

# Archaeological evaluation of land off Old Gated Road, Lighthorne Heath, Warwickshire



© Worcestershire County Council

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

Status: Revision 1  
Date: 27<sup>th</sup> February 2017  
Author: Tim Cornah  
tcornah@worcestershire.gov.uk  
Illustrator: Carolyn Hunt chunt@worcestershire.gov.uk  
Project reference: P5031  
Report reference: 2432  
Oasis id: fieldsec1-277236



**Contents**  
**Summary**

**1**

**Report**

Illustrations by Carolyn Hunt .....	<b>1</b>
<b>1 Background.....</b>	<b>2</b>
1.1 Reasons for the project .....	2
<b>2 Aims.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3 Methods.....</b>	<b>2</b>
3.1 Personnel.....	2
3.2 Documentary research .....	2
3.3 List of sources consulted .....	2
3.4 Fieldwork strategy .....	3
3.5 Structural analysis.....	3
3.6 Artefact methodology .....	3
3.7 Environmental archaeology methodology.....	3
3.8 Statement of confidence in the methods and results .....	3
<b>4 The application site .....</b>	<b>3</b>
4.1 Topography, geology and archaeological context.....	3
4.2 Current land-use .....	4
<b>5 Results .....</b>	<b>5</b>
5.1 Structural analysis.....	5
5.1.1 Phase 1: Natural deposits .....	5
5.1.2 Phase 2: Undated deposits .....	5
5.1.3 Phase 3: Modern deposits .....	5
<b>6 Synthesis .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>7 Significance .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>8 Publication summary .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>9 Acknowledgements.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>10 Bibliography.....</b>	<b>6</b>



---

## **Archaeological evaluation at land off Old Gated Road, Lighthorne Heath, Warwickshire**

Tim Cornah

Illustrations by Carolyn Hunt

### **Summary**

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at land off Old Gated Road, Lighthorne Heath, Warwickshire (NGR SO 4863 6884). It was undertaken on behalf of Cathy Patrick of CgMs Consulting, whose client intends the development of land to the north of the village of Lighthorne Heath in Warwickshire, for which a planning application has been submitted.

Previous archaeological works within the site comprised a geophysical survey and an evaluation in which archaeological features were recorded on high ground in the centre of the field. Trenches in this area revealed a small Iron Age settlement thought likely to comprise two small enclosures which may have surrounded roundhouses, a settlement type known from the late Iron Age. All remaining features recorded were related to medieval and post-medieval periods and largely comprised furrows, the remains of former strip-field agriculture and drainage features.

The design of the proposed scheme was altered and further trenches were required to assess the archaeological potential of the footprint of the proposed spine road of the development. No archaeologically significant features were recorded and it is concluded that the earlier phase of evaluation had effectively defined the limits of the Iron Age features. This second phase of evaluation allows further confidence in the geophysical survey which has accurately identified the one area of significant activity within the site.

A furrow of probable medieval date was recorded as well as modern features related to land drainage and agriculture.

## Report

### 1 Background

#### 1.1 Reasons for the project

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at land off Old Gated Road, Lighthorne Heath, Warwickshire (NGR SO 4863 6884). It was undertaken on behalf of Cathy Patrick of CgMs Consulting, whose client intends the development of land to the north of the village of Lighthorne Heath in Warwickshire and for which an application has been submitted.

A previous archaeological evaluation was carried out on the site (Cornah 2015) after Geophysical survey (Stratascan 2015) and LiDAR analysis. Sixteen trenches were positioned to target the cluster of geophysical anomalies and to test the archaeological potential of the wider site including some scattered anomalies and possible features recognised from analysis of Lidar data. The evaluation confirmed that the geophysical anomalies represent the buried remains of a small Iron Age settlement at the centre of the site along with furrows, the remains of former strip-field agriculture and drainage features of medieval and post-medieval date.

The design of the proposed scheme was altered and further trenches were required to assess the archaeological potential of the footprint of the proposed spine road of the development and further evaluation was undertaken.

