Witham Archaeology

A Report to Lafarge Tarmac on behalf of Crown Construction Services

May 2016



HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT AT DODWELLS ROUNDABOUT, HINCKLEY, LEICESTERSHIRE

Archaeological Monitoring and Recording

R Trimble

HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT AT DODWELLS ROUNDABOUT, HINCKLEY, LEICESTERSHIRE

Site Code: HIDR14

Museum Accession No.: X.A143.2014

Planning Application No.: N/A

NGR: SP 39961 93090

OASIS ID: withamar1-251421

Archaeological Monitoring and Recording

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HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT AT DODWELLS ROUNDABOUT, HINCKLEY, LEICESTERSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND RECORDING

SUMMARY

A programme of monitoring and recording was undertaken by Witham Archaeology during groundworks carried out as part of highway improvements at Dodwells Roundabout, Hinckley, Leicestershire. The work was commissioned by Lafarge Tarmac on behalf of Crown Construction Services, in line with recommendations made in a Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment produced by CH2M HILL. The site lies on the route of the major Roman road (Watling Street/ now the A5) running between Chester and Richborough, and in close proximity to known occupation remains of middle Iron Age and Roman date.

The programme of monitoring and recording revealed high levels of modern disturbance in most parts of the site, arising from excavations for services and previous phases of road construction. Natural ground was revealed in excavations on the central island of the roundabout, and to the north of the roundabout, in a new drain extending along Coventry Road, but the works produced no evidence to suggest that middle Iron Age or Roman occupation extended into the area.

Areas of metalling were revealed on the central island, beneath thick layers of makeup for more recent road surfaces, and on the north side of the carriageway west of the roundabout. The surfaces were identical in character and could represent the remains of a pre-modern phase of use of the Coventry Road/Watling Street routes.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

A programme of archaeological monitoring and record was undertaken by Witham Archaeology during groundworks carried out as part of highway improvements at Dodwells Roundabout, Hinckley, Leicestershire. The work was commissioned by Lafarge Tarmac on behalf of Crown Construction Services, in line with recommendations made in a Cultural Impact Assessment by CH2M HILL. Intermittent attendance on site was required throughout the period 3rd November 2014 to 19th March 2015, timed to coincide with the main elements of intrusive groundwork.

The information in this document is presented with the proviso that further data may yet emerge. Witham Archaeology Ltd cannot, therefore, be held responsible for any loss, delay or damage, material or otherwise, arising out of this report. The document has been prepared in accordance with the Code of Conduct of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.

2.0 SITE LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY & GEOLOGY (see Figs. 1 and 2)

Dodwells Roundabout (NGR SP 39961 93090) is located on the southwestern periphery of Hinckley, Leicestershire, on the route of Watling Street (the modern A5) where it is met by Dodwells Road (the A47) and Coventry Road (the B4666). The site lies within the administrative district of Hinckley and Bosworth.

The site is located upon solid geology of Mercia Mudstone formed during the Triassic period, overlain in the immediate locality by superficial deposits of diamicton (Thrussington Member) formed in the Quaternary period. Immediately west of the roundabout, superficial deposits of alluvium extend north – south, filling the valley of Harrow Brook (British Geological Survey, England & Wales, Solid & Drift, 1:50 000).

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Dodwells Roundabout is located on the line of the major Roman road running between Chester and Richborough, now followed by the A5/Watling Street (HER ref. MLE1388).

Previous archaeological investigations revealed evidence of middle Iron Age settlement 400m east of the roundabout, together with evidence of Romano-British enclosures dated to the 2nd/3rd centuries AD (HER Refs MLE 8919, 8920 and 10141). The Iron Age remains included a sub-square enclosure containing a principal roundhouse and two subsidiary roundhouses. Four more roundhouses were located near to the eastern entrance to the enclosure.

Coventry Road (the B4666), which runs northeast from Dodwells Roundabout, follows the line of the Nuneaton to Leicester turnpike. The road operated as a toll road from 1753 until 1879 (MLE 20657).

4.0 AIMS & OBJECTIVES

The principal objectives of the project, as set out in a Witham Archaeology specification dated 7th November 2014 were to:

- allow the preservation by record of any surviving archaeological deposits and artefacts exposed by the development groundwork within the constraints imposed by the contractor's working methods, programme and development design.
- produce a project archive for deposition with the appropriate museum together with a client report.
- provide information for accession to the Leicestershire County Historic Environment Record.

5.0 METHODOLOGY

In general, monitoring and recording was carried out on an intermittent basis, with attendance timed to coincide with the main phases of development groundwork. More intensive monitoring was carried out during relatively extensive and deep excavations for a new water storage facility on the central island of the roundabout, during excavations for a new drain on the north side of the roundabout, and during road widening in the angle between Coventry Road and Watling Street (the A5).

A record of deposits and features revealed by the groundworks was compiled through colour digital and monochrome (35mm) photographs, plans at scale 1:20 and sections at scale 1:10 or 1:20 as appropriate, as well as written context descriptions for each unit of stratigraphy.

