ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION, AT SANDS ROAD, INKBERROW, WORCESTERSHIRE

Matthew Simmonds

With a contribution by Dennis Williams

Illustrations by Carolyn Hunt

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Historic Environment and Archaeology Service,
Worcestershire County Council,
Woodbury,
University of Worcester,
Henwick Grove,
Worcester WR2 6AJ

Project 3213
Report 1649
WSM 39897

Contents

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Part 1 Project summary

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at Sands Road, Inkberrow, Worcestershire (National Grid reference SP01465808). It was undertaken for Neil Guy of FCS Consulting on behalf of Inkberrow Football Club, who intend to construct three football pitches with associated levelling, drainage, ground preparation and seeding for which a planning application has been submitted. The project aimed to determine if any significant archaeological site was present and if so to indicate what its location, date and nature were.

Ten trenches, six of which were 50m in length and four of which were 25m in length were excavated across the western area of the site from which material is to be excavated to level the site.

Topsoil overlay subsoil, except in trench 6, 7, and the west end of trench 10, which in turn overlay a natural that varied from Mercian mudstone, pinkish brown silty clay, mid grey sandy clay to blue clay. One large pit of unknown date and function was recorded at the south western corner of the site and ridge and furrow was recorded in the central part of the site. No other archaeological features were recorded and it is considered that the area holds little potential for the preservation of archaeology.

Part 2 Detailed report

1. Background

1.1 Reasons for the project

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at Sands Road (NGR SP01465808), Inkberrow, Worcestershire (Fig 1), on behalf of Inkberrow Football Club who intend to construct three football pitches with associated levelling, drainage, ground preparation and seeding. A planning application was submitted to Worcestershire County Council (reference W/07/1156), who considered that a site of archaeological interest may be affected (reference WSM 00885). Levelling of the site will entail excavating material from the higher western side of the site which will be deposited to the east.

The brief originally specified a strip, map, and sample exercise, however, following consultation with Neil Guy and Mike Glyde the recommendation was amended to an evaluation to investigate 4% of the western area of the development from which material will be excavated. The amended methodology agreed upon was six 50 m long trenches and four 25m long trenches be excavated to natural or to a level where archaeological features were present.

1.2 Project parameters

The project conforms to the *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (IFA 2001)

The project also conforms to a brief prepared by Mike Glyde, Historic Environment Planning Advisor (HEAS 2008 a) with the amendments described above, for which a project proposal (including detailed specification) was produced (HEAS 2008 b).

1.3 Aims

The aims of the evaluation were to from locate archaeological deposits and determine, if present, their extent, state of preservation, date, type, vulnerability and documentation. The purpose of this was to establish their significance, since this would make it possible to recommend an appropriate treatment, which may then be integrated with the proposed development programme.

2. Methods

2.1 Documentary search

Prior to fieldwork commencing a search was made of the Historic Environment Record (HER). In addition to the sources listed in the bibliography the following were also consulted:

Cartographic sources

- Ordinance Survey 1st edition, 1885

2.2 Fieldwork methodology

2.2.1 Fieldwork strategy

A detailed specification has been prepared by the Service (HEAS 2008b).

Fieldwork was undertaken between 13th and 16th October 2008. The site reference number and site code is WSM 39897.

Ten trenches, amounting to 700m² in area, were excavated over the site area of *c*17300m², representing a sample of *c* 4.16%. The location of the trenches is indicated in Figure 2. Due to the presence of overhead power lines, three trenches had to be shifted several metres from the locations specified in the project proposal while a fourth had to be relocated entirely.

Deposits considered not to be significant were removed using a 360º tracked excavator, employing a toothless bucket and under archaeological supervision. Subsequent excavation was undertaken by hand. Clean surfaces were inspected and selected deposits were excavated to retrieve artefactual material and environmental samples, as well as to determine their nature. Deposits were recorded according to standard Service practice (CAS 1995. On completion of excavation, trenches were reinstated by replacing the excavated material.

2.2.2 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.

2.3 Artefact methodology

2.3.1 Artefact recovery policy

The artefact recovery policy conformed to standard Service practice (CAS 1995; appendix 2).

2.3.2 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.

Pottery fabrics are referenced to the fabric reference series maintained by the Service (Hurst 1994).

2.4 The methods in retrospect

The methods adopted allow a high degree of confidence that the aims of the project have been achieved.

