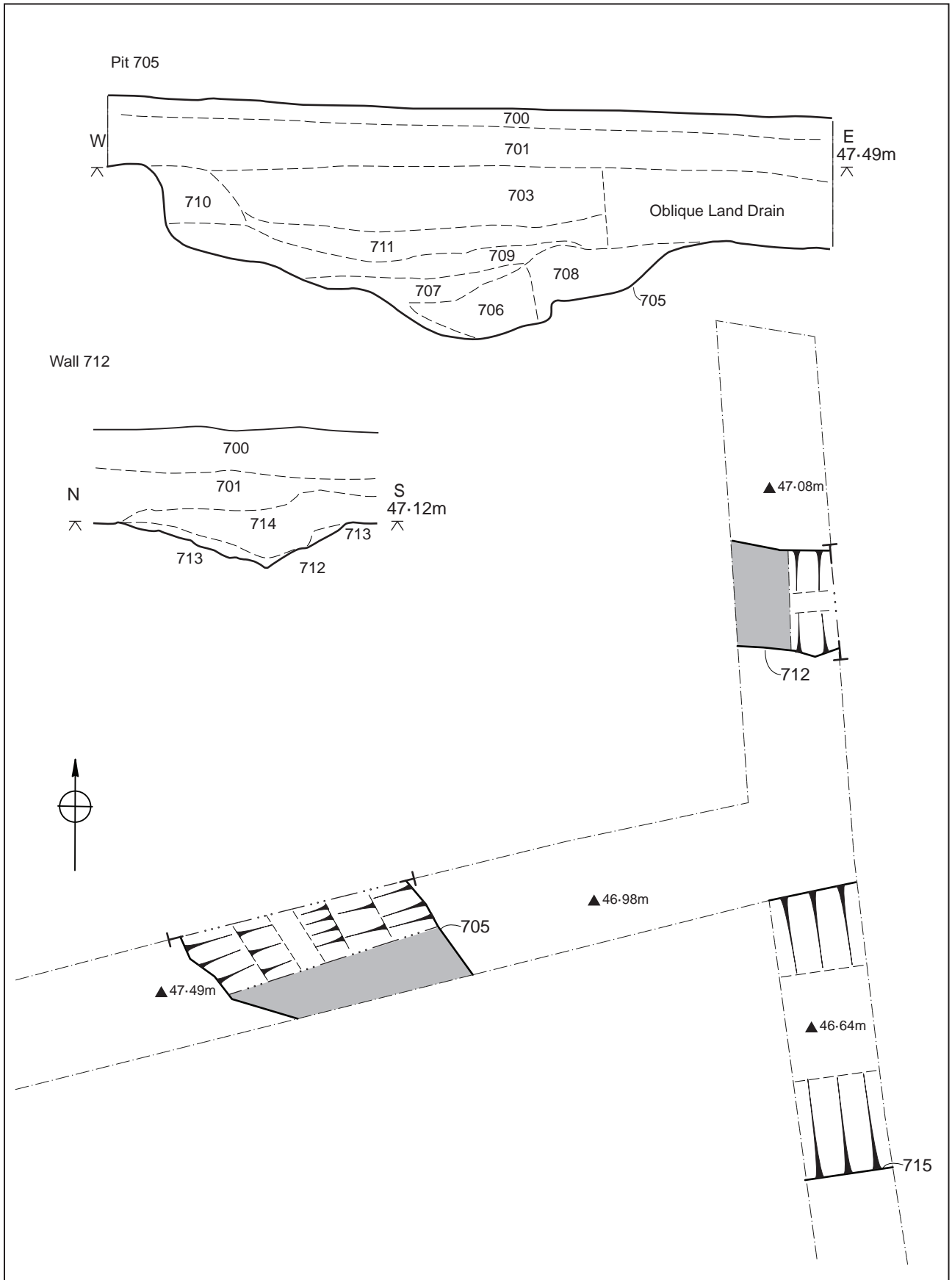


Approximate location of new road, building plots and trench locations in main evaluation area Figure 4



Ditch 115 Plan and section

Figure 5



Pit 705 and Wall 712 Plans and sections

Figure 6

Plates



Plate 1: Ditch (109/115) and pits (106) and (112) facing east, in Trench 1, 2x 1m scales



Plate 2: Ditch (109/115) and pits (106) and (112) facing south-west, in Trench 1, 2x 1m scales



Plate 3: Pit (705) facing north, in Trench 7, 2x 1m scales



Plate 4: Pit (705) facing north-west, in Trench 7, 2x 1m scales



Plate 5: Ditch (715) facing east, in Trench 7, 3x 1m scales



Plate 6: Wall foundations (712) facing south-east, in Trench 7, 1m and 2m scales



Plate 7: Wall foundations (712) post-excavation, facing east, in Trench 7, 1m and 2m scales



