

# Archaeological Evaluation at The Old House, Gaydon, Warwickshire



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## **Archaeological evaluation at The Old House, Gaydon, Warwickshire**

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Illustrations by Carolyn Hunt

### **Summary**

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at The Old House, Gaydon, Warwickshire (NGR SP 36472 54088). It was undertaken on behalf of Merlin Capital who intend to construct three detached houses, for which planning permission has been granted subject to conditions (ref. 15/03544/OUT) including a programme of archaeological works.

The Old House is a Grade II listed mid-17<sup>th</sup> Century limestone and lias rubble former farmhouse which stands to north of Church Road to the east of the village. The site comprises open lawn with mature trees to the rear of the garden of The Old House with an access to the road. Five trenches between 10m and 30m in length were excavated across the site in the footprint of the proposed development.

An archaeological evaluation of The Paddocks to the east of the site was carried out in 2016. This revealed the remains of ridge and furrow agriculture and three undated ditches.

A cobbled surface and probable flanking drainage ditch were revealed in the proposed access close to the road. These align with a footpath depicted on Ordnance Survey maps of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century but are likely earlier in date. Across the northern end of the site, four undated ditches, likely to be field boundaries, and a series of medieval deposits, including another ditch were recorded. Relatively unabraded 11<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> century pottery sherds were recovered from fills of the ditches and are of local significance, as they may relate to the origins of the settlement at Gaydon and may well predate its first documented reference in 1284.

The evaluation has confirmed that ridge and furrow does not extend into the site, suggesting that the area lay between the historic core of Gaydon and surrounding open fields. It is recommended that the heritage assets should be preserved by record through targeted excavation.

## 1 Background

### 1.1 Reasons for the project

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at The Old House, Gaydon, Warwickshire (NGR SP 36472 54088). It was commissioned by Merlin Capital who have been granted permission for the construction of three detached houses Stratford-on-Avon District Council (reference 15/03544/OUT). Permission was subject to conditions including Condition 7 which specifies a programme of archaeological evaluation.

The project conforms to a Written Scheme of Investigation (including detailed specification) that was produced by Worcestershire Archaeology at the request of Chris Sutor, of Merlin Capital (WA 2017) and approved by Stratford-on-Avon District Council.

The project also 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 proposed development on heritage assets.

## 3 Methods

### 3.1 Personnel

The project was led by Peter Lovett (BSc) who joined Worcestershire Archaeology in 2012 and has been practicing archaeology since 2004, assisted by Elspeth Iliff (BA, MSc). The report was produced by Nina O'Hare (BA, PCIfA) and the project manager responsible for the quality of the project was Tom Rogers (BA, MSc). Illustrations were prepared by Carolyn Hunt (BSc, PG Cert, MCIfA) and Laura Griffin (BA, PG Cert, ACIfA) contributed the finds report.

### 3.2 Documentary research

Information from the Historic Environment Record (HER) was gathered to see what known heritage assets lies within the site and surrounding area, historic maps were viewed through the National Library of Scotland website and British History Online was consulted for historically documented information. Results of the search are summaries below in section 4.3. Reference numbers for monuments recorded in Warwickshire HER are prefixed by MWA and listed buildings and scheduled ancient monuments are given their National Heritage List number, prefixed by NHL.

### 3.3 List of sources consulted

#### *Cartographic sources*

- 1885, 1<sup>st</sup> edition, Ordnance Survey map – sheet XLVI. NW
- 1886, 1<sup>st</sup> edition, Ordnance Survey map – sheet XLVI. SW
- 1905, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Ordnance Survey map – sheet XLVI.9

#### *Documentary sources*

- British History Online – <http://www.british-history.ac.uk>

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- Heritage Gateway - <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk>
  - Mann, A, 2016 *Archaeological Evaluation at The Paddocks, Gaydon, Warwickshire*. Worcestershire Archaeology, Worcestershire County Council, unpublished report no. **2308**
  - National Library of Scotland online mapping - <http://maps.nls.uk>
  - Thorn, F, and Thorn, C, 1982 *Domesday Book* - Worcestershire, Chichester
  - Salzman, L F (ed.) 1949 *A History of the County of Warwick: Volume 5, Kington Hundred*: London pp. 88-89. Available at <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/warks/vol5/pp88-89> (accessed 26 October 2017)

### **3.4 Fieldwork strategy**

A detailed specification has been prepared by Worcestershire Archaeology (WA 2017). No adjustments were made to the fieldwork strategy as a result of the documentary search, although the location of Trench 5 was altered in response to archaeological features encountered in Trenches 3 and 4.

Fieldwork was undertaken between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2017. The site reference number used by the Historic Environment Record to record archaeological "events" and site code used in the archive has not yet been assigned.

Five trenches, amounting to 133m<sup>2</sup> in area, were excavated over the site area of 3325m<sup>2</sup>, representing a sample of 4%. Trench locations are indicated in Figure 2.

Deposits considered not to be significant were removed under archaeological supervision using a 360° tracked excavator, employing a toothless bucket. 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 Laura Griffin**

The finds work reported here conforms with the following guidance: for finds work by ClfA (2014b), for pottery analysis by PCRG/SGRP/MPRG (2016), for archive creation by AAF (2011), and for museum deposition by SMA (1993).

#### **3.6.1 Artefact recovery policy**

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

#### **3.6.2 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.

For the purposes of this assessment, pottery sherds have not been quantified by specific fabric or form type but general composition of the group has been noted and is discussed with reference to the Warwickshire medieval and post-medieval pottery type series (Soden and Ratkai 1998).

### **3.6.1 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 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 Worcestershire Archaeology practice (2014). A single sample (of 10 litres) was taken from the fill (307) of an undated pit [309]. The site is located on slowly permeable seasonally wet acid loamy and clayey soils overlying Charmouth Mudstone (Cranfield Soil and AgriFood Institute 2017; British Geological Survey 2017).

### **3.7.2 Processing and analysis**

#### *Processing and analysis*

The sample was processed by flotation using a Siraf tank. The flots were collected on a 300µm sieve and the residue retained on a 1mm mesh. This allows for the recovery of items such as small animal bones, molluscs and seeds.

The residue was scanned by eye and the abundance of each category of environmental remains estimated. A magnet was also used to test for the presence of hammer scale. The flot was scanned using a low power MEIJI stereo light microscope and plant remains identified using modern reference collections maintained by Worcestershire Archaeology, and a seed identification manual (Cappers *et al* 2012). Nomenclature for the plant remains follows the New Flora of the British Isles, 3rd edition (Stace 2010).

Animal bone was catalogued according to number of fragments and weight (g) per context. Comments were made on key species and aspects of the assemblage such as butchery and potential for ageing. Species were identified with the aid of modern bone reference collections housed at the Historic Environment and Archaeology Service and identification guides (Schmid 1972 and Hillson 1992).

