PERSHORE FLOOD ALLEVIATION SCHEME PERSHORE WORCESTERSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL **E**VALUATION

For

THE ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

CA PROJECT: 2877 CA REPORT: 09184

WCC REFERENCE: WSM 40832

DECEMBER 2009



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date	7 December 2009	
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date	10 December 2009	
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date	18 December 2009	
issue	01	

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SUMMARY

Project Name:	Pershore Flood Alleviation Scheme
Location:	Pershore, Worcestershire
NGR:	SO 9395 4524 to 9510 4534
Туре:	Evaluation
Date:	23–26 June 2009
Location of Archive:	To be deposited with Worcestershire County Museum
Site Code:	PFA 09

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at Pershore, Worcestershire by Cotswold Archaeology in June 2009. Four trenches were excavated.

Two drainage ditches, a pit and a possible quarry pit, all of post-medieval date, were identified, together with a modern ditch and soakaway.



1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In June 2009 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation for the Environment Agency on land to the south of Pershore, Worcestershire (NGR: SO 9395 4524 to 9510 4534; Fig. 1). The evaluation was recommended by Mr Mike Glyde, Historic Environment Planning Advisor, Worcestershire Historic Environment and Archaeological Service (WHEAS), in response to a proposal by the Environment Agency to construct a flood alleviation scheme, with associated works.
- 1.2 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) produced by CA (2009) and approved by Mr. Glyde. The fieldwork also followed the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* issued by the Institute for Archaeologists (2008), *Requirements and Guidelines for Archaeological Project in Worcestershire* (WHEAS 2003), the *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage 1991) and the *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE): Project Manager's Guide* (EH 2006).

The site

- 1.3 The site lies on the southern edge of Pershore, Worcestershire (Fig. 2). The site, approximately 4.6ha in size, is located on the floodplain of the Avon Valley and is currently utilised as pasture fields.
- 1.4 The underlying geology of the site is recorded as alluvium and First (Birlington) Terrace deposits of the River Avon (BGS 1993). A programme of geotechnical investigation, comprising trial trenching and drilling of boreholes, monitored by CA in May 2009 revealed sands and gravels throughout the site.

Archaeological background

- 1.5 A single residual prehistoric worked flint was recorded during trial trenching to the north-west of the site (WCC 2009).
- 1.6 A small enclosed Romano-British settlement was recorded to the west of the A4104, approximately 300m west of the site, on higher ground overlooking the floodplain of

the Avon (WCC 2009). The pottery assemblage recovered suggests that settlement may have been established in the Late Iron Age. Roman activity has also been identified within Pershore (HWCC 1996, 4).

- 1.7 The site is located to the south and south-west of the historic core of Pershore. A minster church was founded at Pershore in AD 689. The church is thought to have been located at the site of the later medieval abbey church. The Abbey Park is located to the north of the B4536 and urban development was focused along the A44. Pershore Bridge, south-east of the site, is of medieval origin (Scheduled Monument ref WT321).
- 1.8 The findspot of an 11th-century Viking axehead is recorded adjacent to the River Avon, *c*. 450m south-west of the site.
- 1.9 The 1841 Pershore St Andrews Parish Tithe map depicts the site as agricultural fields, south of a turnpike road (now the B4536). The First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1885 depicts an area of orchard within the eastern part of the site, and a grandstand is shown in the western part of the site on the Second Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1905.
- 1.10 WWII defences for Pershore were focused on Pershore Bridge. A Spigott Mortar Emplacement was located in the south-eastern part of the site.
- 1.11 Undated cropmarks comprising a probable small enclosure and a linear feature, which corresponds with a boundary recorded on the historic cartographic sources, are located *c*. 100m west of the site.

Archaeological objectives

1.12 The objectives of the evaluation are to provide data on the date, character, quality, survival and extent of the archaeological deposits within the application area in order that an informed decision on their importance in a local, regional or national context could be made. This information will clarify whether any remains are of sufficient importance to warrant consideration for preservation *in situ*, or alternatively form the basis of mitigation measures that may seek to limit damage to significant remains.

