

# Archaeological watching brief at Northwick Farm, Broadway, Worcestershire



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Worcestershire Archaeology  
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## Archaeological watching brief at Northwick Farm, Broadway, Worcestershire

Pete Lovett

With contributions by Rob Hedge

### Background information

<i>Client</i>	Robert Cadle
<i>National Grid reference</i>	SP 08595 37637
<i>Historic Environment Record reference</i>	WSM 67771
<i>Planning authority</i>	Wychavon District Council
<i>Reference</i>	W/15/02765
<i>Brief</i>	WCC 2014
<i>Project design</i>	WA 2016
<i>Project parameters</i>	ClfA 2014

The site lies on flat land (Plates 1, 2 and 5) at the foot of the Cotswold escarpment on superficial Head deposits of gravel, sand silt and clay. These overlie Charmouth Mudstone Formation (BGS 2016).

#### *Previous archaeological work on the site*

There has been no previous archaeological work undertaken on site.

#### *Previous archaeological work on associated sites*

The development site lies within an area of extensive prehistoric and Roman activity. To the north-west is a large circular enclosure with two entrances and internal divisions (WSM 06743); to the north-east are cropmarks indicating a multi-phase Iron Age and Roman enclosure and associated cemetery (WSM 01861); to the east and south-east are a series of enclosures recorded via aerial photography of cropmarks (WSM 04138) and to the west, further cropmarks of enclosures (WSM 01860).

There is also widespread evidence for ridge and furrow in the surrounding landscape (WSM 10063, 10064, 10065 and 10066).

### Aims

The aim of the watching brief was to observe and record archaeological deposits, and to determine their extent, state of preservation, date and type, as far as reasonably possible.

### Methods

General specification for fieldwork

WA 2012

Sources consulted

HER

Date(s) of fieldwork

24 February 2016

Area of site

c 2,800m<sup>2</sup>

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Sampling            area sampled    c 273m<sup>2</sup>. Indicated on Fig 2  
                          sample size      c 1%

Dimensions of excavated areas observed –

Services	length 48m
	width 0.4m
	depth 0.6m
Roads/floors	length 46.8m
	width 11m
	depth 0.31m

#### *Access to or visibility of deposits*

Observation of the excavated areas was undertaken during machine excavation. The exposed surfaces were sufficiently clean to observe well-differentiated archaeological deposits, though any less clear may have not been identified. The bright sun impacted upon the visibility of deposits, particularly in the narrow confines of Trench 2.

#### *Statement of confidence*

Access to, and visibility of, deposits allowed a high degree of confidence that the aims of the project have been achieved.

### **Deposit description**

The description of the deposits is given in Appendix 1.

### **Artefact analysis by Rob Hedge**

#### **Summary**

A single sherd of mid-Iron Age pottery was recovered from the topsoil, and a small sherd of Roman pottery from the subsoil. The remainder of the finds were 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century in date, and comprised typical domestic rubbish.

#### **Artefact methodology,**

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 2014), 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).

#### **Recovery policy**

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

#### **Method of analysis**

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.

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 Worcestershire Archaeology (Hurst and Rees 1992 and [www.worcestershireceramics.org](http://www.worcestershireceramics.org)).

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

### Artefactual analysis

The artefactual assemblage recovered is summarised in Tables 1 and 2. The pottery assemblage retrieved from the excavated area consisted of 10 sherds of pottery weighing 166g. In addition fragments of tile, brick and clay pipe stems were recovered. The group came from two stratified contexts and could be dated from the Iron Age period onwards (see Table 1). Using pottery as an index of artefact condition, this was generally poor with the majority of sherds displaying high levels of abrasion. Though the mean sherd size (16g) was above average, this just reflects the presence of several large sherds of coarse post-medieval earthenwares, and the earlier material was actually much degraded.

period	material class	material subtype	object specific type	count	weight(g)
prehistoric	ceramic		pot	1	1
Roman	ceramic		pot	1	2
post-medieval	ceramic		pot	1	30
post-medieval/modern	ceramic		pot	1	106
modern	ceramic		pot	6	27
modern	ceramic		sanitary ware	1	23
modern	ceramic		tile	1	14
modern	metal		lid	1	13
modern	metal	iron	nail	1	1
undated	bone	animal bone	animal bone	2	61
Totals:				16	278

Table 1: Quantification of the assemblage

### Discussion

All sherds have been grouped and quantified according to fabric type (Table 2).

