

# Archaeological evaluation at Marton Road, Long Itchington, Warwickshire



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## **Archaeological evaluation at Marton Road, Long Itchington, Warwickshire**

Richard Bradley

With contributions by Rob Hedge and Elizabeth Pearson

### **Summary**

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken across approximately 2.30ha of land at Marton Road, Long Itchington, Warwickshire (NGR 441597, 265527). It was commissioned by Cathy Patrick of CgMs Consulting acting on behalf of Bloor Homes and undertaken in advance of a consented residential redevelopment.

Eleven trenches of varying length were excavated in a broad array across two adjacent fields. Some trenches were specifically targeted; it was known from preceding geophysical survey that the site had potential for below ground archaeological features in the centre of the southern field, as well as possible earthwork platforms identified through LiDAR coverage in the northern field. At the time of the evaluation, the northern field was in use as a caravan and camping area; the southern field had been in use as a car boot sale area.

The absence of archaeological features for much of the site area suggests that the land was previously used for agricultural activity (pasture), with little indication of any intrusive activity before the modern period and a relative absence of cultural material remains from any period. There was also no indication of any earthwork remains identified during the trenching. However, a burnt stone spread with associated features in the southern field matched a known geophysical anomaly and was considered to represent a possible burnt mound, likely to form an isolated but significant element of a wider prehistoric landscape. This exhibited many of the known characteristics identified for burnt mounds and it was considered that charcoal retrieved would be suitable for radiometric dating. A sample selected for this purpose returned a calibrated date of 1230-1010cal BC, which suggests a later Bronze Age date and supports the likely interpretation of this feature as a burnt mound.

## Report

### 1 Background

#### 1.1 Reasons for the project

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken across approximately 2.30ha of land at Marton Road, Long Itchington, Warwickshire (NGR 441597, 265527). It was commissioned by Cathy Patrick of CgMs Consulting (the Client) acting on behalf of Bloor Homes. Stratford on Avon District Council has granted permission for residential development of the site subject to conditions that include a programme of archaeological works (ref 14/03065/FUL).

Completion of a desk-based assessment (CgMs 2014), a geophysical survey (Stratascan 2014) and a review of LiDAR data determined that the proposed development site may include potential heritage assets which may be affected by the application. These consisted of geophysical anomalies in the centre of the southern of two fields, as well as possible earthwork platforms visible on LiDAR data in the northern field. Therefore, archaeological evaluation was agreed as an appropriate strategy as a first stage of mitigation following correspondence between CgMs Consulting and the Curator, Anna Stocks (Planning Archaeologist for Warwickshire County Council).

The project conforms to a verbal brief regarding the proposed works provided by the Client, as agreed with the Curator, subsequent to which a project proposal (including detailed specification) was produced (WA 2015) and approved by the Curator.

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

The event reference for this project has not yet been provided by Warwickshire HER.

### 2 Aims

The aims and scope of the evaluation are to:

- locate any archaeological deposits and determine, if present, their extent, state of preservation, date, type and vulnerability.

### 3 Methods

#### 3.1 Personnel

The project was undertaken by Richard Bradley (BA (hons.); MA; ACIfA), who joined Worcestershire Archaeology in 2008 and has been practicing archaeology since 2005, with fieldwork assistance provided by Jamie Wilkins (BA (hons.)) and Elspeth Iloff (BA (hons.); MSc). The project manager responsible for the quality of the project was Tom Rogers (BA (hons.); MSc). Elizabeth Pearson (MSc; ACIfA) contributed the environmental report and Robert Hedge (MA Cantab) contributed the finds report. Illustrations were prepared by Carolyn Hunt (BSc (hons.); PG Cert; MCIfA) and Laura Templeton (BA; PG Cert; MCIfA).

#### 3.2 Documentary research

An archaeological desk-based assessment (DBA) of the site had been previously prepared by CgMs, on behalf of Bloor Homes (CgMs 2014). This document provides the detailed background research information for the project and, therefore, only a brief summary of those results are presented below (Section 4).

Warwickshire Historic Environment Record (HER) and Warwickshire Record Office were consulted during preparation of the DBA to access records of archaeological sites, monuments and findspots within the vicinity, as well as readily available archaeological and historical information from documentary and cartographic sources relating to the site and the surrounding area. A site inspection was also conducted in March 2014.

### 3.3 Fieldwork strategy

Fieldwork was undertaken between 2<sup>nd</sup> December and 7<sup>th</sup> December 2015 following the detailed specification prepared by Worcestershire Archaeology (WA 2015).

Eleven trenches of varying length were excavated in a broad array across two fields, taking into consideration the proximity of an existing pond in between the two fields and known services at the western edge of the site. The location of the trenches is indicated in Figure 2. These covered a combined area of approximately 560m<sup>2</sup> (representing c 2.5% of the development site). The trenches included two (Trench 4 and Trench 5) positioned to examine the possible platforms identified through LiDAR data at the eastern edge of the northern field, and two (Trench 7 and Trench 9) targeted on the geophysical anomalies in the central part of the southern field. Other trenches (Trench 8, 10 and 11) were located so as to determine the extents of modern disturbance noted on the geophysical survey around the edge of the southern field and the remainder (Trench 1, 2, 3, and 6) tested areas thought to be blank. Trench 3, in the northern field, was moved slightly from its intended position so as to avoid a heavily waterlogged area of ground and a known drain pipe, while Trench 5 was re-orientated in order to prevent disturbance of hard standing forming a modern trackway across the field.

Deposits considered not to be significant were removed using a 360° tracked excavator, employing a toothless bucket and under constant 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) and survey was undertaken using a differential GPS (Leica Net Rover) with an accuracy limit set at <0.04m. On completion of excavation, trenches were reinstated by replacing the excavated material.

