

Archaeological evaluation at Broadlands Drive, Malvern, Worcestershire



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Archaeological evaluation at Broadlands Drive, Malvern, Worcestershire

Andrew Walsh

With a contribution by Rob Hedge

Illustrations by Carolyn Hunt

Summary

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at Broadlands Drive, Malvern, Worcestershire. It was commissioned by Sanctuary Housing which has been granted permission by Malvern Hills District Council for a residential development at the site. Seven trenches were excavated, representing a sample of just over 2%.

A single feature of possible Roman or medieval date was identified near the southern corner of the site. However it is noted that only a single small sherd of Roman or medieval pottery was recovered from this ditch and it possible that this sherd is residual in a later ditch.

An undated feature, which is probably a tree throw, and a number of shallow linear features, which are probably furrows, were also identified in the centre of the site. No other archaeological features, deposits or finds were identified.

Report

1 Background

1.1 Reasons for the project

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at Broadlands Drive, Malvern, Worcestershire (NGR SO 7681 4764; Fig. 1). It was commissioned by Mark Battin of Sanctuary Housing (the Client) who have been granted permission by Malvern Hills District Council for a residential development (planning reference 15/00888/OUT). Permission was granted subject to conditions including a programme of archaeological works.

Correspondence with Aidan Smyth, Planning Archaeologist for Malvern District Council confirmed the requirement for an archaeological evaluation of the site for which a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was produced (WA 2018) and approved. The project conforms to the *Standard and guidance: Archaeological field evaluation* (ClfA 2014) and the *Standards and guidelines for archaeological projects in Worcestershire* (WCC 2010).

This document describes the methods and results of the evaluation. Following approval, it will be lodged with Worcestershire Historic Environment Record (HER), the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) and Online Access to the Index of archaeological investigations (OASIS).

2 Aims

The aims of the evaluation, as outlined in the WSI, were to:

- determine the presence or absence of archaeological deposits beyond reasonable doubt;
- identify their location, nature, date and preservation;
- assess their significance;
- assess the likely impact of the proposed development;

3 Methods

3.1 Personnel

The project was led by Andrew Walsh (BSc; MSc; ACIfA; FSA Scot); who joined Worcestershire Archaeology in 2013 and has been practicing archaeology since 2004, assisted by Jem Brewer (BA). Elspeth Iliff (BA; MSc) undertook the site survey. The project manager responsible for the quality of the project was Tom Rogers (BA; MSc; MCIfA). Illustrations were prepared by Carolyn Hunt (BSc; PG Cert; MCIfA) and Robert Hedge (MA Cantab, PCIfA) contributed the finds report.

3.2 Documentary research

An archaeological desk-based assessment (DBA) was undertaken in 2015 by the Heritage Collective (HC 2015).

3.3 Fieldwork strategy

Fieldwork was undertaken between 2 February and 8 February 2018. The site reference number used by the Historic Environment Record to record archaeological "events", and site code used in the archive is WSM70165. The Worcestershire Archaeology project number is P5259.

Seven trenches amounting to just over 370m² in area, were excavated over the site area of 17700m², representing a sample of just over 2%. The location of the trenches is 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.

3.4 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

3.5.1 Artefact recovery policy

Recovery of artefacts was undertaken according to standard Worcestershire Archaeology practice (WA 2012).

3.6 Environmental archaeology methodology

3.6.1 Sampling policy

Sampling was undertaken according to standard Worcestershire Archaeology practice (WA 2012). In the event no deposits were identified which were considered to be suitable for environmental analysis.

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.

4 The application site

4.1 Topography, geology and archaeological context

The Site is located to the south-west of Broadlands Drive and 1.8km north-west of the centre of Great Malvern. It is bounded by residential properties to the north-east and south-east, properties and land associated with Cowleigh Park Farm to the south-west, and an orchard to the north-west. The Site is situated on the lower slopes of the Malvern Hills and slopes down south-west to north-east. The underlying geology of the site is mapped as Sidmouth Mudstone Formation with Helsby Sandstone Formation mapped to the west (BGS 2018). Superficial head deposits of clay, silt sand and gravel are mapped across the site.

The DBA (HC 2015) identified a moderate potential for early prehistoric occupation associated with the possibility of the superficial head deposits to contain evidence dating to the Palaeolithic. The assessment also identified a moderate potential for later prehistoric occupation, associated with enclosure and hillforts on the Malvern Hills, and for medieval and post-medieval activity relating to parkland and agricultural activities associated with Cowleigh Park Farm. The assessment suggested a low potential for remains of other periods to survive on site.