### **3.7.3 Discard policy**

Remaining sample material and scanned residues will be discarded after a period of three months following 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 moderate degree of confidence that the aims of the project have been achieved, as the nature of archaeological heritage assets across the site have been observed, although those recorded at the northwest end are not fully understood.



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## 4 The application site

### 4.1 Topography and geology

The underlying geology in Gaydon and across the development site is recorded as mudstone of the Charmouth Mudstone Formation, with no known superficial deposits (BGS 2017). The topography is fairly flat, with only a slight slope across the site from c.107.9m AOD in the north to c.106.5m AOD in the south. Bordering the site to the west, north and east are residential properties and gardens, and to the south lies Church Road and The Old House, to which the site formerly belonged.

### 4.2 Current land-use

The site is former garden and is still maintained as an open area of grass with several trees (Plate 1).

### 4.3 Archaeological and historical context

Relatively little archaeology has been recorded in and around the village of Gaydon, mostly dating to the medieval and post-medieval settlement and surrounding agricultural landscape. Prehistoric and Roman activity is scarce in the area, with just two possible Bronze Age round barrows (MWA685) located c. 300m north of Gaydon and a Roman villa c.800m to the south (NHL1005699). An undated rectilinear enclosure, recorded on aerial photographs, also lies c.900m east of the site (MWA19369).

Gaydon does not appear in the Domesday survey (Thorn & Thorn 1982) and the first reference to a small settlement and chapel there is in 1284, when it formed part of the manor of Chadshunt. In 1316 Gaydon was described as a hamlet (Salzman 1949: 88-89), which is likely to have centred around the chapel, rebuilt in 1852 as St Giles Church. Remnant earthworks (MWA3900) show that Gaydon expanded, presumably during the later medieval period, to the south and west of the chapel site and later shrunk to the modest settlement size recorded on the 1885 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey map. Surviving ridge and furrow around the village (MWA19601-2) shows the possible extent of the medieval Gaydon (MWA9011). It is thought that the development site lay outside the area of medieval occupation and is bounded to the east by an area of ridge and furrow (Mann 2016).

An archaeological evaluation of land adjacent to the east of the site, at The Paddocks, took place in 2016. In addition to probable medieval ridge and furrow, the investigation recorded three undated ditches thought to be for drainage and a possible clay pit, associated with the post-medieval brickworks located to the northeast (MWA7609). The 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey map shows trees within the site, although the area is not marked as a formal orchard, and a footpath running across the southern end of the site (Fig 3).

The Old House, to which the site formerly belonged, is Grade II listed (NHL1364718) and thought to date from the 17<sup>th</sup> century, with later alterations and additions taking place in the 18<sup>th</sup> or early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

## 5 Results

### 5.1 Structural analysis

Trench and feature locations are shown in Fig 2 and details are illustrated in Figs 4 and 5. The results of the structural analysis are presented in Appendix 1.

#### 5.1.1 Phase 1: Natural deposits

The natural substrate encountered across the site was a light yellowish grey or brown clay with patches of occasional cobbles and flecks of iron staining. Depth below ground surface increased

from c.0.4m in Trench 1 to c.0.8m in Trench 5 as the thickness of subsoil correspondingly increased. Inclusions of stones are not typical of mudstone, which suggests that the superficial till deposit recorded by the British Geological Survey to the north of Gaydon (BGS 2017) extends further south than previously recorded, over the development site.

### **5.1.2 Phase 2: Medieval deposits**

A probable medieval trackway (105, Plate 2) and flanking ditch (107, Plate 3) were observed in Trench 1, running north-west to south-east across the southern end of the site (Fig 4). Ditch 107 was shallow, sealed below the subsoil (102) and filled by blueish-grey clay, which is consistent with the gradually water laid siltation expected in a drainage ditch. It contained medieval pottery. Cobbled surface 105 was located to the north of ditch 107 and appeared to extend beyond the northern limit of Trench 1 (Plates 4 and 5). Formed of blue lias stone cobbles, the surface was overlain by a localised layer (104), which extended south over the northern edge of ditch 107 and contained numerous post-medieval artefacts, showing that the cobble trackway surface had fallen out of use by this date.

Further medieval activity, dated by pottery sherds, tile and a quern stone fragment, was recorded in Trench 5, although the stratigraphic relationship between deposits and identification of these features was not entirely clear. Ditch 507, which contained medieval pottery, was not fully exposed but had a flat based, steep sided profile that is generally consistent with a field boundary ditch (Plate 6). To the south of 507 lay another ditch (505) that contained a single sterile fill (504). Whilst ditch 505 cannot be directly dated and there was no apparent stratigraphic relationship between ditches 505 and 507, the overlying context (503) contained medieval pottery (Fig 5, Plate 7). The pottery within layer 503 may be residual and thus an unreliable indicator of date for ditch 505 below, but it is also possible that 503 was a shared ditch fill, which would imply that the two ditches were broadly contemporary and medieval in date.

Ditch fill 509 also contained medieval artefacts but was not excavated. To the north of fill 509 was ditch 505 and to the south ditch 511 (Fig 5). It remains unclear as to whether 509 was a fill of one of these two ditches, or another unseen ditch cut.

### **5.1.3 Phase 3: Post-medieval deposits**

The only context reliably dated to the post-medieval period was layer 104 (Fig 4), which overlay the cobbled surface (105). The quantity and date of finds within this c.0.1m thick layer show that the trackway surface had fallen out of use by the late 17<sup>th</sup>, but indicate that the route was still used into the 19<sup>th</sup> century, probably as a smaller path along which chance finds were lost and odd pieces of rubbish thrown.

### **5.1.4 Phase 4: modern deposits**

Topsoil encountered across the site was generally observed to be a dark clay loam c.0.2m thick, except in Trench 4 where seen to the greater depth of 0.35m. The subsoil was a mid-brown sandy or silty clay, 0.2m to 0.4m in thickness.

Subsoil 302, in Trench 3, contained a fragment of medieval tile. Given the slow process of subsoil formation and c.0.2m thick subsoil observed, it is possible that 302 did begin to form at the end of the medieval period. However, it is likely that the single fragment is a residual find from an earlier deposit and that the subsoil in Trench 3 primarily formed throughout the post-medieval and modern eras.

Between the post-medieval layer 104 and topsoil 101 was a rubble filled silty clay (layer 108, Fig 4). The rubble is likely to derive from the surface (105) below, with layer 108 being the beginnings of subsoil forming over the path. Whilst layer 108 contains no direct dating evidence, the historically mapped footpath that the trackway aligns with was in use until after 1905 (2<sup>nd</sup> edition Ordnance Survey) so layer 108 must have formed throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### 5.1.5 Phase 5: undated deposits

All three ditches in Trench 3 remain undated. Ditches 306 (Plate 9) and 309 (Plate 10) were broadly parallel with V shaped profiles and two relatively sterile fills, one of which (304) contained a small quantity of undated fired clay. The form of these ditches is indicative of field boundaries, as at c.1.2m wide they are more substantial than expected from driveway ditches. The third ditch (311) was not excavated, but was on broadly the same alignment and contained a lighter fill than those seen uppermost in ditches 306 and 309 (Fig 4).

