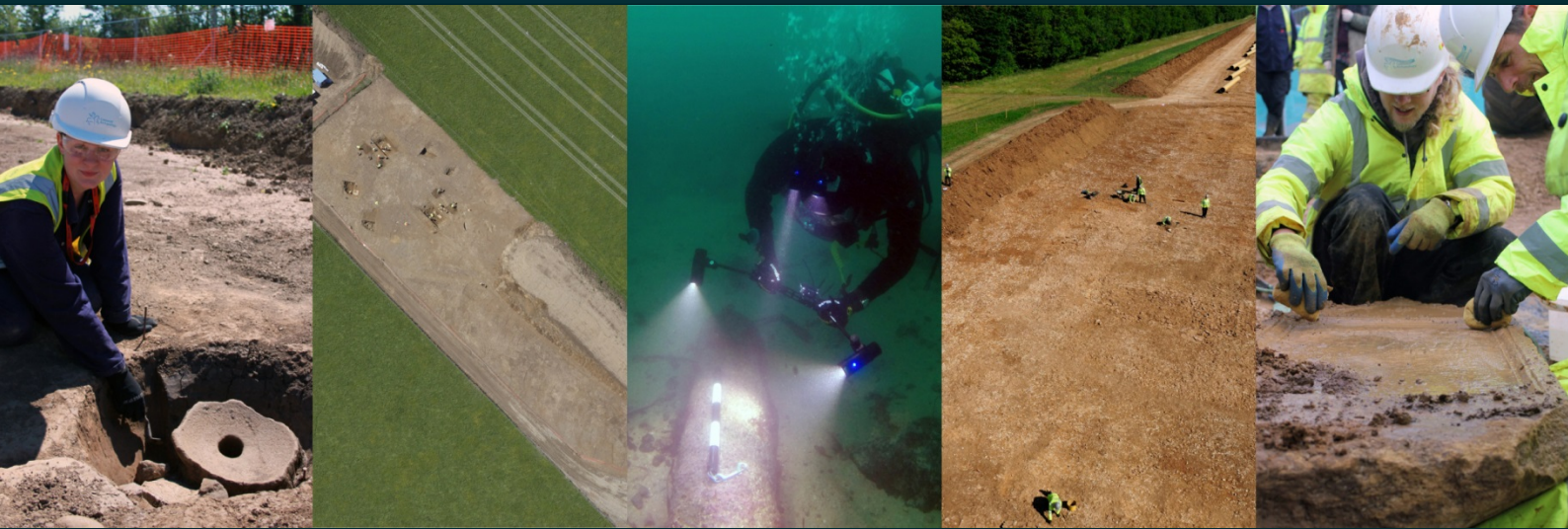


# Land to the south of Lark Hill Road Worcester Worcestershire

*Archaeological Evaluation*



for  
Malvern Homes Ltd

CA Project: CR0141  
CA Report: CR0141\_01

August 2019



Land to the south of Lark Hill Road  
Worcester  
Worcestershire

Archaeological Evaluation

CA Project: CR0141  
CA Report: CR0141\_01



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Revision	Date	Author	Checked by	Status	Reasons for revision	Approved by
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## SUMMARY

**Project Name:** Land to the south of Lark Hill Road, Worcester, Worcestershire  
**Location:** Worcester Worcestershire  
**NGR:** 386260 254121  
**Type:** Evaluation  
**Date:** 5-7 August 2019  
**Location of Archive:** To be deposited with Worcester City Museum  
**Site Code:** LHRO19

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in August 2019 at Land to the south of Lark Hill Road, Worcester, Worcestershire. Four trenches were excavated.

No features, finds or deposits of archaeological significance predating the post-medieval period was identified during the evaluation, other a single residual shard of Roman pottery from the topsoil. The site is in proximity to known Civil War battlefield sites, but despite this potential no associated remains were found.

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 In August 2019 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation for Malvern Homes Ltd at land to the south of Lark Hill Road, Worcester, Worcestershire centred on National Grid Reference 386260 254121 (see Figure 1). The evaluation was undertaken prior to an application for planning permission for development of the site which will be made to Worcester City Council (WCC). The works undertaken were discussed with, and specified by, James Dinn Archaeological Officer and archaeological advisor to Worcester City Council and supplement those already undertaken on a separate parcel of the site in 2003 and 2017.
- 1.2 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a detailed *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) produced by CA (2019) and approved by James Dinn. The fieldwork also followed *Standard and guidance: Archaeological field evaluation* (ClfA 2014). It was monitored by James Dinn, including site visits on the 7<sup>th</sup> of August 2019.