### 3.4 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.

### 3.5 Artefact methodology, by Rob Hedge

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; <http://www.archaeologists.net/codes/ifa>), with archive creation informed by *Archaeological archives: a guide to the best practice in the creation, compilation, transfer and curation* (AAF 2011; <http://www.archaeologyuk.org/archives/>), and museum deposition by *Selection, retention and dispersal of archaeological collections* (SMA 1993; <http://www.socmusarch.org.uk/publica.htm>).

#### 3.5.1 Recovery policy

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

#### 3.5.2 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.

Artefacts from environmental samples were examined, and are included in the tables.

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 pottery type series maintained by Warwickshire County Council (Soden and Ratkai 1998).

### **3.5.3 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.

See the environmental section for other discard where appropriate.

## **3.6 Environmental archaeology methodology, by Elizabeth Pearson**

The environmental element of the project conformed to the guidance documents *Environmental Archaeology: a guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation* (English Heritage 2011), and *Environmental archaeology and archaeological evaluations* (AEA 1995).

### **3.6.1 Sampling policy**

Samples were taken according to standard Worcestershire Archaeology practice (WA 2012). Samples were taken by the excavator from deposits considered to be of high potential for the recovery of environmental remains. A single sample of 40 litres was taken from a charcoal rich burnt spread (903), from which 10L was processed for assessment (Environmental Table 1).

### **3.6.2 Processing and analysis**

The sample was processed by flotation using a Siraf tank. The flot was 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 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 hammscale. 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 quantified by weight (g) and count. Key species and diagnostic qualities were also commented on.

### **3.6.3 Discard policy**

Unprocessed sample material and scanned residue associated with the burnt mound material (903) will be retained as the material recovered has potential for full analysis, should excavation of the site be carried out.

## **3.7 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.



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## 4 The application site

### 4.1 Topography, geology and archaeological context

The DBA (CgMs 2014) provides the detailed background information for the site, but for ease of reference the topographic and geological context in that document is reproduced here:

*'The study site comprises two relatively flat parcels of land, currently used as pasture and paddocks, east of Marton Road on the northern limits of Long Itchington. Levels increase slightly from 71m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) at the northern boundary to 75m AOD at the southern field boundary. The solid geology of the study site comprises Mudstone, Siltstone and Limestone. Superficial alluvial geology is recorded for the eastern half of the study site (British Geological Survey 1984).'*

The DBA established that no designated archaeological heritage assets exist on the site itself, although the Grade II listed Red House (NHL 1035579) is located close to the southern boundary, and also confirmed that no non-designated archaeological heritage assets have previously been recorded. Geophysical survey was also undertaken, which identified weak responses of uncertain origin at the centre of the southern field, interpreted as potentially archaeological, but equally possible to be agricultural or natural. It was therefore concluded in the DBA that there was low potential for the presence of unrecorded buried archaeological remains for all periods and that any unknown assets that may be identified within the site are likely to be of local significance. A subsequent review of LiDAR data suggested topographical anomalies in the northern field which were thought to indicate possible earthwork platforms, although these had not been identified during the site visit.

## 5 Structural analysis

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

### 5.1.1 Phase 1: Natural deposits

The natural substrate was encountered in all eleven of the trenches excavated. This was a compact mid to light blueish yellow clay in the north and west areas of the site and a more mid brownish yellow clay in the eastern part. Some trenches had a considerable depth of deposits above the natural, but in others it was purely topsoil and turf over the clay, which was encountered at between 0.17-0.74m below the current ground surface.

### 5.1.2 Phase 2: Prehistoric deposits (late Bronze Age)

Despite an absence of artefactual dating evidence a group of features identified in the centre of the southern field on the geophysical survey were interpreted as being of prehistoric date. Subsequent scientific dating undertaken during post-excavation assessment has confirmed that this initial interpretation was correct. A radiocarbon date returned from a sample of hazel charcoal of 2923±35 BP gave a calibrated date of 1230-1010cal BC (SUERC-64963). The remains were identified at the junction of Trench 7 and Trench 9 and, although extensive water inundation prevented detailed investigation (Plate 2), are thought to be the shallow remnants of a burnt mound. This comprised a 4m wide spread of dark, charcoal-rich burnt material with moderate heat-cracked chert and limestone within it (903), but only surviving to a maximum of 0.14m in height (Plate 5). It was partly sealed by a potential relict subsoil or alluvial layer of yellow grey clay (906), itself sealed below later subsoil (probably of medieval or later date) and modern topsoil. Adjacent to the main area of material was a smaller 2m wide patch of burnt stone (704), possibly a pit, but this lacked the charcoal content of the main spread.

Around 6m further to the north in Trench 9 was a linear feature (905), possibly a gully that exhibited the same charcoal-rich burnt stone fill as (903) to the south. This was not excavated, but is likely to be related to the spread forming the burnt mound.

### 5.1.3 Phase 3: Modern deposits

Above yellow-brown silty sand subsoil deposits, 0.18-0.52m in depth (probably formed in the medieval period or later, but not securely dated), a number of trenches included dumps of re-deposited natural (803) or horizons of modern rubble (501; 1003; 1103; Plate 3). In some places the modern material also buried former topsoil (502; 1100). These were identified on the preceding geophysical survey around the eastern and southern parts of the site and are thought to relate to modern landscaping of the fields to raise and level the ground.

The current topsoil across the fields comprised friable dark greyish brown silty clay and varied from 0.06-0.26m in depth. This was heavily waterlogged in places.

