

Post-Excavation Analysis & Archive Review

Ledbury Trunk Main

Re-excavation of two engineering access pits,
AP8 and AP9, within the Scheduled Ancient
Monument (Herefordshire 330) to the S of
Stretton Grandison, Herefordshire

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1. Introduction

1.1 SUMMARY OF PROGRAMME OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORKS

1.2 Border Archaeology undertook a programme of archaeological works on the Ledbury Trunk Main Scheme on behalf of Laing O'Rourke comprising of:

- Archaeological observation of topsoil strip, open-cut trenching and re-excavation of Access Pits (AP) 8 and 9 within the designated area of the Roman settlement of Stretton Grandison to locate couplers.
- Manual excavation of an extension to AP8

1.3 This analysis & review is thus compiled to quantify the collected data, assess its potential for further analysis and formalise that assessment together with procedures for the post-analysis retention or disposal of material.

1.4 All information relating to the site archive conforms to standards and guidelines in *Management of Archaeological Projects 2 (1991)*.

1.5 SITE SPECIFIC INFORMATION

1.6 *Archaeological observation of topsoil strip, open-cut trenching and re-excavation*

1.7 This involved the archaeological observation of groundworks undertaken at AP8 and AP9, consisting of the removal of topsoil to a depth of 0.3m, followed by the excavation of open-cut trenching by machine to locate the original AP8 and AP9.

1.8 *Excavation of extension to AP8*

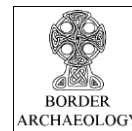
1.9 The difficulty in locating of AP8 resulted in an extension to the original trench that exposed new archaeological deposits and was therefore excavated by hand.

1.10 SCHEME OF WORKS

1.11 Plough soil was removed by machine under archaeological supervision using a toothless ditching bucket. Where the original trench was located, backfill to the pipe was also excavated by machine. Manual excavation of new archaeological deposits ensured the recovery of all stratigraphic data, with the extent and character of each archaeological context being defined by trowelling prior to excavation.

1.12 The significance of archaeological materials encountered was assessed with reference to the research priorities and site-specific research framework outlined in Border Archaeology's Written Scheme of Investigation (Project Design).

1.13 Written, graphic and photographic records were made using pro-forma record forms and sheets, in accordance with Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) Standard and Guidance documents, and a Harris Matrix was produced to demonstrate stratigraphic relationships. Non-significant deposits, features and structures were recorded in plan and section at a scale of 1:50 or in elevation at



a scale of 1:20, depending on size and extent. Significant deposits, features and structures were recorded in plan at a scale of 1:20 and in section / elevation at a scale of 1:20 or 1:10.

- 1.14 All datable finds, including pottery, were collected and catalogued.
- 1.15 Large quantities of slag were found in a deposit within the AP8 extension and these were collected.
- 1.16 Two possible structure foundations, associated pits and a possible gravel surface/trackway in the extension of AP8 were identified and recorded.
- 1.17 All stratified animal bone was recovered.
- 1.18 A judgment sampling methodology was employed, with samples taken from sealed archaeological deposits considered not to be contaminated or of mixed / secondary origin. Samples taken from selected contexts were assigned sample numbers and these were entered into a sample register and cross-referenced with context sheets.
- 1.19 A photographic record of all stratigraphic units comprising record views of contexts, samples or artefacts has been compiled, together with a representative photographic record of the progress of the excavation. X-ray photographs of archaeological metalwork will be produced by the nominated suitably qualified conservator. All photographic records have been indexed and cross-referenced to written site records.
- 1.20 The resultant archive has been compiled in accordance with *Management of Archaeological Projects 2 (1991)*, *Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage* (United Kingdom Institute for Conservation, 1990) and *Standards in the museum care of archaeological collections* (Museums & Galleries Commission, 1994).

2. Quantified Data

- 2.1 This section of the Archive Review contains a summary characterising the quantity and perceived quality of the data contained in the site archive, the term 'data' referring to site records and materials recovered from the site.
- 2.2 A detailed written record comprising a total of 55 *pro forma* record sheets was compiled for the observation of the topsoil strip, open-cut trenching and re-excavation of AP8 and AP9 and the excavation of the AP8 extension.
- 2.3 *Archaeological observation of topsoil strip, open-cut trenching and re-excavation*
- 2.4 A total of 6 contexts were identified for the observation of the topsoil strip, open-cut trenching and re-excavation of AP8 and AP9 (Table 1).