Trench 4 crossed ditch 404 at an oblique angle, so only the western cut edge was exposed and therefore the ditch was not excavated. Whilst the fill (405) contained animal bone and charcoal, no dating material was observed. Ditch 404 may be a continuation and point of intersection between ditches 306 and 311, although this association remains tentative due to the lack of clarity over ditch 404's boundaries.

Ditch 511 was also unexcavated and no dating evidence from its fill (510) retrieved, as only the southern boundary of 511 was clear. It is possible that the medieval ditch fill 509 is part of ditch 511, although it is more plausible that this medieval fill (509) belongs to a separate unseen ditch cut (Fig 5).

## 5.2 Artefact analysis, by Laura Griffin

The artefactual assemblage recovered is summarised in Tables 1 and 2.

The assemblage totalled 32 finds weighing 2482g (see Table 1). Finds came from ten contexts and could be dated from the medieval period onwards (see Table 2). Using pottery as an index of artefact condition, this was good with sherds showing low levels of surface abrasion, suggesting that they were broadly contemporary with their contexts (ie little residuality to be expected).

period	material class	material subtype	object specific type	count	weight (g)
medieval	ceramic		pot	12	90
medieval	ceramic		roof tile(flat)	2	65
medieval	stone		quern	1	2000
modern	ceramic		pot	2	2
post-medieval	ceramic		pipe	1	2
post-medieval	ceramic		pot	1	2
post-medieval	ceramic		roof tile	2	196
post-medieval	glass		vessel	1	67
post-medieval	metal	copper alloy	coin	1	7
undated	ceramic	fired clay		1	5
undated	metal	iron	nail	8	46

Table 1: Quantification of the assemblage

### Summary artefactual evidence by period

The discussion below is a summary of the finds and of their associated location or contexts by period. Where possible, dates have been allocated and the importance of individual finds commented upon as necessary.

### *Medieval*

All datable ditch fills from the site (contexts 106, 503, 506 and 509) could be dated to this period on the basis of the finds retrieved. Artefacts consisted of 12 sherds of pottery (contexts 106, 503 and 509), two pieces of flat roof tile (contexts 302 and 506) and a fragment of quern stone (context 509).

The pottery included fabrics and forms characteristic of 11th–12th century date. These included one sherd of Cotswolds unglazed ware (fabric CO01; context 503) and eight sherds of calcareous fine shelly ware (fabric CL01; contexts 503 and 509). The sherds of shelly ware were of particular note, coming from a single club-rimmed jar, decorated with bands of distinctive diamond-shaped roller-stamping around the shoulder and the top of the rim. Such decoration is consistent with the 11th-12th century date of the Cotswolds unglazed ware.

The remaining three sherds were of an unidentified sandy fabric (fabric group SQ; contexts 106 and 503). Although undiagnostic, it is likely that these fragments are of slightly later date than the shelly and Cotswolds examples and possibly push the end date of the medieval assemblage into the 13th century. This later date would be supported by the presence of the two fragments of ceramic roof tile, which are commonly dated from the 13th century onwards.

The quern fragment was identified as lava quern from the Eifel region of Germany (D Hurst pers comm). The working surface is dressed with distinctive, slightly curved radiating furrows, intersected by four concentric channels. Curved dressing is generally accepted as best for larger grain types such as barley or the more efficient processing of large quantities of grain (M Watts per comm).

Although querns of this type were also used in the Roman period, associated finds would indicate this example to be of medieval date. If this is indeed the case, the presence of this fragment may indicate the owner to have been of some status with only freemen being allowed to own and use a quern at this time, whilst others were required to pay for the use of manorial mills (Watts 2002: 41).

### *Post-medieval and modern*

Material of post-medieval date all came from context 104 and could be dated late 17th–early 19th century. Finds consisted of three fragments of pottery, two pieces of roof tile, a clay pipe stem, a piece of bottle glass and a coin. The pottery included a small sherd of Midlands blackware (fabric MB02), a small sherd of pearlware (fabric PLW) and a brightly decorated sherd of engine turned dipped earthenware (fabric MGW).

The bottle glass was identified as the neck and mouth of a dark brown onion bottle with a sheared lip of late 17th-18th century date. The coin was made of copper alloy and extremely abraded with only the faint outline of a head on the obverse and nothing surviving on the reverse. It is most likely a George III halfpenny of mid–late 18th century date, possibly with clipped edges.

### **Significance and recommendations**

The pottery and associated finds retrieved from the ditches indicate an 11th-12th/13th century date for these features, whilst the 18th-early 19th century date of the later assemblage is consistent with the date of known alterations to The Old House itself (NHL 1987).

context	material class	material subtype	object specific type	count	weight (g)	start date	end date	finds <i>tpq</i>
104	metal	iron	nail	8	46			Late 18th-early 19th
104	ceramic		pot	1	2	17C	E18C	

104	ceramic		pot	2	2	18C	E19C	century
104	ceramic		pipe	1	2			
104	ceramic		roof tile	2	196			
104	glass		vessel	1	67	L17C	E18C	
104	metal	copper alloy	coin	1	7	M18C	L18C	
106	ceramic		pot	1	3	12C	13C	medieval
302	ceramic		roof tile(flat)	1	36			medieval
304	ceramic	fired clay		1	5			undated
503	ceramic		pot	5	46	11C	13C	11th-13th century
506	ceramic		roof tile(flat)	1	29			medieval
509	ceramic		pot	6	41	11C	13C	11th-12th century
509	stone		quern	1	2000			medieval

*Table 2: Summary of context dating based on artefacts*

### 5.3 Environmental analysis, by Elizabeth Pearson

Results are summarised in Tables 3 to 4

#### *Hand-collected animal bone*

A small assemblage (690g; 31 fragments) of well-preserved animal bone was hand-collected from the site. As the assemblage was small, the potential for interpretation was limited, but it was dominated by cattle and sheep/goat bones, most of which were butchered. No further work was recommended on this material.

Although preservation of the bone recovered was good, the location of the site on slowly permeable seasonally wet acid loamy and clayey soils overlying Charmouth Mudstone (Cranfield Soil and AgriFood Institute 2017; British Geological Survey 2017) is likely to limit the survival of animal bone.

#### *Plant and other macrofossil remains*

Uncharred remains, consisting of mainly root fragments are assumed to be modern and intrusive as they are unlikely to have survived in the soils on site for long without charring or waterlogging.

Only a single fragment of unidentified grass or cereal (*Poaceae* sp indet) grain and a small quantity of mainly *Cepea* (garden snail) mollusc shell fragments were recorded which may be contemporary with the deposit. Little interpretation could be made of these remains, and hence it is thought that potential for recovery of significant environmental remains is low.

