

Archaeological evaluation at The Paddock, Station Road, Bretforton, Worcestershire

Worcestershire Archaeology
for Rooftop Housing Group

November 2018



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THE PADDOCK, STATION ROAD BRETORTON WORCESTERSHIRE

Archaeological evaluation report



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SITE INFORMATION

Site name: The Paddock, Station Road, Bretforton, Worcestershire

Local planning authority: Wychavon District Council

Planning reference: -

Central NGR: SP 09072 44094

Commissioning client: Rooftop Housing Group

Client project reference: -

WA project number: **P5432**

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Archaeological evaluation of The Paddock, Station Road, Bretforton, Worcestershire

Jem Brewer

With contributions by Derek Hurst and Elizabeth Pearson

Illustrations by Laura Templeton

Summary

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at The Paddock, Station Road, Bretforton, Worcestershire (NGR SP 09072 44094). It was commissioned by Rooftop Housing Group, in advance of a proposed residential development. A planning application will be submitted to Wychavon District Council.

The site is in the centre of the village of Bretforton, and consists of a single paddock of grassland. Eight trenches, amounting to 284m² in area, were excavated over the 1.42 ha site, representing a sample of c 2%. The trenches were non-gridded and positioned to interrogate geophysical anomalies thought to represent archaeological features. These included a possible roadway or driveway, and other linear and curvilinear features of probable archaeological origin.

Archaeological remains were identified in all but one of the trenches (Trench 2). Most of the features revealed correlated well with the anomalies detected in the geophysical survey, particularly the larger linear and curvilinear features. In addition further features were identified beyond those identified in the geophysical survey.

The majority of the features were indicative of Roman activity, both agricultural and probable sand and gravel extraction on site, with settlement activity nearby. This can be considered alongside a number of sites in the wider area of the Vale of Evesham that have previously revealed archaeology of a similar character. Environmental sampling has identified the production of cereal crops and suggested that there may be evidence of an early change in the type of cereal being grown.

Accordingly this site appears to offer a good potential to contribute to research priorities for the wider region.

Report

1 Introduction

1.1 Background to the project

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Worcestershire Archaeology (WA) in November 2018 at The Paddock, Station Road, Bretforton, Worcestershire (NGR SP 09072 44094). This comprised eight evaluation trenches. The project was commissioned by Rooftop Housing Group, in advance of a proposed residential development. A planning application will be submitted to Wychavon District Council. The archaeological advisor to the local planning authority considered that the proposed development has the potential to impact upon possible heritage assets.

Previous geophysical survey on the site has identified evidence of a possible Roman rectilinear enclosure with potential internal features, along with an associated track or driveway. Additional linear anomalies could have archaeological origins, though their interpretation as such is less certain. The location of a former pond or farm building has been identified, along with evidence of ploughing and an old field boundary (Sumo 2018).

The project conforms to a brief prepared by Worcestershire Archaeology (WA 2018), to the industry guidelines and standards set out by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists in *Standard and guidance: for archaeological field evaluation* (ClfA 2014a) and the *Standards and guidelines for archaeological projects in Worcestershire* (WCC 2010).

1.2 Site location, topography and geology

The site is located in the centre of the village of Bretforton. The site area of 1.42 ha is bounded to the north-east by Station Road, to the south-west by Main Street (B4035), and to the south-east by Shop Lane. To the north-west, the site is bounded by the housing around Coldicotts Lane and Coldicotts Close.

The site comprises a single field currently set as open grassland. It is undulating, at approximately 41m AOD.

The underlying geology comprises bedrock of Blue Lias Formation and Charmouth Mudstone Formation overlain by superficial deposits of Clay, silt sand and gravel (BGS 2018).

2 Archaeological and historical background

2.1 Introduction

Prior to fieldwork commencing, a search of the Worcestershire HER was completed, covering a search area of 1,000m around the site. A summary of the results of this research (WCC 2018) are presented below.

2.2 Prehistoric

A Historic England funded project to identify the potential for Palaeolithic Archaeology in Worcestershire recorded a number of deposits within the search area with potential for archaeology dating back to 476,050 BC [WSM56936]. The area also included two further potentially prehistoric settlements [WSM32495], and [WSM32496].

2.3 Roman

The HER includes details of a conjectural alignment of a Roman road from Bidford to Bretforton, [WSM31682] together with an inhumation [WSM02721] and two settlement sites [WSM37533] and [WSM40852] from this period.

2.4 Saxon

Bretforton is a nucleated row settlement with Saxon origins, which has undergone some modern expansion.

2.5 Medieval / post medieval

In addition to the 12th century Church of St Leonard's [WSM02849], an area of medieval settlement [WSM29872] and a number of 14th century dwellings and farm buildings, there are farm ponds, fishponds and earthworks of Ridge and Furrow [WSM30488], [WSM02854] which indicate a medieval and post-medieval agricultural landscape.

3 Project aims

The aims and scope of the project are to undertake sufficient fieldwork 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 (where the extent and depth of groundworks is known).

The HER search indicates that significant deposits may be defined as those likely to be of Iron Age and Roman date, although there is also the potential for Saxon, medieval and post-medieval remains to be present.

4 Project methodology

A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was prepared by Worcestershire Archaeology (WA 2018). Fieldwork was undertaken between 29 October and 2 November 2018.

Eight trenches, amounting to 284m² in area, were excavated over the 1.42 ha site, representing a sample of c 2%. The location of the trenches is indicated in Figure 2. The trenches laid out were non-gridded and positioned to interrogate various linear and curvilinear features identified by the geophysical survey (Sumo 2018).

Deposits considered not to be significant were removed under constant 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) and trench and feature locations were surveyed using a differential GPS with an accuracy limit set at 0.04m. On completion of excavation, trenches were reinstated by replacing the excavated material.

All fieldwork records were checked and cross-referenced. Analysis was undertaken through a combination of structural, artefactual and environmental evidence, allied to the information derived from other sources.

The project archive is currently held at the offices of Worcestershire Archaeology. Subject to the agreement of the landowner it is anticipated that it will be deposited at Worcestershire County Museum.

5 Archaeological results

5.1 Introduction

The features recorded in the trenches are shown in Figures 3-4 and Plates 1-11. Figure 5 shows expanded views of Trenches 1 and 8, and 3,4,5,6 and 7 overlaid onto the geophysical survey interpretation. The trench and context inventory is presented in Appendix 1.

5.2 Trench descriptions

5.2.1 Natural deposits across the site

The natural substrate observed on-site comprised a firm orangey-yellow sand, between 0.45m-0.65m below the ground surface. It substrate contained frequent pea grit and gravels, with occasional patches of sandy clay.

No alluvial deposits were observed.

The subsoil comprised moderately compact, orangey brown silty sand with frequent small limestone pebbles and gravels, with moderate rooting. This deposit was observed across all the trenches, measuring between 0.20m-0.30m in depth.

The topsoil overlying the site consisted of soft and friable dark greyish brown sandy silt, containing frequent roots and turf with occasional pebbles. The deposit varied in depth from 0.25m-0.36m.

5.2.2 Trench 1

This trench contained one linear feature [104], and two more diffuse features, [109] and [113]. Feature [104] was a shallow north-west to south-east orientated gully, 0.18m deep and 0.60m wide, with no dated finds. This feature corresponds to a linear anomaly depicted on the geophysical survey.

Feature [109] was a large wide cut of a pit, 0.80m deep and 5.0m wide, with steeply sloping sides and a flat base with some shelving to the north-east (Plate 1). This feature corresponds to one of the anomalies from the geophysical survey. One of the fills (106) included animal bone, teeth and possible pot sherd.

The third feature in this trench [113] was a large wide cut of a pit, 0.80m deep and 4.92m wide, with steeply sloping sides to the north-east and shelving to the south-west. Again this feature corresponds to one of the group of anomalies identified on the geophysical survey. Fills included potsherds, animal bones, and a copper alloy ring.

5.2.3 Trench 2

No archaeological features were observed in this trench.

5.2.4 Trench 3

A ditch was present in Trench 3, 0.40m deep and 0.90m wide, following a north-east to south-west alignment [303] (Plate 2). This feature corresponds with a linear anomaly depicted on the geophysical survey. The fill contained pottery and animal bone.

5.2.5 Trench 4

Trench 4 contained three linear and one sub linear feature. The most northerly feature corresponded to a rectilinear feature on the geophysical survey, and appears to be a continuation of ditch [607]. It was not excavated. To the south lay a steep sided pit or waterhole, [405], which extended to c 1.20m depth (Plate 4). South of [405] lay sub linear feature [404], with shallow concave sides and a concave base, 0.66m wide and 0.50m deep (plate 3). A further linear feature lay to the south. It was not excavated during this stage of the investigations. Both of these latter features roughly corresponded to possible geophysical anomalies.