### 5.1.4 Phase 4: Undated deposits

Apart from the charcoal-rich burnt stone deposit in the centre of the southern field, the only other undated archaeological feature identified was a small possible pit at the eastern end of Trench 10 (Plate 4). This was 0.58m by 0.44m in size and shallow (0.13m in depth), but contained charcoal flecking in the silty clay fill which suggested some cultural activity in the vicinity.

## 5.2 Artefactual analysis, by Rob Hedge

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

The assemblage came from six stratified contexts. The majority was post-medieval or modern in date. Using pottery as an index of artefact condition, this was generally fair with the majority of sherds displaying moderate levels of abrasion. At 21g, the average sherd size was considerably above average, reflecting the robust nature of the wares present rather than any special depositional status.

period	material class	material subtype	object specific type	count	weight(g)
medieval/post-medieval	ceramic		brick/tile	1	8
post-medieval	ceramic		pot	5	133
post-medieval/modern	ceramic		pot	1	19
modern	ceramic		floor tile	1	63
modern	ceramic		pot	5	80
modern	ceramic		roof tile	1	25
modern	glass		vessel	1	81
undated	stone	flint	unident	1	16
undated	bone	animal bone	animal bone	1	45
undated	bone	animal bone	butchery waste	1	11
undated	stone	chert		1	1
Totals				19	482

Finds Table 1: Quantification of the assemblage

Broad period	Worcs fabric code	Warwickshire fabric code (where available)	Fabric common name	count	weight(g)
Post-medieval	78		Post-medieval red ware, unglazed	3	98

Broad period	Worcs fabric code	Warwickshire fabric code (where available)	Fabric common name	count	weight(g)
Post-medieval	78.1	MB02	Red sandy ware	1	22
Modern	81.4		Miscellaneous late stoneware	2	64
Post-medieval/modern	83	MGW	Porcelain	1	19
Modern	85	MGW	Transfer-printed modern china	2	2
Post-medieval	91	SLPW	Post-medieval buff wares (Staffordshire slipware)	1	13
Modern	101	MGW	Miscellaneous modern wares	1	14
Totals:				11	232

Finds Table 2: Quantification of the pottery by fabric

### 5.2.1 Discussion

For the finds from individual features, including specific types of pottery, consult Finds Tables 3 and 2 in that order and in combination.

With the exception of a single fragment of ceramic building material for which a medieval date cannot be ruled out, all of the more readily dateable artefacts were associated with topsoil or levelling/dumping deposits, and these were all post-medieval or modern in date. The pottery assemblage comprised a typical domestic range of 18<sup>th</sup> century redwares and slipware and 19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century stone china, porcelain and stoneware.

#### Worked flint

A piece of flint, also recovered from topsoil (1100), although non-native and exhibiting flake scars indicative of modification, is techno-typologically unusual and appears fresh despite having been recovered from topsoil. A later prehistoric date (i.e. middle Bronze Age onwards) is possible, reflecting the casual and informal use of flint at this date (Butler 2005, 182). Another possibility is that, given the recreational use of the site for camping, it may have been recently knapped as a strike-a-light.

A small thermal flake of heat-affected chert was identified within an environmental sample from burnt deposit (903). This is consistent with on-site identification of burnt chert, and suggestive of *in situ* burning.

context	material class	material subtype	object specific type	count	weight(g)	start date	end date	TPQ date range
300	ceramic		roof tile	1	25	1800	1950	1800–1950
	ceramic		brick/tile	1	8	1200	1800	
	ceramic		pot	1	22	1700	1800	
903	stone	chert		1	1			
1003	ceramic		pot	1	19	1750	2000	1800–2000
	ceramic		pot	1	14	1800	2000	
	ceramic		pot	2	2	1800	2000	
	ceramic		pot	1	13	1700	1800	
	glass		vessel	1	81	1800	1905	

context	material class	material subtype	object specific type	count	weight(g)	start date	end date	TPQ date range
1100	ceramic		pot	2	82	1600	1900	1600–1900
	stone	flint	unident	1	16			
1101	bone	animal bone	animal bone	1	45			
1103	ceramic		pot	2	64	1800	1950	1850–2000
	ceramic		floor tile	1	63	1850	2000	
	bone	animal bone	butchery waste	1	11			
	ceramic		pot	1	16	1600	1800	

*Finds Table 3: Summary of context dating based on artefacts*

### 5.2.2 Discard and retention

The post-medieval and modern material is not considered to merit retention. It is suggested that only the worked flint is retained.

### 5.3 Environmental analysis, by Elizabeth Pearson

Charcoal was relatively well preserved and abundant in layer (903), thought to be a burnt mound. Fragments were small, but diagnostic features were well preserved and identification possible for the majority of fragments. However, as no roundwood or fragments with surviving sapwood and bark were noted in the sub-sample scanned for assessment, it is unlikely that the assemblage would provide information on possible wood selection practices or woodland management. Non-oak fragments were dominant, with some oak recorded. The non-oak species included one fragment of gymnosperm (yew/pine/juniper/fir/larch - *Taxus/Pinus/Juniperus/Abies/Larix*) and several fragments likely to be of the group pear/apple/whitebeam/hawthorn/plum/cherry (*Maloideae/Prunus*) based on preliminary inspection.

