

RFGT12/003



ROTHERWAS FUTURES FLOOD ATTENUATION SCHEME, HEREFORD

Archaeological Watching Brief

for Herefordshire County Council

DMS/112395/CD

May 2012

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Midlands & West

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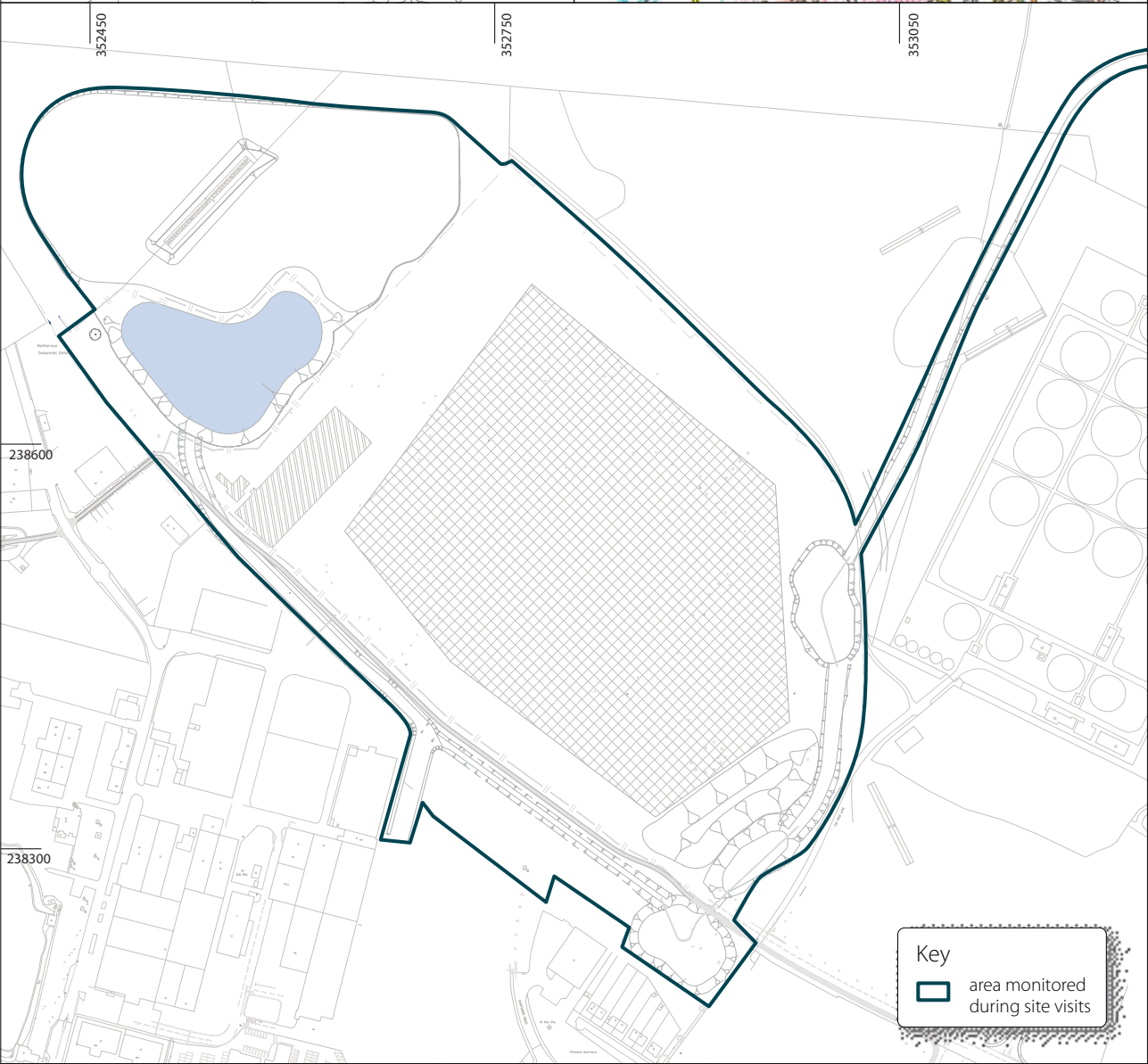
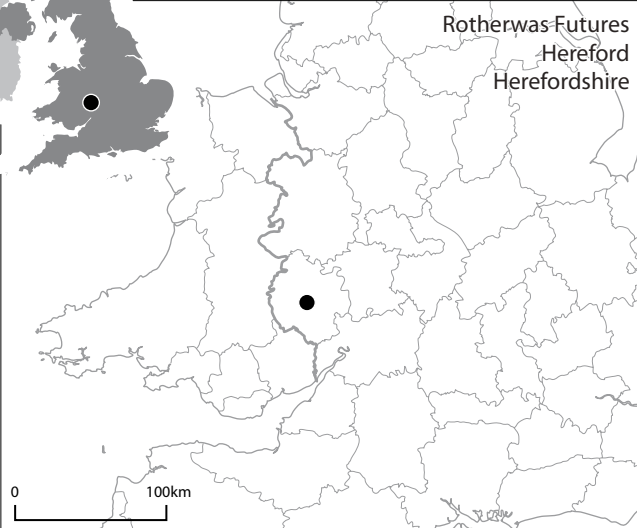
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Rotherwas-Futures
Hereford
Herefordshire