## 6 Synthesis

### 6.1 Medieval

The medieval archaeology recorded across the development site appears to relate to agricultural land boundaries and activities, with a probable stone trackway that may have linked the historic core of Gaydon to the inn or fields in the east before joining the road that is now the B4100. The cobbled trackway aligns with a footpath depicted on the 1886 and 1905 Ordnance Survey maps, and the historic continuation of the trackway was respected by land boundaries into the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Fig 3). Gaydon Inn, now closed, is an early 19<sup>th</sup> century building but may stand on the site of an older building, as the building's alignment suggests that it was situated along the trackway rather than facing the main road. The land immediately north of Gaydon Inn, adjoining the development site's north eastern boundary, contains ridge and furrow and is thought to have formed part of the medieval open field system around Gaydon (Mann 2016).

Across the northern, main section of the development site runs a series of broadly northeast to southwest aligned ditches. It is likely that several phases occur, but it is clear that two ditches (507, fill 509 and probably ditch 505) are medieval in date – it is likely that at least one of the Trench 5 ditches is a continuation of an undated ditch seen in Trench 3 or 4.

The medieval finds assemblage clusters around the 11<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> centuries, demonstrating that the medieval archaeology encountered on site relates to the earliest settlement at Gaydon and almost certainly predates the village's first documented reference in 1284 (Salzman 1949: 88-89). Whilst the ditches are likely to be agricultural land boundaries, around fields or livestock enclosures, the fragment of quern stone and more complex series of deposits recorded in Trench 5 hints at the possibility that agricultural activity, such as grain processing and milling, also took place on or near to the development site.

### 6.2 Post-medieval

Use of the cobbled trackway diminished in the post-medieval period and it may have become restricted to those on foot. The artefact assemblage recovered from layer 104, above the cobbled surface, consists of general rubbish and stray finds, such as the coin, and dates to the construction and later alterations of The Old House. It is possible that access to the trackway changed due to the establishment of The Old House, which is one of the few larger historic houses in Gaydon (Salzman 1949: 88-89).

The lack of post-medieval artefacts elsewhere on the site implies that the site has been garden or private, undeveloped and uncultivated, land belonging to The Old House since the house was construction in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

### 6.3 Undated

Given the projected continuations of the four ditches in Trenches 3 and 4, is it highly likely that several are the same feature as those recorded in Trench 5. Whilst the date of these boundary ditches is uncertain, the similar alignment and character of ditches across the site implies that they are broadly contemporary or consecutive phases of medieval or post-medieval activity.

It is notable that no ditches were observed in Trench 2, despite it being well orientated to detect any northwest to southeast aligned features, suggesting that the ditch activity was confined to the northern strip of the development site. On the 1886 Ordnance Survey map, the northern site boundary forms the edge of a long tenement style strip of land. It is possible that one or multiple of the ditches, especially 309 or 311, formed another thin strip of land across the top of the development site that was originally a separate parcel of land to the grounds of The Old House.

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## 6.4 Research frameworks

The archaeology encountered on the development site has the potential to contribute to several research areas identified in the West Midlands Regional Research Framework (Watt 2011). In relation to medieval archaeology, the "[r]econstruction of communications networks – involving roads and tracks [etc.]" (*Ibid.*: 193) is considered to be a priority and the "question of village origins remains as critical as ever" (*Ibid.*: 178). The probable medieval trackway and early medieval pottery encountered demonstrate that the evaluation site has the potential to contribute to these research priorities.

In addition, the series of recorded ditches, medieval deposits in Trench 5 and quern stone fragment are also valuable for providing an insight into the agricultural economy of rural settlements, another area where knowledge lacking (Watt 2011: 189), and associated activities such as milling, which is "essentially unknown in the archaeological record of the region" (*Ibid.*: 189).

A warning is given within the West Midlands Regional Research Framework that "the trial trenching often undertaken as PPG16 related work, but which does not progress further, fails to adequately address this lacuna [of excavated medieval rural settlement sites]... at best this process will confirm the presence of medieval activity, but may well fail to demonstrate its nature" (Watt 2011: 176).

## 7 Significance

### 7.1 Nature of the archaeological interest in the site

The development site lies between the medieval settlement of Gaydon and surrounding open fields system. Several ditches recorded across the north of the site are typical of field boundaries, although no ridge and furrow has been observed, despite land immediately to the east containing remnant earthworks (Mann 2016). The complex series of deposits in Trench 5 and quern stone fragment imply that the land may have been used for agricultural related activities, rather than being simply agricultural or pastoral land. It is also possible that the land was part of a private plot or tenement instead of being common agricultural land.

A cobbled trackway and probable flanking drainage ditch encountered in Trench 1, at the southern end of the site, are also of considerable archaeological interest for helping to understand the early settlement at Gaydon. Our knowledge of the origins of Gaydon is expanded by the retrieval of 11<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> century pottery, as well as demonstrating that the site is near enough to the historic core of the village to provide dating evidence from the settlement's formation.

### 7.2 Relative importance of the archaeological interest in the site

Archaeological deposits and features within the development site hold great local significance and have the potential to contribute to local and regional research frameworks, despite the exact nature of archaeological heritage assets within the site remaining unclear. Dating evidence of a currently occupied medieval rural settlement is naturally hard to come by, due to the lack of large scale archaeological work within the historic core of villages.

### 7.3 Physical extent of the archaeological interest in the site

An increasing density of archaeological deposits was observed across the northern section of the site, increasing again towards the northwest. Archaeological deposits were generally encountered within 0.4m of the present ground surface and continued up to a metre below ground. Consequently, they are vulnerable to truncation by the intrusive groundworks typically associated with construction, the movement of heavy machinery across the site and re-landscaping works.

## **8 The impact of the development**

### **8.1 Impacts during construction**

During the construction phase, the development will have a negative impact on the archaeological heritage assets within the site by causing the loss or partial loss of archaeological significant deposits and artefacts.

### **8.2 Impacts on sustainability**

The NPPF emphasises the importance of sustainability (DCLG 2012, section 131). The historic environment is a non-renewable resource and therefore cannot be directly replaced. However mitigation through recording and investigation also produces an important research dividend that can be used for the better understanding of the area's history and contribute to local and regional research agendas (cf NPPF, DCLG 2012, section 141).

## **9 Recommendations**

Due to the potential archaeological significance of the site and the potential impact of the development, it is recommended that further mitigation be undertaken to preserve the known heritage assets by record. This could take the form of targeted excavation focussed on the ditches at the northern end of the site and the cobbled surface at the site entrance.

Any site investigation works or watching briefs required should include the production of an archaeological report (and appropriate publication) to be deposited for public consultation with the Warwickshire Historic Environment Record Office and a project archive to be deposited at a local museum.