Broad period	fabric code	Fabric common name	count	weight(g)
Iron Age	4.6	Oolitic limestone and sand	1	1
Romano-British	12	Severn Valley ware	1	2
Post-medieval	78	Post-medieval red ware	1	30
Modern	81.4	Miscellaneous late stoneware	1	15
Modern	85	Modern china	5	12

Broad period	fabric code	Fabric common name	count	weight(g)
Post-medieval	90	Post-medieval orange ware	1	106
Totals:			10	166

Table 2: Quantification of the pottery by period and fabric-type

One highly abraded residual sherd of middle Iron Age (5<sup>th</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC) oolitic limestone and sand-tempered pottery (fabric 4.6) was recovered from topsoil (100). Subsoil (201) yielded a similarly abraded body sherd of Roman (1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> century AD) Severn Valley Ware (fabric 12). These are likely to relate to the intensive prehistoric and Roman settlement activity identified in the vicinity of the site, and were probably incorporated into the site through agricultural processes; they are not thought to indicate the presence of deposits of this date within the site area.

The majority of the finds assemblage consisted of 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century domestic refuse, including typical 19<sup>th</sup> century domestic stone china (fabric 85) and coarse earthenwares including 18<sup>th</sup> century redware (fabric 78) and 19<sup>th</sup> century orange ware (fabric 90), along with later 20<sup>th</sup> century material. Their condition is consistent with residual material incorporated into the site through agricultural processes such as manuring.

### Site dating

context	material class	material subtype	object specific type	count	weight(g)	start date	end date	TPQ date range
100	ceramic		pot	5	12	1800	1950	1960 - 2000
	ceramic		pot	1	6	1700	1900	
	ceramic		tile	1	14	1800	1950	
	ceramic		sanitary ceramic	1	23	1800	1950	
	ceramic		pot	1	15	1800	1950	
	metal		lid	1	13	1960	2000	
	metal	iron	nail	1	1	1800	1900	
201	bone	animal bone	animal bone	2	61			1600 - 1800
	ceramic		pot	1	1	-500	-100	
201	ceramic		pot	1	2	43	410	1600 - 1800
	ceramic		pot	1	30	1600	1800	

Table 3 Summary of context dating based on artefacts

## Recommendations

### Further analysis and reporting

No further work on the assemblage is required.

### Discard and retention

The majority of the assemblage is not considered to merit retention, the sole exception being the small sherd of Iron Age pottery.

## Discussion

The development involved the stripping of a drive and car parking spaces, footings for concrete pillars and the excavation of service trenches (Plates 1-5).

The drive and car parking space, Trench 1, removed the top 0.3m of ground, which was identified as being topsoil only. In some places the interface with the subsoil was revealed (Plate 2). Trench 2 was a long thin trench for the installation of a sewer pipe. This reached a depth of up to 0.6m,

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and allowed for an inspection of the topsoil and the subsoil, as well as revealing the underlying natural strata. A shallow linear feature was excavated in Trench 2 (Plates 3 and 4). It was aligned north-east to south-west, and contained no dating material. It is most likely to be a furrow; the surrounding fields demonstrate the frequency of the practice in the area. There may have been further furrows remaining in the section, but the narrow trench, coupled with a low winter sun, meant that visibility was poor.

Due to the depth of top and subsoils across the development site, the intended support footings for the log cabins (Trenches 3, 4, and 5; Fig 2) would not impact upon any archaeology. As such, it was determined that these would not need to be monitored.

The finds from the topsoil were predominantly post-medieval or modern. Prehistoric and Roman pottery was only found in the top and subsoils, suggesting that there is limited scope for domestic activity in the immediate vicinity.