5.2.1 Trench 5

Trench 5 contained three linear and curvilinear features. The largest of these corresponds to an apparent enclosure ditch, aligned north-east to south-west, on the geophysical survey. It was investigated in Trench 6 to the south, as [606], and noted in Trench 4 to the east. Butting against this ditch was another linear feature, aligned north-west to south-east, which was not shown on the survey. Neither feature was excavated within this trench.

The final linear feature was aligned north-west to south-east [503], was 0.29m deep and 0.64m wide, and corresponds to a curvilinear geophysical anomaly (Plate 5). This feature contained a single sterile fill.

5.2.2 Trench 6

Trench 6 contained four linear features. Of these, the feature furthest to the south-east was not reflected by an anomaly on the geophysical survey. The feature immediately to the north-west corresponds roughly to curvilinear feature noted above. Neither were excavated.

Ditch [606], aligned north-east to south-west, correlates to the apparent enclosure ditch noted in Trench 5, on the geophysical survey (Plate 7). At this point the ditch was 0.76m deep and 1.90m wide. One fill (610) contained animal bone, whilst another (611) included flecks of charcoal. The profile of the ditch suggests that the upper fills were deliberately dumped in this ditch to slight it.

The final feature in this trench was a north-east to south-west aligned ditch [603], 0.54m deep and 0.69m wide (Plate 6). The basal fill of this trench (605) included pottery and animal bone.

5.2.3 Trench 7

Trench 7 was 'L' shaped with one arm running from the north-east to the south-west, which contained three linear features, all aligned north-east to south-west. The arm running from the north-west to south-east contained three further linear features.

The ditch to the furthest south-east [707] was 0.60m deep and 2.0m wide (Plate 9). This appeared to have been recut, [709], and the fill of this recut contained charcoal, animal bone, pot and iron slag. This feature corresponds to the westernmost line of the double ditch anomalies on the geophysics survey, as does ditch [817] to the north.

Ditch [703] lay to the west, parallel with [707/709]. It was unexcavated but was approximately 1m wide and did not relate to any geophysical anomalies.

Ditch [705] was 0.32m deep and 0.87m wide and aligned approximately east to west although may have been curvilinear and corresponded with a geophysical anomaly (Plate 8).

Three intercut or recut linear ditches lay along the full length of the longer north-east to south-west aligned arm of the trench. They did not relate to any geophysical anomalies. None were excavated, and their relationship with ditch [705] to the east was unclear.

5.2.4 Trench 8

Trench 8 contained five linear features and two pits.

To the east ditch [806], 0.56m deep and 2.36m wide, was aligned approximately north-east to south-west (Plate 10). The upper fill of this ditch (803) included animal bone.

To the east ditch [817] was parallel to [806]. Ditch [817] corresponds to the westernmost ditch of the parallel linear anomaly on the geophysical survey, as does [707/709] to the south. The upper fill of this ditch, (816), which was not investigated, is considered to be the same as fill (803).

The fourth linear feature [813], a ditch aligned north-east to south-west, 0.70m deep and 2.14m wide, corresponds to the easternmost ditch of the parallel linear anomaly noted in Trench 7 (Plate 11). Two

fills of this ditch (810) and (811) contained pot. The ditch also contained a recut to the north-western side [808]. This recut contained a fill (807) which included frequent charcoal and bone fragments, together with occasional burnt stone.

At the far north-west of the trench [815] was a modern rubbish pit containing rubble, clinker and metal fragments (not shown on the plan). Possible pit [819] is also conjectured to be of modern origin (not shown on the plan).

The final linear feature in this trench was [821], aligned north-east to south-west. It is considered to be a furrow.

6 Artefactual evidence by Derek Hurst

6.1.1 Artefact methodology

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

6.1.2 Recovery policy

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

6.1.3 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 Microsoft Access database.

Artefacts from environmental samples were examined and included in the assessment where they provided additional information on the range of material present (ie they are not included in the tabulations below).

The pottery and ceramic building material was examined under x20 magnification and referenced as appropriate by fabric type and form according to the fabric reference series maintained by Worcestershire Archaeology (Hurst and Rees 1992 and www.worcestershireceramics.org).

6.1.4 Discard policy

Artefacts from topsoil and subsoil and unstratified contexts will normally be noted but not retained, unless they are of intrinsic interest (e.g. worked flint or flint debitage, featured pottery sherds, and other potential 'registered artefacts'). All artefacts will be collected from stratified excavated contexts, except for large assemblages of post-medieval or modern material, unless there is some special reason to retain such as local production. Such material may be noted and not retained, or, if appropriate, a representative sample may be collected and retained. Discard of finds from post-medieval and earlier deposits will only be instituted with reference to museum collection policy and/or with agreement of the local museum.

6.1.5 Artefactual analysis

The assemblage (Finds Tables 1–3) came from thirteen stratified contexts and could be dated from the Roman period onwards (see Table 1). Using pottery as an index of artefact condition, this was generally good with the majority of sherds, only some displaying high levels of abrasion, and the average sherd size at 7.6g being below average.

Period	Material class	Material subtype	Object specific type	Count	Weight (g)
Roman	ceramic	earthenware	pot	13	102
?Roman	ceramic	earthenware	pot	1	7
?medieval	ceramic	earthenware	pot	1	5
	ceramic	fired clay		1	43
	metal	copper alloy	finger ring	1	1
	metal	iron	?nail	1	1
	slag	fuel ash slag		3	22
	stone			1	60
totals				21	240

Finds Table 1: Quantification of the assemblage

Broad period	Fabric code	Fabric common name	Count	Weight (g)
Roman	12	Severn Valley ware	11	92
Roman	12.3	Reduced organically tempered Severn Valley ware	1	4
Roman	22	Black-burnished ware, type 1 (BB1)	1	6
Roman	98	Miscellaneous Roman wares	1	7
Medieval	99	Miscellaneous medieval wares	1	5
totals			15	114

Finds Table 2: Quantification of the pottery by fabric

6.1.6 Summary artefactual evidence by period

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

Roman

A single sherd from subsoil 401 was of a type that might be later prehistoric, though pottery of this general type can also extend into the Roman period and so, in the absence of other prehistoric indicators, it has also been assigned to the Roman period.

The bulk of the site pottery assemblage was of the Roman period and, though small in assemblage size, there were some signs that it gravitated towards the earlier part of this period wherever a narrower date range could be assigned to it (i.e. c AD 43–200). Severn Valley ware was, as typically for the Roman period in this area, the commonest fabric type.

Though intrinsically undated, a copper alloy finger ring (oval-sectioned and with an internal diameter 21mm) came from the primary fill of pit [113], and, since this feature was associated with Roman pottery, it seems likely that this object is also of that date.

A small amount of tabular limestone was of a thickness that would have functioned well for roof tiling. It occurred in at least one Roman context ((710) in ditch [709]) and so has been generally assumed to be of this date elsewhere on the site (e.g. (407) in pit [405]).

Some Roman remains were clearly truncated as there was abraded Roman pottery in the sub/top soils.

Medieval

A single sherd was potentially of this date ((106) in pit [108]) – 12th–13/14th century cooking pot; though it is not impossible that this could instead be earlier prehistoric – it was too small a rim sherd to be sure, although, whichever period, it belonged to a substantial vessel.

Post-medieval and modern

Finds of post-medieval and modern date were confined to topsoil (e.g. layer (600)).

Context	Material class	Material subtype	Object specific type	Count	Weight (g)	Start date	End date	tpq date
106	ceramic	earthenware	pot	1	5	1100	1400	medieval
110	ceramic	earthenware	pot	5	17	43	400	M1–4c
	stone			1	60			
111	metal	iron	?nail	1	1			undated
112	metal	copper alloy	finger ring	1	1			undated
304	ceramic	earthenware	pot	1	4	43	400	M2–4c
	ceramic	earthenware	pot	1	6	120	400	
401	ceramic	earthenware	pot	1	7	-100	200	?1–2c AD
600	ceramic	fired clay		1	43			undated
605	ceramic	earthenware	pot	1	7	43	400	M1–4c
700	ceramic	earthenware	pot	1	30	43	200	M1–2c
704	ceramic	earthenware	pot	1	15	43	400	M1–4c
710	ceramic	earthenware	pot	1	9	43	400	M1–4c
	slag	fuel ash slag		3	22			
810	ceramic	earthenware	pot	1	10	43	400	M1–4c
811	ceramic	earthenware	pot	1	4	43	400	M1–4c

Finds Table 3: Summary of context dating based on artefacts

6.1.7 Significance

In the case of the main period represented (Roman) the finds assemblage seemed quite typical in composition, in so far as such a small assemblage could be assessed. It was, accordingly, domestic in nature (e.g. jars and bowls).

6.1.8 Discard and retention

It is likely that, in consultation with the local museum, much of this site assemblage might not be retained.

7 Environmental evidence by Elizabeth Pearson

7.1.1 Project parameters

The environmental project conforms to guidance by ClfA (2014a) on archaeological evaluation and guidance by English Heritage (2011) and Association for Environmental Archaeology (1995).