## **10 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 The Old House, Gaydon, Warwickshire (NGR SP 36472 54088). It was undertaken on behalf of Merlin Capital who intend to construct three detached houses, for which planning permission has been granted subject to conditions (ref. 15/03544/OUT) including a programme of archaeological works.*

*The Old House is a Grade II listed mid-17th Century limestone and lias rubble former farmhouse which stands to north of Church Road to the east of the village. The site comprises open lawn with mature trees to the rear of the garden of The Old House with an access to the road. Five trenches between 10m and 30m in length were excavated across the site in the footprint of the proposed development.*

*An archaeological evaluation of The Paddocks to the east of the site was carried out in 2016. This revealed the remains of ridge and furrow agriculture and three undated ditches.*

*A cobbled surface and probable flanking drainage ditch were revealed in the proposed access close to the road. These align with a footpath depicted on Ordnance Survey maps of the 19th Century but are likely earlier in date. Across the northern end of the site, four undated ditches, likely to be field boundaries, and a series of medieval deposits, including another ditch were recorded. Relatively unabraded 11th to 13th century pottery sherds were recovered from fills of the ditches and are of local significance, as they may relate to the origins of the settlement at Gaydon and may well predate its first documented reference in 1284.*



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*The evaluation has confirmed that ridge and furrow does not extend into the site, suggesting that the area lay between the historic core of Gaydon and surrounding open fields. It is recommended that the heritage assets should be preserved by record through targeted excavation.*

## 11 Acknowledgements

Worcestershire Archaeology would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project: Chris Sutor of Merlin Capital.

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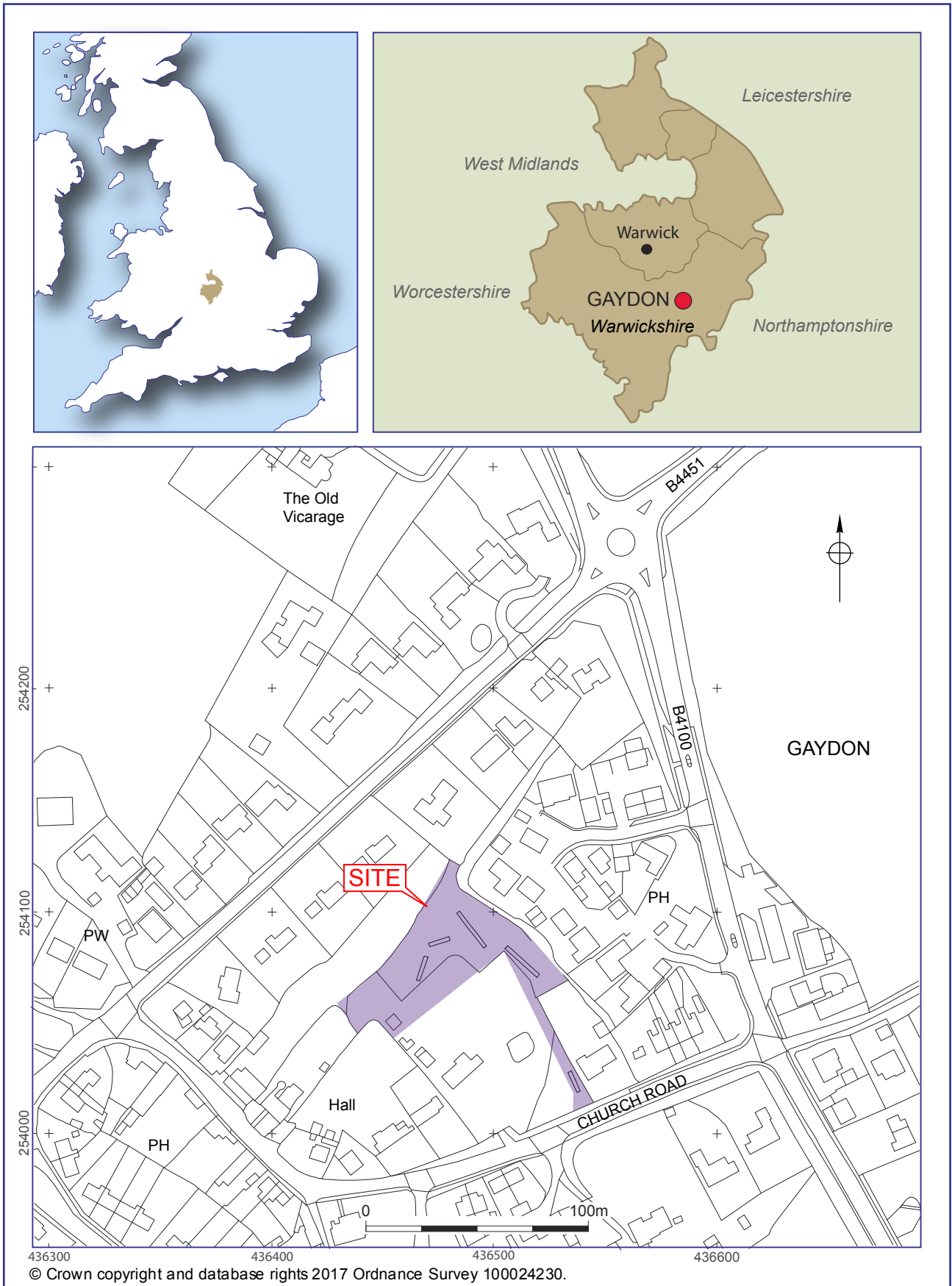
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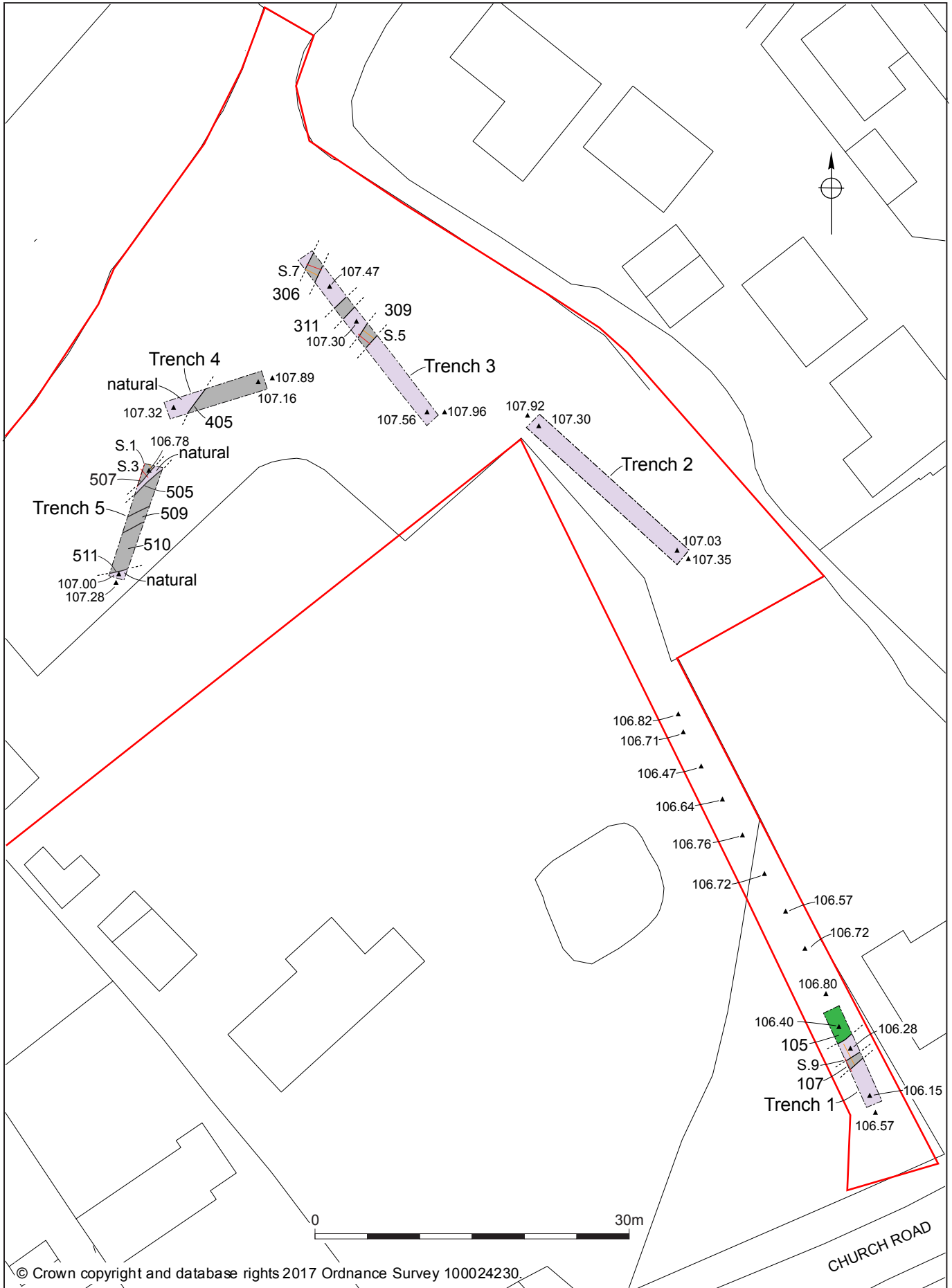
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**Figures**



