

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT:
TRIAL TRENCHING ON LAND OFF LOWER HOWSELL ROAD, LOWER HOWSELL,
GREAT MALVERN, WORCESTERSHIRE**

Planning Reference: 14/01231/OUT
Worcestershire HER Activity Number: WSM66259
NGR: SO 7883 4824
AAL Site Code: LOHO 14
OASIS Reference Number: allenarc1-198987



Report prepared for Heritage Collective
On behalf of Harris Lamb Property Consultancy

By
Allen Archaeology Limited
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Allenarchaeology



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Cover image: General view of the site, looking southwest

Executive Summary

- Allen Archaeology Limited was commissioned by the Heritage Collective on behalf of Harris Lamb Property Consultancy to undertake an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching on land off Lower Howsell Road, Lower Howsell, Great Malvern, Worcestershire, prior to determination of a planning application for a residential development.
- Desk based assessment identified the potential for Roman activity on or near to the site, but a geophysical survey revealed little evidence for archaeological activity other than a high level of modern disturbance, resulting from the presence of several allotments across the site.
- Eight trenches measuring 40m long by 1.8m wide were excavated over anomalies identified during geophysical survey.
- Trench 1 exposed a large feature at the northeast end of the trench; this extended beyond the limits of the trench and was not fully excavated but was of modern date, and appears to be associated with the use of the site as allotment gardens in the early 20th century.
- Trench 3 exposed three small northeast to southwest orientated ditches. These were also of early modern date and are most likely to be associated with the allotment gardens.
- Trench 6 exposed four north to south orientated ditches again of modern date. As with the other features encountered at the site they are most likely to be associated with the 20th century allotments at the site.
- The remaining trenches (2, 4, 5, 7 and 8) were devoid of archaeological features or deposits.
- The only dateable evidence recovered from the site comprised modern pottery and building materials from a small number of cut features. No further finds, either stratified or from residual contexts, were recovered from the site.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Allen Archaeology Limited (hereafter AAL) was commissioned by Harris Lamb Property Consultancy to undertake an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching on land off Lower Howsell Road, Malvern, Worcestershire, prior to determination of a planning application for a residential development.
- 1.2 The excavating, recording and reporting conforms to current national guidelines, as set out in the Institute for Archaeologists '*Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluations*' (IfA 1999, revised 2001 and 2008), the English Heritage document '*Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment*' (English Heritage 2006) and a specification prepared by the Heritage Collective (2014).

2.0 Site Location and Description

- 2.1 The site is located in Lower Howsell, in the northern suburbs of Great Malvern, Worcestershire. The proposed development area is currently an irregular shaped block of pasture of c.5.52 hectares, subdivided longitudinally by a public footpath (Plate 1). The site is centred on NGR SO 7883 4824 (Figure 1).



Plate 1: The site prior to excavation, looking east

- 2.2 The local geology comprises bedrock deposits of mudstone and sandstone, with no overlying superficial geology (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>).

3.0 Planning Background

- 3.1 An outline planning application has been submitted for a residential development of the site for up to 110 dwellings (Reference 14/01231/OUT). Prior to submission of the planning application, an archaeological desk based assessment (Collings 2014) and geophysical survey (Stratascan 2014) were undertaken. Following discussion with the Worcestershire County Archaeologist, it was agreed that a further programme of archaeological trial trenching would

be undertaken in order to more accurately determine the archaeological potential of the proposed development area.

- 3.2 The relevant planning policy which applies to the effect of development is Chapter 12: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Department for Communities and Local Government 2012).