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Scale 1:5,000 @ A4



Illus 1
Site location

ROTHERWAS FUTURES FLOOD ATTENUATION SCHEME, HEREFORD

Archaeological Watching Brief

Herefordshire County Council, commissioned Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd to conduct a programme of monitoring inspections during the current phase of work on the flood attenuation scheme, relating to the re-development of the former Rotherwas munitions factory. (DMS/112395/CD), (NGR: SO 52780 38820).

No archaeological features or previously unidentified heritage assets were observed within the monitored area.

1. INTRODUCTION

Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd acting on behalf of Amery Consulting, conducted a series of site inspections during the ground stripping phase of works in respect of a planning consent granted by Herefordshire County Council (DMS/112395/CD) for the construction of a flood alleviation scheme at Rotherwas (NGR: 52920 38500).

Herefordshire County Council granted planning permission for the development on the condition that the applicant implemented a programme of archaeological works in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation.

The Herefordshire Archaeology, the advisors to the planning authority the Herefordshire County Council development control archaeologist agreed that an appropriate level of work following pre-determination investigations would be a series of monitoring visits to identify areas of archaeological activity.

This was accomplished through regular monitoring inspections, assessing the impact of ground works and systematically examining the area for any archaeological indication illustrating the site's history preceding the construction of the munitions factory.

The ten monitoring inspections made allowed the affected area to be rapidly assessed and examined while the works were undertaken and were conducted between the 30th of January 2012 and the 12th of April 2012.

The work was conducted in line with a Written Scheme of Investigation agreed with the planning authority (Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd, Craddock-Bennet 2011).

1.1 Site description

The area of re-development consists of the former 'north magazine' at Rotherwas (NGR SO 52920 38500) (see Illustration 1). Currently the location has been cleared of the bulk of military structures that once occupied the site, although some buildings have been retained for posterity.

Overall, the topography of the site gently slopes down from the south towards the River Wye in the north.

It is geologically located on river terrace deposits overlying the Raglan Mudstone Formation (BGS 1990).

1.2 Archaeological background

The site is of significant interest in terms of the wartime heritage assets that were present, of which the structures considered to be of high heritage value, have been listed, and preserved.



Of particular interest are the listed picric acid expense store located at NGR SO 52600 38780, and the large empty shell store located at NGR SO 52670 38570. The re-development of the site has been designed to avoid direct impact on these structures whilst protecting and preserving them.

The former line of the nineteenth century Holme Lacy to Hereford railway passes through the development. The earthworks of this, where remaining, are being avoided by the re-development scheme.

The eastern part of the site coincides to some extent with part of the historic post-medieval landscape of Rotherwas House. The general locality of the Rotherwas estate is known to have a high potential for the presence of significant finds from early prehistory.