Access Pit Number	Number of Deposits	Number of Structures	No of Cuts	No of Fills
AP8	0	0	1	1

AP9	4	0	0	0
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Table 1: Context information for re-excavation of AP8 and AP9

2.5 A total of 5 site drawings were compiled, consisting of two plans at a scale of 1:50 and 1:20 (Table 2).

Drawing Number	Drawing Type	Context Numbers	Direction (facing)	Description	Scale	Number of sheets
4	Section	401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 408, 411	S	S-facing section of AP8	1:20	1
5	Plan	419, 420	N/A	Post-ex plan of AP8 (incl. extension)	1:20	6
6	Plan	411, 412, 413	N/A	Plan of sondage and post hole	1:20	1
7	Plan	401, 408, 411	N/A	Plan of deposit 408	1:20	2
9	Plan	302	N/A	Post-ex plan of AP9	1:50	1

Table 2: Drawing register for re-excavation of AP8 and AP9

2.6 A photographic record comprising 29 photographs was made using a high resolution 10.3 MPX digital camera (Table 3).

Access Pit Number	Digital	Colour 35mm	Monochrome 35mm
AP8 (incl. extension)	22	-	-
AP9	7	-	-

Table 3: Photograph register for re-excavation of AP8 and AP9

2.7 A total of 51 artefacts were recovered from the backfill of the original trench and are therefore unstratified, consisting of 48 pottery sherds and two pieces of CBM/fired clay (Table 4).

Access Pit Number	Context Number	Ceramic Sherds	CBM/Fired clay	Bone	FE Objects	Cu Alloy Objects	Glass	Slag
AP8	419	48	2	1	0	0	0	0
AP9	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL		48	2	1	0	0	0	0

Table 4: Artefact register for re-excavation of AP8 and AP9

2.8 *Excavation of extension to original AP8*

2.9 A total of 18 contexts were identified for the manual excavation of the extension to AP8 (Table 5).

Access Pit Number	No of Deposits	No of Structures	No of Cuts	No of Fills
AP8 extension	9	1	3	5

Table 4: Context information for AP8 extension

2.10 A total of 4 site drawings were made during the manual excavation of the extension to AP8 including 3 plans and 1 section (Table 5).

Drawing Number	Drawing Type	Context Numbers	Direction (facing)	Description	Scale	Number of sheets
4	Section	Multiple	S	S-facing section of AP8	1:20	1
5	Plan	Multiple	N/A	Post-ex plan of AP8	1:20	6
6	Plan	411, 412, 413	N/A	Plan of sondage and pit [413]	1:20	1
7	Plan	401, 408, 411	N/A	Plan of (408)	1:20	2

Table 5: Drawing register for AP8 extension

2.11 A total of 1315 artefacts were recovered from 7 contexts identified during excavation of the extension to AP8, which included 823 sherds of pottery, 26 fragments of CBM, 202 pieces of animal bone, 25 Fe objects, 3 Cu Alloy object, 2 fragments of glass and 234 pieces of slag (Table 6).

Access Pit Number	Context Number	Ceramic Sherds	CBM/Fired clay	Bone	FE Objects	Cu Alloy Objects	Glass	Slag
AP8 extension	400	564	17	167	15	0	1	24
	401	101	0	11	3	1	0	0
	407	16	3	5	0	0	0	0
	409	19	5	3	0	0	1	210
	411	68	1	6	4	2	0	0
	412	21	0	7	0	0	0	0
	416	34	0	3	3	0	0	0
TOTAL		823	26	202	25	3	2	234

Table 6: Artefact register for AP8 extension

2.12 A total of 2 environmental samples were taken during the excavation of the extension to AP8 (Table 7).

Access Pit Number	Sample Number	Context Number	Sample Type	Sample Size
AP8 extension	1	416	Charcoal deposit	10L
	2	409	Slag deposit	2L

Table 7: Sample register for AP8 extension

2.13 The photographic record of the excavation of the AP8 extension comprised a total of 22 photographs taken with a high resolution 10.3 MPX digital camera (Table 8).

Access Pit Number	Digital	Colour 35mm	Monochrome 35mm
AP8 (incl. original trench)	22	-	-

Table 8: Photograph register for AP8

3. Statement of Potential for Analysis

3.1 An initial assessment of the archaeological potential of the site archive has been undertaken with reference to the research priorities and site-specific research framework identified by Border Archaeology with reference to research agendas and outlined in the Written Scheme of Investigation. These priorities include:

- Evidence for prehistoric activity
- Evidence for Roman occupation, with a particular focus on the Roman settlement area delineated in the Central Marches Historic Towns Survey for Stretton Grandison
- Evidence for post-Roman, medieval and post-medieval activity
- Characterising and mapping Holocene alluvial deposits

3.2 Evidence for prehistoric activity

Based on the available evidence (specifically documentary research, aerial photography and historic maps), it is clear that both the landscape of the Lower Lugg and the Frome were areas of intensive human settlement at least since the Mesolithic period (c. 8500–4000 BC). Evidence for prehistoric occupation within the pipeline corridor consists of chance finds and possible cropmark features identified from aerial reconnaissance; the only prehistoric site lying in the immediate vicinity of the pipeline route is Wergins Stone, the remains of a possible chambered tomb of Neolithic date (c. 4000-2000 BC), subsequently re-used as a medieval boundary marker.