7.1.2 Aims

The aims of the assessment were to determine the state of preservation, type, and quantity of environmental remains recovered, from the samples and information provided. This information will be used to assess the importance of the environmental remains.

7.1.3 Methods

Sampling policy

Samples were taken according to standard Worcestershire Archaeology practice (2012). A total of 4 samples (each of 10 to 20 litres) were taken from the site (Env Table 1).

Context	Sample	Feature type	Fill of	Period	Sample volume (L)	Volume processed (L)	Residue assessed	Flot assessed
304	1	Ditch	303	Roman	10	10	Yes	Yes
407	3	Pit	405	Roman	10	10	Yes	Yes
605	2	Ditch	603	Roman	10	10	Yes	Yes
710	4	Ditch	709	Roman	20	10	Yes	Yes

Env Table 1: List of bulk samples

Processing and analysis

The samples were 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 residues were scanned by eye and the abundance of each category of environmental remains estimated. A magnet was also used to test for the presence of hammerscale. The flots were 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 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).

Charcoal was examined under a low power MEIJI stereo light microscope in order to determine the presence of oak and non-oak charcoal.

7.1.4 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.

7.1.5 Report

Hand-collected animal bone

Results are summarised in Env Table 2.

A total of 1.71 kg (45 fragments) of animal bone, mostly well-preserved, was hand-collected during excavation. Cattle bone was predominant. Butchery, in the form of split limb fragments and occasional knife marks were noted. Although the assemblage was small, the predominance of cattle bone may be an indication of Romanised animal husbandry practices.

context	material class	material subtype	Count	weight(g)	Feature type	Period	Phase	comments
106	bone	animal bone	5	173	Pit	?medieval	0	1 cattle phalange, ? Cattle sacrum, 1 cattle premolar/molar, 1 large mammal size split limb shaft
110	bone	animal bone	2	54	Pit	Roman	0	1 ?cattle rib, 1 ?cattle scapula fragment
111	bone	animal bone	5	33	Pit	undated	0	1 pig ?upper mandible fragment with teeth, indet large mammal fragments
301	bone	animal bone	1	153	Subsoil	undated	0	large cattle upper mandible fragment
304	bone	animal bone	1	9	Ditch	Roman	0	1 sheep/gt pelvis acetabulum
401	bone	animal bone	2	51	Subsoil	LIA/ERB	0	
605	bone	animal bone	5	52	Ditch	Roman	0	Indet limb large mammal fragments; large mammal lower mandible fragment

701	bone	animal bone	11	498	Subsoil	undated	0	Cattle distal humerus, proximal radius, metatarsal and split limb shaft fragments; occ knife cuts
701	bone	animal bone	2	205	Subsoil	undated	0	1 cattle metacarpal, 1 cattle metatarsus
706	bone	animal bone	5	398	Ditch	undated	0	2 cattle lower mandible frags, ? Ulna frags
803	bone	animal bone	1	14	Ditch	undated	0	
807	bone	animal bone	5	73	Ditch	?Roman	0	Incl. 1 cattle size rib, cattle size thoracic vertebra fragment
Totals			45	1713				

Env Table 2: Hand-collected animal bone

Plant macrofossil remains

Results are summarised in Env Tables 3 and 4.

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.

Charred cereal crop remains were abundant in fill (407) of waterhole or pit [405] and fill (710) of ditch [709]. They were also present in lower levels in fills (304 and 605) of ditches [303] and 603]. This material is of particular interest as the cereal grain was dominated grain which appeared to be free-threshing wheat (*Triticum* sp free-threshing), but some of the grains were slightly more speltiform (like *Triticum spelta*) in shape, being broad but having a truncated apex and slightly flatter in profile. Barley (*Hordeum vulgare*) and oat (*Avena* sp) grains were also present. Chaff remains such as glume bases are usually present to some degree on Roman sites where glume wheat grains are found. As no chaff was identified, it is thought that these remains are likely to be those of a free-threshing wheat crop with some speltiform characteristics.

A glume wheat, such as spelt wheat is characteristic for contexts of Roman date, whereas the evidence for free-threshing wheat being the main wheat in cultivation dates from the 7th century AD (McKerracher 2018). The charred cereal grain at Bretforton appears to be intermediate between a glume and a free-threshing wheat.

Charcoal fragments, including non-oak species were abundant in fills (407) and (710) of pit [405] and ditch [709] respectively. Molluscs were abundant, but as they were dominated by a burrowing snail (*Cochlicopa lubrica*), it is not certain whether these are contemporary with the deposits.

Small quantities of large and small mammal bone were also recorded in sample residues, alongside burnt clay, ceramic building material, iron slag, glass and possible building stone.

context	sample	large mammal	small mammal	mollusc	charcoal	charred plant	uncharred plant	artefacts
304	1	occ	occ	occ	occ		mod*	occ cbm, Fe slag.
407	3	occ	occ	occ	mod	occ	occ*	occ burnt clay, building stone.
605	2	occ		occ	abt	occ	abt*	occ fired clay, glass.
710	4	occ	occ	occ	occ	occ		occ cbm, building stone?

Env Table 3: Summary of environmental samples; occ = occasional, mod = moderate, abt = abundant, * = probably modern and intrusive

context	sample	preservation type	species detail	category remains	quantity/diversity	comment
304	1	ch	cf <i>Triticum</i> sp (free-threshing) grain, <i>Hordeum vulgare</i> grain (hulled), cf <i>Avena</i> sp grain	grain	+/low	
304	1			molluscs	+++/low	Cochlicopa
304	1	?wa	unidentified herbaceous root fragments	misc	++/low	Probably modern and intrusive
407	3	ch	<i>Triticum spelta</i> grain, <i>Triticum aestivo-compactum</i> grain, <i>Triticum</i> sp (free-threshing) grain, <i>Hordeum vulgare</i> grain (hulled), <i>Avena</i> sp grain	grain	+++/low	Mostly free-threshing wheat, some barley and oat
407	3			molluscs	+/low	
407	3	ch	unidentified wood fragments, non-oak wood	misc	+++/low	Well preserved, identifiable fragments
407	3	ch	cf <i>Vicia faba</i> , cf <i>Vicia</i> sp	seed	+/low	
605	2	ch	<i>Triticum</i> sp (free-threshing) grain	grain	+/+++/low	
605	2	ch	unidentified wood fragments	misc	+++/low	
605	2			molluscs	+++/low	

605	2	?wa	unidentified herbaceous root fragments	misc	+++/low	Probably modern and intrusive
710	4	ch	non-oak wood	misc	+++/low	Some large fragments, incl a non-oak r/w, solitary pore group
710	4	ch	<i>Triticum</i> sp (free-threshing) grain, <i>Hordeum vulgare</i> grain (hulled), cf <i>Avena</i> sp grain	grain	++/low	Mostly free-threshing wheat, but some slightly speltiform
710	4			molluscs	+/low	

Env Table4: Plant remains from bulk samples

Key:

preservation	quantity
ch = charred	+ = 1 - 10
min = mineralised	++ = 11- 50
wa = waterlogged	+++ = 51 - 100
?wa = waterlogged or uncharred	++++ = 101+
	* = probably modern and intrusive ** = oyster shell/fragments

Key:

habitat	quantity
A= cultivated ground	+ = 1 - 10
B= disturbed ground	++ = 11- 50
C= woodlands, hedgerows, scrub etc	+++ = 51 - 100
D = grasslands, meadows and heathland	++++ = 101+
E = aquatic/wet habitats	* = fragments
F = cultivar	

7.1.6 Synthesis

The presence of abundant charred cereal crop remains is not unexpected considering that the site is located on freely draining lime-rich soils, and is today mainly arable with grassland. It is well-suited to cereals and other crops, including grass (Cranfield Soil and AgriFood Institute 2018).

The wheat remains, which are transitional in form between a glume wheat and a free-threshing wheat, are of interest. It may imply that changes in the genetic make-up of wheat crops were already underway by the late Roman period in some areas of the country. The quantities found suggest that this material is unlikely to be intrusive. However, it is recommended that should further fieldwork take place, any similar remains recovered should be radiocarbon dated. This may help to determine whether the features excavated are post-Roman with some continuation of Roman pottery use.

7.1.7 Significance

Assessment has demonstrated the presence of charred cereal crop remains of high significance as they appear to be transitional between a glume wheat and a free-threshing wheat. They may, therefore, relate to a significant change in arable agriculture. Charcoal remains are also relatively abundant and show the potential to provide information on local wood fuel use.

A small assemblage of large domestic animal and some small mammal bone was hand-collected during excavation and recovered from sample residues. Further excavation of the site has the potential to produce an assemblage of suitable size for analysis.

8 Discussion

This evaluation has established that the site contains archaeological features which are predominantly characteristic of Roman settlement activity. The absence of material earlier than mid-1st-2nd century, or later than 4th century, suggests that this site was not a focus for prehistoric activity, although prehistoric settlements are recorded in the vicinity. Likewise, given the absence of later materials from the site, and the presence of later buildings and features in the village, it would appear that late Roman and post-Roman activities were also focussed elsewhere.