### ***The site***

- 1.3 The proposed development area is approximately 0.5ha, and comprises an area of open ground on the southern side of Lark Hill Road. The site is relatively flat and lies at approximately 40m above Ordnance Datum (aOD).
- 1.4 The underlying bedrock geology of the area is mapped as Sidmouth Mudstone Formation of the Triassic Period (BGS 2019). The geology was mapped as a dark reddish brown silty-clay during this evaluation.

## **2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The site has previously been the subject of an archaeological desk-based assessment (CA 2009), subsequently updated in 2014 (CA 2014), watching brief (CA 2017), earthwork survey, metal detector survey and partial archaeological evaluation (northern half of the site: Mike Napthan Archaeology (MNA) 2003). Below

is a summary of the combined current knowledge pertaining to the site, based on the findings of the above documents/investigations.

***Prehistoric (pre AD 43) and Roman (AD43 – AD410)***

- 2.2 Two prehistoric find spots are recorded 500m to the north of the site. These comprise worked flint and several stone hammers. Bronze and Iron Age phases of settlement have been established in Worcester, including evidence of a defended settlement over 1.5km to the west of the site. No deposits of Bronze or Iron Age date have been recorded within the site or its vicinity.
- 2.3 Worcester (possibly the Roman town of Vertis) was established as a Roman fort in the 1st century AD, and expanded to become a substantial civilian settlement and centre for iron production. This settlement built upon previous Bronze and Iron Age occupation (see above), and was centred on what later became the Cathedral Close. A single Roman coin of Domitian has been found 100m to the north of the site.

***Early Medieval (AD 410 to 1066) and Medieval (1066-1539)***

- 2.4 Worcester was a significant Saxon settlement, established as an ecclesiastical centre in 680 AD. The site lay within the Manor of Perry, one of the fifteen Saxon and medieval manors that administered the rural areas beyond the city, near to Perry Wood. However, the location of the manor house itself is not recorded. A medieval water conduit previously ran 700m to the south-west of the site.
- 2.5 A hoard of medieval silver coins and rings was discovered near to Lark Hill in 1854 (Akerman 1854). Approximately 215 silver pennies, seven rings and a single brooch were recorded 'near Lark Hill, within about a mile of Worcester, upon making a drain' (ibid.). The coins were recorded as being wrapped in a piece of coarse cloth, suggesting they may have been redeposited in the post-medieval period. No further location detail is recorded, but no coins were recorded during metal detecting works within the site (MNA 2003).
- 2.6 Although ridge and furrow earthworks are recorded throughout the area, including within the site itself, the lack of dating evidence means they have been included in the Undated section below. A survey of these earthworks was carried out during evaluation work in the site in 2003.

- 2.7 Within the site, very small fragments of medieval or post-medieval tile were recovered from evaluation Trench T1, although no features were recorded.

***Post-medieval (1540-1800) and Modern (1801 – present)***

- 2.8 Worcester played a significant role in the Civil War, with the Battle of Worcester taking place in 1651. The Battle of Worcester Registered Battlefield lies 500m to the south-west of the site, where cavalry fighting took place, but the large area covered by the battle may include the site itself. A fragment of a post-medieval gun mount was found by metal detecting during the evaluation within the site, although this may not be related to the events of the Civil War. A number of clay pipes and a metal sphere, possibly a musket ball, were found 500m to the south-west of the site. The silver coin hoard may have been buried as a result of the proximity to the battlefield.
- 2.9 The Oxford, Worcestershire and Wolverhampton Railway was constructed to the west of the site in the 1840s, along with engine sheds 300m and 500m to the northwest.
- 2.10 During World War II, Worcester was intended to be the seat of government in the event of invasion or the destruction of London, and as such was heavily fortified as a proposed centre of resistance. A number of defence features are located within the vicinity of the site.
- 2.11 Two modern churches also lie within the study area, the Church of St Martin and the Red Hill Baptist Church.
- 2.12 Within the site, fragments of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century ceramics were found during an evaluation in 2003 (MNA 2003) in trench T2. Trench T3 recorded a single circular feature containing fragments of 20th-century material.