6.0 RESULTS

For ease of reference, the following discussion is structured on an area-by-area basis. Detailed records were compiled for deposits in four discrete areas; the water storage facility on the south side of the central island of the roundabout (designated A), service trenches following the westbound carriageway (B) an existing ditch on the north side of the island (C), and a new drainage ditch excavated to the northeast of the roundabout (D).

6.1 Area A (Figs. 3 and 5; Plates 6 and 7)

The geology of light to mid reddish brown clay (107) was revealed in the lowest levels of Area A. It was overlain by a layer of small stone mixed with clay (106) interpreted as a possible metalled surface. The surface, revealed intermittently on the north side of the trench, was around 0.20 to 0.22m thick where recorded.

The probable metalling was sealed by a sequence of deposits interpreted as makeup for comparatively late phases of road construction. The lowest of the layers, (105), was 0.22 - 0.30m thick, comprising large fragments of angular stone (80%) mixed with light yellowish brown silty sand (20%). It was overlain by a layer, (104), of smaller stone (70%) mixed with reddish brown silty sand (30%), which was

in turn sealed by a layer, (103), of small angular stone (70%) mixed with dark grey/black silty sand (30%).

The upper part of the recorded sequence comprised a shallow layer, (102), of small stone (80%) mixed with light yellowish brown silty sand (20%), followed by a layer, (101), of dark reddish brown silty sand (50%) and small stone (50%), and finally, material redeposited as part of the ongoing roadworks (100). The latter deposit was 0.35m thick.

6.2 Area B (Figs. 3 and 5)

A sample section recorded at a point 200m west of the roundabout revealed light to mid grey sandy silt, (116), at around 0.95m below existing ground level. It was sealed by a layer, (115), of small stone (50%) mixed with light to mid grey silt (50%), 0.15m thick, interpreted as probably forming part of metalling (106) identified in Area A (top surface at 0.7m below existing ground level). The layer of metalling was sealed by a layer of stone, (112), identical in composition to (105) recorded in Area A. Traces of tarmac at the interface with (115) indicate a relatively late date. Layer (115) was sealed by a shallow depth of loose/broken tarmac (111), which was in turn sealed by a thick layer of concrete and stone, (110). A layer of concrete 0.2m thick, (109), sealed (110), and was in turn overlain by the modern tarmac road surface (108).

6.2 Area C (Figs 3 and 4; *Plates 2*, 3 and 4)

Stratigraphic sequences of deposits in Area B were recorded during excavations to form new headwalls to culverts at either end of an existing drainage ditch on the roundabout. The lower part of the sequence at both ends comprised light brown clay, probably the natural, (126), at 1.1 - 1.15m below existing ground, overlain by light yellowish brown clayey silt, (125), 0.4 - 0.6m thick. The latter deposit may be interpreted as a relict plough-soil.

At the western end of the ditch (125) was sealed by recently disturbed ground 0.75m thick (124). The same type of material, numbered (127) and 0.40m thick, was encountered at the eastern end, separated from (125) by a layer of topsoil 0.10m thick, (128).

None of the deposits in Area C were dated.

6.3 Area D (Figs. 3 and 6; Plates 9, 10 and 11)

Area D designates a new ditch excavated on the north side of the roundabout, between Dodwells Road (the A47) and Coventry Road (the B4666). The feature replaces an original ditch located closer to the roundabout.

At a point mid way along the length of the ditch, the top of natural clay, (120), was encountered at a depth of 1.6m below existing ground level. It was sealed by light to mid greyish brown clay 0.15m thick, (119), which was in turn sealed by dark grey silty clay 0.15m thick. The latter had the appearance of a topsoil, while a small quantity of pottery recovered from the deposit indicated a 19th century date of deposition. The assemblage included one sherd dated as 17th – 18th century (see Appendix B).

The topsoil was sealed by a deposit of mixed clayey silt and clay 1.3m thick. Modern materials in the layer, including wire and plastic, indicate deposition at some time in the late 20th century, presumably as part of previous roadworks or associated drainage works.

6.4 Other (Plates 12 and 13)

Excavations carried out as part of road widening on the east side of the roundabout, in the angle between the A5 and Coventry Road, were closely monitored for evidence of early road construction. The works revealed high levels of previous disturbance from services and earlier phases of modern road construction, to a depth of at least 800mm, obscuring or truncating any evidence for the continuation of the areas of metalling recorded in Areas A and B.

7.0 DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

Overall, the programme of monitoring and recording at Dodwells Roundabout revealed significant depths of modern overburden in most areas, as well as severe truncation through various phases of road construction and the installation of services.

Extensive and relatively deep excavations, for a new water storage feature at the centre of the roundabout (Area A) and for drainage on the north side adjacent to Coventry Road (Area D), revealed no evidence of middle Iron Age and Roman settlement comparable to the remains uncovered during previous investigations on land further to the east.