Uncharred root fragments may be intrusive as they are often found in contexts where they are unlikely to have survived in the soil for long without charring or waterlogging.

context	charcoal	uncharred plant	comment
903	abundant	Moderate (probably intrusive)	abundant fire-cracked stones, occasional worked chert,

*Environmental Table 1: Summary of remains from bulk sample*

context	sample	preservation type	species detail	category remains	quantity/diversity	comment
903	1	ch	<i>Taxus/ Pinus/ Juniperus/ Abies/Larix, Quercus robur/petraea</i> wood, Maloideae/Prunus, non-oak wood	misc	+++/medium	predominantly non-oak wood (possibly Maloideae/Prunus).
903	1	?wa	unidentified root fragments	misc	++/low	probably modern and intrusive

Environmental Table 2: plant remains from layer 903

### Key:

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

#### 5.3.1 Summary

The charcoal has the potential to provide information on timber and woodland use. This may relate to both the use of wood as fuel to heat stones, but may also have been used for its sensory properties. The gymnosperm and Maloideae/Prunus groups are both known to give off pleasant scents when burnt so may have been valued for this reason for ritual activities, such as the use of the burnt mound as a sweat lodge, as has been suggested in the archaeological literature (Loktionov 2013, Topping 2011).

## 6 Synthesis

The archaeological potential for this site identified throughout the DBA is broadly supported by the excavation of the evaluation trenches. A limited number of archaeological features were recorded and much of the site appeared to have been undisturbed by intrusive activity until the modern period, as also highlighted by the geophysical survey. The possible earthwork platforms noted on the LiDAR data were characterised by an area of deeper subsoil in the north-east part of the site, probably infilling previously undulating ground, but were not considered to represent archaeological features or deposits of any antiquity. This area is currently used for camping and caravanning and communication with the present landowner determined that much of this part of the site had been levelled/sculpted to create a more suitable level for these activities. It is therefore likely that the site occupies an area of land previously used for mostly rural agricultural activity (mainly pasture), with no indication of direct settlement due to the lack of features and the relative absence of cultural material remains from any period. The artefactual assemblage was consistent with this, being mostly typical 18<sup>th</sup>–20<sup>th</sup> century domestic material, and is likely to have been introduced onto the site through manuring or other agricultural activity.

However, a limited presence of prehistoric activity is known from the wider area and the possible burnt mound remains noted in the southern field are likely to form a small element of this prehistoric landscape.

The features clustered in the central part of the southern field exhibited many of the known characteristics identified for burnt mounds; they were comprised of charcoal and heat-cracked stone, no artefacts were found and, although not located adjacent to a known water source, were positioned in a wet or boggy location (Barfield and Hodder 1987, 370; Barfield and Hodder 2010,

40). Whilst this site is some distance from a recognised focus of such features, burnt mounds have been identified fairly regularly in the greater Birmingham region and are normally radiocarbon dated in the range 1700-1000 cal BC, the Middle to Late Bronze Age (Hodder 2002, 1). Therefore, the date returned from the sample of the burnt mound here correlates well with this regional information, fitting broadly into the later end of this sequence.

Given the lack of other notable features across the site area, other than a small pit, and the heavy waterlogging that indicates the unsuitability of this area for occupation, it is suggested that the possible burnt mound is likely to fit into a previously identified typology; one that is not located in direct physical association with a settlement site, but close to such occupation (as yet unidentified) that is positioned on higher and drier ground somewhere in the surrounding area (see Hodder 2002, 2; Barfield and Hodder 2010, 40).

## **7 Significance**

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

A limited number of archaeological features were recorded on the site which lacked evidence for any intrusive activity before the modern period. The artefactual assemblage reflects typical post-medieval and modern domestic activity, introduced onto the site through manuring or other agricultural activity, and supports the indication that the site has remained largely undisturbed.

However, a spread of burnt stone, likely to represent a shallow burnt mound dating to the late Bronze Age, is of more interest. This suggests that there is a focus of possible prehistoric activity in the centre of the southern field. As similar features are normally located at some distance from settlement it is likely that more intensive activity is located on higher ground to the east of the site, although the presence of a former watercourse in the area (ie a palaeochannel) could be considered likely to exist in the more immediate surrounds, given the known association between burnt mounds and water.

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

The lack of archaeological remains for much of the site area in both the trenching and the preceding geophysical survey, particularly with regard to the northern field, suggests that in broad terms the site is of limited archaeological significance. Rather more archaeological importance can be attached to the burnt mound in the centre of the southern field, which is likely to be of local significance as a feature in isolation, but could provide information to improve understanding of such archaeology in the surrounding region. Certainly, the charcoal from this has been assessed to have the potential to contribute towards the interpretation of the function of the burnt mound and also timber and woodland use. Burnt mounds, whilst becoming better recognised and more frequently identified in Warwickshire and the surrounding areas (e.g. Bradley 2014), have generally been seen to be more prominent in the greater Birmingham region to the west and north-west (see fig 3.1 in Hurst 2011) so this example (particularly if well-preserved) could become an important addition to the known distribution.

The artefacts do not represent an assemblage of archaeological interest as they were associated with topsoil and 19<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> century dumping deposits. However, the presence of worked flint means that the recovery of more prehistoric material cannot be ruled out during further works – in this context, for instance, it is worth considering that a paucity of artefacts is a common characteristic of Bronze Age burnt mounds.

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

The archaeological interest is restricted to the identified features in the centre of the southern field, as located through geophysical survey (Trenches 7 and 9). Although a small pit was located to the south-east (Trench 10), the surrounding area was mostly devoid of archaeological features. It can therefore be suggested that the extent of archaeological remains will be focused upon and around the burnt stone spread (903).