4.2 Current land-use

The site is currently rough pasture.

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

The underlying geology in Trenches 1-5 and 7 was a reddish brown clay with frequent sandstone blocks, consistent with the mapped geology. In Trench 6 grey silty sand was present.

5.1.2 Phase 2: Roman or medieval deposits?

One ditch, orientated north-east to south-west was identified in Trench 3. It measured 0.96m in width and 0.28m in depth (Fig. 3; Plate 1) and its fill yielded one sherd of Roman or medieval pottery.

5.1.3 Phase 3: Undated deposits

In Trench 1 one irregular pit-like feature was identified (103; Plate 2). It measured 1.4m in width and 1.4m in length, and had a very irregular profile. With the exception of a small quantity of charcoal, the fill of this feature was sterile. Also identified in this trench were a small number of shallow (c.0.05m in depth) features orientated north-to south. These features may have been furrows or possibly related to drainage.

5.1.4 Phase 4: modern deposits

All the trenches and features were sealed by an orangey-brown clayey silty subsoil and a dark brown silty topsoil.

5.2 Artefact analysis, by Rob Hedge

A single 0.5g sherd of very abraded pottery was recovered from fill (304). The surfaces were missing and no diagnostic features remained. It is in a soft, oxidised fabric with occasional quartz and iron-rich inclusions. It is either Roman or medieval in date, but cannot be conclusively ascribed to either period.

The condition of the single pottery sherd is poor; it is therefore not considered worth retaining, although the final decision rests with Museums Worcestershire.

6 Synthesis

A single feature of possible Roman or medieval date was identified in Trench 3 near the southern corner of the Site. However it should be noted that only a single small sherd of Roman or medieval pottery was recovered from this ditch and it possible that this sherd is residual in a later ditch.

An undated feature, which is probably a tree throw, was identified in Trench 1. A number of shallow linear features were also identified in this trench. These are probably furrows.

No archaeological features, deposits or finds were identified in Trenches 2 and 4-7 inclusive.

7 Significance

The ditch identified in Trench 3 appears to date to the Roman or medieval periods, but it is possible that it is of later origin. It was the only feature identified in this area, suggesting an archaeological activity is limited to a single boundary which is likely to be related to agricultural, rather than settlement activity.

The features in Trench 1 appear to be of natural or agricultural origin.

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.

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9 Acknowledgements

Worcestershire Archaeology would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project; Mark Battin of Sanctuary Housing for commissioning the project and Aidan Smyth of Malvern District Council for monitoring the work.