Evidence of a metalled surface was located in the central island of the roundabout, during excavations for the new storage feature (Area A), and similar metalling was identified in service trenches excavated along the edge of the westbound carriageway northwest of the roundabout (Area B). The areas of metalling did not display the characteristics normally associated with a major Roman road, so the deposit is more likely to represent a pre-modern phase of road surfacing related to Coventry Road and the route subsequently followed by the A5.

Excavations in Areas A and B revealed successive layers of makeup material overlying the areas of metalling. The earliest of these deposits could have been associated with the creation of the turnpikes in the later post medieval period, but the later deposits were clearly related to more recent phases (probably mid to late 20th century) of road formation.

8.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author of this report would like to thank Mr Jonathan Falls, Lafarge Tarmac, for his interest and support in ensuring that the project was brought to a successful conclusion.

9.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY

CH2MHILL 2014 A5(T)/A47 Dodwells and Longshoot Junction Economy Scheme (530013). DMRB Simple Assessment: Cultural Heritage. Unpublished Report for A-One+

10.0 PROJECT/ ARCHIVE DETAILS

10.1 Project Details

SITE CODE: HIDR14

PLANNING APPLICATION No.: N/A

FIELD OFFICER: R Trimble

NGR: NGR: SP 39961 93090

CIVIL PARISH: Hinckley

DATE OF INTERVENTION: 3rd November 2014 to 19th March 2015

TYPE OF INTERVENTION: Monitoring and Recording

UNDERTAKEN FOR: Lafarge Tarmac on behalf of Crown Construction Services

10.2 Archive Details

PRESENT LOCATION: Witham Archaeology, 2 High Street, Ruskington, Sleaford, NG34 9DT

FINAL LOCATION: Leicestershire Museums Service

MUSEUM ACCESSION No.: X.A143.2014

PROPOSED ACCESSION DATE: July 2016

The Site Archive Comprises:

Context Records	29
Section Drawings at Scale 1:20	2
Section Drawings at Scale 1:10	2
Sketch Sections	2
B & W and Digital Photographs	55 views
Set of Site Notes	18 day sheets

It is intended that transfer of the archive in accordance with current published requirements will be undertaken following completion of this project.

COLOUR PLATES



Plate 1: Initial ground clearance on the island at Dodwells Roundabout, looking east



Plate 2: Work to upgrade headwalls in the existing ditch (Area C), looking west



Plate 3: Area C, Section 1, looking northwest; 1m scale



Plate 4: Area C, Section 2, looking southeast; 1m scale



Plate 5: Work in progress to form the water storage feature (Area A), looking northeast



Plate 6: Excavation for water storage feature (Area A), looking northwest; 1m scale



Plate 7: Section 3 in the water storage feature (Area A), looking north; 1m scale



Plate 8: New drain northeast of the roundabout (Area D), looking southeast



Plate 9: Section 5 in Area D, looking southeast; 1m scale



Plate 10: Eastern end of Area D including Section 6, looking c. southeast; 1m scale



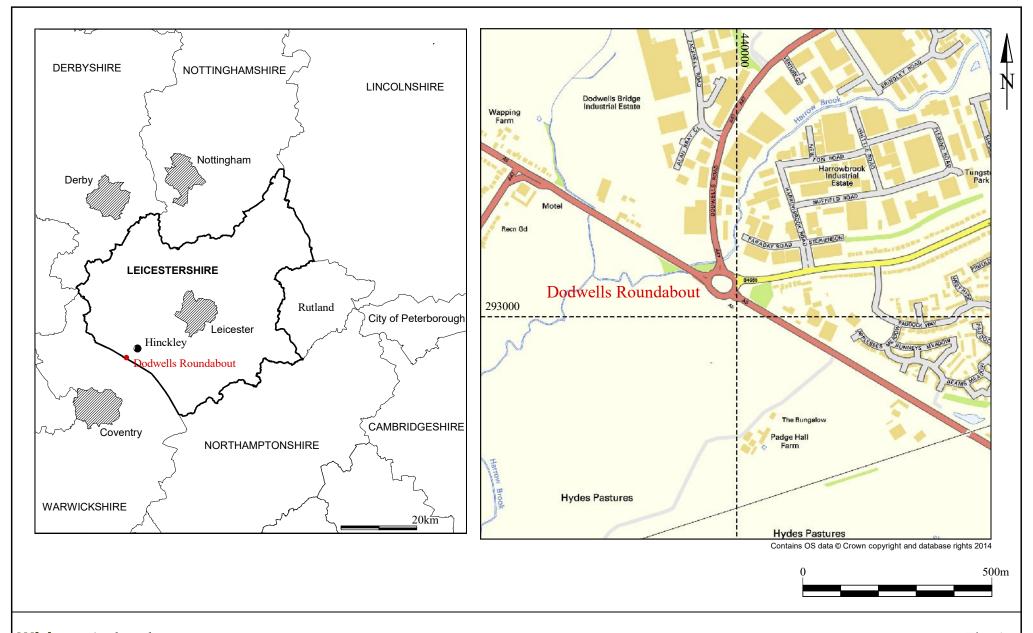
Plate 11: Section 6 (Area D), looking east; 1m scale