The landscape, including possible prior field boundaries identified by geophysical survey and extant ridge and furrow, demonstrates that this field has remained part of the wider agricultural landscape prior to its most recent use as pasture. This is coherent with the character of the village, the surrounding area and its historic environment. Although the trenches excavated represent only a sample of this site, it is considered that the results enable a general characterisation of the level and nature of the archaeology present.

The evaluation has also established that most of the features had a good correlation with the anomalies detected in the geophysical survey, particularly the larger linear and curvilinear features. In addition, there were a further range of features, both pits and more diffuse gullies and ditches, which indicate that there were additional archaeological features beyond those identified in the geophysical survey.

The archaeology sits at a depth of 0.45m at the northern end of the site, increasing to 0.65m to the southern end, although within each trench this will be subject to the position of the extant ridge and furrow.

Prehistoric activity

There are no features or finds clearly dating to the prehistoric period, suggesting that there was no activity of this period on site.

Roman

Roman features were present in Trenches 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 and 8, and it is probable that other features and deposits observed in the trenches, but which were not excavated or did not contain artefacts, are of similar origin.

Major features identified include parallel ditches to the north-west side of the site, seen in Trenches 7 and 8, which are considered to delineate a probable driveway, a possible waterhole within Trench 4, and probable quarry pits within Trench 1. Although the pottery found from a lower fill (106) within the most northerly of these pits [109] has been dated as medieval, there is a degree of uncertainty around this identification, and the archaeology suggests that this feature is also of a Roman date. This pit [109] is very similar in size and form to the second pit excavated in Trench 1, [113], which contains mid 1st-4th century pottery, and a copper alloy finger ring which is probably of Roman date.

The presence of a number of ditches and gullies on various alignments in the south-east part of the site suggests that there have been a number of phases of activity within the Roman period. No obvious structural remains were observed, but the combination of the results of geophysical survey and the observed and excavated features within the trenches suggest an area of broadly agricultural activity.

9 Significance

The artefactual evidence points to this site being an area of Roman activity, potentially with multiple phases of activity within this period. The environmental evidence suggests that activity on this site and its vicinity included both cattle and cereal production, and that the grain being grown is somewhat atypical for this period.

The *Rural Settlement of Roman Britain* online resource identifies a number of smaller farms and field systems in the area to the north, east and south of Evesham. The closest of these is just over 2km to the east, near Honeybourne (RSRB, 2018). Here, excavation identified groups of pits and ditches suggesting backyard plots of a farmstead with occupation focussed on the 2nd century (Hart & McSloy, 2011). The activity identified on this site therefore forms part of a pattern of agricultural activity within the Vale of Evesham in the Roman period.

Accordingly, the site has the potential to contribute to the regional research priorities for the Roman period as identified by White and Hodder in their Table 1.1 (2018, 4-5). In particular, these could include the following specific research priorities for Worcestershire:

- Explore the nature of rural settlements in relation to questions of Roman or native forms of settlement and the relationship between them
- Through enhanced scientific analysis and programmes of environmental sampling, continue to explore the nature and character of agricultural production and consumption throughout the county.

10 Conclusions

This evaluation of the site has confirmed the results of the geophysical survey and identified further archaeological features which were not picked up by the survey. The archaeological features investigated appear to be of Roman date from 1st-4th century AD, and appear to be related to agricultural and small scale mineral extraction activities.

Environmental and animal bone analysis has suggested cattle husbandry and cereal production activities, with the possibility of evidence of an early change in the type of grain grown. The site has the potential to contribute to regional research priorities identified for the Roman period.

The methods adopted allow a high degree of confidence that the aims of the project have been achieved. Conditions were suitable in all of the trenches to identify the presence or absence of

archaeological features. It is considered that the nature, density and distribution of archaeological features provides an accurate characterisation of the development site as a whole.

11 Project personnel

The fieldwork was led by Andy Mann, assisted by Graham Arnold, Pete Lovett, Jem Brewer and Jamie Wilkins.

The project was managed by Tom Vaughan. The report was produced and collated by Jem Brewer. Specialist contributions and individual sections of the report are attributed to the relevant authors throughout the text.

12 Acknowledgements

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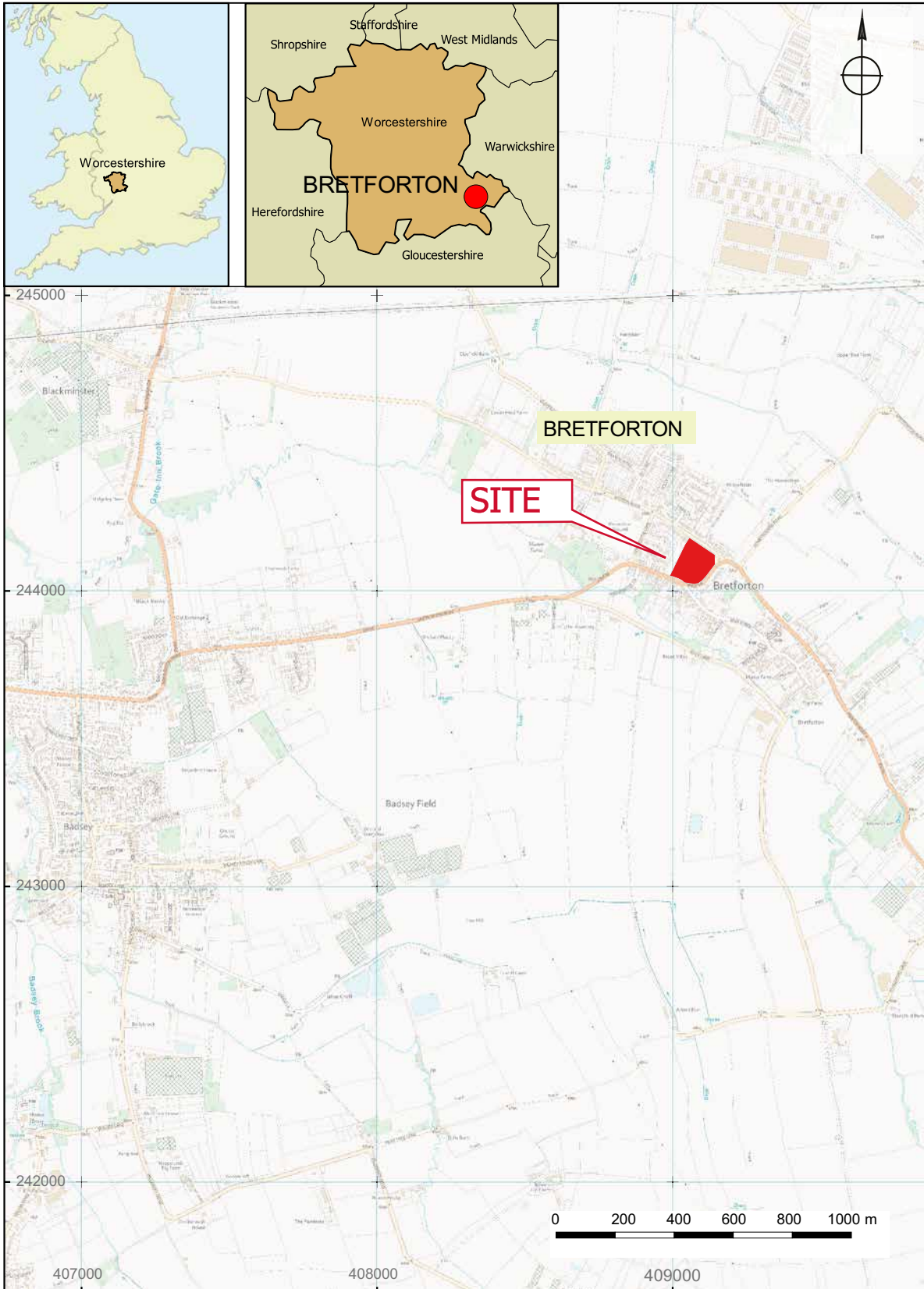
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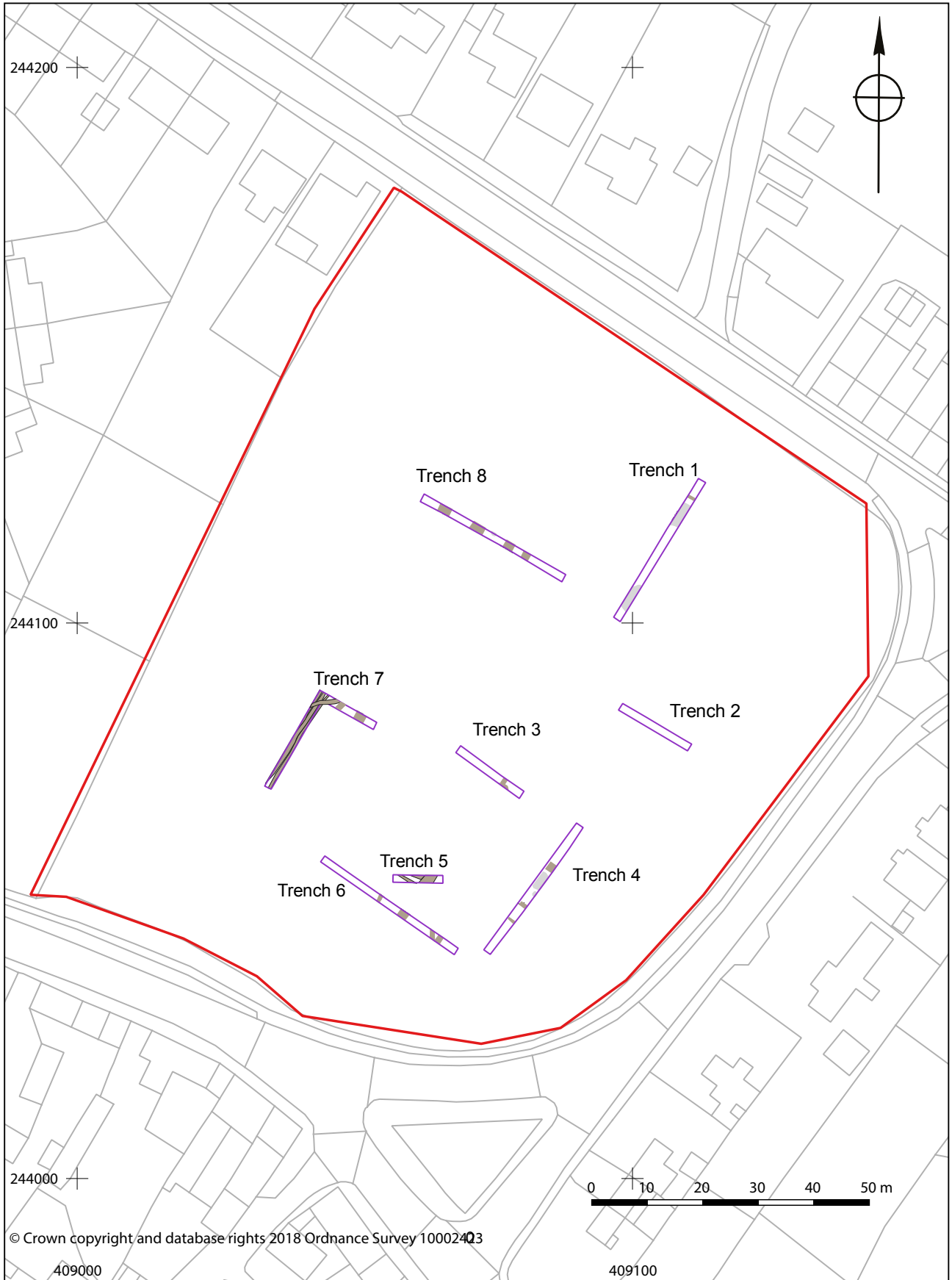
Figures