It is worth noting that the client had found evidence of extensive deposits of modern rubbish by a previous landowner, suggesting that there may be unexpected levels of modern truncation over parts of the site (Robert Cadle pers comm).

## Conclusions

The depth of the top and subsoils meant that the only window into potential archaeological deposits was via a 0.4m wide trench (Trench 2; Plates 3 and 4). As such, this watching brief can provide little clarification of the nature of the archaeology in the development area. The minimal amount of Prehistoric or Roman pottery in the top and sub soils is of note, considering the extensive cropmark activity recorded on the HER.

## 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 watching brief was undertaken on behalf of Robert Cadle at Northwick Farm, Broadway, Worcestershire (NGR SP 08595 37637; HER ref WSM 67771). Two trenches were excavated in advance of the construction of three log cabins and associated parking and services. A possible agricultural furrow was revealed, aligned north-east to south-west. The depth of the top and subsoils, coupled with the limited impact of the construction project, precluded any further investigation of archaeological deposits. The finds assemblage retrieved from the topsoil suggested predominantly post-medieval agricultural activity, although a heavily abraded sherd of middle Iron Age (5th to 2nd century BC) and Roman (1st to 4th century AD) pottery were also recovered.*

## Acknowledgements

Worcestershire Archaeology would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project, Robert Cadle (the client) and Adrian Scruby (Historic Environment Advisor, Worcestershire County Council).

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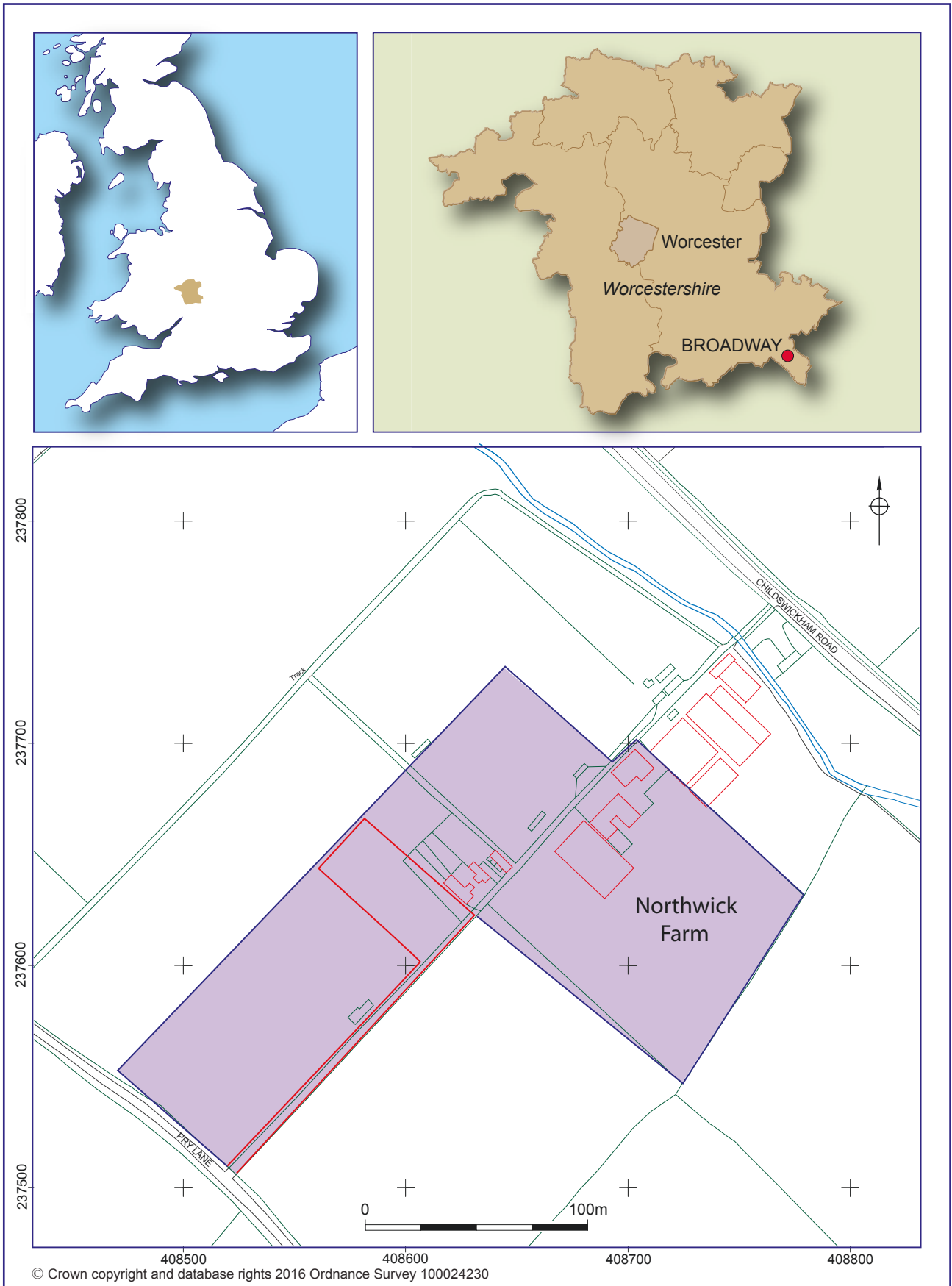
WA 2016 *Proposal for an archaeological watching brief at Northwick Farm, Broadway, Worcestershire*, Worcestershire County Council, unpublished document dated 4 February 2016, **P4768**