Prior to determination of the planning application, site an archaeological watching brief was undertaken on geotechnical test pits across the flood alleviation area, and the locations of the proposed balancing ponds were evaluated by trial trench (Mayes 2011). No archaeological remains were located during this work, however portions of the flood alleviation scheme remained un-evaluated and there was considered to be residual potential for archaeological remains to occur in these areas.

2. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the project were to ascertain whether any archaeological remains were present within the area of the flood alleviation works, and to mitigate the impact of the works upon these remains by creating a permanent record of them.

3. METHOD

During the groundworks, regular site inspections were conducted in order to allow the site works to be monitored during topsoil strips and construction of the pond areas; compensating scrape areas; swales and balancing ponds. The site inspection were spread over the period of works and consisted of ten ground-monitoring visits.

3.1 Recording

All recording followed *IfA Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluation (IfA 2009)*. A plan of evaluation area was created using an RTK Trimble GPS and updated onto an AutoCAD base plan of the re-development site.

General digital site photographs were taken while the works were conducted

2



Illus 2

General view showing the stripping of the topsoil



Illus 3

General view showing the excavation of the main pond

4. RESULTS

The general stratigraphic make up the of the site meant that below an average depth of 0.4m in the south and 0.6m towards the northern boundary of the site (below present ground level), a natural gravel horizon was encountered.

Above this sterile gravel horizon, the stratigraphic sequence of the site consisted of a red-brown silty subsoil beneath the current topsoil.

The topsoil within the limits of the development, generally consisted of building and demolition debris, associated with the site and vegetation clearance.

No archaeological remains were observed.

5. DISCUSSION

The principal aim of the project was to identify and record through ongoing observation of the groundwork any archaeological assets. The monitoring of the flood alleviation works has established that no significant or large-scale archaeological assets were disturbed by the works.

The site inspections have indicated that the site has been subject to minimal human activity prior to the construction of the munitions factory, and historically may always have been agricultural land. It is also possible

that the construction of the munitions factory had a direct impact on any previously existing archaeological remains.

6. REFERENCES

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7. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Site register

Appendix 1.1 Photographic register

Photo no.	BW	Colour	Digital	Description
01	-	-	Y	General views of site during works
02	-	-	Y	General views of site during works
03	-	-	Y	General views of site during works
04	-	-	Y	General views of site during works
05	-	-	Y	General views of site during works
06	-	-	Y	General views of site during works
07	-	-	Y	General views of site during works
08	-	-	Y	General views of site during works
09	-	-	Y	General views of site during works
10	-	-	Y	General views of site during works
11	-	-	Y	General views of site during works
12	-	-	Y	General views of site during works
13	-	-	Y	General views of site during works
14	-	-	Y	General views of site during works
15	-	-	Y	General views of site during works
16	-	-	Y	General views of site during works
17	-	-	Y	General views of site during works
18	-	-	Y	General views of site during works
19	-	-	Y	General views of site during works
20	-	-	Y	General views of site during works
21	-	-	Y	General views of site during works
22	-	-	Y	General views of site during works
23	-	-	Y	General views of site during works
24	-	-	Y	General views of site during works
25	-	-	Y	General views of site during works
26	-	-	Y	General views of site during works
27	-	-	Y	General views of site during works
28	-	-	Y	General views of site during works
29	-	-	Y	General views of site during works
30	-	-	Y	General views of site during works
31	-	-	Y	General views of site during works
32	-	-	Y	General views of site during works
33	-	-	Y	General views of site during works
34	-	-	Y	General views of site during works

Photo no.	BW	Colour	Digital	Description
35	-	-	Y	General views of site during works
36	-	-	Y	General views of site during works
37	-	-	Y	General views of site during works
38	-	-	Y	General views of site during works
39	-	-	Y	General views of site during works
40	-	-	Y	General views of site during works
41	-	-	Y	General views of site during works
42	-	-	Y	General views of site during works
43	-	-	Y	General views of site during works
44	-	-	Y	General views of site during works
45	-	-	Y	General views of site during works
46	Y	-	Y	General views of site during works



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