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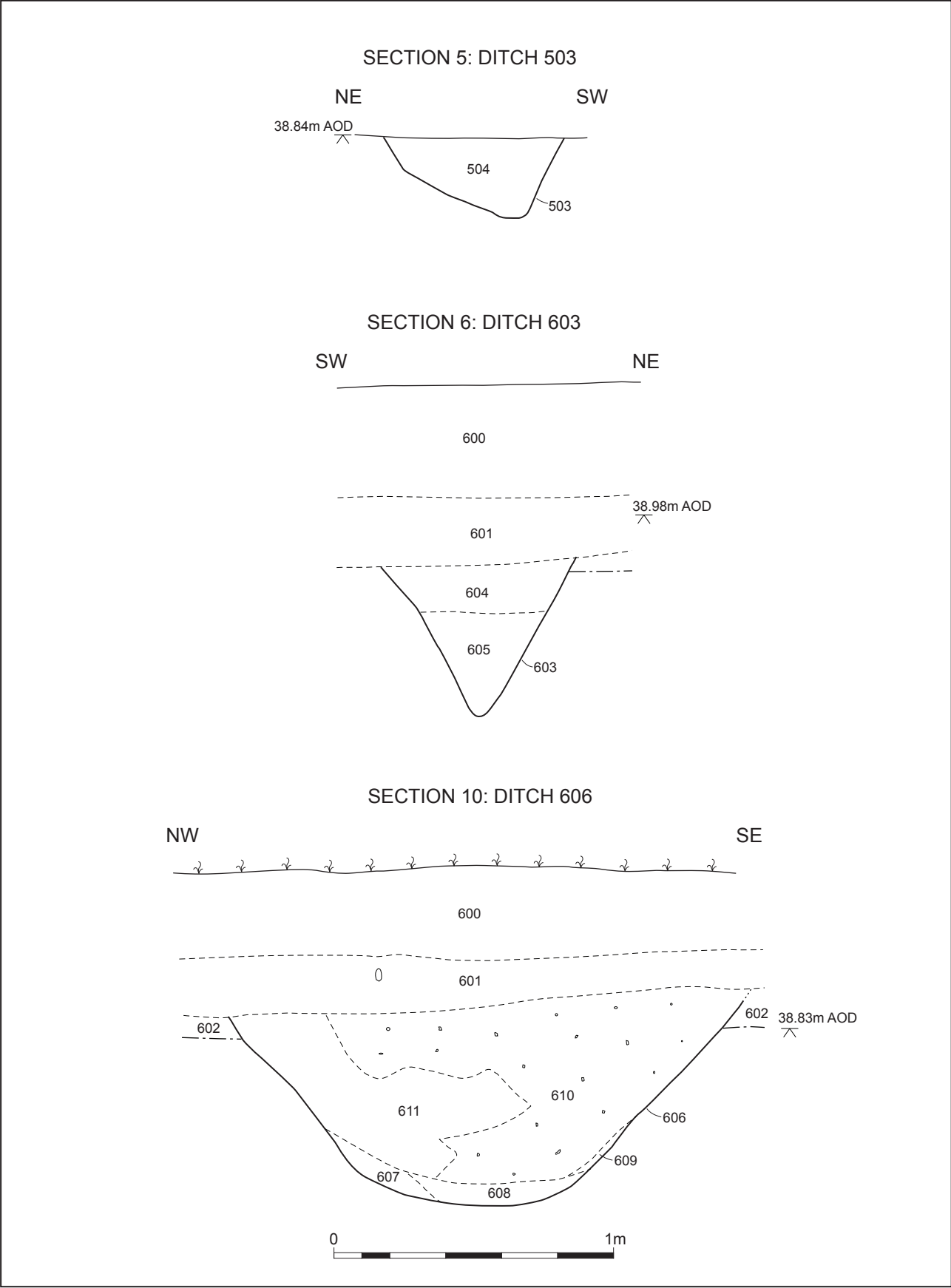
Location of the site