3. Topographical and archaeological context

Inkberrow is a small village situated on fairly flat land some 16.5km east of Worcester. The study area lies in open farmland approximately 400m north of the centre of the village, to the west of a minor road and north of and adjacent to the football club's pavilion and pitches. On the 1st edition Ordinance Survey map of 1885, there is a field boundary immediately to the north of the study area, however it no longer exists. The soils in the Inkberrow area are

Stagnogleyic Argillic brown earths; slightly mottled, non-calcareous brownish to reddish loams that are subject to slight seasonal waterlogging (Soil Survey of England and Wales, 1983).

Sites recorded on the Historic Environment Record in the vicinity are as follows. Approximately 600m to the southwest lies Stonehouse Farm, Little Inkberrow, a 17th c dwelling. 600m to the south in a field several linears and pits have been recorded dating from the late medieval period to the 20th c or of unknown date and ridge and furrow field system dated between mid 16th c to the 20th c. However there was some minor evidence suggesting Iron Age and possibly Roman period activity in the area.

Approximately 400m to the northeast near Pinhills Farm, an isolated find consisting of a single mid-16th c coin was discovered. Approximately 600m to the northeast, in a field south of Pinhills Farm there is an undated visible enclosure. On the grounds of Pinhills Farm, a skeleton was recorded during excavation of a bull pen in 1976. It was male with a north-south orientation but no grave goods or firm dating evidence was recovered.

On the 1st edition map Ordinance Survey of 1885, shows the study area to be in an open field with very little development around; Stonehouse Farm to the southwest and Pinhills Farm to the northwest being the largest settlements in the nearby vicinity.

4. Results

4.1 Structural analysis

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

4.1.1 Phase 1 Natural deposits

The natural deposits varied on site consisting of a moderately compact pinkish brown silty clay with mudstone fragments in trench 1, compact red Mercian mudstone and clay found mainly to the east of trench 2, loose light grey silty clay with occasional flint nodules and patches of light brown silty clay with small flakes of mudstone in trench 10, to mid grey to blue grey clay interspersed with mudstone/sandstone and reddish brown sandy clay with rounded cobbles as found in the remainder of the trenches.

4.1.2 Phase 2 Medieval deposits

Ridge and furrow was recorded in trenches 5, 6, 7 and the northern end of 8, 9, and 10. The furrows are roughly E-W aligned and of the two sectioned, 505 and 604, were quite shallow and flat based. Land drains or gullies were cut into the bases of some of the furrows and running with the same alignment, as recorded in trench 6, indicating that the furrows were still visible in the ground when the drains/gullies were put in. The cuts for other drains/gullies were visible in other furrows.

4.1.3 Phase 3 Undated deposits

One large pit of unknown function or date was recorded in trench 1. The pit 104 measured approximately 7.5m wide, in excess of 12m in length, and 0.88m deep. The edges of the pit were fairly steep to near vertical and the base was broad and flat. Charcoal was present in the two fills 105 and 106 however no finds were recovered from the feature. A rich organic layer was absent from 104 to suggest that it was left open for a lengthy period of time or that it filled with water. However, the most likely purpose for pit 104 is a modern watering hole for cattle due to its size and its location in the corner of a field that until now has always been farmed.

4.2 Artefact analysis, by Dennis Williams

One sherd of 16th-17th Century Malvernian pottery with a lead glaze was recovered from the fill of a furrow in trench 5 (504). One fragment of brick or tile of indeterminate age was recovered from the fill of a furrow in trench 6 (604).

5. Synthesis

With the exception of feature 104, a probable livestock watering pond, no other features of archaeological significance were uncovered during these works. However, metal and CBM were recovered from a sectioned furrow in trench 5 and the occasional pottery and glass were visible in the ploughed topsoil, all of which were modern.

6. Recommendations

It is recommended that no further archaeological mitigation is required in the footprint of the proposed development.