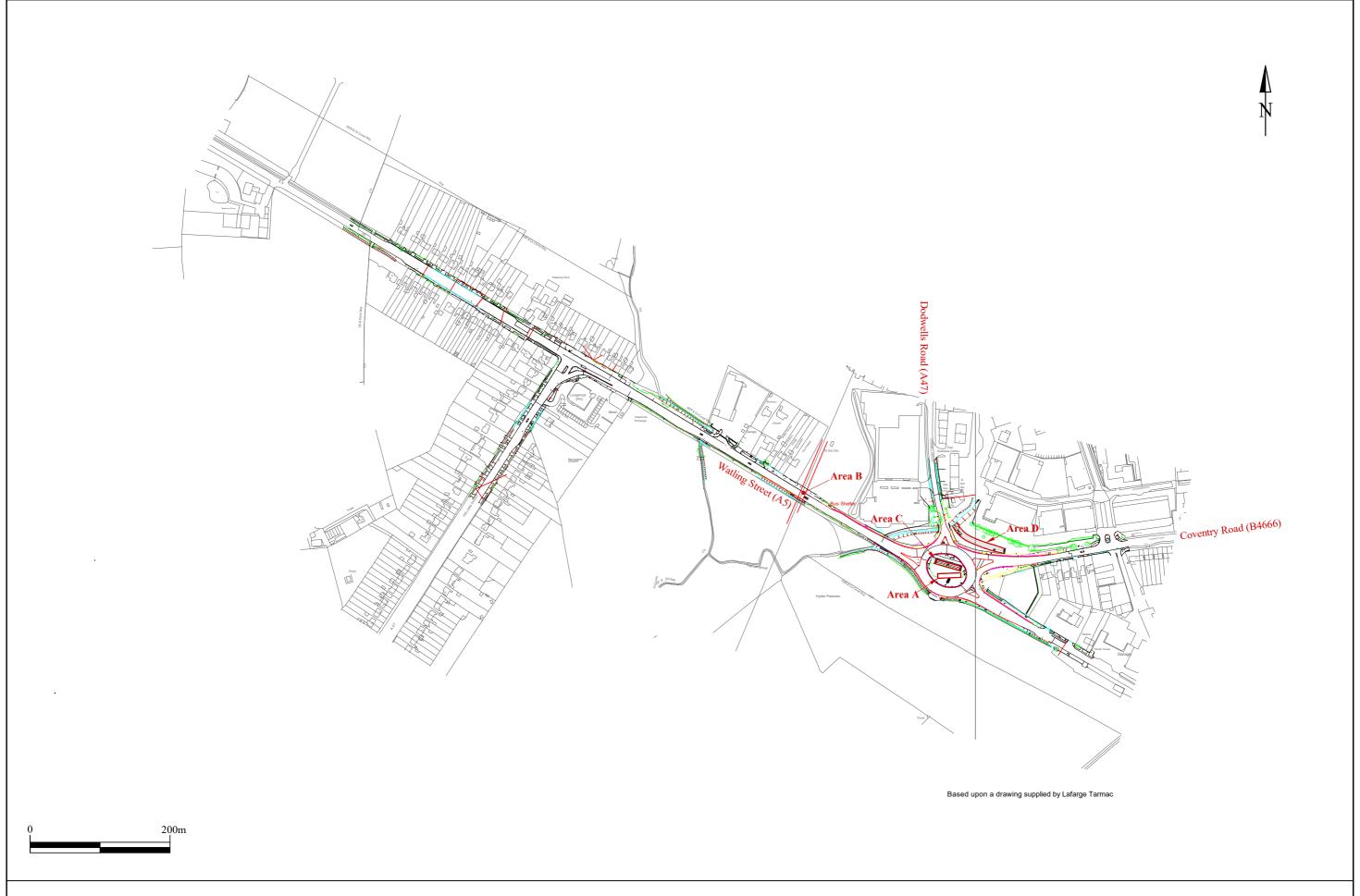
Plate 12: Work in progress, east of the roundabout, looking c. west