4.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 4.1 An archaeological desk based assessment of the site and its surroundings has been carried out in support of the planning application. This has been summarised in the Written Scheme of Investigation (Collings 2014), and is outlined below.
- 4.2 The desk based assessment identified that the site lies within an area of high potential, with particular reference to the Romano-British pottery industry within the Malvern area. A possible Roman-British kiln was recorded close to the southern edge of the site, opposite Spring Lane; however, the exact location of the remains is unclear. In the early 1990s, a production site was found to the southeast of the site at North End Farm and is associated with a second kiln and workshop features.
- 4.3 A further Romano-British pottery kiln was revealed in 1978 during monitoring of a gas pipeline at Newland Common, close to the northeast end of the site, from which a quantity of Severn Valley ware was collected. Further evidence of Romano-British pottery manufacture can be seen to the northeast, where surface finds and limited excavations at the Swan Inn in 1976 produced evidence for a Romano-British pottery kiln (Collings 2014).

5.0 Methodology

- 5.1 The fieldwork was undertaken by a team of experienced field archaeologists over five days, from Monday 8th to Friday 12th December 2014, and supervised by the author. Eight trenches were excavated, each measuring 40m long by 1.8m wide. Trenches were located using a Leica GS08 GPS, receiving RTK corrections.
- 5.2 Each trench was excavated using a tracked excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. In each trench, topsoil, subsoil and underlying non-archaeological deposits were removed in spits no greater than 0.1m in thickness until the natural geology or first archaeological horizon was exposed. All further excavation was then undertaken by hand.
- 5.3 A full written record of the archaeological deposits was made on standard AAL context recording sheets. Archaeological features and deposits were drawn to scale, in plan and section (at scales of 1:20 and 1:50). Where no archaeological features or deposits were encountered within a trench a representative section of the trench section was drawn (Figure 3). Photography formed an integral part of the recording strategy. All photographs incorporated scales, with an identification board and directional arrow, and a selection of these images has been included in the report.
- 5.4 Each deposit, layer or cut was allocated a unique, three digit identifier (context number), and accorded a written description, a summary of these are included in Appendix 1. Numbers in square brackets represents cut features (e.g. ditch [304]).

6.0 Results

Trench 1

- 6.1 The uppermost deposit in Trench 1 was a 0.32m thick, dark grey-brown silty clay topsoil, 100.
- 6.2 At the northeast end of the trench, this sealed a substantial cut feature [102]. Only part of an east to west orientated edge of the feature was visible within the trench and therefore the shape of the feature in plan is unknown. The feature contained an upper fill of light pinkish-brown, silty clay 103, which had the appearance of re-deposited natural geology and contained modern pottery, glass and lumps of charcoal (none of which were retained) and an earlier fill, 104, which comprised mid orange brown silty clay and also contained early modern pottery and tile fragments (Plate 2 and Figure 4).
- 6.3 The earliest deposit encountered within the trench was a light orange brown silty clay, 101, which extended across the trench and formed a natural geological deposit.



Plate 2: Feature [102] looking north. 2m scale

Trench 2

- 6.4 The sequence of deposits in this trench consisted of a 0.30m thick dark greyish brown, silty clay topsoil, 200, overlying the natural geology, 201, which comprised light orange brown silty clay, with occasional sub-angular mudstone fragments (Figure 3). No archaeological features or deposits were observed.

Trench 3

- 6.5 The uppermost deposit encountered in Trench 3 was a 0.25m thick dark greyish brown topsoil 300. The topsoil sealed three linear features, [302], [304] and [306]. Each of the features was orientated northeast to southwest and all were shallow, none exceeding 0.18m in depth, and all produced small quantities of modern pottery.

- 6.6 The earliest deposit encountered in the trench was a natural geological deposit comprising light orange brown silty clay which extended across the trench.



Plate 3: Section through linear features [304] and [306], looking north-east, with 2m scale

Trench 4

- 6.7 The sequence of deposits encountered in Trench 4 consisted of a 0.20m thick dark greyish brown topsoil, 400, overlying the natural geology, 401 (Figure 3). No archaeological features or deposits were observed.

Trench 5

- 6.8 A 0.31m thick, dark greyish brown topsoil, 500, overlay the natural geology, 501, in Trench 5 (Figure 3). No archaeological features or deposits were observed.