Methodology

- 1.13 The evaluation, as proposed, comprised the excavation of six trenches, each 30m in length by 1.8m in width (Fig. 2). Two of the proposed trenches (trenches 4 and 5) were unexcavated, however, due to access constraints.
- 1.14 All trenches were excavated by mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless grading bucket. All machine excavation was undertaken under constant archaeological supervision to the top of the first significant archaeological horizon or the natural substrate, whichever was encountered first. Where archaeological deposits were encountered they were excavated by hand in accordance with CA Technical Manual 1: *Fieldwork Recording Manual* (2007).
- 1.15 Deposits were assessed for their palaeoenvironmental potential in accordance with CA Technical Manual 2: The Taking and Processing of Environmental and Other Samples from Archaeological Sites (2003) but no deposits were identified that required sampling. All artefacts recovered were processed in accordance with CA Technical Manual 3: Treatment of Finds Immediately After Excavation (1995).
- 1.16 The archive and artefacts from the evaluation are currently held by CA at their offices in Kemble. Subject to the agreement of the legal landowner the artefacts will be deposited with Worcestershire County Museum, along with the site archive. A summary of information from this project, set out within Appendix C, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

2. RESULTS (FIGS 2-3)

- 2.1 This section provides an overview of the evaluation results; detailed summaries of the recorded contexts and finds are in Appendices A and B respectively.
- 2.2 No archaeological features were encountered within trenches 1 and 2, which contained only natural alluvial clays at 0.25-0.3m below present ground level (bpgl) overlain by modern ploughsoil.

Trench 3

- 2.3 The natural geological substrate 3002, comprising alluvial clay and first encountered at 0.45m bpgl, was cut by an irregularly-shaped pit 3003. Its sandy clay fill 3004 contained modern glass (not retained) together with two 19th to 20th-century pottery sherds and a ceramic tile fragment.
- 2.4 A north-west/south-east-aligned ditch 3005, also cut through the substrate 3002, was filled by a sandy clay fill 3006 containing modern glass (not retained).

Trench 6

- 2.5 The natural geological substrate 6003, comprising sands and gravels, was encountered at approximately 0.55m bpgl and was cut by a series of post-medieval and modern features. A north-west/south-east-aligned v-shaped ditch 6010 contained a primary silty sand fill 6011, which yielded one glass fragment, and a secondary fill 6012 which contained two fragments of ceramic building material (CBM).
- 2.6 A north/south-aligned u-shaped ditch 6013 contained a primary clay fill 6014 containing no finds, and a secondary clay fill 6015 from which one iron fragment, six pieces of slag and two animal bone fragments were recovered. A possible quarry pit 6006, with steeply-sloping sides which were only partially revealed, contained sandy silt fills 6007, 6008 and 6009. A north/south-aligned soakaway 6016 was unexcavated, but its upper sandy silt fill 6017 contained one post-medieval brick.

The Finds and Palaeoenvironmental Evidence

2.7 Artefactual material comprising quantities of pottery, ceramic building material (CBM), glass, slag and iron was recovered from six deposits (Appendix B). Pottery of post-medieval date was recovered from pit fill 3004. Both sherds are identifiable as refined white earthenware. Glass was recovered from two deposits. The fragment from quarry pit fill 6008 appears to be vessel glass, whilst the fragment from ditch fill 6011 appears to be window glass. Ceramic building material was recovered from three deposits. A brick with slag adhering to one end was recovered from soakaway 6017. The brick is stamped with 'Hickmans Stourbridge'. Fragments of tile were recovered from pit fill 3004 and ditch fill 6012. Two well-preserved rib bone

fragments, one cow–sized and one sheep–sized, were recovered from ditch fill 6015 together with miscellaneous iron working slag and part of an iron nail.

3. DISCUSSION

3.1 Although evidence of prehistoric, Romano-British and medieval activity and occupation has come from the wider locality, this evaluation revealed no archaeological features pre-dating the post-medieval period. The features encountered, including drainage ditches and possible quarry pitting, appear to be associated with agricultural activity on the southern outskirts of Pershore.

4. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Stuart Joyce, assisted by Heather Griggs and Andrew Loader. The report was written by Stuart Joyce, assisted by Hazel O'Neill. The illustrations were prepared by Peter Moore. The archive has been compiled by Stuart Joyce, and prepared for deposition by Victoria Taylor. The project was managed for CA by Richard Young.

5. REFERENCES

- BGS (British Geological Survey) 1993 Worcester, 1:50,000 series, England and Wales sheet **199**, solid and drift
- CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2009 Pershore, Worcestershire: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation
- HWCC (Hereford and Worcester County Council) 1996 Archaeological Assessment of Pershore, Hereford and Worcester, unpublished typescript report
- WCC (Worcestershire County Council) 2009 Archaeological Investigation at Pershore Cemetery, Dafford Road, unpublished typescript report **WR8172**

APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench 1 – western end 15.01m AOD, eastern end 14.73m AOD

No.	Туре	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot- date
1000	Layer	Modern ploughsoil: mid brown silty-clay			0.25	
1001	Layer	Natural geological substrate: alluvial clay			>0.10	

Trench 2 - western end 14.79m AOD, eastern end 14.83m AOD

No.	Туре	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot- date
2000	Layer	Modern ploughsoil: mid brown silty-clay			0.30	
2001	Layer	Natural geological substrate: alluvial clay			>2.30	