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

### 2 Aims

The aims of the evaluation were;

- to describe any heritage asset with archaeological interest;
- to assess the nature, importance and extent of any heritage asset;
- to assess the impact of the application on any heritage asset.

### 3 Methods

#### 3.1 Personnel

The project was led by Timothy Cornah (BA (hons.), MSc); who joined Worcestershire Archaeology in 2006 and has been practicing archaeology since 2003, assisted by Peter Lovett (BSc (hons.)). The project manager responsible for the quality of the project was Tom Rogers (BA (hons.); MSc). Illustrations were prepared by Carolyn Hunt (BSc (hons.); PG Cert; MCIfA).

#### 3.2 Documentary research

An archaeological desk-based assessment (CgMs 2015) was prepared for the site and was consulted prior to the evaluation along with the results of a previous evaluation within the field (Cornah 2015).

#### 3.3 List of sources consulted

*Cartographic sources (included in desk-based assessment)*

- 1728 Yates' map of Warwickshire
- 18<sup>th</sup> century Estate Map of Lighthorne, Kington and Chesterton
- Chesterton (1849), Kington (1849) and Lighthorne (1843) Tithe Maps
- 1885-5 Ordnance Survey 1:10,000
- 1955-66 Ordnance Survey 1:10,000
- 1992-3 Ordnance Survey 1:10,000

- 
- 2006 Ordnance Survey 1:10,000
  - 2013 Ordnance Survey 1:10,000

#### *Documentary sources*

Published and grey literature sources are listed in the bibliography.

### **3.4 Fieldwork strategy**

A detailed specification has been prepared by Worcestershire Archaeology (WA 2017). This was prepared in line with the standard Brief issued by Warwickshire County Council and with ClfA professional guidance.

Fieldwork was undertaken between the 13<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of February 2017.

Twelve trenches, amounting to just over 648m<sup>2</sup> in area were excavated over the site. The location of the trenches is indicated in Figure 2. The trenches were located to assess the archaeological potential of the footprint of the proposed spine road of the development.

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**

No artefactual material suitable for detailed analysis was recovered from the site

### **3.7 Environmental archaeology methodology**

No deposits suitable for environmental analysis were present within the trenches.

### **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 is located within a high point in the landscape, and slopes away in all directions though most noticeably towards the north and the village of Chesterton. The highest point of the field at its south east end is about 123m AOD and the south west side is at a height of about 109m AOD.

The majority of the site lies on the Salford Shale Member and Langport Member Limestone in the south western corner of the field. These were both overlain by a till deposit formed in the mid Pleistocene (BGS 2017).

The archaeological background given here is summarised from the desk based assessment (CgMs 2015), a geophysical survey (Stratascan 2015) and a previous evaluation of the site (Cornah 2015).

Little is suggested within the vicinity of the site or its wider environs of any Prehistoric settlement or activity. Three possible Bronze Age Barrows have been recorded (HER MWA685 and MWA811),

though none within the immediate vicinity of the site and none have been proven as such. A possible long barrow also existed to the west of the site (HER MWA4460) along with a possible enclosure of the prehistoric or Romano-British periods (NMR 1548489). Similarly, neither of these were located close to the site. To the north of the site, a single sherd of Iron Age pottery was recovered within an archaeological watching brief though not associated with any features. Some prehistoric remains have also been recently recovered at Gaydon as part M40 Junction 12 works.

Romano British activity was largely represented along the Fosse Way, about 2km to the north west of the site, as seen by a scheduled settlement site (NHL1005699). Further settlement activity was also registered in the form of further settlements and a villa to the south of the site (NHL1005699). None of these are suggested to extend into the site itself as a geophysical survey did not record anomalies typical of Roman settlement activity on the site.

Less still can be suggested of the site in the Saxon and Early Medieval periods despite the villages of Lighthorne, Chesterton and Kingston being suggested as being founded at this time. It is likely that the site at this period was used as either agricultural hinterland or common area.

This situation probably continued into the medieval era, whilst the village of Gaydon, c 3km to the south east of the site, was founded in the in the 13th century around a chapel (HER MWA648). The area is likely to have been predominantly agricultural, as seen by the presence of ridge and furrow to the south and south east of the site.