Trench 6

- 6.9 Topsoil, 600, sealed four shallow ditches, [602], [604], [606] and [608] (Plate 4). These were arranged in pairs, with ditches [606] and [608] towards the southwest end of the trench, and ditches [602] and [604] towards the centre of the trench (Plate 4 and Figure 5). The features were orientated broadly northeast to southwest, and each contained a single fill which contained modern pottery (not retained).



Plate 4: Trench 6 looking east, with 2m scale

Trench 7

- 6.10 The sequence of deposits in this trench consisted of a 0.25m thick dark greyish brown topsoil, overlying the natural geology, 701 (Figure 3). No archaeological features or deposits were observed.

Trench 8

- 6.11 The uppermost deposit encountered in Trench 8 was a dark greyish brown topsoil, 800, which measured up to 0.35m thick and overlay the natural geology, 801 (Figure 3). No archaeological features or deposits were observed.

7.0 Discussion and Conclusions

- 7.1 The trial trenching identified a single large feature, [102] at the north-east end of Trench 1. The only finds recovered from it were a few sherds of modern pottery but the form and function of the feature is unknown. Shallow ditches were encountered in Trenches 3 and 6 but finds from these features were also all of modern origin. Historic map analysis indicates that the site had been used as allotment gardens from at least 1904 until the late 20th century (Heritage Collective 2014, 7) and it therefore seems likely that the features encountered within the trenches are related to these allotments.
- 7.2 Trenches 2, 4, 5, 7, and 8 were devoid of archaeological features and deposits.
- 7.3 The evidence suggests that the site's archaeological potential is negligible and the proposed development will have a negligible impact upon the archaeological resource.

8.0 Effectiveness of Methodology

8.1 The trial trenching methodology was appropriate to the nature and extent of the development. It has demonstrated that the site has a negligible archaeological potential.

9.0 Acknowledgements

9.1 Allen Archaeology would like to thank Harris Lamb Property Consultancy for this commission. Thanks also go to Michelle Collings of Heritage Collective.

10.0 References

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Stratascan (SUMO), 2014, *Geophysical Survey Report: Lower Howsell, Great Malvern, Worcestershire*, Unpublished Report

Appendix 1: Context Summary List

Trench 1

Context	Type	Description	Interpretation
100	Layer	Dark greyish brown clayey silt, frequent sub-angular mudstone fragments, 0.32m thick, Seals 101	Topsoil
101	Layer	Light orange brown silty clay, with occasional sub-angular mudstone fragments, 0.30m + thick; sealed by 302], [100	Natural geology
102	Cut	Unknown shape in plan, single east-west aligned edge visible, depth is 1.00m +; filled by 103 and 104, cuts 101	Unknown. Not fully excavated
103	Fill	Moderately compact light pinkish brown silty clay, with occasional charcoal flecks. Contains modern pottery, tile and glass (not retained). 0.20m thick, sealed by 100 and seals 104	Upper fill of cut [102]
104	Fill	Moderately compact mid orange brown silty clay, with modern pottery and tile and an iron nail, 0.50m + thick sealed by 103	Lower fill of cut [102]

Trench 2

Context	Type	Description	Interpretation
200	Layer	Dark greyish brown clayey silt, frequent sub-angular mudstone fragments, 0.25m thick; seals 201	Topsoil
201	Layer	Light orange brown silty clay, with occasional sub-angular mudstone fragments, 0.35m + thick; sealed by 200	Natural geology

