

KRWW12



## KETCH ROUNDABOUT REALIGNMENT

*Archaeological Evaluation*

*for Worcestershire Highways*

*October 2012*



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Project Manager

Mike Kimber

Author

Simon Mayes

Fieldwork

Jason Murphy & Simon Mayes

Graphics

Caroline Norrman

Approved by

Mike Kimber – Project Manager

 .....

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**Midlands & West**

Headland Archaeology  
Unit 1, Premier Business Park, Faraday Road  
Hereford HR4 9NZ  
01432 364 901  
[hereford@headlandarchaeology.com](mailto:hereford@headlandarchaeology.com)

**[www.headlandarchaeology.com](http://www.headlandarchaeology.com)**





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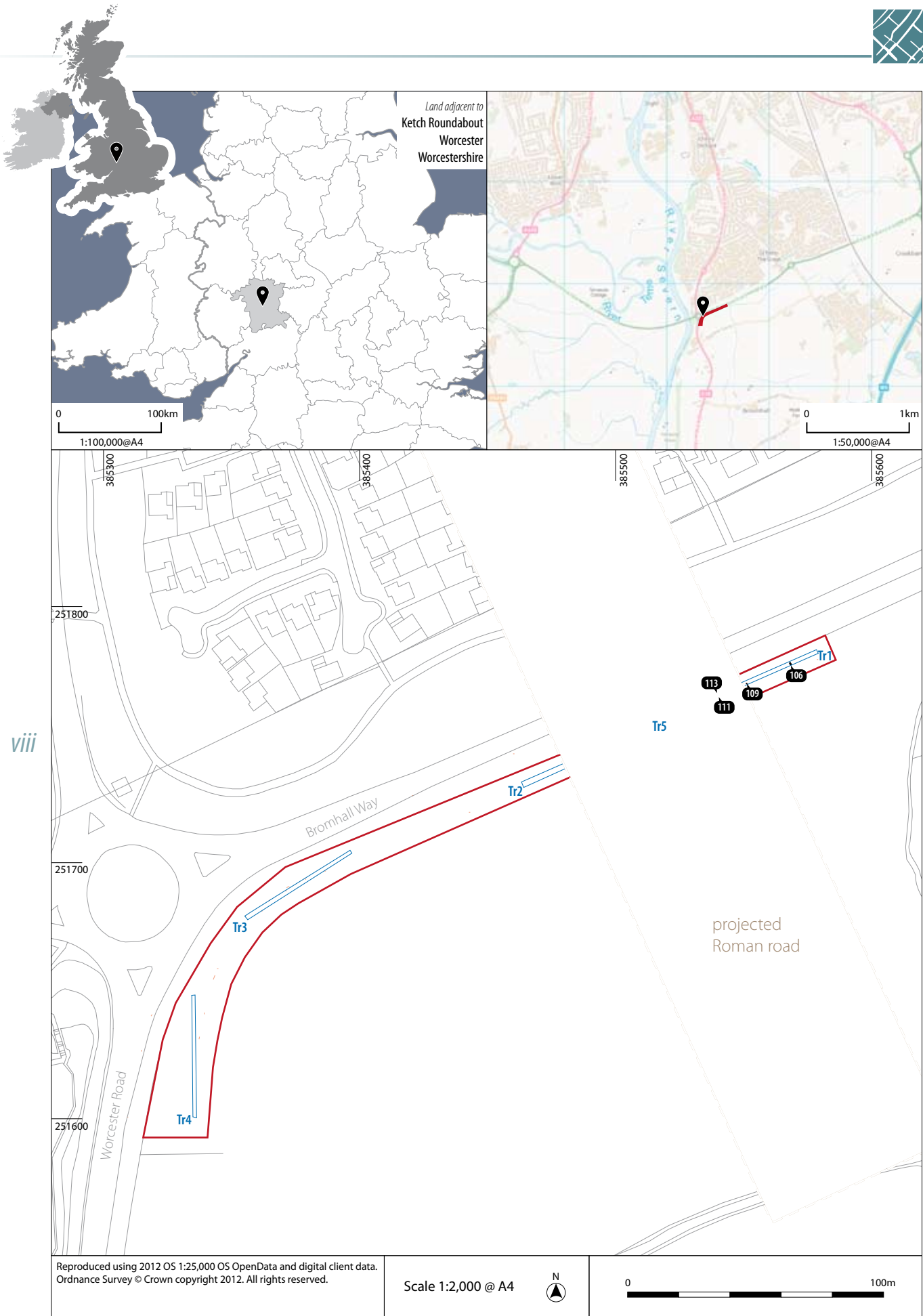