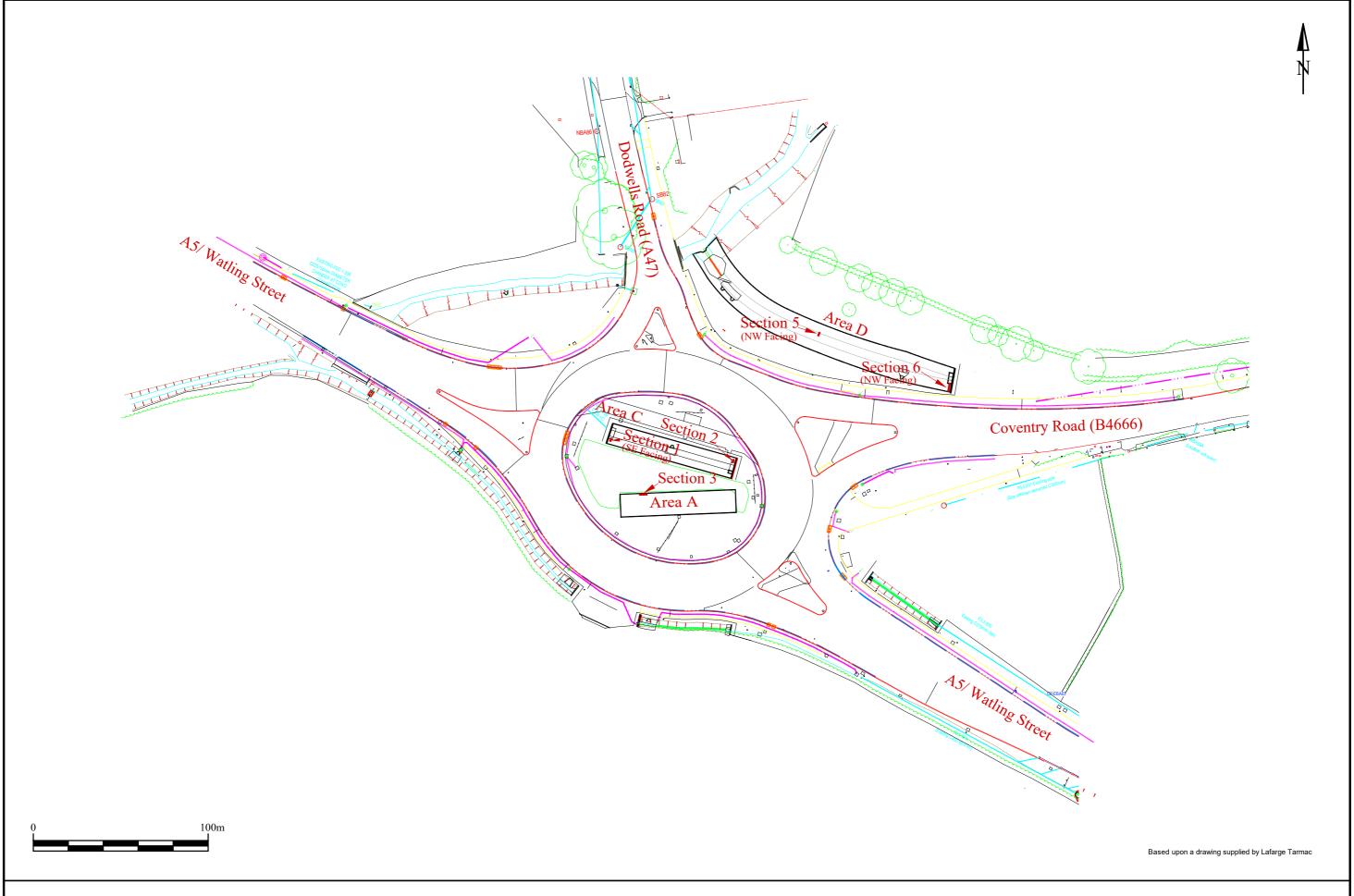


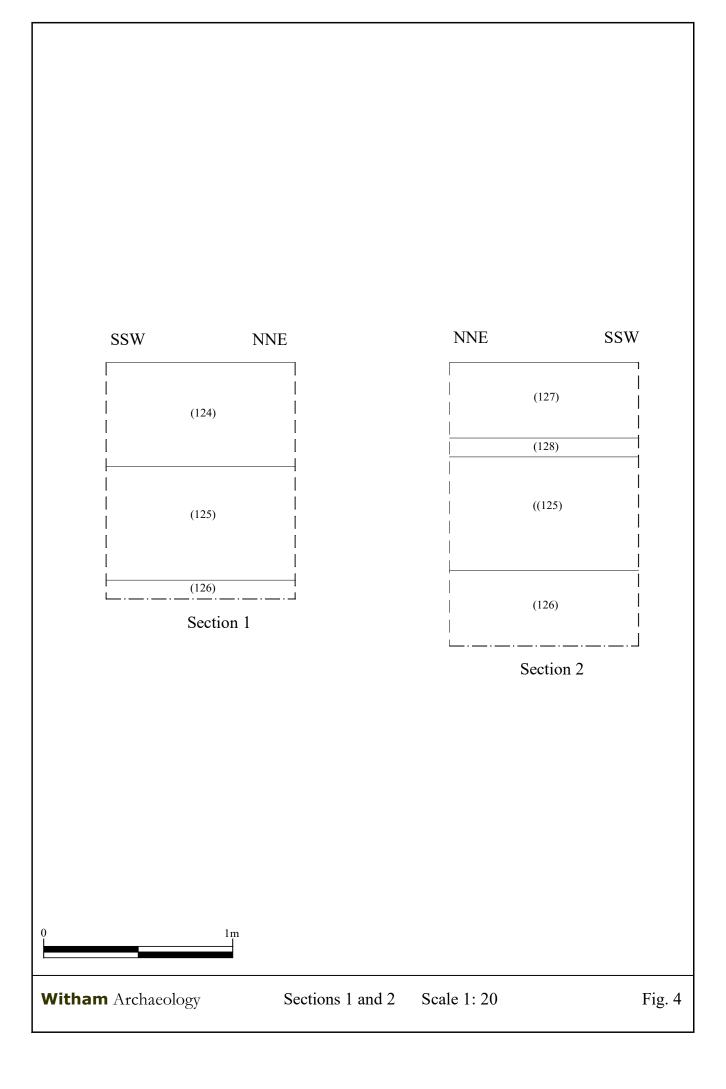
Plate 13: Work in progress, east side of the roundabout, looking c. west