10 Bibliography

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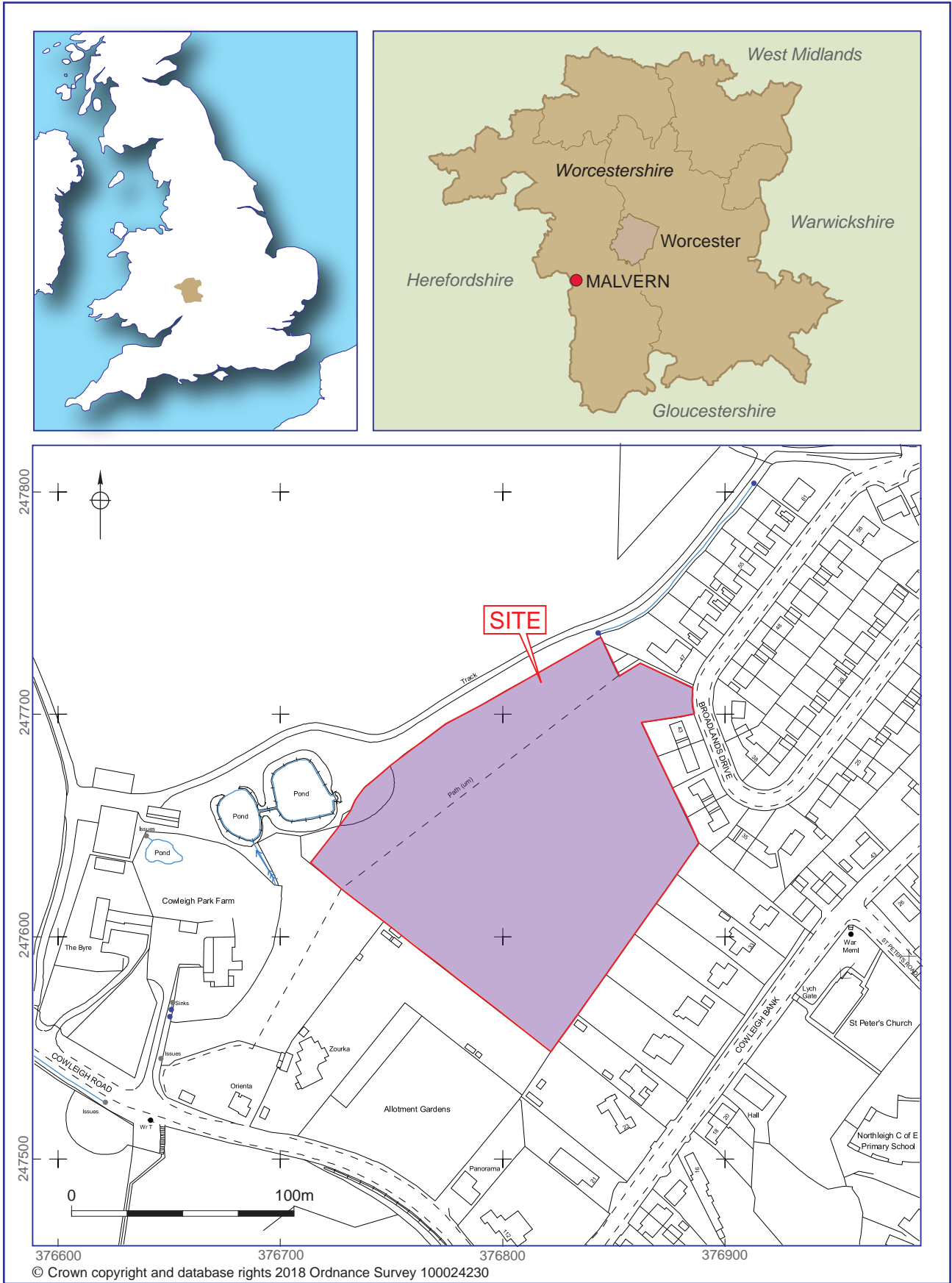
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WA 2018 *Written Scheme of Investigation for an archaeological evaluation at Broadlands Drive, Malvern, Worcestershire*, Worcestershire Archaeology, Worcestershire County