Figure 1



Trench Plan

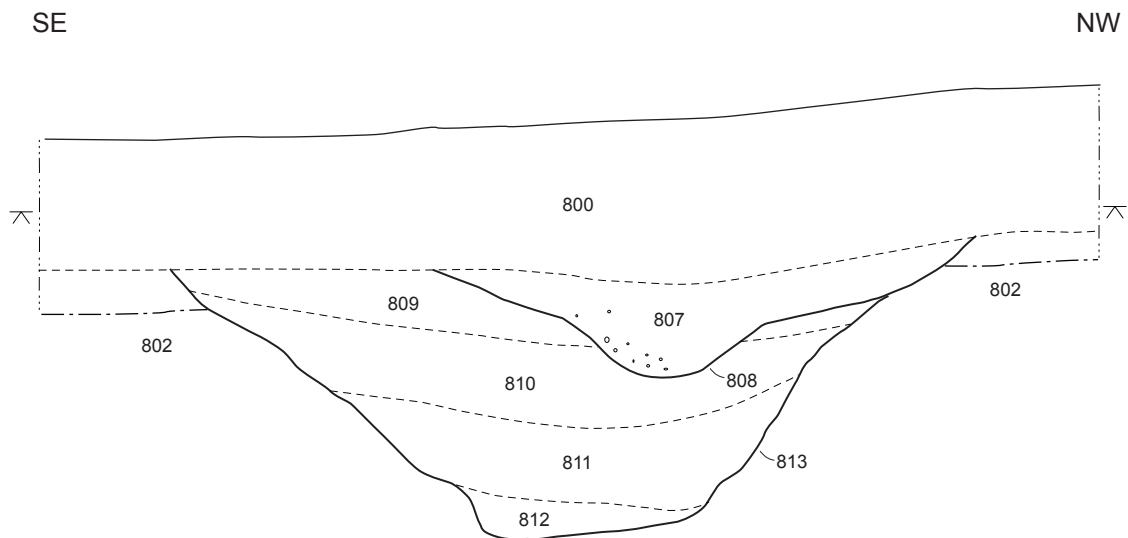
Figure 2



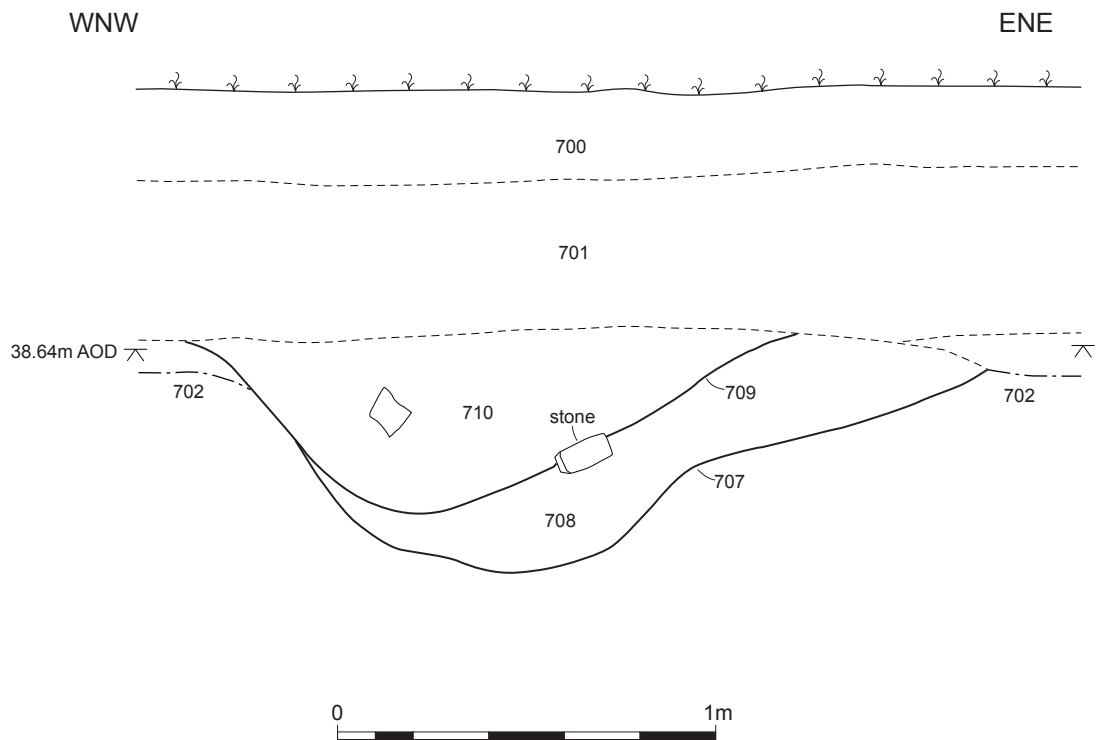
Sections 5, 6 and 10

Figure 3

SECTION 9: DITCHES 808 AND 813

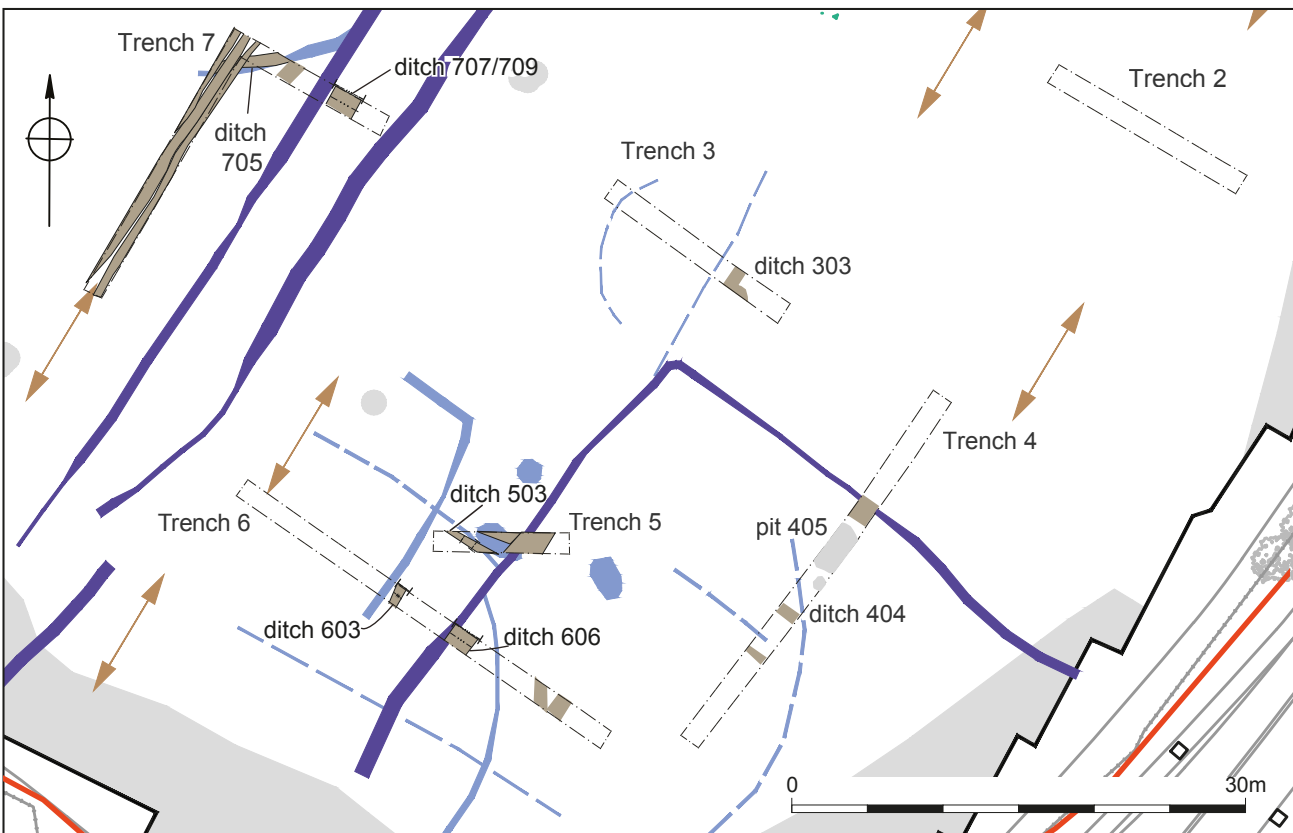
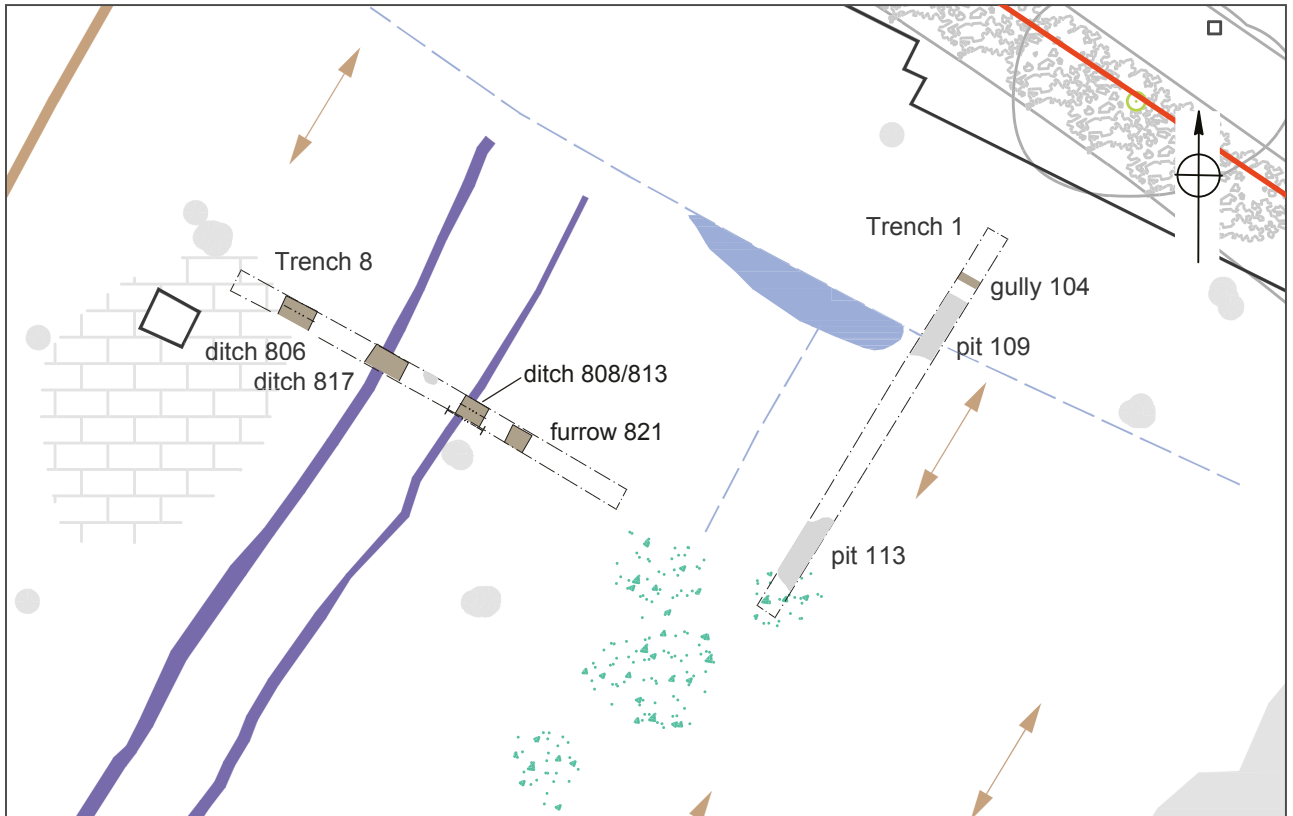