3.3 *No prehistoric finds or features were observed during this phase of work on AP8 and AP9.*

3.4 Evidence for Roman occupation

Archaeological evidence of Roman activity (c.43-410 AD) within the pipeline corridor is well attested; the pipeline route crosses the line of a Roman road to the E of the reservoir at Bewdley Bank. More significantly, the pipeline crosses through the Roman settlement of Stretton Grandison (*Epoessa*?) to the S of the River Frome, an area which has been identified by the Central Marches Historic Towns Survey as containing buried archaeological deposits of 'high potential'. The pipeline directly traverses the line of a known Roman road to the E of the

A417 and enters the area of a rectangular ditched enclosure of Roman date, which has been designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM Heref. 330).

3.5 *The excavations at AP8 have revealed significant evidence of occupation within the area of the Roman settlement of Stretton Grandison (SAM Heref. 330). The features revealed included two possible platforms for buildings and a posthole; a gravel trackway or courtyard; multiple occupation layers and two dump deposits, one of metal working slag and the other of burnt organic material. Analysis of the pottery and Cu alloy coin have potential to give further dating evidence for the occupation of the site, and also evidence of what this part of the site was being used for. Analysis of the slag and organic material will aid the understanding of the industrial processes being undertaken in this area of the site.*

3.6 Evidence for post-Roman, medieval and post-medieval activity

The pipeline route passes in close proximity to several deserted medieval settlements at Lower Lyde, Upper Lyde, Eau Withington and Nunnington and immediately to the N of a 12th-13th century moated site at Yarkhill, which has been designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument. A complex series of drainage features, field enclosures and ridge and furrow features, dating back to the medieval period, have also been identified in close proximity to where the pipeline route crosses the Lugg to the S of Wergins Bridge.

3.7 *No post-medieval finds or features were recovered from the excavations.*

3.8 Characterising and mapping Holocene alluvial deposits

3.9 Herefordshire Archaeology has identified as a key research objective the specialist geomorphological recording, analysis and modelling of Holocene alluvial deposits within these floodplain areas. Evidence relating to the developing environment of the West Midlands is relatively sparse and this objective thus links with the emerging West Midlands Regional Research Framework for Archaeology.

3.10 *No geoarchaeological recording or were carried out on this phase of work.*

3.11 Initial Assessment

3.12 All material initially identified as appropriate will be sent for analysis to the following specialists, whose recommendations for further and more detailed assessment will be adopted within the updated Project Design:

- Roman Pottery - Dr Jane Timby
- Samian Ware – Ms. Felicity C. Wild
- Coins – Adrian Popescu (Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge)
- Animal bone - Dr Deborah Jaques, Palaeoecology Services Co Hull
- Slag and metal – Dr. David Starley
- Conservation of ferrous artefacts – Phil Parkes

4. Storage and Curation

4.1 Immediate and long-term conservation and storage requirements for the data held in the site archive

4.2 Each object identified as requiring conservation treatment will have a manual conservation record describing condition and treatment. It should be noted that no damp or wet finds, large structural items (wooden building elements, wall plaster or mosaics) or vulnerable finds in danger of deterioration were identified.

4.3 The archive will be stored and packed to ensure general preservation, with particular attention being paid to the storage of iron.

4.4 Cardiff Conservation Services will carry out X-radiography and conservation of all metal objects.

4.5 Recommendations about discarding material

4.6 Recommendations regarding the discarding of material will be obtained from specialists and their guidance will be adhered to.

5. Preparation of Archive

5.1 Preparation of Documentary Archive

5.2 The documentary archive includes the following items:

- Context register
- Context sheets
- Site drawings
- Photographic register
- Site photographs
- Small finds register
- Bulk finds catalogue
- Sample register
- Matrices
- Levels recording sheet
- Drawing register

5.3 Preparation of Material Archive (finds)

5.4 The material archive includes the following items:

- Pottery
- CBM/Fired clay
- Animal bone
- Fe objects
- Cu Alloy objects
- Glass
- Slag



- 5.5 Bulk finds have been quantified, catalogued and marked with a reference number. This number is unique to each item and has been cross-referenced with the finds catalogue. Registered finds have been cleaned (as appropriate) and registered as individual items.

6. Publication of Final Report

- 6.1 Copies of the final report will be sent to the following individuals & organisations:

- Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water
- Laing O'Rourke
- Julian Cotton Archaeological Advisor, Herefordshire Council
- Herefordshire Archaeology Sites and Monuments Record

- 6.2 An article detailing the findings of the fieldwork will be submitted for publication in the *Transactions of the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club*.

7. Deposition of Archive

- 7.1 The archive will be deposited with Hereford City Museum on completion of post-excavation analysis and report preparation.