Council, unpublished document dated 26 January 2017, **P5259**

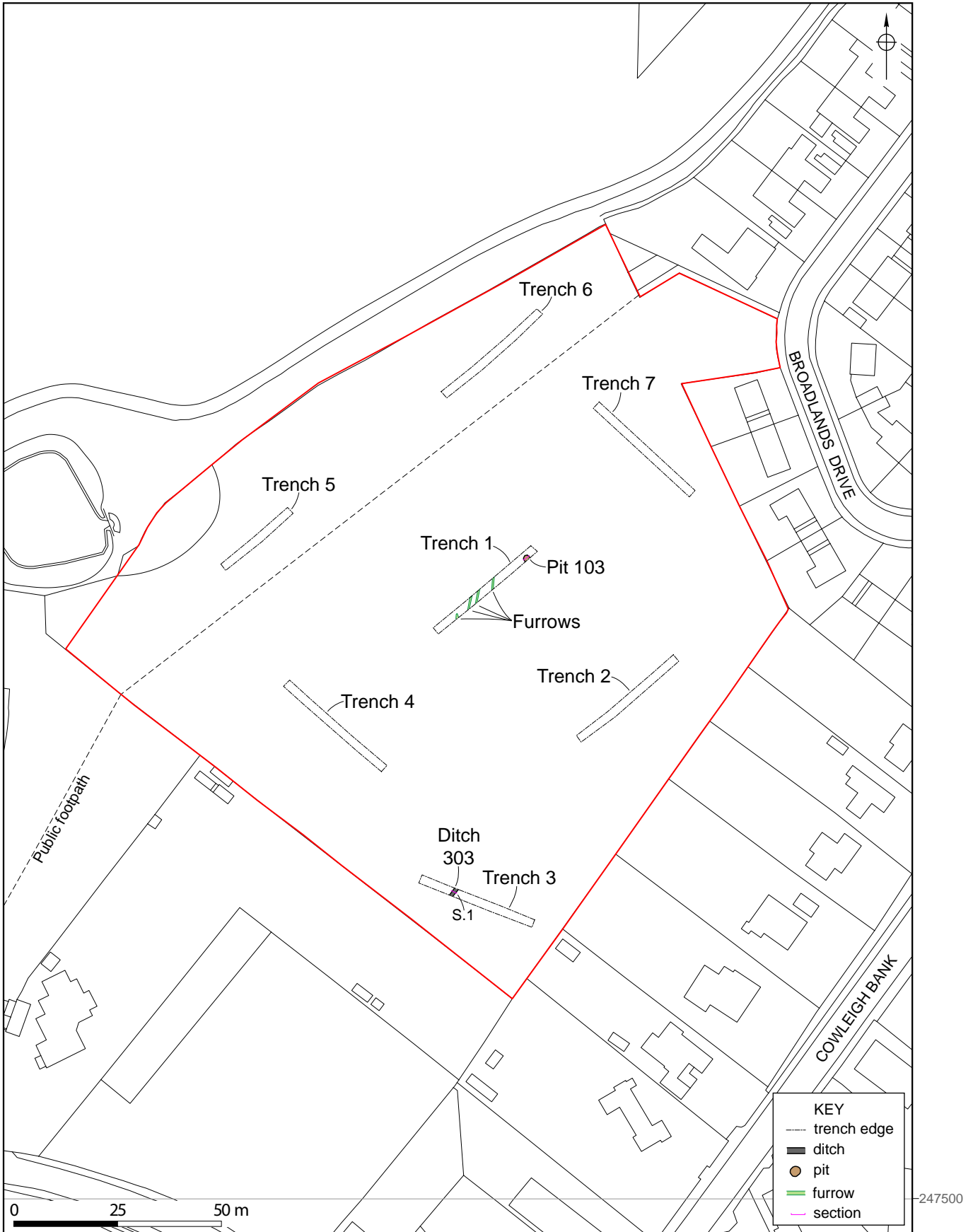
WCC 2010 *Standards and guidelines for archaeological projects in Worcestershire*, Planning Advisory Section, Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service, Worcestershire County Council unpublished report **604**, amended July 2012