It was within the post-medieval period that much of the modern landscape and its character were formed. The most significant landscape change is likely to have been enclosure, which is visible for the first time on an 18th century estate map. This map, along with the 1728 map, shows a road to the south of the site along the line of the current B4100 and is a former turnpike (HER MWA 4774). Within the south east corner of the site, was an area of 19th century quarrying (HER MWA 9736). The farmstead of Kingston Grange is first noted at this time along whilst the land is larger listed as pastoral and arable within the tithe apportionments.

The 20th century saw the construction of Lighthorne Heath itself as a settlement linked to RAF Gaydon during the Second World War. Within the environment of the site, further 20th century quarrying is seen to its south and south east. The site and its wider environment remained in agricultural throughout to 20th century (CgMs 2015).

Within the site itself, the topography suggested the possibility of hilltop settlement, partially confirmed by a geophysical survey which (Stratascan 2015) which identified a cluster of anomalies at its centre, interpreted as deriving from probable archaeological features. A subsequent archaeological evaluation (Cornah 2015) confirmed that the geophysical anomalies represent the buried remains of a small Iron Age settlement. It is thought that the settlement is likely to comprise two small enclosures which may have surrounded roundhouses, a settlement type known from the late Iron Age. To the north of these small enclosures further activity was recorded in the form of ditches and pits which may have lain outside the enclosed area. A 1728 map shows a watercourse running through this field, and this settlement is located on its eastern bank.

A wide range of pottery fabric and form types was recovered although the paucity of published assemblages from the area precluded precise identification of fabrics. The remains of this period were confined to the area highlighted by the geophysical survey. All remaining features recorded were related to medieval and post-medieval periods, largely comprised furrows, the remains of former strip-field agriculture and drainage features.

#### **4.2 Current land-use**

The site remained in use as a field and had been used up until recently for the cultivation of an arable crop. The site is bounded to the north by the M40 motorway and to the south by the B1400 road.



---

## 5 Results

### 5.1 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

Geological deposits largely consisted of compact light yellow sandy clays, with occasional bands of limestone (101, 202, 301, 401, 502, 602, 1101 and 1201). The exceptions to this were deposits (802, 902 and 1002) which consisted of compact red-brown clays with interbedded limestone brash and occasional areas of yellow clays. Trench 7 contained both red and yellow clays (702) representing the transition between the two areas of geological deposits. These deposits were consistent with those recorded in the previous evaluation of the site.

#### 5.1.2 Phase 2: Undated deposits

Subsoils (201, 501, 601, 701, 801, 901 and 1001) were not present in all trenches, and where present consisted of firm mid-red and grey-brown sandy clays.

Within the eastern end of Trench 5, an east to west aligned shallow feature of 0.08m depth [504] with gradually sloping edges was present. This was filled by firm mid reddish brown sandy clay (503). This feature was interpreted as a furrow. As such, this may be of medieval origin but no datable material was retrieved.

#### 5.1.3 Phase 3: Modern deposits

Present within most of the trenches were a number of land drains, often filled with limestone rubble.

Topsoil deposits (100, 200, 300, 400, 500, 600, 700, 800, 900, 1000, 1100 and 1200) consisted of firm dark brownish yellow brown sandy clay. Within the southern end of Trench 1, the topsoil also contained modern material such as tarmac and rubble fragments.

## 6 Synthesis

A previous archaeological evaluation of the site identified a small Iron Age settlement at its centre. It is thought that the settlement is likely to comprise two small enclosures which may have surrounded roundhouses, a settlement type known from the late Iron Age.

The second stage of evaluation described in this report identified no further elements of the Late Iron Age settlement present beyond previously suggested limits and further demonstrates that the geophysical anomalies present an accurate indication of the extent of archaeological features.

A single feature present is likely to have been part of a furrow of medieval date. The remaining features related to land drainage and agriculture.

## 7 Significance

The archaeological interest in the site relates to the Late Iron Age settlement located on high ground in the centre of the site, as identified within the previous archaeological evaluation. The relative importance and extent of these features have been outlined previously.