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## 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 across approximately 2.30ha of land at Marton Road, Long Itchington, Warwickshire (NGR 441597, 265527). It was commissioned by Cathy Patrick of CgMs Consulting acting on behalf of Bloor Homes and undertaken in advance of a consented residential redevelopment.*

*Eleven trenches of varying length were excavated in a broad array across two adjacent fields. Some trenches were specifically targeted; it was known from preceding geophysical survey that the site had potential for below ground archaeological features in the centre of the southern field, as well as possible earthwork platforms identified through LiDAR coverage in the northern field. At the time of the evaluation, the northern field was in use as a caravan and camping area; the southern field had been in use as a car boot sale area.*

*The absence of archaeological features for much of the site area suggests that the land was previously used for agricultural activity (pasture), with little indication of any intrusive activity before the modern period and a relative absence of cultural material remains from any period. There was also no indication of any earthwork remains identified during the trenching. However, a burnt stone spread with associated features in the southern field matched a known geophysical anomaly and was considered to represent a possible burnt mound, likely to form an isolated but significant element of a wider prehistoric landscape. This exhibited many of the known characteristics identified for burnt mounds and it was considered that charcoal retrieved would be suitable for radiometric dating. A sample selected for this purpose returned a calibrated date of 1230-1010cal BC, which suggests a later Bronze Age date and supports the likely interpretation of this feature as a burnt mound.*

## 9 Acknowledgements

Worcestershire Archaeology would like to thank the following for their assistance in the successful conclusion of this project: Cathy Patrick (CgMs Consulting) and John Robinson and Anna Stocks (Warwickshire County Council planning archaeologists).

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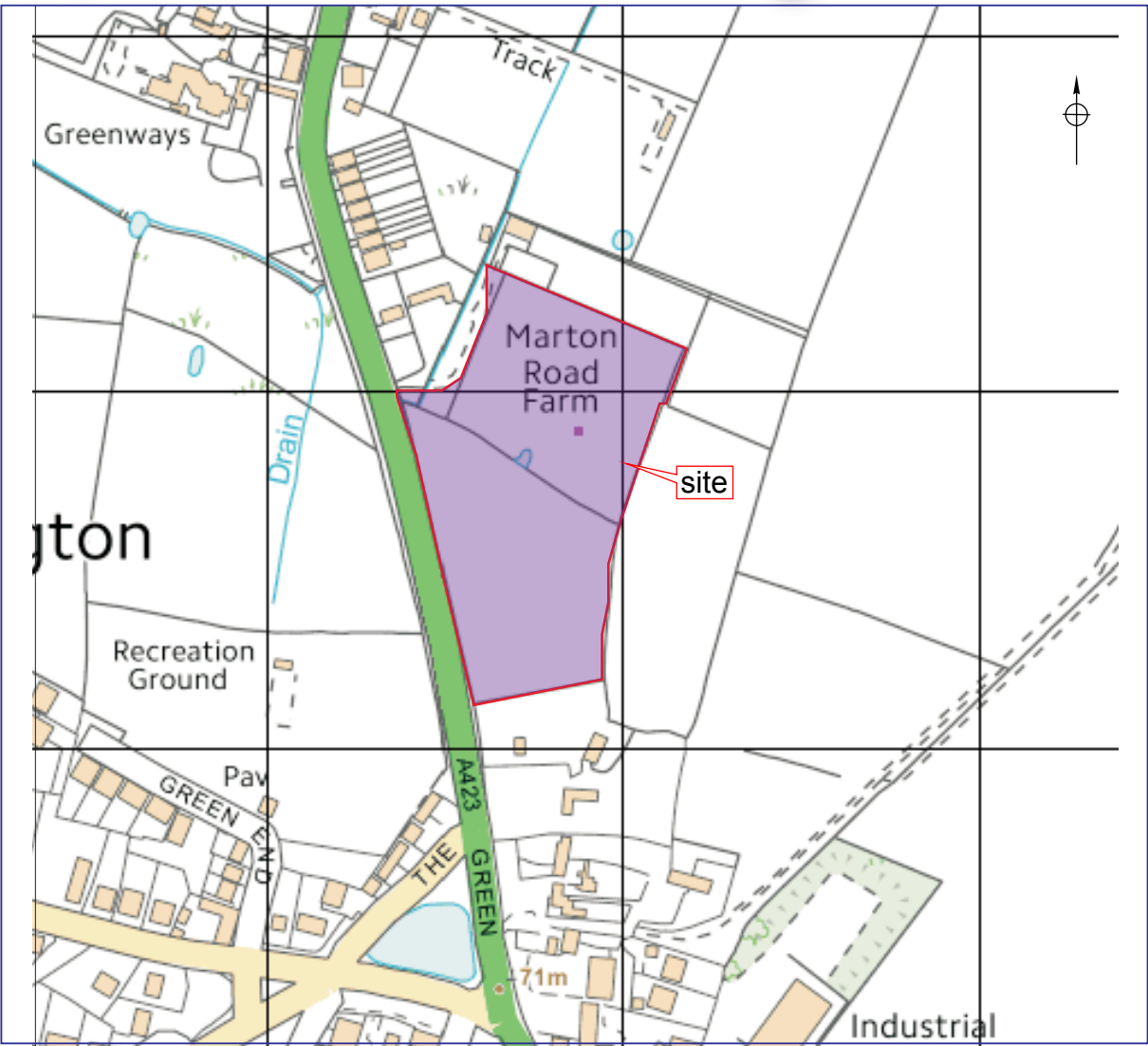
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**Figures**