Trench 3

Context	Type	Description	Interpretation
300	Layer	Dark greyish brown clayey silt, frequent sub-angular mudstone fragments, 0.25m thick; seals 301	Topsoil
301	Layer	Light orange brown silty clay, with occasional sub-angular mudstone fragments, 0.20m + thick; sealed by 300	Natural geology
302	Cut	Southwest to northeast aligned with sharp upper edges and steep shallow sides and a flat base, 1.00m wide, 0.18m deep, filled by 303 and cuts 301	Possible allotment feature
303	Fill	Firm orange brown silty clay with moderate mudstone fragments, 1.00m wide, 0.18m thick, sealed by 300, fills [302]. Contains modern pottery	Fill of [302]
304	Cut	Southwest to northeast aligned with sharp upper edges and steep sides to a semi sharp break of slope base, the base is slightly concave, 0.76m wide, 0.14m deep; sealed by 305, cuts 301	Possible allotment feature
305	Fill	Firm orangey brown silty clay with moderate mudstone fragments, 0.76m wide, 0.14m deep, sealed by 300, fills [304]. Contains modern pottery	Fill of [304]
306	Cut	Southwest to northeast aligned with sharp upper edges and concaved sides and base, the base is flattish, 0.90m wide, 0.12m deep; sealed by 307, cuts 301.	Possible allotment feature
307	Fill	Firm orange brown silty clay with moderate mudstone. Contains modern pottery fragments, 0.90m wide, 0.12m deep, sealed by 300, seals [306]. Contains modern pottery	Fill of [306]

Trench 4

Context	Type	Description	Interpretation
400	Layer	Dark greyish brown clayey silt, frequent sub-angular mudstone fragments, 0.20m thick; seals 401	Topsoil
401	Layer	Light orange brown silty clay, with occasional sub-angular mudstone fragments, 0.35m + thick; sealed by 400	Natural geology

Trench 5

Context	Type	Description	Interpretation
500	Layer	Dark greyish brown clayey silt, frequent sub-angular mudstone fragments, 0.31m thick; seals 501	Topsoil
501	Layer	Light orange brown silty clay, with occasional sub-angular mudstone fragments, 0.35m + thick; sealed by 500	Natural geology

Trench 6

Context	Type	Description	Interpretation
600	Layer	Dark greyish brown clayey silt, frequent sub-angular mudstone fragments, seals 601 and is 0.25- 0.30m thick	Topsoil
601	Layer	Light orange brown silty clay, with occasional sub-angular mudstone fragments, 0.25m + thick; sealed by 600	Natural geology
602	Cut	North south aligned with sharp upper edges and shallow concaved sides and a slightly undulating base, 1.36m wide and 0.20m deep, sealed by 603 and cuts 601	Possible allotment feature
603	Fill	Firm orange brown silty clay with moderate mudstone fragments, 1.36m wide and 0.20m thick, sealed by 600. Contains modern pottery	Fill of [602]
604	Cut	North south aligned with sharp upper edges and shallow irregular sides and base, 1.34m wide and 0.14m deep, sealed by 605 and cuts 601	Possible allotment feature
605	Fill	Firm orange brown silty clay with moderate mudstone fragments, 1.36m wide and 0.14m thick, sealed by 600 and seals [604]. Contains modern pottery	Fill of [604]
606	Cut	North south aligned with sharp upper edges and shallow concaved sides and base, 0.50m wide and 0.10m deep, sealed by 607 and cuts 601	Possible allotment feature
607	Fill	Firm orange brown silty clay with moderate mudstone fragments, 0.50m wide and 0.10m thick, sealed by 600 and seals [606]. Contains modern pottery	Fill of [606]
608	Cut	North south aligned with sharp upper edges and shallow concaved sides and base, 1.00m wide and 0.20m deep, sealed by 609 and cuts 601	Possible allotment feature
609	Fill	Firm orange brown silty clay with moderate mudstone fragments, 1.0m wide and 0.20m thick, sealed by 600 and seals [608]. Contains modern pottery	Fill of [608]

Trench 7

Context	Type	Description	Interpretation
700	Layer	Dark greyish brown clayey silt, frequent sub-angular mudstone fragments, 0.25m thick; seals 701	Topsoil
701	Layer	Light orange brown silty clay, with occasional sub-angular mudstone fragments, 0.20m + thick; sealed by 700	Natural geology

Trench 8

Context	Type	Description	Interpretation
800	Layer	Dark greyish brown clayey silt, frequent sub-angular mudstone fragments, 0.25–0.35m thick; seals 801	Topsoil
801	Layer	Light orange Brown silty clay, with occasional sub-angular mudstone fragments, 0.20m + thick; sealed by 800	Natural geology