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Scale 1:2,000 @ A4



**Illus 1**  
Site location



# KETCH ROUNDABOUT REALIGNMENT

## Archaeological Evaluation

*Halcrow Group Ltd, on behalf of Worcestershire Highways, commissioned Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd to undertake an evaluation by trial trench on land adjacent to the Ketch roundabout, south of the A4440, Worcester (Illus 1).*

*The evaluation comprised five trenches, three 50m in length, one 40m long and one 10m long. A small area of post-medieval soil horizon was recorded towards the northern end of the site; the southern evaluation trenches indicated that the rest of the site had been previously, truncated by modern construction activity. The evaluated area is considered to have limited potential for archaeological remains to occur.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

An archaeological evaluation was carried out on land south of the A4440, Worcester on behalf of Worcestershire Highways, through their agent, Halcrow Group Ltd.

The client is planning a proposed road improvement scheme.

It was considered that there was a high potential for Roman activity within the area of the proposed development in the form of the predicted course of the Roman road from Worcester to Gloucester. The local authority has requested information on the significance of any heritage assets within the proposed development area by means of archaeological trial trenching

All works were undertaken in line with a Brief issued by James Dinn, the archaeological advisor to the Planning Authority. A specification for the work was prepared in line with the Brief, in line with IfA standards (Kimber 2012).

### 2. SITE DESCRIPTION

The site is generally flat but has a subtle slope up towards the Ketch roundabout. It is currently under grass, but in use regularly as a venue for a local car boot sale and has subsequently undergone improvement through the inclusion of hard standing and vehicular routes across the area.

Towards the southwest of the site, a government owned oil pipeline is known to cross the area, and towards the west a number of water main services are located. The site lies at approximately 25.0m AOD and the underlying geology consists of the Sidmouth Mudstone formation.

### 3. BACKGROUND

The scheme lies within The Registered Battlefield of Worcester (1651); the projected line of the Gloucester-Worcester Roman Road (Archaeologically Sensitive Area (ASA) No. 23 also runs north-south through the development area.

The archaeological background, including the level of archaeological potential, to the site is given in a desk-based assessment (DBA) which was prepared to inform a proposal relating to the potential for a park and ride facility in between the A38 and Norton Road (Halcrow 2010, WSI Halcrow-2012). The DBA covered the south east part of the current road improvement in depth, whilst the remainder of the site was embraced in the wider study area of that report. The proposal has also been included in a DBA undertaken as part of the proposed 'Worcester South' urban extension (EDP UK 2010, WSI Halcrow-2012). A program of geophysics was carried out on the site (Archaeophysica 2011, WSI Halcrow-2012) which detected a spread of debris across the site; this was considered to relate to agricultural improvements related to the current use of the land. No other anomalies were identified.



◀ **Illus 2**

*Section showing historic soil horizon and modern dumping within Trench 1*

All recording followed standard archaeological guidelines as set out by the Institute for Archaeologists. All contexts were given unique numbers and recording was undertaken on *pro forma* record cards that conform to accepted archaeological norms.

Trench plans and sections were produced at a scale of 1:100. Photographs were taken throughout using 35mm monochrome and colour slide film while digital photographs were taken on a 7.2mp camera for illustrative purposes. Registers were kept for context records, photographs and drawings. Trench positions were surveyed using a Trimble RTK R6 GPS.

## 4. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aims and objectives of the archaeological evaluation were to:

- Establish the presence or absence of significant archaeological assets;
- To determine the significance, degree of survival and extent of any buried archaeological assets;
- Determine the presence or absence of the Worcester-Gloucester Roman Road;
- To produce a report on the results of the fieldwork in line with this WSI and the WCC Brief that will;
- Assist in formulating a strategy to ensure the recording, preservation or management of the resource and;
- Assist in the formulation of a proposal for further archaeological investigation within a programme of research.