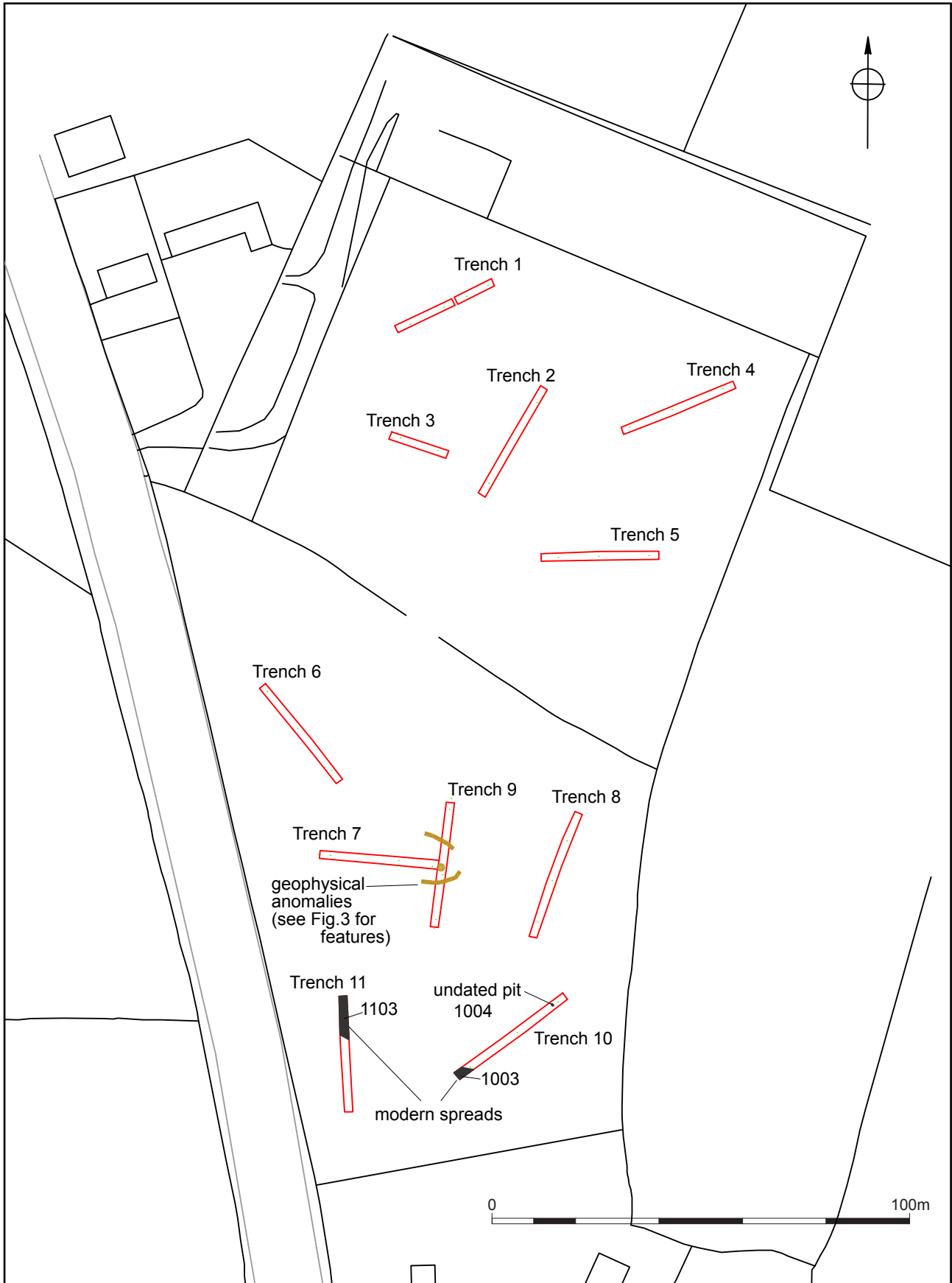
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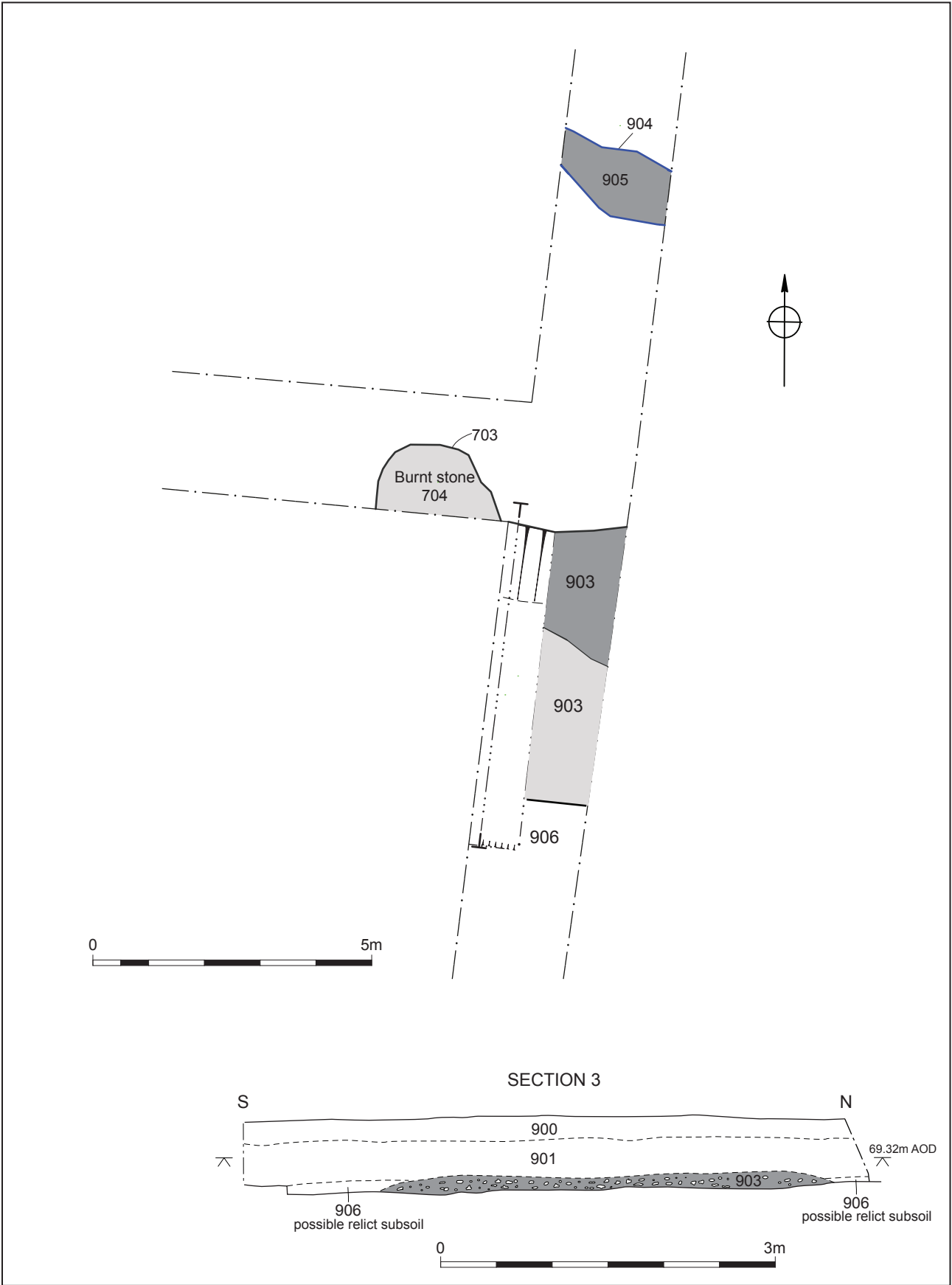
Location of the site