***Undated***

- 2.13 Ridge and furrow earthworks are recorded both within the site and in the wider vicinity. Although heavily overgrown and hard to discern during the site visit in January 2009, the WSMR description for these earthworks records them exhibiting the reversed-S shape characteristic of the medieval period. These earthworks are also visible on aerial photographs of the site.

- 2.14 Two undated cuttings are recorded within the study area. These may be defensive entrenchments or hollow ways. One of these, 150m to the north-east of the site, may represent the course of the medieval road to from Worcester to Alcester. A number of finds have been located by metal detectorists in Perry's Wood, but no further information is recorded.

#### ***Earthwork survey***

- 2.15 The earthwork survey recorded ridge and furrow earthworks resulting from medieval or post-medieval ploughing present across the site. A terraced area in the northern part of the orchard was also recorded, possibly relating to an aborted attempt to continue the residential development of Lark Hill Road (MNA, 2003).

#### ***Metal detecting***

- 2.16 The metal detector survey produced limited finds of archaeological interest, and large quantities of agricultural iron scrap (MNA, 2003).

#### ***Archaeological evaluation***

- 2.17 Six trial trenches were opened in 2003 (MNA, 2003) within the site and adjacent land. Two of the trenches lay within the development site and were cleaned and recorded, with plans and sections included in the evaluation report. The evaluation was abandoned at the behest of the then developer, before trenches T4, T5 and T6, which lay outside of the proposed development site, could be recorded. No features of archaeological significance were observed.

#### ***Other work***

- 2.19 A further five programmes of work have taken place outside the site, but within the vicinity. These comprise:
- an evaluation by trial trenching at 4 Whittington Road, a former execution site 600m to the south-east of the site, which uncovered a trackway and large posthole (Rogers 2005);
  - a building assessment at Woodside, 50m north of the site;
  - an archaeological survey of Perry Wood, 500m north of the site, which recorded visible archaeological features, comprising blocks of ridge and furrow, a hollow way, and post-medieval and modern quarries and field boundaries;
  - a structural report on St Martins Church, 200m to the west of the site;
  - a programme of building recording at the Red Hill Baptist Chapel, 200m to the south of the site.



### ***Recent Works***

- 2.20 An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology (2017) during groundworks associated with the development of five new dwellings and associated access, as well as orchard restoration and new orchard planting at land to the south of Lark Hill Road, Worcester, Worcestershire. No features, finds or deposits of archaeological significance were identified during the watching brief. The site contained the remains of ridge and furrow earthworks which were further recorded where accessible.

## **3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

- 3.1 The objectives of the evaluation are to provide information about the archaeological resource within the site, including its presence/absence, character, extent, date, integrity, state of preservation and quality, in accordance *Standard and guidance: Archaeological field evaluation* (ClfA 2014). This information will enable James Dinn, Archaeological Officer, Worcester City Council to identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset, consider the impact of the proposed development upon it, and to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the development proposal, in line with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012).

## **4. METHODOLOGY**

- 4.1 The fieldwork comprised the excavation of 4 trenches (1.7m wide and between 30.30 and 25m in length) in the locations shown on the attached plan (Figure 2). Due to the bramble overgrowth and trees on site all trenches were either moved and/or shortened, with the approval of James Dinn. Trenches were set out on OS National Grid (NGR) co-ordinates using Leica GPS and surveyed in accordance with CA Technical Manual 4 *Survey Manual*.
- 4.2 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*.

- 4.3 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* and, no deposits were identified that required sampling. All artefacts recovered were processed in accordance with Technical Manual 3 *Treatment of Finds Immediately after Excavation*.
- 4.4 The archive and artefacts from the evaluation are currently held by CA at their offices in Andover. Subject to the agreement of the legal landowner the archive will be deposited with Worcester City Museum. 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.

## 5. RESULTS (FIGURES 2-4)

- 5.1 This section provides an overview of the evaluation results; detailed summaries of the recorded contexts, are to be found in Appendix A.
- 5.2 The four trenches contained no archaeological features.
- 5.3 The natural geology consisted of a dark brownish-red compact silty-clay (approx. 0.40m below current ground level). In **Trenches 1** and **2** the geology was overlain by subsoil (0.35 and 0.32m thick respectively) which consisted of a mid-grey/brown compact silt/clay. In **Trenches 3** and **4** the natural geology was overlain by a mix of made ground (0.3m and 0.17m thick respectively) which consisted of a dark-red compact silt/clay. All four trenches were sealed by modern topsoil, a brown/grey compact silt/clay (between 0.18 and 0.27m thick).