## 5. METHOD

Excavation was undertaken using a mechanical excavator with the use of a toothless bucket. The trenches were positioned to investigate a wide sample of the land-take area and to investigate the supposed course of the Roman road. All mechanical excavation took place under archaeological supervision. The trenches were excavated to naturally occurring deposits where possible, otherwise to a maximum depth of 1.2m.

The original trench layout had called for four 50m trenches but due to the location of an unofficial footpath and entrance into the area of investigation it was felt necessary to move trench 1, leave a gap and excavate the remaining area with a 10m trench. This resulted in trench 2 being shortened to 40m. This action was considered necessary to eliminate the chances of the presence of the Roman road being missed within the land-take area (Illus 1).

## 6. RESULTS

### 6.1 Trench 1

Trench 1 (Illus 2) measured 50m in length and was aligned northeast/southwest. The topsoil was a mid brown silt loam, probably imported. It overlay mixed subsoil, containing modern rubble that was noted but not retained.

Towards the north east end of the trench beneath the dumps of modern deposits a sondage was excavated to a depth of 1.20m exposing an historic soil horizon. [104] consisted of a dark grey silty clay containing charcoal inclusions and small sub rounded stones, finds from [104] included transfer print pottery and broken clay pipe stems, [104] overlay a mid brown/pink hard clay deposit [105]. The soil horizon [104] appeared to slope up towards the south-western end of trench 1 (23.19-23.46m) for approximately 20m, where it appeared to have been truncated by development associated with the construction of the A4440. Within the subsoil beneath [104] a series of small linear plough marks, aligned north south were noted.

Located towards the centre of the trench, the base of a small sub-circular cut feature [109] measuring approx 0.05m across and 0.07m deep was recorded and sectioned. Although no datable finds were recovered from it a small amount of material was identified by the archaeological adviser to be slag from a blast furnace. Towards the west end of trench 1 two features were identified and sample excavated. Feature [110] was 1.4m wide and 0.22m deep and ran on across approximately 10m of the evaluation trench aligned north-west to south-east. No dateable finds were present; it may have been a post-medieval field boundary. Feature [113] lay only partially within the trench; its uneven sides and base and rounded terminal end suggested strongly that it may have been a tree-throw pit.

## 6.2 Trench 2

Trench 2 (Illus 3) was aligned north-east/south-west and measured 40m in length. It was excavated to 0.6m in depth. Excavation took place to undisturbed geological deposits throughout. Beneath the topsoil, a subsoil of red brown silty clay overlay a geological deposit of rounded pebbles in a clay matrix. The modern rubble noted in trenches 1, 4 and 5 was not present indicating that this area may not have been impacted upon by the construction of the A4440. No archaeological remains were present.



## 6.3 Trench 3

Trench 3 (Illus 4) was also aligned north-west south-east and was 50m long. It was excavated to a depth of 0.6m at which point the geological horizon was apparent. No modern rubble was present indicating that the vicinity of trench 3 may not have been impacted upon by the construction of the A4440. No archaeological remains were present.



## 6.4 Trench 4

Trench 4 (Illus 5) was 50m long and was aligned north/south. Excavation took place to natural deposits throughout (1.2m). Beneath the topsoil, a compact layer of modern rubble overlay a geological deposit of rounded pebbles in a clay matrix. No archaeological significant assets were present.



## 6.5 Trench 5

Trench 5 (Illus 6) was 10m in length and was aligned approximately northeast/ southwest. It was excavated to a depth of 1.2m. The topsoil was approximately 0.15m deep above mixed subsoil with inclusions of red brick. Below the modern subsoil was a very compact mid yellow brown sandy loam, probably associated with the previous road construction. The geological horizon in the trench was red brown clay containing river wash pebbles. No archaeological remains were present.