Figure 1



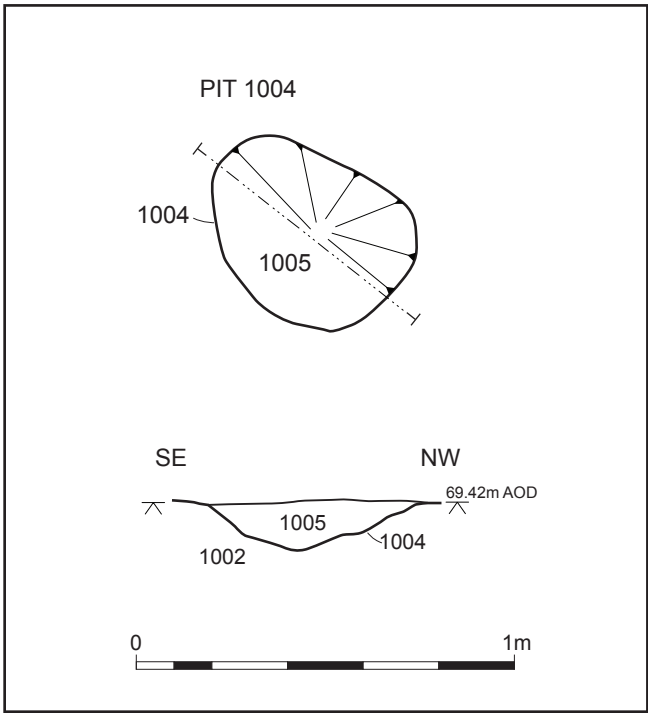
Trench locations and archaeological features

Figure 2



Trenches 7 and 9 - detail

Figure 3



Trench 10 Pit

Figure 4



## Plates



*Plate 1: The southern field of the site, before trenching*



*Plate 2: Example of site conditions, Trench 1 waterlogged*

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*Plate 3: Modern dumped deposit (1103), Trench 11*



*Plate 4: Small pit feature (1004)*

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*Plate 5: Burnt stone spread (903), visible below subsoil*

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## Appendix 1 Trench descriptions

### Trench 1

Length: 26m      Width: 1.80m      Orientation: north-east to south-west

#### Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
100	Topsoil	Layer	Friable dark greyish brown silty clay	0.20m	
101	Subsoil	Layer	Moderately compact mid yellowish brown silty clay	0.13m	
102	Natural	Layer	Compact light blueish yellow clay	Unexc.	

### Trench 2

Length: 29.7m      Width: 1.80m      Orientation: north-east to south-west

#### Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
200	Topsoil	Layer	Friable dark greyish brown silty clay	0.17m	
201	Natural	Layer	Compact mid blueish yellow clay	0.10m+	

### Trench 3

Length: 14.90m      Width: 1.80m      Orientation: east to west

#### Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
300	Topsoil	Layer	Friable dark greyish brown silty clay	0.22m	
301	Natural	Layer	Compact mid blueish yellow clay	0.20m+	

---

**Trench 4**

Length: 29.80m      Width: 1.80m      Orientation: north-east to south-west

**Context summary:**

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
400	Topsoil	Layer	Friable dark greyish brown silty clay	0.22m	
401	Subsoil	Layer	Moderately compact mid yellowish brown silty clay	0.52m	Could be two layers but all very similar
402	Natural	Layer	Compact mid brownish yellow clay	0.07m+	More brownish clay seen in east part of the site.

**Trench 5**

Length: 29.30m      Width: 1.80m      Orientation: east to west

**Context summary:**

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
500	Topsoil	Layer	Friable dark greyish brown silty clay	0.14m	
501	Made ground	Layer	Moderately compact mid brownish orange sandy clay	0.30m	
502	Topsoil	Layer	Soft dark greyish brown silty clay	0.06m	Possible re-deposited/ buried former topsoil, covered by made ground
503	Natural	Layer	Compact mid greyish brown clay	0.06m+	

**Trench 6**

Length: 29.50m      Width: 1.80m      Orientation: north-west to south-east

**Context summary:**

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
600	Topsoil	Layer	Friable dark greyish brown silt	0.15m	
601	Subsoil	Layer	Moderately compact mid yellowish brown silty clay	0.08m	
602	Natural	Layer	Compact mid blueish yellow clay	0.16m+	

## Trench 7

Length: 28.50m      Width: 1.80m      Orientation: east to west

### Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
700	Topsoil	Layer	Friable dark greyish brown silt loam	0.13m	
701	Subsoil	Layer	Moderately compact dark yellowish brown silty clay	0.32m	
702	Natural	Layer	Compact mid brownish yellow clay	Unexc.	
703	Pit	Cut			Unexcavated possible pit. However it might be a spread similar to (903) rather than a cut feature, but it does appear circular.
704	Pit	Fill	Moderately compact dark greyish brown silty clay		Fill of possible pit or just a layer. Full of heat affected stone. Likely to relate to (903).