Plate 8: Linear features in Trench 6 facing south-west, 2x 1m scales



Plate 9: Sandstone-tempered pottery of mid-5th to mid-7th century, external face, from possible SFB (115), in Trench 1



Plate 10: Sandstone-tempered pottery of mid-5th to mid-7th century, internal face, from possible SFB (115), in Trench 1



Plate 11: Ceramic and stone roof tile from pit (705) in Trench 7



Plate 12: Partial whittle-tang iron knife from wall foundation (712) in Trench 7



Plate 13: Partial whittle-tang iron knife wall foundation (712) in Trench 7



Plate 14: Type MP2 arrowhead from linear depression (715) in Trench 7



Plate 15: Type MP2 arrowhead from linear depression (715) in Trench 7

Appendix 1 Trench descriptions

Main deposit descriptions

Trench 1

Maximum dimensions: Length: 25.50m Width: 1.80m Depth: 0.38m

Orientation: NE-SW

Context	Feature type	Context type	Description	Height/Depth (m)
100	Topsoil	Layer	Friable dark greyish brown clay loam	0.08
101	Subsoil	Layer	Moderately Compact light greyish brown silty clay	0.30
102	Natural	Layer	Firm light yellow silty clay	
103	Subsoil	Layer	Moderately Compact mid greyish brown silty clay	0.10
104	Pit	Fill	Moderately Compact mid greyish brown clay silt	0.20
105	Pit	Fill	Friable mid greyish brown clay silt	0.40
106	Pit	Cut	Cut of possible pit only seen in section. Vertical sides with a sharp break to a concave base. 0.60m wide and 0.60m deep. Filled by 104 and 105.	0.60
107	Ditch	Fill	Moderately Compact mid brownish grey silty clay	0.20
108	Ditch	Fill	Moderately Compact light greyish brown silty clay	0.30
109	Ditch	Cut	Cut of probable ditch, possible the same as cut 115. Sides not visible due to later truncation but has a flat base. Filled by 107 and 108.	0.50
110	Pit	Fill	Friable mid brownish grey clay silt	0.30
111	Pit	Fill	Moderately Compact mid greyish brown clay silt	0.50
112	Pit	Cut	Cut of probable pit only seen in section. Near vertical sides breaking to a concave base. 0.25m wide and 0.50m deep. Filled by 110 and 111.	0.50
113	Ditch	Fill	Moderately Compact mid greyish brown clay silt	0.50
114	Ditch	Fill	Moderately Compact mid yellowish brown silty clay	0.20
115	Ditch	Cut	Probable ditch aligned NW-SE, with vertical sides and flat base. Possibly the same as 109. Filled by 113. 2.38m wide.	0.70

Trench 2

Maximum dimensions: Length: 16.50m Width: 1.80m Depth: 0.62m

Orientation: NNW-SSE

Context	Feature type	Context type	Description	Height/Depth (m)
200	Topsoil	Layer	Friable Loamy soil	0.12
201	Subsoil	Layer	Firm greenish grey sandy clay	0.20
202	Made ground	Layer	Firm light blueish grey silty clay with frequent blue lias stone fragments and broken ceramic land drains.	0.30
203	Natural	Layer	Firm light blueish grey silty clay	

Trench 3

Maximum dimensions: Length: 20.00m Width: 1.80m Depth: 0.42m

Orientation: NNW-SSE

Context	Feature type	Context type	Description	Height/Depth (m)
300	Topsoil	Layer	Friable Loamy soil	0.14
301	Subsoil	Layer	Moderately compact light greyish brown silty clay	0.26
302	Natural	Layer	Firm light yellowish brown silty clay	
303	Ditch	Cut	Modern drainage ditch post-1999, part of the golf course infrastructure. Not excavated.	
304	Ditch	Fill	Pea grit.	

Trench 4

Maximum dimensions: Length: 12.00m Width: 1.80m Depth: 1.52m

Orientation: NNE-SSW

Context	Feature type	Context type	Description	Height/Depth (m)
400	Topsoil	Layer	Friable loamy soil	0.12
401	Subsoil	Layer	Moderately compact light greyish brown silty clay	0.30
402	Colluvium?	Layer	Compact mid greenish brown sandy clay with frequent small –medium rounded stones.	1.10
403	Natural	Layer	Light yellowish brown silty clay	

Trench 5

Maximum dimensions: Length: 23.50m Width: 1.80m Depth: 0.42m

Orientation: E-W

Context	Feature type	Context type	Description	Height/Depth (m)
500	Topsoil	Layer	Friable loamy soil	0.12
501	Subsoil	Layer	Moderately compact light greyish brown silty clay	0.30
502	Natural	Layer	Light yellow silty clay	