7. Publication summary

The Service has a professional obligation to publish the results of archaeological projects within a reasonable period of time. To this end, the Service 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 evaluation was undertaken on behalf of Inkberrow Football Club at Sands Road, Inkberrow, Worcestershire (NGR ref SP01465808; SMR ref WSM 39897). The football club intend to develop the field into two large football pitches to the north of the existing pavilion and one small pitch to the west of the pavilion. Several sites in the vicinity are recorded on the Worcestershire Historic Environment Record. A 16th century coin and a burial were discovered near Pinhills Farm to the northwest of the site (WSM 01331; WSM 00187) and a rectangular enclosure of unknown date is visible on aerial photography also to the northwest (WSM 00885). To the southwest of the site there is an early 17th century stone farmhouse known as Stonehouse Farm (WSM 08637). To the southeast, a previous evaluation uncovered a late medieval ridge and furrow farming system and post medieval pits and postholes with some minor evidence of Iron Age or Roman activity (WSM 36240; WSM35770). To the northeast of the study area several place names Salters street, Salters Street Close, and Salters Street Ground may imply Roman origins (WSM 30991; WSM 30786; WSM 30787).

Archaeological investigations in the area to be cut into the natural in order to level the field for the football pitches took place between 13th and 16th October 2008. Four 25m trenches and six 50m trenches were excavated amounting to 700m. Topsoil, a light to dark brown to brown grey silty clay, overlay a reddish brown to light to mid brown silty clays subsoil which in turn overlay a variable natural ranging from Mercian mudstone, pinkish brown silty clay, mid grey sandy clay to blue clay. Ridge and furrow was uncovered in five trenches in the centre of the site and a large pit of unknown date, probably a cattle watering pond was uncovered to the south-west. Otherwise no archaeological features of significance were uncovered.

8. Acknowledgements

The Service would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project Neil Guy of FSC Consulting, and Mike Glyde, Historic Environment Planning Officer.

9. Personnel

The fieldwork was led by Tom Rogers and report preparation by Matthew Simmonds. The project manager responsible for the quality of the project was Tom Rogers. Fieldwork was undertaken by Tom Rogers and Matthew Simmonds, finds analysis by Dennis Williams, and illustration by Carolyn Hunt.

10. Bibliography

CAS, 1995 (as amended) *Manual of Service practice: fieldwork recording manual*, County Archaeological Service, Hereford and Worcester County Council, report, **399**

HEAS, 2008a *Brief for an archaeological evaluation at Sands Road, Inkberrow, Worcestershire,* Historic Environment and Archaeology Service, Worcestershire County Council unpublished document dated 1st February 2008

HEAS, 2008b *Proposal for an archaeological evaluation at Sands Road, Inkberrow, Worcestershire (revision 1)*, Historic Environment and Archaeology Service, Worcestershire County Council, unpublished document dated 16th June 2008, **P3213**