## 8 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 Old Gated Road, Lighthorne Heath, Warwickshire (NGR SO 4863 6884). It was undertaken on behalf of Cathy Patrick of CgMs Consulting, whose client intends the development of land to the north of the village of Lighthorne Heath in Warwickshire, for which a planning application has been submitted.*

*Previous archaeological works within the site comprised a geophysical survey and an evaluation in which archaeological features were recorded on high ground in the centre of the field. Trenches in this area revealed a small Iron Age settlement thought likely to comprise two small enclosures which may have surrounded roundhouses, a settlement type known from the late Iron Age. All remaining features recorded were related to medieval and post-medieval periods and largely comprised furrows, the remains of former strip-field agriculture and drainage features.*

*The design of the proposed scheme was altered and further trenches were required to assess the archaeological potential of the footprint of the proposed spine road of the development. No archaeologically significant features were recorded and it is concluded that the earlier phase of evaluation had effectively defined the limits of the Iron Age features. This second phase of evaluation allows further confidence in the geophysical survey which has accurately identified the one area of significant activity within the site.*

*A furrow of probable medieval date was recorded as well as modern features related to land drainage and agriculture.*

## **9 Acknowledgements**

Worcestershire Archaeology would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project, Cathy Patrick, CgMs Consulting Ltd.

## **10 Bibliography**

AAF 2011 *Archaeological archives: a guide to the best practice in the creation, compilation, transfer and curation*, Archaeological Archives Forum, <http://www.archaeologyuk.org/archives/>

BGS 2016 *Geology of Britain Viewer*, <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>, British Geological Survey, accessed 17 February 2017

Cappers, T R J, Bekker, R M, and Jans, J E A, 2012 *Digitale Zadenatlas van Nederland: Digital seed atlas of the Netherlands*, *Groningen Archaeological Studies*, 4, Barkhuis Publishing and Groningen University Library: Groningen

CgMs 2015 *Land Adjacent to The Old Gated Road Lighthorne Gaydon Warwickshire*. CgMs Consulting, unpublished report dated October 2015

Cornah, T 2015 *Archaeological Evaluation of land off Old Gated Road, Lighthorne Heath, Warwickshire*, Worcestershire County Council, unpublished document dated 23 October 2015, report number 2271

CIfA 2014 *Standard and guidance: Archaeological field evaluation*, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, <http://www.archaeologists.net/codes/ifa>

CIfA 2014b *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials*, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, <http://www.archaeologists.net/codes/ifa>

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

---

DCLG/DCMS/EH 2010 *PPS5 Planning for the historic environment: historic environment planning practice guide*, Department for Communities and Local Government/Department for Culture, Media and Sport/English Heritage

English Heritage 2011 *The setting of heritage assets*, English Heritage

W A D, 1984 *Soils and their use in midland and western England*, Soil Survey of England and Wales, **12**

SMA 1993 *Selection, retention and dispersal of archaeological collections*, Society for Museum Archaeology, <http://www.socmusarch.org.uk/publica.htm>

Soil Survey of England and Wales, 1983 *Midland and Western England*, sheet 3, scale 1:250,000 + Legend for the 1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales (A brief explanation of the constituent soil associations)

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

WA 2017 *Written Scheme of Investigation for an archaeological evaluation at Lighthorne Heath, Warwickshire*, Worcestershire Archaeology, Worcestershire County Council, unpublished document dated 9<sup>th</sup> February 2017, **P5031**