Trench 6

Maximum dimensions: Length: 27.50m Width: 1.80m Depth: 0.44 m

Orientation: NE-SW

Context	Feature type	Context type	Description	Height/Depth (m)
600	Topsoil	Layer	Moderately Compact dark greyish brown loam	0.14
601	Subsoil	Layer	Compact light greyish brown silty clay	0.30
602	Natural	Layer	Light yellow silty clay	
603	Ditch?	Cut	Very shallow linear features aligned NE-SW. Thought to be of modern origin?	0.02

Trench 7

Maximum dimensions: Length: 22.00x20.50m Width: 1.80m Depth: 0.42m

Orientation: N-S and E-W

Context	Feature type	Context type	Description	Height/Depth (m)
700	Topsoil	Layer	Friable mid brownish grey clay loam	0.12
701	Subsoil	Layer	Moderately Compact mid greenish grey silty clay	0.30
702	Natural	Layer	Moderately Compact light yellow silty clay	
703	Colluvium?	Layer	Moderately compact mid greenish brown silty clay	0.52
704	Ditch	Fill	Hard dark greyish brown sandy loam.	0.26
705	Pit	Cut	Sub-oval pit aligned N-S. Has steep, stepped sides breaking gradually to a flat base. 4.10m wide and 1.80m deep. Filled by 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711.	1.80
706	Pit	Fill	Friable light reddish brown sandy clay	0.54
707	Pit	Fill	Firm mid yellowish brown sandy clay	0.56
708	Pit	Fill	Friable mid reddish brown sandy clay	0.56
709	Pit	Fill	Firm mid yellowish brown sandy clay	0.36
710	Pit	Fill	Firm mid yellowish brown sandy clay	0.42
711	Pit	Fill	Friable mid reddish brown sandy clay	0.36
712	Foundation trench	Cut	V-shaped cut aligned E-W for foundation rubble. 1.80m wide and a minimum of 1.80m long.	0.32
713	Foundation trench	Fill	Moderately Compact light greyish brown clay silt	0.02
714	Foundation trench	Fill	Foundation rubble, consisting of angular, fragmented blue lias stone.	0.30
715	Linear	Cut	Wide shallow linear depression, aligned ENE-WSW. With gradually breaking sides and a flat base. 5.50m wide, 0.30m deep. Filled by 704.	0.12

Trench 9

Maximum dimensions: Length: 30.00m Width: 1.80m Depth: 0.45m

Orientation: E-W

Context	Feature type	Context type	Description	Height/Depth (m)
900	Topsoil	Layer	Soft mid greyish brown silty clay	0.06
901	Subsoil	Layer	Moderately Compact mid greyish brown silty clay	0.39
902	Natural	Layer	Firm light yellow silty clay	

Trench 10

Maximum dimensions: Length: 21.50m Width: 1.80m Depth: 0.40m

Orientation: N-S

Context	Feature type	Context type	Description	Height/Depth (m)
1000	Topsoil	Layer	Soft mid brown silty clay	0.10
1001	Subsoil	Layer	Moderately Compact mid greyish brown silty clay	0.30
1002	Natural	Layer	Friable orange sandy clay	

Trench 11

Maximum dimensions: Length: 19.50m Width: 1.80m Depth: 0.45m

Orientation: E-W

Context	Feature type	Context type	Description	Height/Depth (m)
1100	Topsoil	Layer	Soft mid greyish brown silty clay	0.10
1101	Subsoil	Layer	Moderately Compact mid greyish brown silty clay	0.30
1102	Natural	Layer	Firm mid greyish blue silty clay	

Trench 12

Maximum dimensions: Length: 21.50m Width: 1.80m Depth: 0.30m

Orientation: E-W

Context	Feature type	Context type	Description	Height/Depth (m)
1200	Topsoil	Layer	Soft mid brown silty clay	0.07
1201	Subsoil	Layer	Moderately Compact mid greyish brown silty clay	0.20
1202	Natural	Layer	Firm light greyish blue silty clay	

Trench 13

Maximum dimensions: Length: 17.0m Width: 1.80m Depth: 0.55m

Orientation: N-S

Context	Feature type	Context type	Description	Height/Depth (m)
1300	Topsoil	Layer	Friable mid brownish grey clay loam	0.05
1301	Made ground	Layer	Brick rubble/hardcore	0.47
1302	Natural	Layer	Firm light yellow silty clay	

Appendix 2 Technical information

The archive

The archive consists of:

- 24 Context records AS1
- 1 Photographic records AS3
- 1 Black and white photographic films
- 93 Digital photographs
- 1 Drawing number catalogues AS4
- 4 Scale drawings
- 3 Sample records AS17
- 1 Sample number catalogues AS18
- 3 Flot records AS21
- 13 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 Warwickshire, CV34 4SS

Tel. Warwick (01926) 412500