## 7. DISCUSSION

In general, the area of trenches 1, 4 and 5 appears to have been heavily disturbed by modern levelling and landscaping, probably associated with the construction of the A4440. The hedge line on the northern edge of the site appears to contain no mature species that would indicate that it is of any age further emphasising that the site has been affected by the previous road development. There was no evidence of disturbance in trenches 2 and 3, neither was there any evidence for the presence of archaeological remains. In particular, no evidence for the

### Illus 3 ►

*General view of Trench 2, facing N-E*

### Illus 4 ►

*General view of Trench 3, facing W*

### Illus 5 ►

*General view of Trench 4, facing N*



## ◀ Illus 6

*General view of Trench 5, facing W*

possible that the road never did pass through this area, and instead ran into Worcester to the east or the west of the proposed development area.

The only archaeological features discovered in the course of the evaluation in trench 1 are most likely to be post-medieval in date, and to relate to agricultural use of the land.

## 8. ARCHIVE

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The project archive will be deposited with Worcester Museum.

## 9. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation: Document XX  
Version 03, Worcester Highways, Halcrow 2012

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

Brickley M & McKinley J 2004 *Guidelines to the standards for  
recording human remains* (IfA Paper No 7).

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(revised October 2008).

Watkinson D & Neal V *First aid for finds*, (Third Edition 1998).

presence of the Roman Road was found during the course of the evaluation.

- 4 The disturbance associated with the construction of the A4440 may explain why the evaluation did not identify any evidence or remains to confirm the presence of the projected line of the Gloucester-Worcester Roman Road. On the other hand it is also

## 10. APPENDICES

### Appendix 1 Site registers

#### Appendix 1.1 Trench register

Trench	Orientation	Description	Length	Avg. depth
1	NE-SW	Stratified deposits with historic soil horizon and subsoil with evidence for plough marks the historic horizon (transfer print and clay pipe) has been truncated by modern construction and dump, possible associated with road construction, two linear features resembling boundaries or hedge lines p, possible post hole (modern). Trench was located to intercept the projected alignment of the Roman road, no indication of the roads existence.	50m	23.46–23.19m
2	NE-SW	Modern topsoil overlaying red brown clay deposits, overlaying a geological deposit of rounded pebbles in a clay matrix, No archaeological significant assets	40m	23.20m
3	NE-SW	Modern topsoil overlaying red brown clay deposits, overlaying a geological deposit of rounded pebbles in a clay matrix, No archaeological significant assets	50m	25.30m
4	N-S	Modern topsoil overlaying a compact layer of modern dump (the site appears to have been truncated either from road construction or from the nearby services) overlaying a geological deposit of rounded pebbles in a clay matrix, No archaeological significant assets	50m	26.25m
5	NE-SW	Modern topsoil overlaying a modern dump of hard compacted made up ground as seen in the SW end of trench 1, overlaying a geological deposit of rounded pebbles in a clay matrix, No archaeological significant assets	10m	23.50m

#### Appendix 1.2 Context register

Context	Trench	Description
100	1	Topsoil, light brown silty loam, moist-loose (0.15m depth)
101	1	Subsoil, grey/brown silty loam, mixed deposit, red brick and plastic finds, modern deposit (0.44m depth)
102	1	Subsoil mid grey/brown sandy loam, moist compact/solid (0.30m depth)
103	1	Subsoil (dump) light brown silty clay, dry compact/solid (0.11m depth)
104	1	Soil Horizon , dark grey silty clay containing small sub rounded stones- (historic topsoil)
105	1	Subsoil mid brown/pink moist hard un excavated –base layer- (historic subsoil)
106	1	Fill of 107 light brown loamy sand no finds