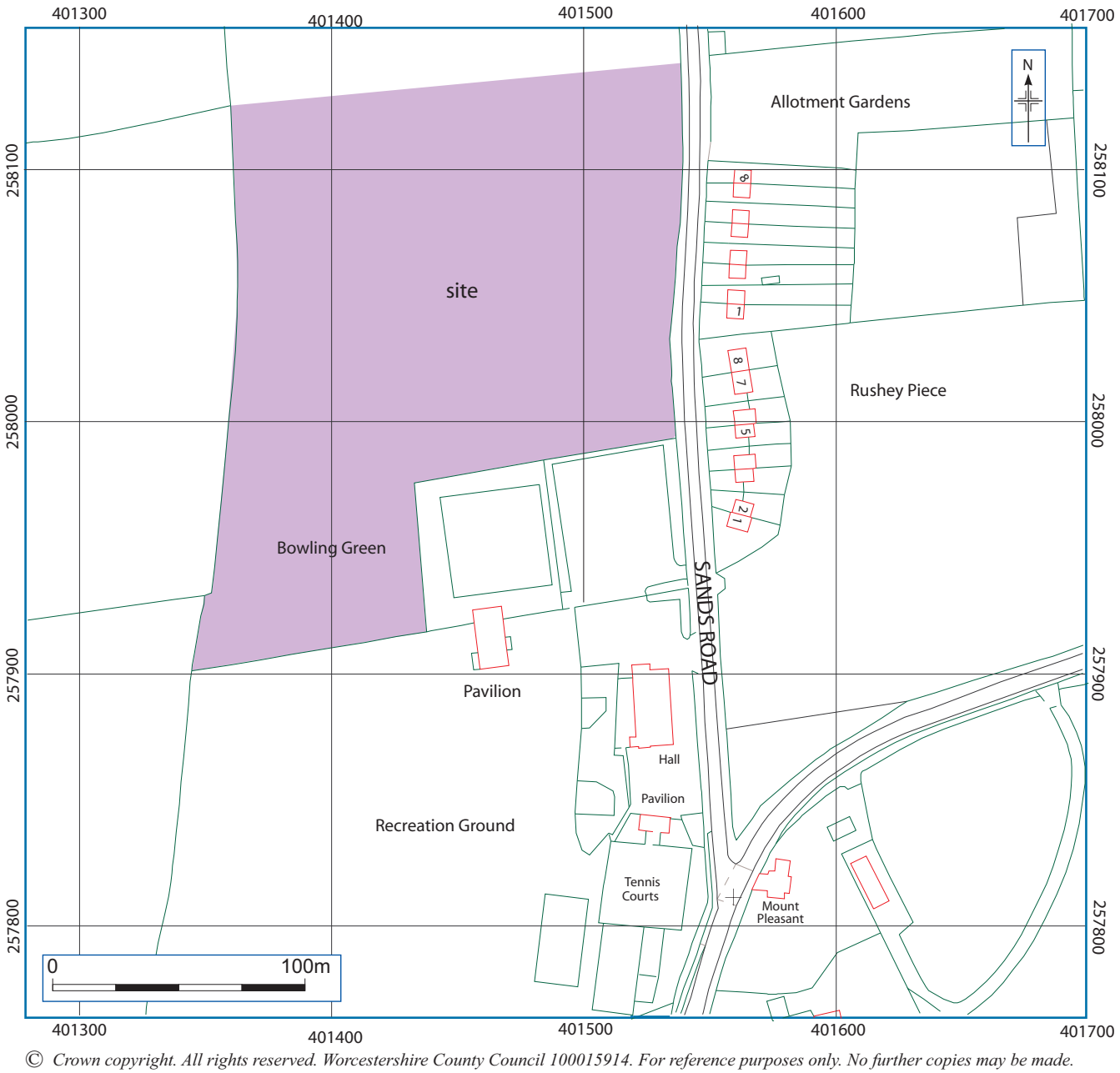
Hurst, J D, 1994 (as amended) *Pottery fabrics. A multi-period series for the County of Hereford and Worcester*, County Archaeological Service, Hereford and Worcester County Council, report, **445**

Hurst, J D, and Rees, H, 1992 Pottery fabrics; a multi-period series for the County of Hereford and Worcester, in Woodiwiss, S G (ed), *Iron Age and Roman salt production and the medieval town of Droitwich*, CBA Res Rep, **81**