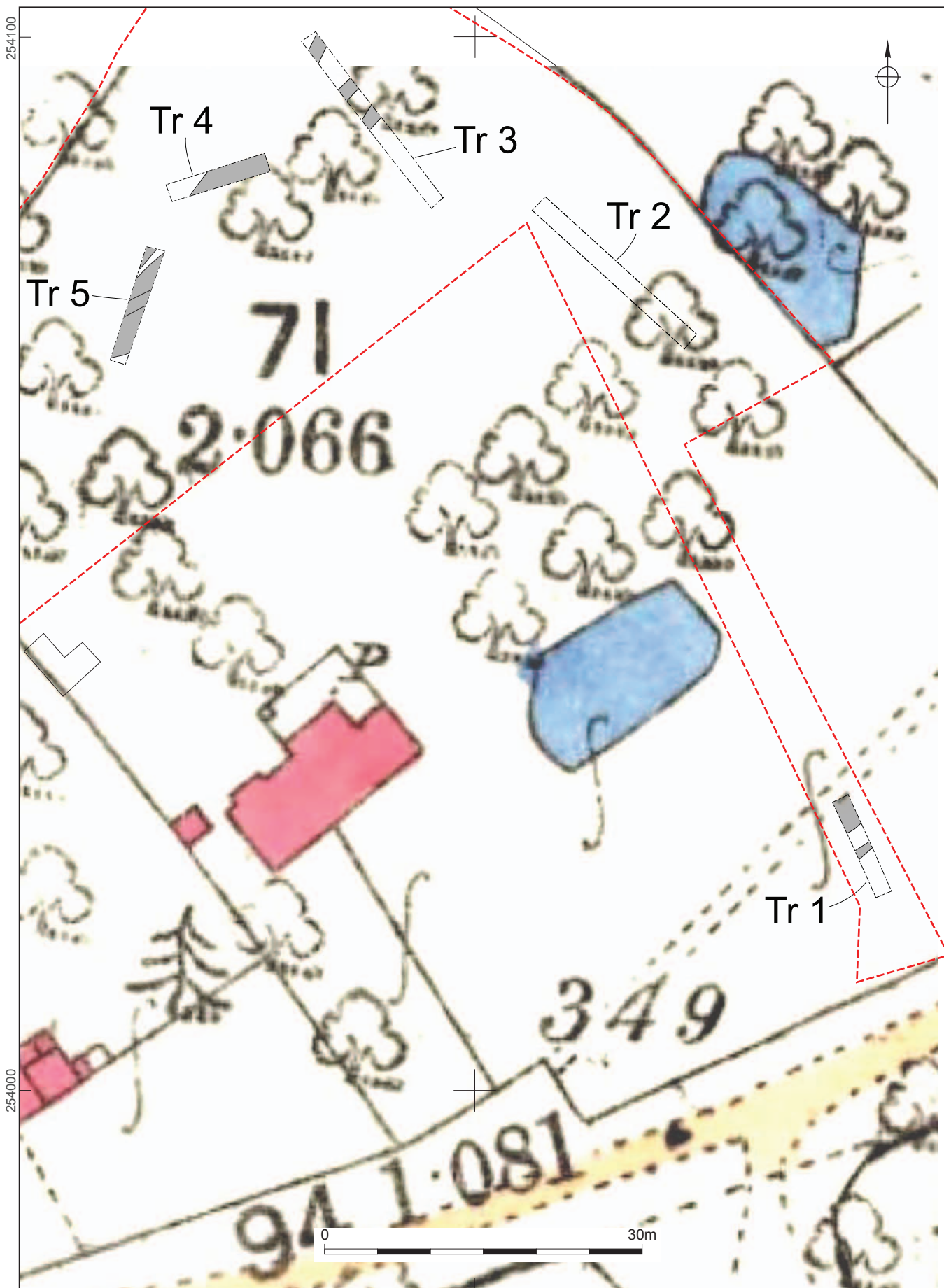
Location of the site

Figure 1



Trench location plan

Figure 2

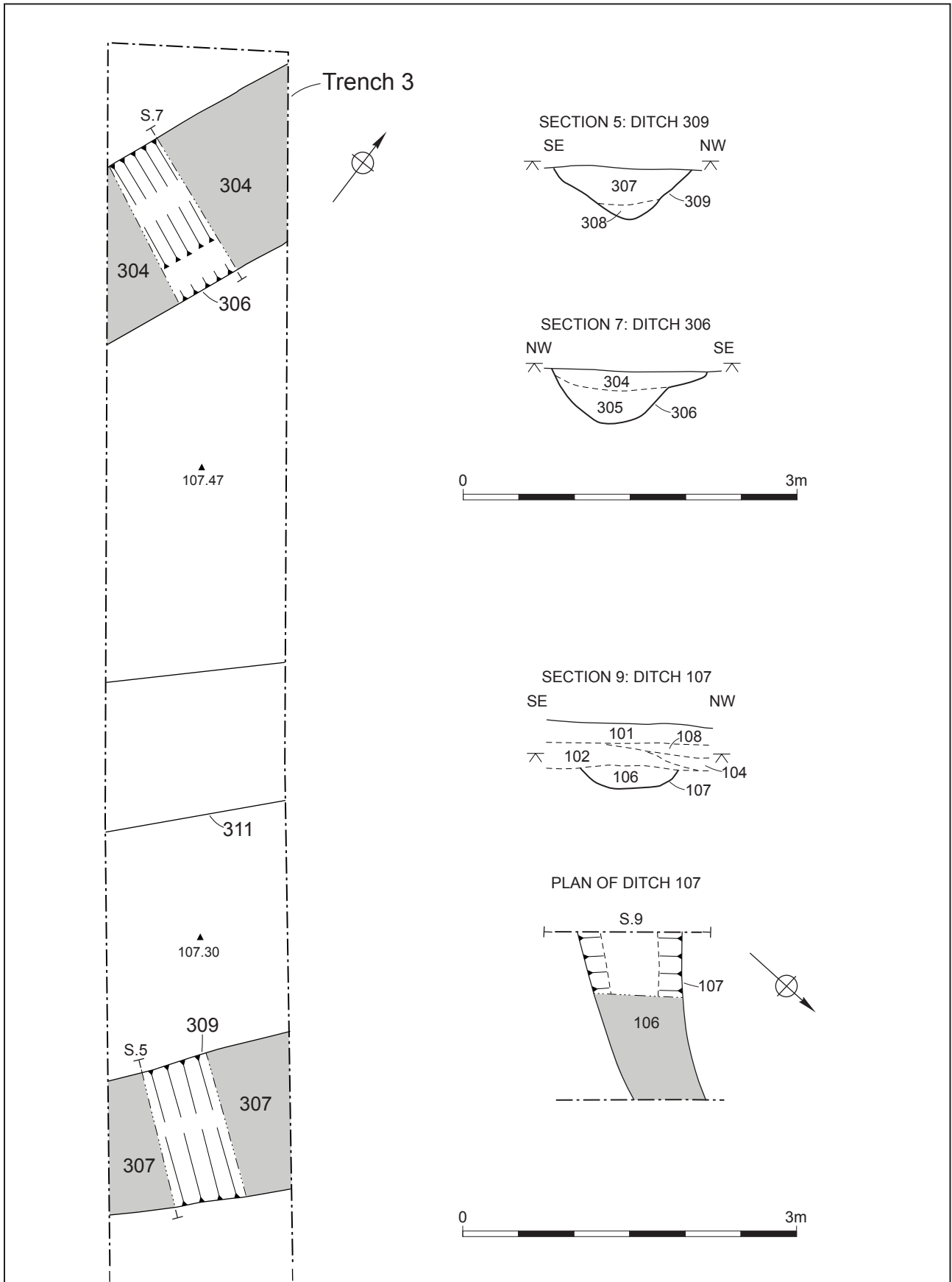


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Extract of 1st edition OS with location of trenches

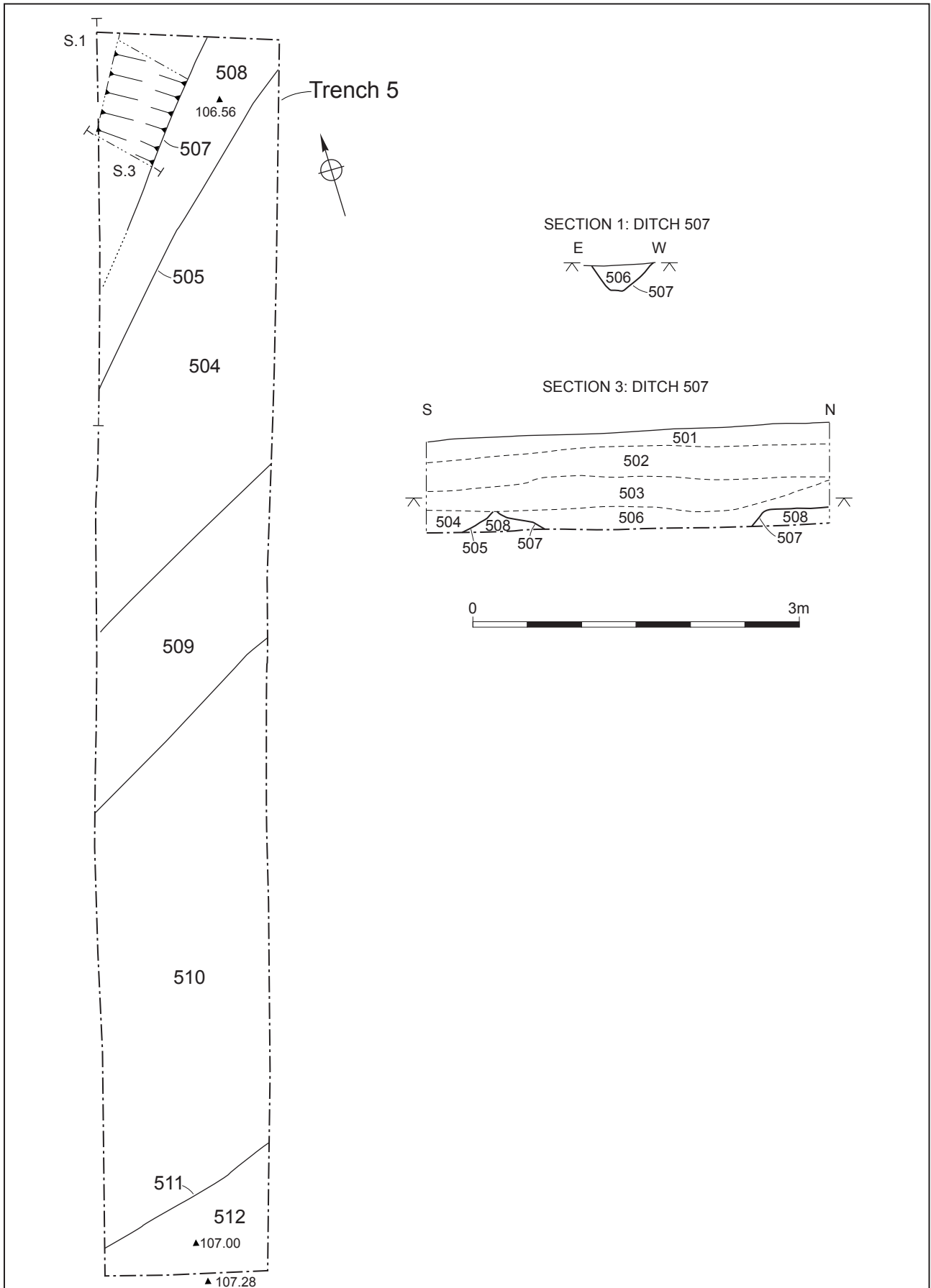
Figure 3





Trench 3 plan and sections; Plan and section of Ditch 107

Figure 4



Trench 5 plan and sections

Figure 5



## Plates



*Plate 1: General view across the northern section of the site, looking west.*



*Plate 2: Surface 105, looking north.*

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Plate 3: Northeast facing section of ditch 107.



