

DWHH11



HEREFORD SATELLITE RADIOTHERAPY UNIT

Archaeological Evaluation

for Herefordshire Primary Care Trust

DMS/112924/F

August 2012

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CONTENTS

1.	INTRODUCTION	1
2.	SITE DESCRIPTION	1
3.	ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND	1
4.	OBJECTIVES	1
5.	METHOD	2
	5.1 Trial trenching	2
	5.2 Recording	2
6.	RESULTS	2
7.	DISCUSSION	3
8.	REFERENCES	3
	8.1 Bibliography	3
	8.2 Cartography	3
9.	APPENDICES	4
	Appendix 1 Trench descriptions	4
	Appendix 2 Photographic register	4

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

<i>Illus 1</i>	viii
<i>Site location</i>	
<i>Illus 2</i>	2
<i>General view of the site during excavation</i>	
<i>Illus 3</i>	2
<i>Trench 1 facing north-east</i>	
<i>Illus 4</i>	3
<i>Trench 2 facing north-east</i>	



Illus 1

Site location

HEREFORD SATELLITE RADIOTHERAPY UNIT

Archaeological Evaluation

The construction of a new radiotherapy unit (Ref: DMS/112924/F) on land previously occupied by Dore Ward at Hereford County Hospital necessitated the excavation of two trial trenches, within the footprint of the proposed development, to satisfy planning conditions attached to the approval for the development.

A series of modern service features were identified within the areas investigated,

but no remains of archaeological significance were identified.

1

1. INTRODUCTION

Herefordshire County Council granted planning permission for the construction of a new radiotherapy unit within Hereford County Hospital (Ref: DMS/112924/F) on the condition that the applicant implemented a programme of archaeological works in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (Craddock-Bennett 2012).

The agreed approach was to excavate two trial trenches as a first phase of investigation to inform the need for any further mitigation work on the site.

The evaluation was conducted on the 2nd of July 2012

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

The site is located within the southern complex of the Hereford County Hospital and currently consists of the demolished remains of the previous Dore ward Buildings (NGR: SO 51723 39966).

The site is bound by a public footpath to the south and hospital buildings to the north, east, and west. Within the development, are numerous inspection chambers indicating the presence of live services. (*Illus 1* – see opposite)

The underlying geology consists of old fluvio-glacial gravels overlying Old Red Sandstone.

3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Numerous excavations have taken place near the assessment area. These have concentrated upon the site of St Guthlac's priory and its cemetery to the northwest. Trial trenching undertaken in 1998 suggested that the area lies outside the priory and its burial ground but did identify pits associated with the dissolution of the priory.

However, previous work conducted within closer proximity to the new development produced no evidence of any historically significant assets (Doyle, D 2008).

4. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the project were to ascertain whether any archaeological remains were present within the area of the development, and to characterise their date, extent, preservation, and significance.

The evaluation trenching was intended to make it possible to establish the potential impact of the development upon any archaeological assets present within the site boundary and thus to establish the need for, and scope of, any mitigation measures that may be required prior to or during construction.



Illus 2

General view of the site during excavation

5. METHOD

5.1 Trial trenching

The evaluation comprised the excavation of two trenches, one 15m in length, and one 7m in length. Both lay within the principal area of the development. The evaluation trenches were located to avoid any known services, the need to do this being agreed in advance with the local planning authority's archaeological advisor. (Illus 2)

Excavation of the evaluation trenches was undertaken using a 14 tonne mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless bucket. All mechanical excavation was under direct supervision of an archaeologist.

The excavated trenches were closely examined for any features and the spoil was re-examined in order to collect any artefacts.

5.2 Recording

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

Evaluation trenches were photographed with graduated metric scales and include 35mm black-and-white archival prints and digital reference photographs.

6. RESULTS

For ease of reporting, the excavation results have been displayed in a tabular form (Appendix 1). A brief, generalised description of the contexts present in the excavated trenches is given below.

The general stratigraphic make up the of the site consisted of the present day demolition debris associated with the removal of Dore Ward, beneath which was a dark soil horizon containing post medieval domestic refuse such as glass and brick.

The demolition debris and subsoil overlay a deposit comprising

mixed red gravels and small regular shaped cobbles, set in a buff red, sandy grit matrix. This was considered to be a glaciofluvial geological deposit. Excavation was discontinued when this layer was encountered.

Within Trench 1 (Illus 3), a feature aligned east west cutting the subsoil was identified. It is most likely this represents a redundant service run, investigation of the feature indicated that the sides were straight cut and the width of the feature was also suggestive of a modern machine cut pipe run.