SECTION 12: DITCHES 707 AND 709



Sections 9 and 12

Figure 4



Trench plans with geophysical results

Figure 5

Plates



Plate 1: Tr 1, pit [109], view north, 2x 1m scales



Plate 2: Tr 3, ditch [303], view south-west, 0.5m scale



Plate 3: Tr 4, ditch [404], view W, 0.5m scale



Plate 4: Tr 4, waterhole [405], view SW, 2 x 1m scales



Plate 5: Tr 5, ditch [503], view south-east, 0.5m scale



Plate 6: Tr 6, ditch [603], view north-east, 0.5m scale



Plate 7: Tr 6, ditch [606], view north-east, 2x 1m scales



Plate 8: Tr 7, ditch [705], view west, 0.5m scale



Plate 9: Tr 7, ditch [707], view north-east, 2x 1m scales



Plate 10: Tr 8, ditch [806], view south-west, 2x 1m scales



Plate 11: Tr 8, ditch [808] and recut [813], view south-west, 1m scale

Appendix 1: Trench descriptions

Main deposit descriptions

Trench 1

Maximum dimensions: Length: 30m Width: 1.6m Depth: 0.70m

Orientation: NE-SW

Context	Context Type	Feature Type	Description	Interpretation	Depth
100	Layer	Topsoil	Soft and friable, dark greyish brown, sandy silt.	Topsoil	0.25m
101	Layer	Subsoil	Moderately compact, orangey brown silty sand.	Subsoil	0.25m
102	Layer	Natural	Firm, orangey yellow and white sand with frequent pea grit and gravels, and occasional patches of sandy clay.	Natural	0.50m+
103	Fill	Gully	Moderately compact, dark greyish brown, sandy silt.	Fill of gully [104]. Sterile fill.	0.18m
104	Cut	Gully		Cut of symmetrical shallow gully aligned NW-SE.	0.18m
105	Fill	Pit	Compact, mid greyish brown, sandy silt.	Upper fill of pit[109]	0.36m
106	Fill	Pit	Moderately compact, dark brownish grey, sandy silt.	Fill of pit [109].	0.30m
107	Fill	Pit	Loose, brownish orange, sand.	Fill of pit [109]. Likely natural slumping on SW side of the ditch , with more sand than (108) on NE side.	0.20m
108	Fill	Pit	Compact, brownish orange yellow sand	Fill of pit [109]. Natural slumping or backfilling of very gravelly material on NE side of the ditch.	0.45m
109	Cut	Pit	Cut of large wide pit, with steeply sloping sides and a flat base. Some shelving on the NE side	Probably gravel quarry pit.	0.80m
110	Fill	Pit	Moderately compact, mid yellowish brown, sandy silt.	Upper fill of pit [113]. Contained pot. Appears to be a mix of redeposited natural and consumption waste. Possible deliberate slighting of the feature to close it.	0.34m
111	Fill	Pit	Moderately compact, mid greyish brown, sandy silt.	Middle fill of pit [113]. Contains animal bone and nail? Partially made up of deposited waste.	0.36m
112	Fill	Pit	Soft, mid orange brown, silty sand.	Basal fill of pit [113]. Contained one small Fe / Cu object {Small finds 1}, otherwise sterile. Arisen from natural silting.	0.22m
113	Cut	Pit	Irregular shaped cut of pit, with shelving to the south eastern side	Quarry pit?	0.80m

Trench 2

Maximum dimensions: Length: 15m Width: 1.6m Depth: 0.66m

Orientation: NW-SE

Context	Context Type	Feature Type	Description	Interpretation	Depth
200	Layer	Topsoil	Soft dark brown sandy silt	Topsoil	0.30m
201	Layer	Subsoil	Soft and friable mid yellowish brown sandy silt	Subsoil	0.28m
202	Layer	Natural	Soft, mix of light yellowish brown sand & brashy limestone gravels.	Natural	0.58m+

Trench 3

Maximum dimensions: Length: 10m Width: 1.6m Depth: 0.51m

Orientation: ENE-WSW

Context	Context Type	Feature Type	Description	Interpretation	Depth
300	Layer	Topsoil	Soft and friable, dark greyish brown, sandy silt.	Topsoil	0.25m
301	Layer	Subsoil	Moderately compact, orangey brown silty sand.	Subsoil	0.20m
302	Layer	Natural	Firm, orangey yellow and white sand with frequent pea grit and gravels, and occasional patches of sandy clay.	Natural	0.45m+
303	Cut	Ditch	Linear cut of ditch, aligned NE-SW with steeply sloping sides and a flat base.	ditch	0.40m
304	Fill	Ditch	Firm and friable, mid orangey brown, silty sand.	Fill of ditch [303]	0.40m

Trench 4

Maximum dimensions: Length: 30m Width: 1.6m Depth: 0.50m

Orientation: NNE-SSW

Context	Context Type	Feature Type	Description	Interpretation	Depth
400	Layer	Topsoil	Soft and friable, dark greyish brown, sandy silt.	Topsoil	0.30m
401	Layer	Subsoil	Moderately compact, orangey brown silty sand.	Subsoil	0.20m
402	Layer	Natural	Firm, orangey yellow and white sand with frequent pea grit and gravels, and occasional patches of sandy clay.	Natural	0.50m+
403	Fill	Ditch	Moderately compact mid orange brown silty sand.	Fill of gully [404]	0.26m
404	Cut	Ditch	Shallow linear gully, steeper to NE, aligned NW-SE.	Probable drainage gully	0.26m
405	Cut	Pit	Vertical sided, circular cut	possible waterhole	1.2m
406	Fill	Pit	Soft & friable, mid olive brown, sandy loam.	Upper fill of pit [405]	0.70m
407	Fill	Pit	Soft & friable, dark blueish grey, sandy clay.	Lower fill of pit [405] Contained a number of large sub angular stone blocks to north eastern side of slot	0.50m

Trench 5

Maximum dimensions: Length: 50m Width: 1.8m Depth: 0.68m

Orientation: E-W

Context	Context Type	Feature Type	Description	Interpretation	Depth
500	Layer	Topsoil	Soft and friable mid reddish brown clay silt	Topsoil	0.22m
501	Layer	Subsoil	Moderately compact mid reddish brown silty clay	Subsoil	0.34m
502	Layer	Natural	Moderately compact dark reddish brown silty clay	Natural	0.58m+
503	Cut	Gully	Linear aligned NW/SE; sharp break to steep slope on SW; concave on NE to slightly concave base; 0.29m deep and 0.64m wide	Gully / ditch	0.29m
504	Fill	Gully	Moderately compact mid orangey-brown silty sand; moderate pea gravel; frequent roots	Fill of [603]	0.29m

Trench 6

Maximum dimensions: Length: 50m Width: 1.8m Depth: 0.59m

Orientation: N-S

Context	Context Type	Feature Type	Description	Interpretation	Depth
600	Layer	Topsoil	Soft and friable mid reddish brown clay silt	Topsoil	0.31m
601	Layer	Subsoil	Moderately compact mid reddish brown silty clay	Subsoil	0.24m
602	Layer	Natural	Moderately compact dark reddish brown silty clay	Natural	0.61m+
603	Cut	Gully/ditch	Cut of steep sided ditch with sharp pointed base; aligned NE/SW; 0.54m deep and 0.69m wide	ditch	0.54m
604	Fill	Gully/ditch	Moderately compact mid greyish-brown silty clay, frequent gravel and angular stones	Secondary fill of [603]	0.19m
605	Fill	Gully / ditch	Moderately compact mid brown silty sand; very occasional stone and gravel	Primary fill of [603]	0.38m
606	Cut	Ditch	Linear aligned SW/NE; sharp break to steep sides, curving to concave base; 1.90m wide and 0.76m deep	Ditch	0.76m
607	Fill	Ditch	Soft mid brownish orange silty sand; occasional limestone frags	Primary fill of [606]	0.09m
608	Fill	Ditch	Soft mid orange brown silty sand; occasional gravels	Secondary fill of [606]	0.08m
609	Fill	Ditch	Moderately compact mid greyish brown sandy silt; occasional limestone frags; thin lens on one side of ditch, overlying (608)0.03m	Secondary fill of [606]	0.03m
610	Fill	Ditch	Moderately compact mid brown sandy silt; abundant limestone frags and flecks; animal bone	Tertiary fill of [606]; deliberately backfilled?	0.65m
611	Fill	Ditch	Moderately compact mid	Tertiary fill of [606];	0.42m

			orange brown sandy silt; rare limestone frags and charcoal flecks	deliberately backfilled?	
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Trench 7