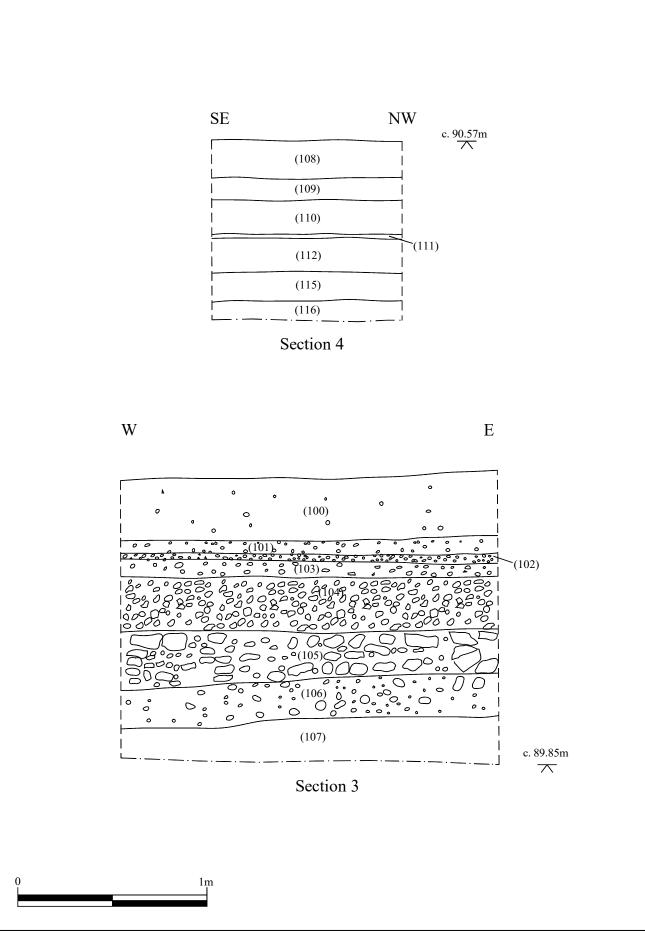


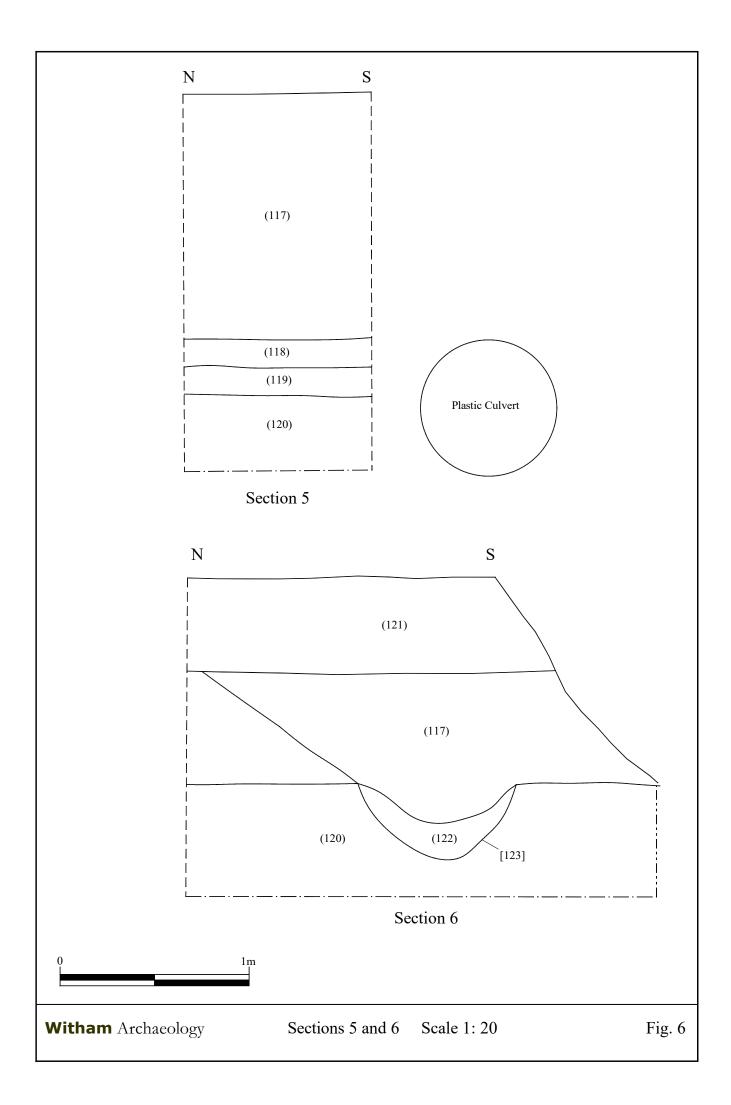
Witham Archaeology Site Location Maps Fig. 1