Figures



Location of the site

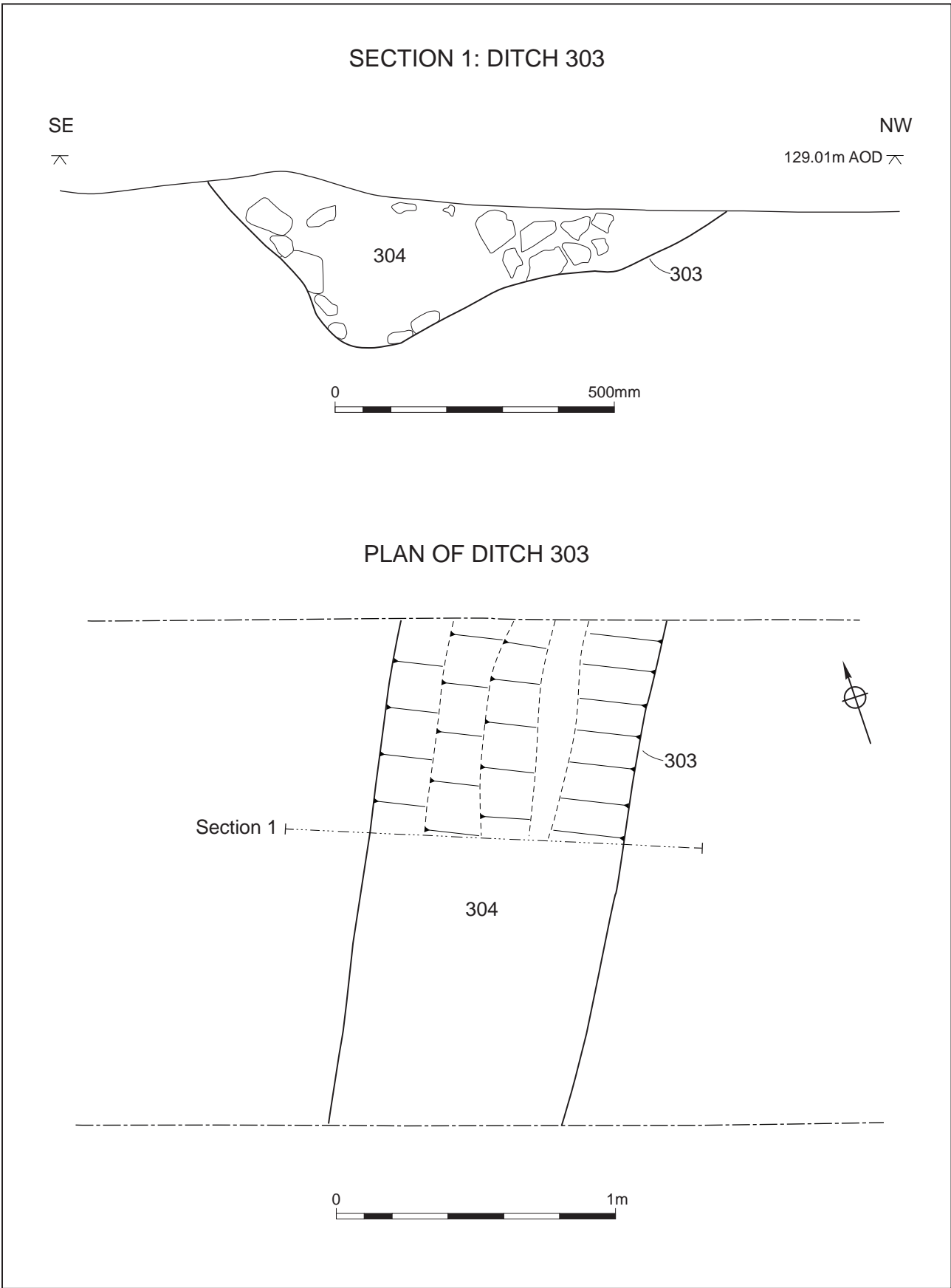
Figure 1



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Trench location and features

Figure 2



Ditch 303: plan and section

Figure 3

Plates



Plate 1: Ditch 303. Photo looking north-east



Plate 2: Feature 103, a possible tree throw. Photo looking south-east

Appendix 1 Trench descriptions

Main deposit descriptions

Trench 1

Maximum dimensions: Length: 31.1m Width: 1.8m Depth: 0.66m

Orientation: North-east to south-west

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
100	Topsoil	Dark brown clayey silt	0.0-0.49m
101	Subsoil	Mid orangey brown silty clay	0.50-0.66m
102	Natural	Mid reddish brown clay mudstone	0.67m+
103	Cut	Irregular feature, probably a tree throw	
104	Fill	Light greyish brown clayey silt. Fill of 103	

Trench 2

Maximum dimensions: Length: 30.5m Width: 1.8m Depth: 0.81m

Orientation: North-east to south-west

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
200	Topsoil	Dark orangey brown clayey silt	0.0-0.54m
201	Subsoil	Light orangey brown silty clay mudstone	0.54-0.81m
202	Natural	Mid reddish brown clay	0.81m+

Trench 3

Maximum dimensions: Length: 29.1m Width: 1.8m Depth: 0.77m

Orientation: North-west to south-east

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
300	Topsoil	Dark brown clayey silt	0.0-0.50m
301	Subsoil	Mid reddish brown silty clay	0.50-0.68m
302	Natural	Dark reddish brown clay mudstone	0.68-77m+
303	Cut	Cut of linear ditch	

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
304	Fill	Mid greyish brown silty clay. Yielded one sherd of Roman or medieval pottery	

Trench 4

Maximum dimensions: Length: 31.2m Width: 1.8m Depth: 0.81m

Orientation: North-west to south-east

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
400	Topsoil	Dark brown clayey silt	0.0-0.66m
401	Subsoil	Light reddish brown silty clay	0.66-0.81m
402	Natural	Dark reddish brown clay mudstone	0.81m+

Trench 5

Maximum dimensions: Length: 21.2m Width: 1.8m Depth: 1.05m

Orientation: North-east to south-west

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
500	Topsoil	Mid grey brown sandy silt	0.0-0.3m
501	Subsoil	Mid yellowish brown sandy clayey silt	0.3-0.60m
502	Natural	Mid reddish brown clay mudstone	0.90m+

Trench 6

Maximum dimensions: Length: 30.6m Width: 1.8m Depth: 0.85m

Orientation: North-east to south-west

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
600	Topsoil	Mid grey brown sandy silt	0.0-0.35m
601	Subsoil	Light yellowish brown clayey sandy silt	0.25-0.75m
602	Natural	Mid grey silty sand	0.75m+

Trench 7

Maximum dimensions: Length: 31.4m Width: 1.8m Depth: 0.80m

Orientation: North-west to south-east

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
700	Topsoil	Mid grey brown sandy silt	0.0-0.49m
701	Subsoil	Light grey brown clayey sandy silt	0.50-0.66m
702	Natural	Mid reddish brown clay mudstone	0.67m+

Appendix 2 Technical information

The archive (site code: WSM70165)

The archive consists of:

- 3 Context records AS1
- 1 Photographic records AS3
- 77 Digital photographs
- 1 Drawing number catalogues AS4
- 1 Scale permatrace drawings AS34
- 7 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:

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