Maximum dimensions: Length: 50m Width: 1.8m Depth: 0.52m

Orientation: E-W

Context	Context Type	Feature Type	Description	Interpretation	Depth
700	Layer	Topsoil	Soft and friable mid reddish brown clay silt	Topsoil	0.22m
701	Layer	Subsoil	Moderately compact mid reddish brown silty clay	Subsoil	0.21m
702	Layer	Natural	Moderately compact dark reddish brown silty clay	Natural	0.65m+
703	Cut	Ditch	Cut of N-S aligned ditch / gully, with a flat base, and steep sides.	Unexcavated	0.20m
704	Fill	Ditch	Moderately compact light greyish-brown clay silt, occasional very small charcoal flecks, rare small rounded stones.	Fill of ditch [703]; unexcavated	0.20m
705	Cut	Ditch	E/W aligned ditch / gully, Steep north side; concave south side; base slopes from north to south; 0.87m wide and	Linear ditch; relationship with ditches to west unclear	0.32m
706	Fill	Ditch	Dark greyish brown silty sand; frequent limestone flakes and flecks; occasional charcoal flakes, abundant gravels and animal bone	Fill of (705)	0.32m
707	Cut	Ditch	Linear, aligned NE-SW, sharp break of slope and steep to W; gradual to E; concave base; 0.60m deep and 2m wide	Droeway ditch? Associated with (817) to north	0.60m
708	Fill	Ditch	Soft brownish yellow silty sand and gravel; increasing gravel to base	Fill of (707)	0.30m
709	Cut	Ditch	0.50m deep and 1.50m wide	Recut of (707)	0.50m
710	Fill	Ditch	Moderately compact dark greyish brown clayey silt; frequent large charcoal flecks; occasional animal bone, rare pot sherds and iron slag	Fill of recut (709)	0.50m

Trench 8

Maximum dimensions: Length: 50m Width: 1.8m Depth: 0.56m

Orientation: N-S

Context	Context Type	Feature Type	Description	Interpretation	Depth
800	Layer	Topsoil	Soft and friable mid reddish brown clay silt	Topsoil	0.19m
801	Layer	Subsoil	Moderately compact mid reddish brown silty clay	Subsoil	0.28m
802	Layer	Natural	Moderately compact dark reddish brown silty clay	Natural	0.45m+
803	Fill	Ditch	Moderately compact mid orangey brown silty sand	Upper fill of ditch [806]	0.18m
804	Fill	Ditch	Soft dark orangey brown clay silt	Fill of ditch [806]	0.28m
805	Fill	Ditch	Soft dark orangey brown clay silt	Initial weathering of the ditch edges	0.10m
806	Cut	Ditch	Cut of ditch aligned NE-SW, with concave base and generally concave sides.	Possibly one of multiple driveway ditches	0.56m
807	Fill	Ditch	Soft dark blackish brown silty sand	Fill of ditch recut [808]	0.25m
808	Cut	Ditch	Concave base and sides; ditch aligned NE-SW.	Recut of probable driveway	0.25m
809	Fill	Ditch	Soft light brownish orange clay silt	Upper fill of probable driveway ditch [813]	0.15m
810	Fill	Ditch	Moderately compact mid orangey brown silty sand	Fill of probable driveway ditch [813]	0.22m
811	Fill	Ditch	Dark orange brown clay silt	Fill of probable driveway ditch [813]	0.20m
812	Fill	Ditch	Mid orange brown silty sand	Primary fill of probable driveway ditch [813]	0.10m
813	Cut	Ditch	Flat base, and steep sides.	Probable driveway ditch	0.70m
814	Fill	Pit	Dark brownish black silty sand	Modern rubbish pit containing frequent rubble, clinker and metals	
815	Cut	Pit		Cut of modern rubbish pit	
816	Fill	Ditch	Moderately compact mid orangey brown silty sand	upper fill of ditch 817	
817	Cut	Ditch	aligned NE-SW	Cut of linear ditch	
818	Fill	Pit	Soft mid brownish orange clay silt	Possible pit – unexcavated	
819	Cut	Pit		Possible pit - unexcavated	
820	Fill	Furrow	Dark greyish brown silty sand	Fill of probable furrow	
821	Fill	Furrow	Same as subsoil?	Probable furrow	

Appendix 2: Summary of project archive (WSM 70573)

TYPE	DETAILS*
Artefacts and Environmental	Animal bones, Ceramics, Environmental,
Paper	Context sheet, Diary (Field progress form), Drawing, , Photograph, Report, Section, Survey
Digital	Database, GIS, Geophysics, Images raster/digital photography , Spreadsheets, Survey, Text

*OASIS terminology

Appendix 3: Summary of data for HER

WSM 70573 (event HER number)

P5432

Artefacts

Period (note 1)	material class	material subtype	object specific type	start date	end date	count	weight(g)	specialist report? (note 2)	key assemblage? (note 3)
	ceramic	fired clay				1	43	Y	Y
	metal	iron	?nail			1	1	Y	Y
	slag	fuel ash slag				3	22	Y	Y
	stone					1	60	Y	Y
?Roman	ceramic	earthenware	pot	-100	200	1	7	Y	Y
Roman	ceramic	earthenware	pot	43	400	13	102	Y	Y
?Roman	metal	copper alloy	finger ring			1	1	N	N
?medieval	ceramic	earthenware	pot	1100	1400	1	5	Y	Y

Notes

- 1) In some cases the date will be "Undated". In most cases, especially if there is not a specialist report, the information entered in the Date field will be a general period such as Neolithic, Roman, medieval etc (see below for a list of periods used in the Worcestershire HER). Very broad date ranges such as late Medieval to Post-medieval are acceptable for artefacts which can be hard to date for example roof tiles. If you have more specific dates, such as 13th to 14th century, please use these instead. Specific date ranges which cross general period boundaries can also be used, for example 15th to 17th century.

period	from	to
Palaeolithic	500000 BC	10001 BC
Mesolithic	10000 BC	4001 BC
Neolithic	4000 BC	2351 BC
Bronze Age	2350 BC	801 BC
Iron Age	800 BC	42 AD
Roman	43	409
Post-Roman	410	1065
Medieval	1066	1539
Post-medieval	1540	1900
Modern	1901	2050

period specific	from	to
Lower Palaeolithic	500000 BC	150001
Middle Palaeolithic	150000	40001
Upper Palaeolithic	40000	10001
Early Mesolithic	10000	7001
Late Mesolithic	7000	4001
Early Neolithic	4000	3501
Middle Neolithic	3500	2701
Late Neolithic	2700	2351
Early Bronze Age	2350	1601
Middle Bronze Age	1600	1001
Late Bronze Age	1000	801
Early Iron Age	800	401
Middle Iron Age	400	101
Late Iron Age	100 BC	42 AD
Roman 1st century AD	43	100
2nd century	101	200
3rd century	201	300
4th century	301	400
Roman 5th century	401	410
Post roman	411	849
Pre conquest	850	1065
Late 11th century	1066	1100
12th century	1101	1200
13th century	1201	1300
14th century	1301	1400
15th century	1401	1500
16th century	1501	1600
17th century	1601	1700
18th century	1701	1800
19th century	1801	1900
20th century	1901	2000
21st century	2001	

2. Not all evaluations of small excavation assemblages have specialist reports on all classes of objects. An identification (e.g. clay pipe) and a quantification is not a specialist report. A short discussion or a more detailed record identifying types and dates is a specialist report. This field is

designed to point researchers to reports where they will find out more than merely the presence or absence of material of a particular type and date.

3. This field should be used with care. It is designed to point researchers to reports where they will be able to locate the most important assemblages for any given material for any given date.

Environmental

Methods of retrieval	Yes/No
Hand retrieval	Yes
Bulk sample	Yes
Spot sample	
Auger	
Monolith	
Observed	

Type	Preservation	Date (note 1)	Specialist report? Y/N (note 2)	Key assemblage? Y/N (note 3)
Bone – small mammal	Not decayed	Roman	No	No
Bone – large mammal	Not decayed	Roman	Yes	No
Plant remains – macrofossils	Charred	Roman	Yes	Yes
Plant remains – wood	Charred	Roman	Yes	No
Shell – mollusc	Not decayed	?Roman	No	No
Teeth – reptile				