APPENDIX A - CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Context	Area	Interpretation	Description
100	Α	Redeposited	Material redeposited as part of the current works; 0.35m thick
- • •			and extending throughout Area A
101	Α	Makeup for modern	Moderately compact, dark reddish brown silty sand (50%), and
		road	angular stone to 20mm (50%); 80 – 100mm thick
102	Α	Makeup for modern	Angular stone to 30mm (80%) and light yellowish brown silty
		road	sand (20%); 30 – 50mm thick
103	Α	Makeup for modern	Angular stone to 50mm across (70%) and loose, dark
		road	grey/black silty sand (30%); 70 – 100mm thick
104	A	Makeup for modern	Mostly angular and occasionally rounded stone (70%) mixed
		road	with mid reddish brown silty sand (30%); 0.28m thick,
			extending throughout the majority of Area A
105	A	Makeup for modern	Angular stone to 0.3m across in size (80%) mixed with mid
		road	reddish brown silty sand (20%); 0.22 – 0.30m thick, thickening
			to west
106	A	Metalled surface	Moderately compact, mid to dark grey silty clay (50%),
			rounded stone to 20mm (40%), and angular stone to 20mm
			(10%); 0.20 – 022m thick where recorded
107	A	Natural	Compact/plastic, light to mid reddish brown clay containing
			occasional patches of orange sand and gravel, patches of redish
			brown sand with irregular pockets of gravel
108	В	Existing road	Tarmac 0.2m thick
109	В	Part of modern road	Concrete, 0.20m thick
110		structure	7 010 111
110	В	Makeup for modern	Loose concrete and stone, 0.18m thick
111	D	road	T // 1 /
111	В	Road makeup?	Loose/broken tarmac
112	В	Makeup for modern	Composition as (105), with occasional lenses of tarmac at the
112	NT/A	road	lower interface with (115)
113	N/A	Void	
114 115	N/A B	Void Metalled surface =	Down dod stone to 0.10m somess (500/) and light to mid anary silt
113	Ь	(106)?	Rounded stone to 0.10m across (50%) and light to mid grey silt (50%); 0.15m thick
116	В	Layer	Moderately compact/soft light to mid grey sandy silt; 0.10m+
110	В	Layer	thick
117	D	Redeposited from	Firm, mid greyish brown clayey silt mixed with yellowish
11/		previous phase of	brown clay, containing wire, plastic and stone; 1.2m thick
		modern roadworks	where recorded in Area C, thickening to the west
118	D	Topsoil	Firm/compact, dark grey silty clay containing occasional tile,
			pot, charcoal flecks and stone to 50mm; 0.15m average
			thickness in recorded area
119	D	Layer – part of (118)?	Stiff/firm, light to mid greyish brown clay, 0.15m thick
120	D	Natural	Stiff/firm, light yellowish clay with occasional orange-brown
			mottles, 0.40+m thick
121	D	Redeposited material	Firm but malleable, mid yellowish brown silty clay; 0.50m
			thick, extending throughout area D
122	D	Fill of [123]	Soft, mid brownish grey, clayey silt containing rounded stone
			to 30mm
123	D	Probable ditch	Linear cut 0.60m wide x 0.40m deep; has c. 45° sides and
			concave base
124	С	Recently disturbed	
		ground	
125	C	Layer	Sticky/malleable, light yellowish brown clayey silt 0.4m thick
126	С	Possibly natural	Firm, light brown clay
127	C	As (124)	
128	C	Topsoil	Mid to dark greyish brown sandy silt 0.1m thick

APPENDIX B – POST ROMAN POTTERY

By Alex Beeby

Introduction

All the material was recorded at archive level in accordance with the guidelines laid out in Slowikowski *et al.* (2001). The pottery codenames (Cname) are in accordance with the Post Roman pottery type series for Lincolnshire, as published in Young *et al.* (2005), which can also be used to record material from surrounding counties. An equivalent code from the type series for Leicestershire (*c.f.* Sawday, unpublished) is included in Table 1 below. A total of five sherds from three vessels, weighing 161 grams was recovered from the site.