Plate 4: North end of Trench 1, showing ditch 107 and surface 105.





*Plate 5: Trench 5 looking northwest.*

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Plate 6: Ditch 505, on the left, and ditch 507 on the right (photo looking southwest).



Plate 7: East facing section of Trench 5 at the north end, showing ditches 507 and (partially) 505.





*Plate 8: Trench 5 looking south, with ditches 507 and 505 in the foreground.*

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Plate 9: Northeast facing section of ditch 306.



Plate 10: Northeast facing section of ditch 309.

## Appendix 1 Trench descriptions

### Trench 1

Maximum dimensions - Length: 10m Width: 1.6m Depth: 0.4m

Orientation: N-S

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
101	Topsoil	Moderately compact dark brownish grey clayey loam.	0 – 0.2m
102	Subsoil	Moderately compact mid brownish grey sandy clay.	0.2 – 0.4m
103	Natural	Firm light yellowy grey clay.	0.4m+
104	Layer above surface 105	Moderately compact mid greyish brownish sandy clay, containing tile, glass, nails, pot, bone, clay pipe and a coin.	-
105	Surface	Spread of sub-rounded to sub-angular cobbles and boulders of blue lias stone.	-
106	Fill of 107	Compact mid blue-grey clay with pot and bone.	0.38 – 0.58m
107	Cut of ditch	Shallow cut, 0.64 – 0.90m wide, parallel to surface 105.	0.38 – 0.58m
108	Layer between 101 and 104	Firm mid grey-brown silty clay.	-

### Trench 2

Maximum dimensions - Length: 20m Width: 1.6m Depth: 0.4 – 0.6m

Orientation: NW-SE

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
201	Topsoil	Loose dark brownish-black clay silt with some rooting and a few inclusions.	0 – 0.20m
202	Subsoil	Compact mid grey silty clay with occasional angular stones up to 10cm and some brown iron streaks. Deeper to northwest.	0.2 – 0.6m

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
203	Natural	Firm mid grey clay with occasional rounded stones up to 10cm, streaks of iron-rich sand probably derived from local sandstone – more prevalent to northwest.	0.6m+

### Trench 3

Maximum dimensions - Length: 20m      Width: 1.6m      Depth: 0.9m max.

Orientation: NW-SE

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
301	Topsoil	Moderately compact dark brownish-grey clay loam.	0 – 0.22m
302	Subsoil	Moderately compact mid brownish-grey silty clay.	0.22 – 0.42m
303	Natural	Firm mid greenish-yellowish grey clay.	0.42m+
304	Upper fill of 306	Compact mid brownish blue-grey clay with occasional charcoal.	-
305	Lower fill of 306	Compact light greyish-yellow clay with occasional charcoal.	-
306	Cut of ditch	V shaped ditch aligned NE-SW containing fills 304 and 305.	-
307	Upper fill of 309	Compact mid greenish-blue grey clay with occasional charcoal and rare bone.	-
308	Lower fill of 309	Compact mid greyish-yellow clay with rare charcoal.	-
309	Cut of ditch	V shaped ditch aligned NE-SW containing fills 307 and 308. Similar to ditch 306.	-
310	Fill of 311	Compact mid yellowish-grey clay.	-
311	Cut of ditch	Unexcavated ditch aligned NE-SW.	-



#### Trench 4

Maximum dimensions - Length: 9.5m Width: 1.6m Depth: 0.75m

Orientation: NE-SW

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
401	Topsoil	Loose dark brownish-black clay silt with some rooting and clinker at northwest end of trench.	0 – 0.35m
402	Subsoil	Compact mid grey silty clay with occasional angular stones up to 10cm and some brown iron streaks. Deeper to northwest.	0.35 – 0.75m
403	Natural	Firm light brown clay with occasional rounded cobbles.	0.75m+
404	Cut of ditch	Unexcavated ditch occupying most of trench, with only one edge exposed. May be one large cut or multiple cuts.	-
405	Fill of 404	Firm yellow brown clay similar to 402 but slightly softer and greyer, contains bone and occasional charcoal.	-

#### Trench 5

Maximum dimensions - Length: 11.5m Width: 1.6m Depth: 0.92m

Orientation: N-S

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
501	Topsoil	Moderately compact dark greyish-brown clay loam.	0 – 0.22m
502	Subsoil	Moderately compact mid greyish-brown silty clay.	0.22 – 0.50m
503	Fill of ditches 505 and 507?	Firm mid yellowish-brown silty clay with occasional bone. Does not extend as far south as 509.	0.50 – 0.80m
504	Fill of 505	Moderately compact mid yellowish-brown silty clay with occasional sun-angular cobbles and boulders, bone and pottery.	-

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
505	Cut of ditch	Unexcavated ditch aligned N-S at least 1.4m wide. Full extent and relationship with 507 unclear, filled by 504 and possibly 503 and/ or 509.	-
506	Fill of 507	Firm light yellowish-brown silty clay with blue mottling. 0.45m thick and 0.56m+ wide.	-
507	Cut of ditch	N-S aligned ditch. Uncertain relationship with ditch 505 and fill/layer 503.	-
508	Natural	Firm light yellowish-brown silty clay.	0.80 – 0.92m+
509	Fill of 505?	Firm dark greyish-brown silty clay with pottery and bone. Unexcavated fill of either ditch 505 or another unseen ditch cut.	-
510	Fill of 511	Firm mid greyish-brown silty clay – unexcavated.	-
511	Cut of ditch	Unexcavated ditch filled by 510. Limits unknown.	-
512	Natural	Possible natural geology seen at south end of trench beyond ditch 511 only.	-

## **Appendix 2 Technical information**

### **The archive**

The archive consists of:

- 2 Photographic records AS3
- 1 Black and white photographic films
- 48 Digital photographs
- 1 Drawing number catalogues AS4
- 10 Scale drawings
- 1 Sample number catalogues AS18
- 5 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

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