Trench 3 – western end 15.16 m AOD, eastern end 15.54m AOD

No.	Туре	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot- date
3000	Layer	Modern ploughsoil: mid-brown silty-clay			0.24	
3001	Layer	Subsoil: mid orange-brown silty-sand			0.21	
3002	Layer	Natural geological substrate: alluvial clay			>0.45	
3003	Cut	Modern pit	0.67	0.51	0.17	
3004	Deposit	Fill of 3003: brown to black silty sand-clay	0.67	0.51	0.17	C19–C20
3005	Cut	Modern NW/SE-aligned ditch: steep-sided with flat base	>1.60	0.65	0.40	
3006	Deposit	Fill of 3005: brown-grey silty sandy-clay	>1.60	0.65	0.40	

Trench 6- western end 16.51m AOD, eastern end 16.09m AOD

No.	Туре	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot- date
6000	Layer	Modern topsoil: dark brown silty-sand			0.32	
6001	Layer	Mid brown silty sandy-clay			0.23	
6002	Layer	Light mottled green and yellow-grey alluvium				
6003	Layer	Natural geological substrate: mid brown/orange sand-gravels				
6004	Cut	Ditch: N/S-aligned with u-shaped profile	>1.60	1.68	0.16	
6005	Deposit	Fill of 6004: grey-brown silt sand-clay	>1.60	1.68	0.16	
6006	Cut	Possible quarry pit: linear shape with steeply- sloping sides (only partially revealed)	5	>2	>0.5	
6007	Deposit	Primary fill of 6006: grey-brown sand-silt				
6008	Deposit	Secondary fill of 6006: grey-brown sand-silt				PM
6009	Deposit	Tertiary fill of 6006: orange-brown gravels and sands				
6010	Cut	Ditch: N/S-aligned with v-shaped profile				
6011	Deposit	Primary fill of 6010:orange-brown silt-sand				PM
6012	Deposit	Secondary fill of 6010: grey-brown silt-sand				
6013	Cut	Ditch: N/S-aligned with u-shaped profile	>1.60	2.60	0.36	
6014	Deposit	Primary fill of 6013: grey-brown clay	>1.60	1.68	0.30	
6015	Deposit	Secondary fill of 6013:mid brown silt sand-clay	>1.60	1.01	0.16	
6016	Cut	Soak away		1		
6017	Deposit	Fill of 6016, ash clinker, glass and brick fragments				PM

APPENDIX B: THE FINDS

Context	Artefact type	Count	Weight (g)	Spot-date
3004	CBM: tile	1	139	C19–C20
	Post-Medieval Pottery: refined white earthenware	2	14	
6008	Glass: vessel?	1	8	PM
6011	Glass: window glass?	1	1	PM
6012	СВМ	2	30	
6015	Animal Bone: cow sized, sheep sized	2	3	
	Slag	6	110	
	Fe Metalwork	1	1	
6017	Brick: 'Hickmans Stourbridge'	1	2815	PM

APPENDIX C: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS

Project Name	Pershore Flood Alleviation Scheme, Pershore, Worcestershire			
Short description	An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at			
(250 words maximum)	Pershore, Worcestershire	by Cotswold Archaeology		
	in June 2009 Four trenches were excevated			
	Two drainage ditches	nit and a possible quarry		
	nit all of post modious	al data woro identified		
	together with a modern dit	an uale, were identified,		
Drain at data a	logether with a modern dit	Ch and Soakaway.		
Project dates	23-26 June 2009			
Project type	Not known			
(e.g. desk-based, field evaluation etc)				
	× ×			
Previous work	Not known			
(reference to organisation or SMR numbers etc)				
Future work	Unknown			
PROJECT LOCATION				
Site Location	Pershore, Worcestershire			
Study area (M ² /ha)	4.6 ha			
Site co-ordinates (8 Fig Grid Reference)	SO 9395 4524 to 9510 4534			
PROJECT CREATORS				
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology			
Project Brief originator	Worcestershire County Co	buncil		
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology			
Project Manager	Richard Young			
Project Supervisor	Stuart Joyce			
PROJECT ARCHIVES	Intended final location of	Content (e.g. pottery,		
	archive	animal bone etc)		
	(museum/Accession no.)			
	(museum//tecession no.)			
Physical	Worcestershire County	Ceramics, animal bone.		
	Museum	glass, CBM, slag,		
	maccum	metalwork		
Paner	Worcestershire County	Context sheets Trench		
	Museum	Departing Shoots		
W	widseum	Levele Degister DUM		
		Levels Register, B+W		
		pnotos		
Digital	Worcestershire County	Digital photos		
	Museum			
BIBLIOGRAPHY				
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