The excavation of Trench 2 (Illus 4) revealed an identical stratigraphic makeup as described above for Trench 1, with the exception of a large red pea grit filled cut aligned approximately southeast-northwest, cutting the subsoil. Partial excavation of



Illus 3

Trench 1 facing north-east

**Illus 4***Trench 2 facing north-east*

this feature indicated that it was possibly an unrecorded modern service run as it contained modern tarmac fragments within its makeup.

The large red gravel filled service run also cut a previously recorded, and now redundant, service run, in this case aligned northeast-southwest.

Within Trench 2 were two other features both with indeterminate edges. They were excavated to expose a section through them and were subsequently revealed to be very shallow and to contain modern ceramic finds. The original nature of these features is difficult to determine.

7. DISCUSSION

Excavation of the trial trenches has indicated that the site has been subject to minimal human activity apart from modern construction associated with the hospital development. Historically, this area of the hospital complex may always have been pasture or woodland. Also given the amounts of disturbance observed within the trenches there did not appear to be any surviving historic soil levels above the natural drift geology. This might imply that the site was levelled at the time the buildings were constructed in the middle of the 20th century.

The evaluation has established, as far as is practicable, that no significant or large-scale archaeological assets are present within the footprint of the proposed development.

8. REFERENCES

8.1 Bibliography

Archaeological Archives Forum 2007 *Archaeological Archives: a guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer, and curation* (published by the IfA 2007).

Caddock-Bennett, L 2012 *Hereford Satellite Radiotherapy Unit, Written Scheme of Investigation*, Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd.

Doyle, D & Lewis, D 2008 *Charles Renton Unit, Hereford Hospital, Archaeological Evaluation*, Archaeological Investigations – HAS 792.

Institute for Archaeologists 2009 *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation*.

8.2 Cartography

1990 British Geological Survey *Mid Wales & Marches*, 1:250 000 scale map.



9. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Trench descriptions

Trench	Dimensions (m)	Description	Contexts (depths below ground surface)
1	6.0 x 15.0 x 0.80	Excavated to a geological deposit, excavation indicated the presence of a service run aligned east-west	Ground surface: 100 – 0.30m Subsoil: 101 – 0.50m Geological deposit: 102 – u/ex
2	3.0 x 7.0 x 1.0	Excavated to a geological deposit, two modern service runs were located and two shallow features of an undetermined nature were identified.	Ground surface: 200 – 0.40m Subsoil: 201 – 0.60m Geological deposit: 202 – u/ex

Appendix 2 Photographic register

Photo	BW	C/S	Digital	Direction	Description
01	–	–	Y	NW	View prior to excavation
02	–	–	Y	N	View prior to excavation
03	–	–	Y	N	View during excavation
04	–	–	Y	NW	View prior to excavation
05	–	–	Y	NW	View prior to excavation
06	–	–	Y	NW	View prior to excavation
07	–	–	Y	N	View prior to excavation
08	–	–	Y	NE	View during excavation
09	–	–	Y	S	Damage prior to excavation
10	–	–	Y	S	Damage prior to excavation
11	–	–	Y	S	Damage prior to excavation
12	–	–	Y	S	Damage prior to excavation
13	–	–	Y	S	Damage prior to excavation
14	–	–	Y	S	Damage prior to excavation
15	–	–	Y	S	Damage prior to excavation
16	–	–	Y	S	General view of Trench 1
17	Y	Y	Y	N	Trench 1 after excavation
18	Y	Y	Y	N	Trench 1 after excavation
19	Y	Y	Y	E	West facing section ,Trench 1
20	Y	Y	Y	E	West facing section, showing modern service run
21	Y	Y	Y	S	Trench 1 after excavation
22	Y	Y	Y	N	Trench 2 after excavation
23	Y	Y	Y	W	East facing section showing modern makeup
24	Y	Y	Y	S	Trench 2, showing modern features.
25	Y	Y	Y	E	West facing section of Trench 2 showing red gravel, modern service cut
26	–	–	Y	–	General view after reinstatement of site
27	–	–	Y	–	General view after reinstatement of site

Photo	BW	C/S	Digital	Direction	Description
28	–	–	Y	–	General view after reinstatement of site
29	–	–	Y	–	General view after reinstatement of site
30	–	–	Y	–	General view after reinstatement of site
31	–	–	Y	–	General view after reinstatement of site



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