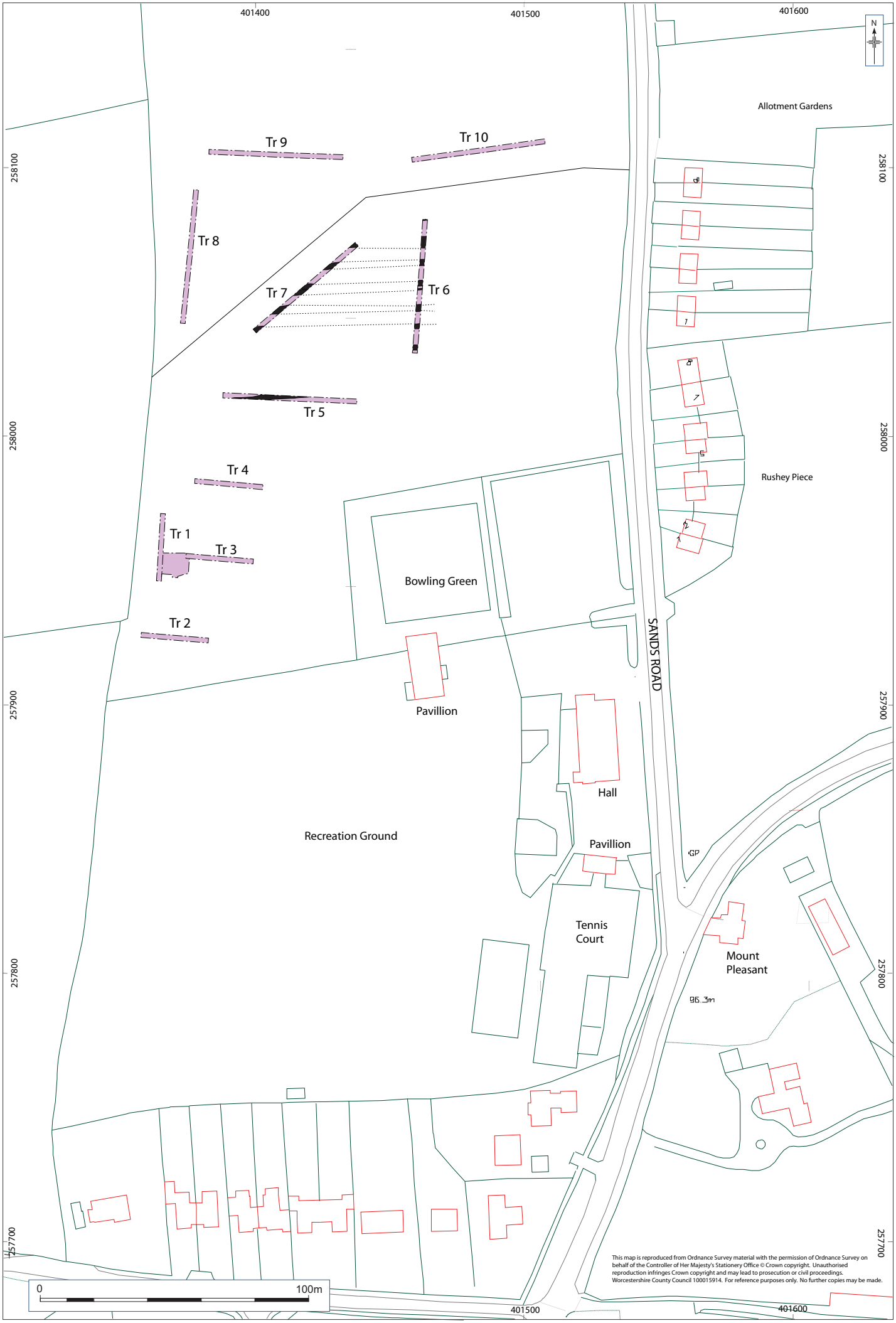
IFA, 2001 *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation,* Institute of Field Archaeologists