WCC 2012 *Standards and guidelines for archaeological projects in Worcestershire*, Planning Advisory Section, Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service, Worcestershire County Council unpublished report **604**, amended July 2012

WCC 2014 *Requirements for an Archaeological Watching Brief as a Condition of Planning Consent*, Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service, Worcestershire County Council, unpublished document, Version 1, dated September 2014

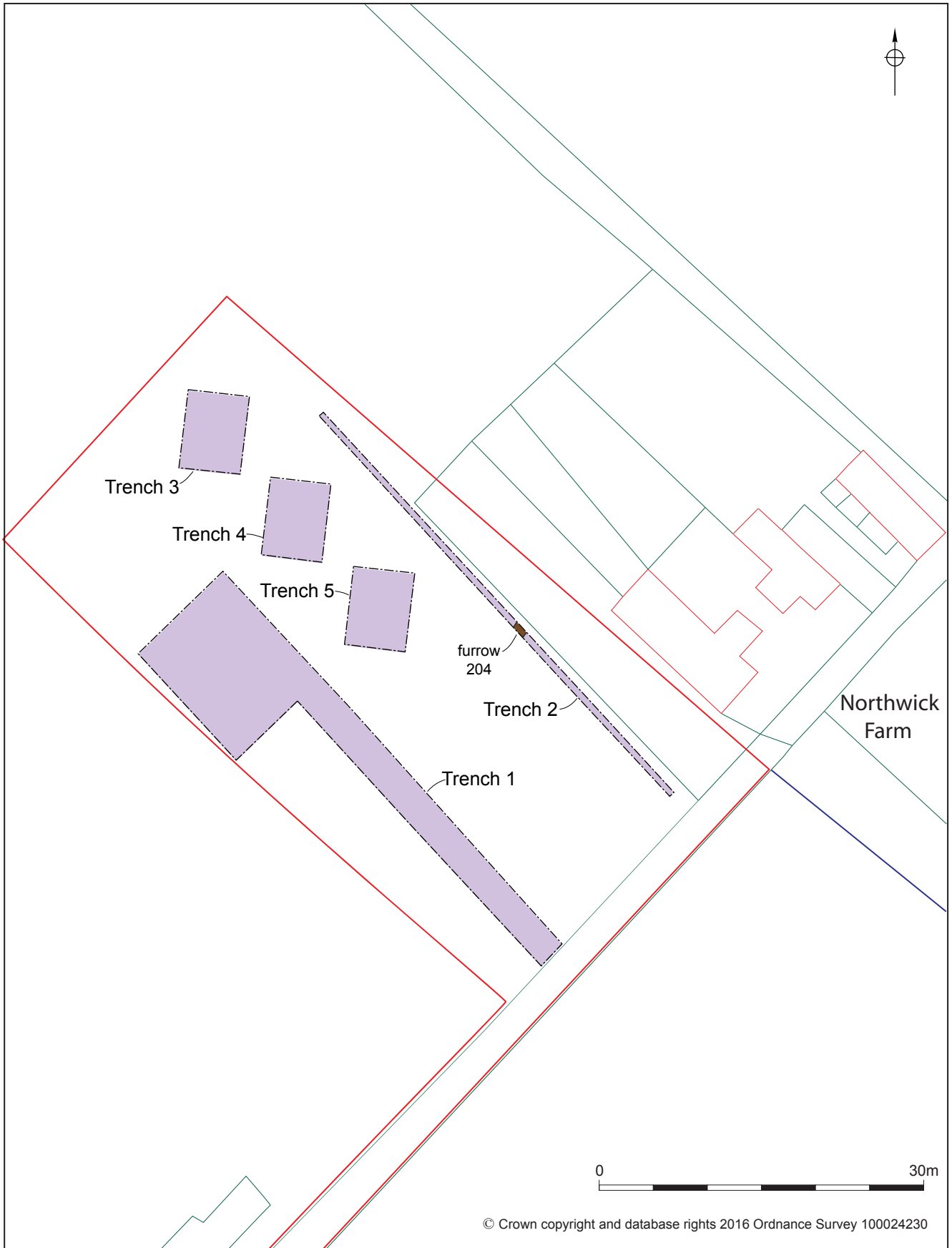
**Figures**





Location of the site

Figure 1



Trench location plan

Figure 2

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## Plates



*Plate 1 The site, looking north-west*



*Plate 2 Trench 1, looking south-east (1m scales)*





*Plate 3 Trench 2, looking north-west (1m scale)*





*Plate 4 Furrow 204 in Trench 2, looking north-east (1m and 0.5m scales)*



*Plate 5 The site showing open trenches, looking south*

## Appendix 1 Trench descriptions

### Trench 1

Length: 46.8m                      Width: 11m                      Orientation: North-west to south-east

#### Context summary:

Context Feature	Context	Description	Height/depth	Interpretation	
100	Topsoil	Layer	Moderately compact mid greyish brown silty clay	0.23m	Topsoil
101	Subsoil	Layer	Moderately compact mid orangey brown sandy clay	0.08m	Subsoil