107	1	Two linear cuts. Cut filled by 106 (1.5m x0.21 x0.04m) possible plough marks
108	1	Fill of 109, mid grey brown silty loam
109	1	Sub-circular cut, filled by 108 (0.04 x 0.05 x 0.07m)
110	1	Fill of 111, brown grey silty loam containing sorted stone inclusions, and brick and glass
111	1	Cut filled by 110, linear cut ,rounded profile 10.5 x 1.4 x 0.22m, possible field boundary/hedge line
112	1	Fill of 113, dark grey brow silty loam containing small rounded stones
113	1	Cut filled by 112,linear with round terminating end, cut by trench section, uneven sides and undulating base, possible tree pit or hedge remains
200	2	Topsoil, light brown silty loam, moist-loose (0.25-0.30m depth)
201	2	Subsoil, red brown clay with charcoal inclusions and band of rounded small gravel, (0.30m depth)
202	2	Geological sterile horizon, red brown clay containing river wash pebbles (un-excavated)
300	3	Topsoil, light brown silty loam, moist-loose (0.25–0.30m depth)
301	3	Subsoil, red brown clay with charcoal inclusions and band of rounded small gravel, (0.30m)
302	3	Geological sterile horizon, red brown clay containing river wash pebbles (un-excavated)
400	4	Topsoil mid brown, silty loam with yellowing base (0.30–40m depth)
401	4	Subsoil mid yellow sandy loam, compact/solid (0.30m depth) modern dump
402	4	Subsoil, red brown clay with charcoal inclusions and band of rounded small gravel, (0.30m)
403	4	Geological sterile horizon, red brown clay containing river wash pebbles (un-excavated)
500	5	Topsoil, light brown silty loam, moist-loose (0.15m depth)
501	5	Subsoil, grey/brown silty loam, mixed deposit, red brick and plastic finds, modern deposit (0.44m depth)
502	5	Subsoil mid yellow sandy loam, compact/solid (0.30m depth) modern dump
503	5	Geological sterile horizon, red brown clay containing river wash pebbles (un-excavated)

#### Appendix 1.3 Drawing register

Drw	Section	Plan	Description
1	–	not to scale	Plan of Trench 1,2,3,4,5 (Schematic location plan-gps surveyed)
2	–	1:200	Plan of trench 1
3	1:20	–	Section of NE end of trench 1 showing dump and historic soil horizon



## Appendix 1.4 Photographic register

Shot	B/W	C/S	Digital	Direction	Description
0	y	y	y	N	NE section of Trench 1 showing historic soil horizon and modern dumps
1	y	y	y	N	Section of Trench 3
2	y	y	y	SW	General view of trench 3
3	y	y	y	NE	General view of Trench 2
4	y	y	y	SE	General view of Trench 1
5	y	y	y	SE	General view of Trench 1
6	y	y	y	SE	Trench 1 ,possible plough marks
7	y	y	y	SW	Section through post hole 109 trench 1
8	y	y	y	SW	Section across 110 and 113, trench 1
9	y	y	y	SW	General view of Trench 5
10	y	y	y	S	Section Trench 5
11	y	y	y	S	Trench 1 section across 110
12	y	y	y	N	General view of Trench 4
13	y	y	y	W	Section of sondage in Trench 4
14	y	y	y	W	Section of sondage in Trench 4
15	-	-	y	NE	General view of backfilled Trench 2
16	-	-	y	N	General view of backfilled Trench 5
17	-	-	y	N	General view of backfilled Trench 5
18	-	-	y	N	General view of backfilled Trench 1
19	-	-	y	NE	General view of backfilled Trench 1
20	-	-	y	NE	General view of backfilled Trench 1
21	-	-	y	NE	General view of backfilled Trench 1
22	-	-	y	SW	General view of backfilled Trench 3
23	-	-	y	S	General view of backfilled Trench 4





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**Midlands & West**

Headland Archaeology  
Unit 1, Premier Business Park, Faraday Road  
Hereford HR4 9NZ  
01432 364 901  
[hereford@headlandarchaeology.com](mailto:hereford@headlandarchaeology.com)

**South & East**

Headland Archaeology  
Technology Centre, Stanbridge Road  
Leighton Buzzard LU7 4QH  
01525 850878  
[leighton.buzzard@headlandarchaeology.com](mailto:leighton.buzzard@headlandarchaeology.com)

**North East**

Headland Archaeology  
13 Jane Street  
Edinburgh EH6 5HE  
0131 467 7705  
[office@headlandarchaeology.com](mailto:office@headlandarchaeology.com)

**North West**

Headland Archaeology  
10 Payne Street  
Glasgow G4 0LF  
0141 354 8100  
[glasgowoffice@headlandarchaeology.com](mailto:glasgowoffice@headlandarchaeology.com)

**[www.headlandarchaeology.com](http://www.headlandarchaeology.com)**