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

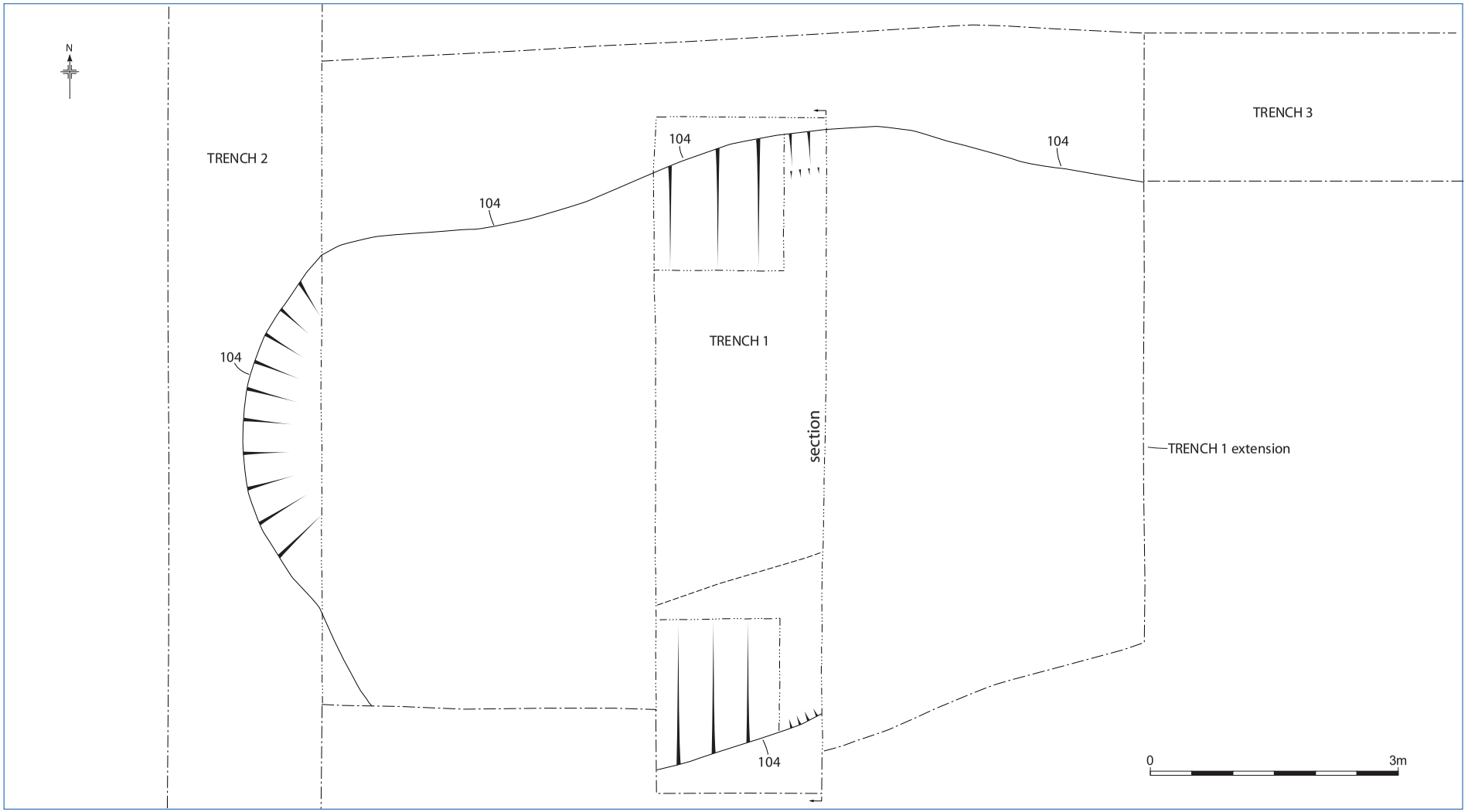
Figures



Location of the site. *Figure 1*

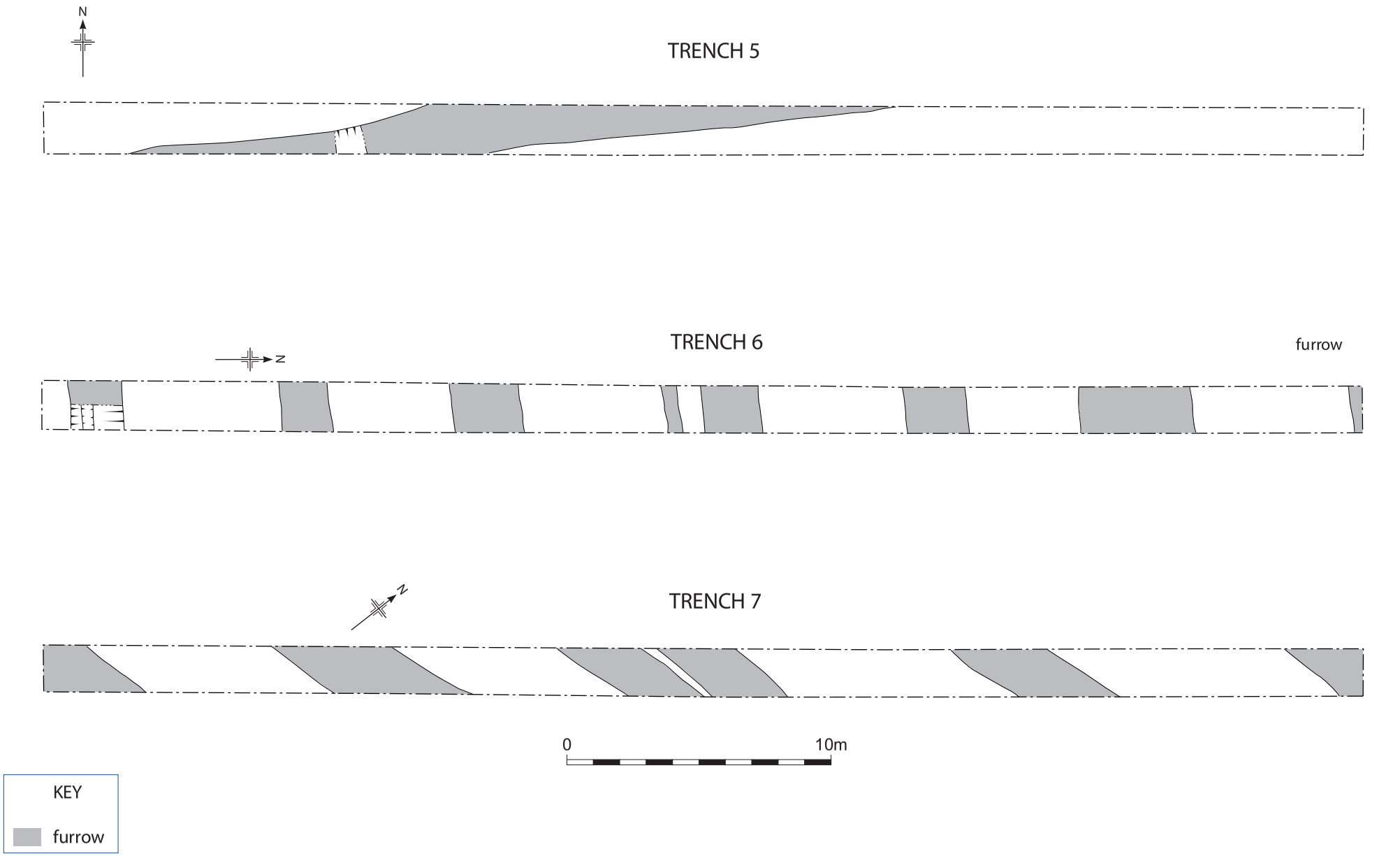


Trench location plan *Figure 2*



Plan and section of Trench 1

Figure 3



Trenches 5, 6 and 7: plans

Figure 4

Plates

Plate 1: Trench 4, general view (facing east).

Plate 2: Trench 7, general view with furrows running at 45° angle across trench

Plate 3: Trench 8, general view (facing north).

Plate 4: Trench 6, general view, furrow 604 and land drain/gully in foreground (facing north).

Plate 5: Trench 1, pit 104 (facing east).

Plate 7: Trench 1, pit 104 (facing

Plate 8: Trench 5, furrow 505 (facing west).

Plate 9: Trench 6, furrow 604, modern field drain/gully in the centre (facing west).

1 meter scale used for all photographs.

Appendix 1 Trench descriptions

Trench 1

Maximum dimensions: Length: 25m Width: 1.8m Depth: 0.45m-0.75m

Orientation: N-S

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
101	Topsoil	Moderately compact and malleable mid brown grey clay with some silt. Contains frequent flint nodules.	0.0-0.29m
102	Subsoil	Compact and malleable red brown clay with some silt.	0.29m-0.41m
103	Natural	Compact and friable pinkish brown silty clay with occasional mudstone fragments.	0.41m+
104	Cut of pit	Partially excavated cut of pit, 5.31m long and 1.03m wide. Oval in shape with a sharp break of slope at the top with fairly and primarily straight near vertical sides that smoothly turn into a flat but slightly uneven base.	0.29m-1.33m