### Trench 2

Length: 48m                      Width: 0.4m                      Orientation: North-west to south-east

#### Context summary:

Context Feature	Context	Description	Height/depth	Interpretation	
200	Topsoil	Layer	Moderately compact mid greyish brown silty clay	0.3m	Topsoil
201	Subsoil	Layer	Moderately compact mid orangey brown sandy clay	0.26m	Subsoil
202	Natural	Layer	Firm mid yellowish brown sandy clay		Natural Quaternary Head deposit
203	Furrow	Fill	Moderately compact mid yellowish brown sandy clay	0.14m	Fill of furrow, similar to subsoil but few inclusions
204	Furrow	Cut		0.14m	Possible furrow, aligned north-east to south-west. No finds recovered

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## **Appendix 2 Technical information**

### **The archive (site code: WSM 67771)**

The archive consists of:

- 1 Field progress reports AS2
- 1 Photographic records AS3
- 31 Digital photographs
- 2 Trench record sheets AS41
- 1 CD-ROM/DVD
- 1 Copy of this report (bound hard copy)

The project archive is intended to be placed at:

Worcestershire County Museum  
Museums Worcestershire  
Hartlebury Castle  
Hartlebury  
Near Kidderminster  
Worcestershire DY11 7XZ  
Tel Hartlebury (01299) 250416

## Summary of data for Worcestershire HER

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Roman	ceramic		pot	1	2
post-medieval	ceramic		pot	1	30
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