## 6. THE FINDS

- 6.1 Artefactual material recovered from the evaluation is listed in Appendix B and discussed further below. All finds have been recorded directly to an MS Excel

spreadsheet. Where possible, fabric codes matching those of the Worcestershire Type Series (WCC 2019) have been used, given in bold below.

### **Pottery**

- 6.2 A small assemblage, comprising four sherds (weighing 73g), was recovered from two deposits. A sherd of Roman Severn Valley Ware (fabric 12) was a residual find from topsoil deposit **1000**. The form is identifiable as a tankard, similar to Webster's Form E, nos 42–43 (Webster 1976, 30–31), and as such probably dating to the 2<sup>nd</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries AD. The remainder of the pottery dates to the modern period. Topsoil deposit **1000** produced a transfer-printed refined white ware (fabric 85) handle sherd of late 18<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century date, a sherd of flowerpot type unglazed earthenware probably dating no earlier than the 19<sup>th</sup> century. A second sherd of the latter type, was recorded from subsoil deposit 3001.

### **Other Finds**

- 6.3 A single iron item was recovered from topsoil deposit **1000**. Use as a tool handle is probable, although the fragmented nature precludes dating.
- 6.4 A single fragment of clay tobacco pipe, a stem fragment, was recovered from subsoil deposit **3001**. In the absence of diagnostic features such as the bowl or decoration, the pipe can only broadly be dated from the late 16<sup>th</sup> to late 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.
- 6.5 Two items of ceramic building material, comprising probable tile fragments of post-Roman (medieval to post-medieval) date, were recovered from deposit **3001**.

## **7. DISCUSSION**

- 7.1 No archaeology was found within the four evaluation trenches. Despite scanning the topsoil, subsoil and spoil heaps with a metal detector no pre-modern metal objects were found.

## **8. CA PROJECT TEAM**

- 8.1 Fieldwork was undertaken by Adam Howard, assisted by Pawel Jablonski. The report was written by Adam Howard. The finds report was written by Katie Marsden

respectively. The illustrations were prepared by Gemma Bowen. The archive has been compiled by Richard Paxford, and prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The project was managed for CA by Ray Kennedy.

## 9. REFERENCES

BGS (British Geological Survey) 2019 *Geology of Britain Viewer* [http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geology\\_viewer\\_google/googleviewer.html](http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geology_viewer_google/googleviewer.html) Accessed 9 August 2019

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Davis, O., 2012, Processing and working with LIDAR DATA in ARCGIS: A practical guide for archaeologist, Royal Commission of the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales.

Mike Napthan Archaeology (MNA), 2003, Evaluation at Lark Hill Orchard, Worcester WCM 101033

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#### APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench No.	Context No.	Type	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	D (m)
1	100	Layer	Topsoil	Dark brownish grey sandy clay loose	28.1	1.7	0-0.18
1	101	Layer	Subsoil	Mid reddish brown sandy clay firm	28.1	1.7	0.18-0.54
1	102	Layer	Natural Geology	Dark reddish brown clay firm	28.1	1.7	0.54+
2	200	Layer	Topsoil	Dark brownish grey sandy clay loose	30.3	1.7	0-0.23
2	201	Layer	Subsoil	Mid reddish brown sandy clay friable	30.3	1.7	0.23-0.55
2	202	Layer	Natural Geology	Dark red clay firm	30.3	1.7	0.55+
3	300	Layer	Topsoil	Dark brownish grey sandy clay friable	25.6	1.7	0-0.27
3	301	Layer	Subsoil	Mid grey sandy clay firm	25.6	1.7	0.27-0.57
3	302	Layer	Natural Geology	Dark brownish red clay	25.6	1.7	0.57+
4	400	Layer	Topsoil	Dark brownish grey clayey sand friable	26	1.7	0-0.23
4	401	Layer	Subsoil	Dark red compact silty clay	26	1.7	0.23-0.4
4	402	Layer	Natural Geology	Dark brownish red clay compact	26	1.7	0.4+