105	Fill of 104	Compact red brown silty clay containing small fragments of mudstone and small beige flecks.	1.10m-1.33m
106	Fill of 104	Moderately compact mid brown silty clay with patches of light grey brown silty clay. Contains frequent flint nodules up to 0.10m and occasional flecks of charcoal, mainly concentrated just off centered to the north.	0.55m-1.10m
107	Fill of 104	Fairly compact mid brown clay with some silt. Contains frequent flint nodules 0.05m-0.15m in size and very occasional charcoal flecks.	0.26m-0.55m

Trench 2

Maximum dimensions: Length: 25m Width: 1.8m Depth: 0.55m-0.75m

Orientation: E-W

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
201	Topsoil	Compact light brown silty clay with occasional flecks of charcoal and CBM.	0.0-0.03m

202	Subsoil	Firm reddish brown silty clay, which degrades gradually to a weathered natural towards the base.	0.03m-0.04m
203	Natural	Compact red Mercian mudstone and clay. The mudstone occurs mainly to the east of the trench.	0.07m+

Trench 3

Maximum dimensions: Length: 25m Width: 1.8m Depth

Orientation: E-W

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
301	Topsoil	Moderately compact and friable silty clay with occasional rounded cobbles and charcoal flecks.	0.00m-0.04m
302	Subsoil	Mid to light brown silty clay with occasional patches of re-deposited natural.	
303	Natural	Variable natural from Mercian mudstone at the east end to blue grey clay with interspersed with outcrops of sandstone	