## Trench 8

Length: 32m      Width: 1.80m      Orientation: north-east to south-west

### Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
800	Topsoil	Layer	Friable dark greyish brown silty sand	0.19m	
801	Subsoil	Layer	Moderately compact dark yellowish brown silty sand	0.50m	
802	Natural	Layer	Moderately compact mid yellowish brown sandy clay	0.11m+	
803	Layer	Layer	Yellowish grey silty clay	0.38m	Dumped deposit/ levelling layer, burying topsoil (800) in centre of the trench - modern
804	Topsoil	Layer	Friable dark greyish brown silty sand	0.06m	Turf above (803) after original topsoil (800) has been buried

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**Trench 9**

Length: 30.70m      Width: 1.80m      Orientation: north to south

**Context summary:**

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
900	Topsoil	Layer	Friable dark greyish brown silty sand	0.24m	
901	Subsoil	Layer	Moderately compact mid yellowish brown silty clay	0.38m	
902	Natural	Layer	Compact mid brownish yellow sandy clay	0.06m+	
903	Burnt Feature	Layer	Moderately compact dark greyish brown silty clay	0.14m	Layer of burning in centre of the trench, possibly a burnt mound. Seen on geophysics.
904	Gully	Cut			Unexcavated. Possible gully cut.
905	Gully	Fill			Unexcavated fill of possible gully, may relate to (903)
906	Subsoil	Layer	Moderately compact mid yellowish grey silty clay	0.12m+	Probable layer of relict subsoil. Very different from (901).

**Trench 10**

Length: 33m      Width: 1.80m      Orientation: north-east to south-west

**Context summary:**

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
1000	Topsoil	Layer	Friable dark greyish brown silt loam	0.26m	
1001	Subsoil	Layer	Moderately compact dark yellowish brown silty clay	0.33m	
1002	Natural	Layer	Compact mid yellow brown sandy clay	Unexc.	
1003	Layer	Layer	Loose dark greyish black silty clay		Dumping/ levelling layer with frequent rubble/ CBM. Likely 19th/20 <sup>th</sup> century
1004	Pit	Cut		0.13m	Cut of small pit or post hole. No finds or dating.
1005	Pit	Fill	Moderately compact mid yellowish grey silty clay	0.13m	Fill of small pit/ post hole. Contained some charcoal flecks but no other finds/ dating

## Trench 11

Length: 28.40m

Width: 1.80

Orientation: north to south

### Context summary:

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
1100	Topsoil	Layer	Friable dark greyish brown silt loam	0.15m	
1101	Subsoil	Layer	Moderately compact dark yellowish brown silty clay	0.18m	
1102	Natural	Layer	Compact mid yellowish brown sandy clay	0.05m+	
1103	Layer	Layer	Loose dark greyish black silty clay		Layer of dumping/levelling – same as (1003). Above (1100).
1104	Topsoil	Layer	Friable dark greyish brown silt loam		

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## **Appendix 2 Technical information**

### **The archive**

The archive consists of:

- 4 Context records AS1
- 4 Field progress reports AS2
- 3 Photographic records AS3
- 1 Black and white photographic film
- 116 Digital photographs
- 1 Drawing number catalogues AS4
- 4 Scale drawings
- 1 Sample records AS17
- 1 Sample number catalogues AS18
- 11 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 deposited with the Warwickshire Museum, Warwick.

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Marton Road, Long Itchington, Warwickshire

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## **Appendix 3 Radiocarbon dating certificate**

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## RADIOCARBON DATING CERTIFICATE

27 January 2016

**Laboratory Code** SUERC-64963 (GU39780)

**Submitter** Liz Pearson  
Worcestershire Archaeology  
The Hive  
Sawmill Walk  
The Butts  
Worcester WR1 3PB

**Site Reference** Marton Lane, Long itchington, Warwickshire

**Context Reference** (903) charcoal-rich layer

**Sample Reference** P4732/903/1

**Material** Charcoal : cf *Coylus avellana*


**$\delta^{13}\text{C}$  relative to VPDB** -24.4 ‰

**Radiocarbon Age BP** 2923  $\pm$  35

**N.B.** The above  $^{14}\text{C}$  age is quoted in conventional years BP (before 1950 AD). The error, which is expressed at the one sigma level of confidence, includes components from the counting statistics on the sample, modern reference standard and blank and the random machine error.

The calibrated age ranges are determined from the University of Oxford Radiocarbon Accelerator Unit calibration program (OxCal4).

Samples with a SUERC coding are measured at the Scottish Universities Environmental Research Centre AMS Facility and should be quoted as such in any reports within the scientific literature. Any questions directed to the Radiocarbon Laboratory should also quote the GU coding given in parentheses after the SUERC code. The contact details for the laboratory are email [Gordon.Cook@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:Gordon.Cook@glasgow.ac.uk) or telephone 01355 270136 direct line.

Conventional age and calibration age ranges calculated by :-  Date :- 27/01/2016

Checked and signed off by :-  Date :- 27/01/2016

# Calibration Plot