Methodology

The material was laid out and viewed. Sherds were then counted and weighed. The pottery was examined visually and using x20 magnification. This information was then added to an Access database. An archive list of the pottery is included in Table 1 below. The pottery dates to the late post medieval and early modern period.

Condition

The pottery is unabraded and the pieces are relatively large.

Results

Table 1, Post Roman Pottery Archive

Cxt	Cname	Full name	Leics Code	Form	Decoration	Part	Comment	Date	NoS	NoV	W(g)
118	NCBW	Nineteenth century buff ware	EA	Closed	Trailed blue slip	Bases; BS	Poorly finished	EM19th	3	1	61
118	LERTH	Late earthenware	EA	Garden pot		Rim		19th	1	1	60
118	BERTH	Brown glazed earthenware	EA1	Jar or Bowl		BS		17th- 18th	1	1	40
								Total	5	3	161

Provenance

All of the material was recovered from soil layer (118).

Range

There are five sherds from three separate vessels. Two of these vessels are of 19th century date, whilst a third is dated to the 17th to 18th centuries.

Potential

There is no potential for further work. The pottery should be retained as part of the site archive and should pose no problems for long term storage.

SPOT DATING

The dating in Table 2 is based on the evidence provided by the finds detailed above.

Table 2, Spot dates

,						
Cxt	Date	Comments				
118	19th					

ABBREVIATIONS

BS Body sherd CXT Context

NoF Number of Fragments
NoS Number of sherds
NoV Number of vessels
W (g) Weight (grams)

REFERENCES

Sawday, D., Unpublished, Post Roman Ceramic Codes for Leicester

Slowikowski, A. M., Nenk, B., and Pearce, J., 2001, *Minimum Standards for the Processing, Recording, Analysis and Publication of Post-Roman Ceramics*, Medieval Pottery Research Group Occasional Paper 2

Young, J., Vince, A.G. and Nailor, V., 2005, A Corpus of Saxon and Medieval Pottery from Lincoln (Oxford)

APPENDIX C OASIS SUMMARY DETAILS FORM

5/12/2016 OASIS FORM - Print view

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

List of Projects | Manage Projects | Search Projects | New project | Change your details | HER coverage | Change country | Log out

Printable version

OASIS ID: withamar1-251421

Project details

Project name Monitoring and Recording during highway improvements at Dodwells Roundabout, Hinckley, Leicestershire

Short description of the project

A programme of monitoring and recording was undertaken during highway improvements at Dodwells Roundabout, Hinckley, Leicestershire. The site lies on the route of Watling Street, the line of a major Roman road, and close to previous finds of Iron Age and Roman occupation. The project resulted in the recording of an undated layer of metalling predating thick makeup for various phases of modern roadbuilding. The metalling did not have characteristics of a major Roman road and might, therefore be interpreted as later surfacing on the line of the route or Coventry Road, which meets the roundabout from the northeast. There were no significant finds from the site.

Project dates

Start: 03-11-2014 End: 19-03-2015

Previous/future

No / No

work

Any associated HIDR14 - Sitecode

project reference

codes

X.A.143,2014 - Museum accession ID

Any associated project reference codes

Type of project

Recording project

Site status

None

Current Land use

Transport and Utilities 1 - Highways and road transport

Monument type

TRACK Uncertain

https://oasis.ac.uk/form/print.cfm 1/4

Monument type ROAD Modern

Significant Finds POTTERY Post Medieval

Prompt Environmental (unspecified schedule)

Project location

Country England

LEICESTERSHIRE HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH HINCKLEY Dodwells Roundabout, Hinckley, Leicestershire Site location

Postcode LE10 3ED

Study area 0 Square metres

Site coordinates SP 39960 93090 52.533844001601 -1.410828841537 52 32 01 N 001 24 38 W Point

Project creators

Name of Witham Archaeology

Organisation

Project brief Contractor (design and execute)

originator

Project design Dale Trimble

originator

Project supervisor Russell Trimble

Type of

Developer sponsor/funding

body

Name of

Crown Construction Services

sponsor/funding

body

Project archives

Physical Archive Leicestershire Museums

recipient

Physical Archive X.A143.2014

ID

Physical Contents "Ceramics"

5/12/2016 OASIS FORM - Print view

Digital Archive

recipient

Leicestershire Museums

Digital Archive ID X.A143.2014

Digital Contents "Stratigraphic"

Digital Media available

"Images raster / digital photography", "Images vector", "Text"

Paper Archive

Leicestershire Museums

recipient

Paper Archive ID X.A143.2014
Paper Contents "Stratigraphic"

Paper Media available

"Context sheet", "Drawing", "Notebook - Excavation', 'Research', 'General Notes", "Photograph", "Report", "Section"

Project bibliography 1

Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

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https://oasis.ac.uk/form/print.cfm 4/4

Witham Archaeology

2 High Street, Ruskington, Sleaford, Lincolnshire NG34~9DT

Tel/Fax: (01529) 300890 Email: info@withamarchaeology.co.uk

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