Trench 4

Maximum dimensions: Length: 25m Width: 1.8m Depth: 0.65m

Orientation: E-W

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
401	Topsoil	Firm dark brown silty clay with occasional rounded cobbles.	0.00m-0.35m
402	Subsoil	Firm reddish brown silty clay to clay with occasional rounded cobbles.	0.35m-0.65m
403	Natural	Solid grey black sandstone interspersed with blue grey clay at the west end. Middle and east end of trench has blue clay with patches of brown sandy clay with frequent rounded cobbles.	0.65m+

Trench 5

Maximum dimensions: Length: 50m Width: 1.8m Depth: 0.45m

Orientation: E-W

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
501	Topsoil	Mid brown silty clay with occasional rounded cobbles and charcoal flecks.	0.00m-0.26m
502	Subsoil	Mid to light brown silty clay with occasional patches of re-deposited natural.	0.26m-0.45m
503	Natural	Mottled light blue clay with patches of reddish brown sandy clay with rounded cobbles.	0.45m+
504	Fill of 505	Compact reddish brown silty clay with occasional charcoal and rounded cobbles.	0.45m-0.51m
505	Linear cut	Shallow linear cut for furrow with gentle break of slope at the top, shallow sides, and a flat base. 30m in length, 1.30m wide, and slightly off parallel to trench.	0.45m-0.51m

Trench 6

Maximum dimensions: Length: 50m Width: 1.8m Depth: 0.30m+

Orientation: N-S

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
601	Topsoil	Mid brown silty clay with occasional rounded cobbles and charcoal flecks.	0.00m-0.30m
602	Natural	Mottled blue clay with patches of reddish brown sandy clay with rounded cobbles.	0.30m+
603	Fill of 604	Firm reddish brown silty clay with occasional CBM.	0.30m-
604	Linear cut	Shallow linear cut for furrow with gentle break of slope and sides with a slightly concave base. Just off E-W aligned.	0.30m-

605	Fill of 606	Firm light brown silty clay with frequent patches of re-deposited natural.	0.30m-
606	Linear cut	Steep sided linear gully cut with sharp break of surface at the top, near vertical side, and a flat base. Intentionally placed in the bottom if 604, cutting its base and running the length of 604.	

Trench 7

Maximum dimensions: Length: 50m Width: 1.8m Depth: 0.30m+

Orientation: NE-SW

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
601	Topsoil	Loose dark brown silty clay with occasional rounded cobbles.	0.00m-0.30m
602	Natural	Homogenous light blue clay.	0.30m+

Trench 8

Maximum dimensions: Length: 50m Width: 1.8m Depth: 0.72m

Orientation: N-S

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
801	Topsoil	Loose and friable mid grey silty clay with occasional flint nodules.	0.00m-0.28m
802	Subsoil	Loose and friable mid brown clay silt with occasional flint nodules.	0.28m-0.72m
803	Natural	Loose and friable light to mid grey sandy clay interspersed with lenses of mudstone and small patches of light brown silty clay.	0.72m+

Trench 9

Maximum dimensions: Length: 50m Width: 1.8m Depth: 0.37m

Orientation: E-W

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
901	Topsoil	Loose and friable mid grey silty clay with occasional flint nodules.	0.00m-0.30m
902	Subsoil	Loose and friable mid brown clay silt with occasional flint nodules. Occasional flecks of charcoal in interface with 903	0.30m-0.37m
903	Natural	Loose and friable light to mid grey sandy clay interspersed with lenses of mudstone and small patches of light brown silty clay.	0.37m+

Trench 10

Maximum dimensions: Length: 50m Width: 1.8m Depth: 0.36m

Orientation: E-W

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
1001	Topsoil	Loose and friable mid to dark grey silty clay with occasional flint nodules.	0.00m-0.30m
1002	Subsoil	Loose and friable light to mid brown clay silt. Occurs only for 10m on the east side, the subsoil in remainder of the trench has been ploughed away.	0.30m-0.36m
1003	Natural	Loose and friable light grey silty clay with occasional flint nodules and patches of light brown silty clay with small flakes of mudstone.	0.36m+

Appendix 2 Technical information

The archive

The archive consists of:

7	Context records AS1
2	Fieldwork progress records AS2
1	Photographic records AS3
20	Digital photographs
1	Drawing number catalogues AS4
0	Context number catalogues AS5
10	Trench record sheets AS41
6	Scale drawings

The project archive is intended to be placed at:

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