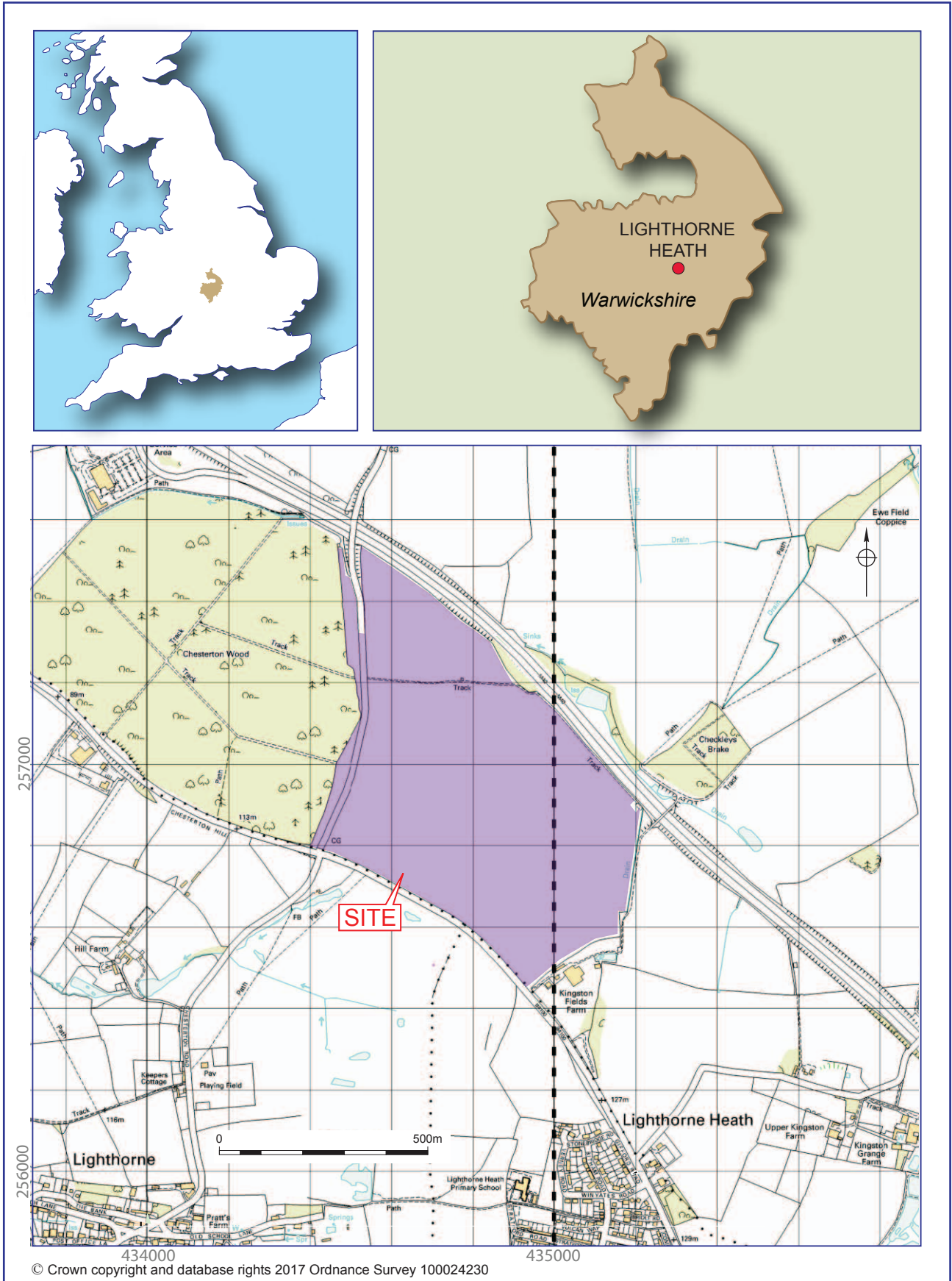
Watt, S, (ed) 2011 *The archaeology of the West Midlands: a framework for research*, Oxbow Books, Oxford





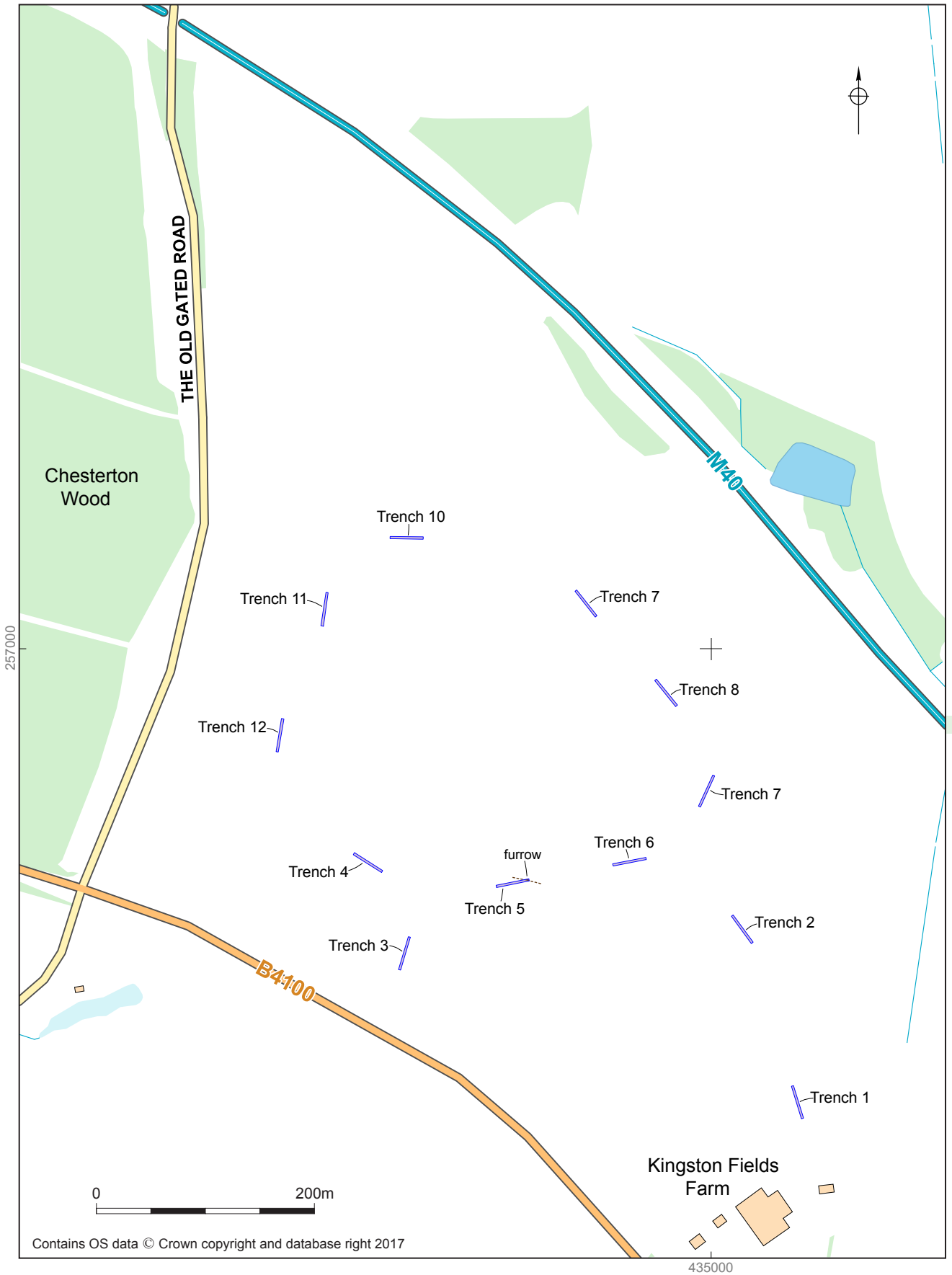
**Figures**

---



Location of the site

Figure 1



Trench location plan

Figure 2



---

## Plates



*Plate 1 Natural deposits within Trench 1, looking south-east*



*Plate 2 Natural deposits within Trench 1, looking east*

---





*Plate 3 Natural deposits within Trench 5 and furrow [504] in the foreground, looking east*

---

## Appendix 1 Trench descriptions

### Trench 1

Maximum dimensions: Length: 30m      Width: 1.8m      Depth: 0.38m

Orientation:                      NW-SE

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
100	Topsoil	Firm dark brownish grey silty clay	0-0.38m
101	Natural	Compact mid brown yellow clay	0.38m

### Trench 2

Maximum dimensions: Length: 30m      Width: 1.8m      Depth: 0.53m

Orientation:                      NW-SE

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
200	Topsoil	Firm dark brownish grey silty clay	0-0.31m
201	Subsoil	Firm mid reddish grey brown sandy clay	0.31-0.46m
202	Natural	Firm mid reddish brown sandy clay with limestone brash patches	

### Trench 3

Maximum dimensions: Length: 30m      Width: 1.8m      Depth: 0.34m

Orientation:                      NE-SW

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
300	Topsoil	Firm dark brownish grey silty clay	0-0.38m
301	Natural	Firm Light yellow brown clay	0.38m

#### Trench 4

Maximum dimensions: Length: 30m      Width: 1.8m      Depth: 0.33m

Orientation:                      NW-SE

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
400	Topsoil	Firm dark brownish grey silty clay	0-0.22m
401	Natural	Firm Light yellow brown clay	

#### Trench 5

Maximum dimensions: Length: 30m      Width: 1.8m      Depth: 0.50m

Orientation:                      E-W

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
500	Topsoil	Firm dark brownish grey silty clay	0-0.34m
501	Subsoil	Firm mid yellow grey silty clay	0.34-0.50m
502	Natural	Firm light yellow brown sandy clay with limestone fragment	
503	Furrow fill	Firm mid reddish brown sandy clay with occasional sub-angular stones	0.50-0.58m
504	Furrow cut	E-W aligned furrow	0.50-0.58m

#### Trench 6

Maximum dimensions: Length: 30m      Width: 1.8m      Depth: 0.46m

Orientation:                      E-W

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
---------	----------------	-------------	---

---

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
600	Topsoil	Firm dark brownish grey silty clay	0-0.22m
601	Subsoil	Compact mid brown yellow clay	0.22-0.40m
602	Natural	Firm Light yellow brown clay	

**Trench 7**

Maximum dimensions: Length: 30m      Width: 1.8m      Depth: 0.38m

Orientation:                      NE-SW

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
700	Topsoil	Firm dark brownish grey silty clay	0-0.28m
701	Subsoil	Firm mid reddish grey brown sandy clay	0.28-0.38m
702	Natural	Firm mid reddish brown sandy clay at N end becoming firm mid yellow grey clay sand	

**Trench 8**

Maximum dimensions: Length: 30m      Width: 1.8m      Depth: 0.65m

Orientation:                      NW-SE

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
800	Topsoil	Firm dark brownish grey silty clay	0-0.32m
801	Subsoil	Compact mid brown yellow clay	0.32-0.56m
802	Natural	Firm mid reddish brown sandy clay with limestone brash patches	

### Trench 9

Maximum dimensions: Length: 30m      Width: 1.8m      Depth: 0.46m

Orientation:                      NW-SE

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
900	Topsoil	Firm dark brownish grey silty clay	0-0.29m
901	Subsoil	Firm mid reddish grey brown sandy clay	0.29-0.41m
902	Natural	Firm mid reddish brown sandy clay becoming more mid yellow clay towards NW end	

### Trench 10

Maximum dimensions: Length: 30m      Width: 1.8m      Depth: 0.48m

Orientation:                      E-W

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
1000	Topsoil	Firm dark brownish grey silty clay	0-0.28m
1001	Subsoil	Compact mid brown yellow clay	0.48m
1002	Natural	Firm mid reddish brown sandy clay with limestone brash patches	

### Trench 11

Maximum dimensions: Length: 30m      Width: 1.8m      Depth: 0.40m

Orientation:                      NE-SW

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
---------	----------------	-------------	---

---

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
1100	Topsoil	Firm dark brownish grey silty clay	0-0.40m
1101	Natural	Firm Light yellow brown clay	

**Trench 12**

Maximum dimensions: Length: 30m    Width: 1.8m    Depth: 0.40m

Orientation:                    NE-SW

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
1200	Topsoil	Firm dark brownish grey silty clay	0-0.32m
1201	Natural	Firm Light yellow brown clay	0.32m

## **Appendix 2 Technical information**

### **The archive**

The archive consists of:

- 1 Field progress reports AS2
- 1 Photographic records AS3
- 47 Digital photographs
- 12 Trench record sheets AS41
- 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

---