## APPENDIX B: THE FINDS

Context	Class	Description	Fabric Code	Count	Weight (g)	Spot-date
1000	Iron	handle?		1	41	LC18-C19
	Roman pottery	oxidised Severn Valley Ware	12	1	13	
	modern pottery	transfer-printed refined white ware	85	1	10	
	modern pottery	unglazed earthenware 'flowerpot'	-	1	30	
3001	modern pottery	unglazed earthenware 'flowerpot'	-	1	20	C19+
	CBM	tile		2	25	
	Clay Tobacco Pipe	stem only		1	3	

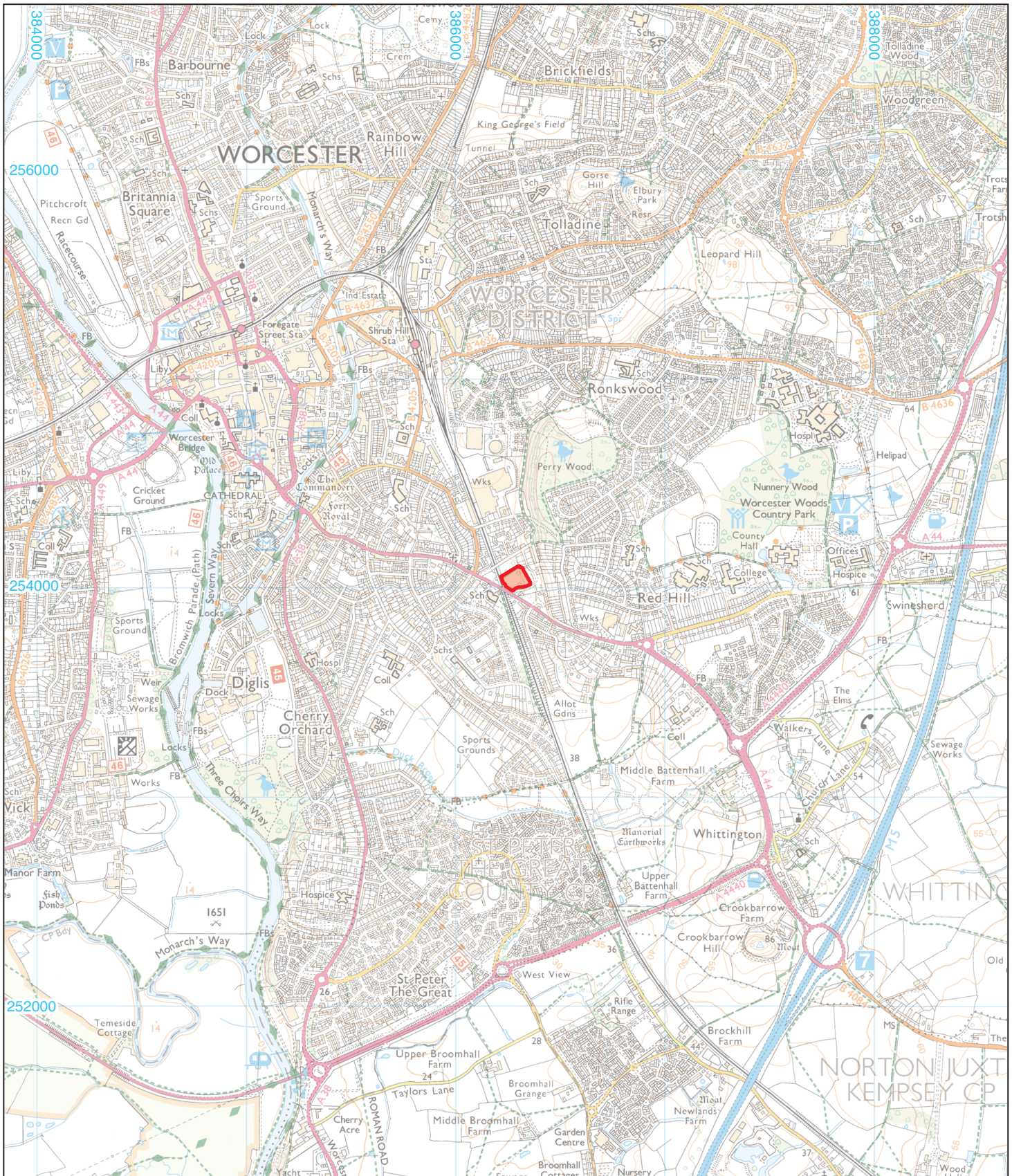
### References

Webster, P. 1976 'Severn Valley Ware: A Preliminary Study' Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society 94

Worcestershire County Council 2019 *Worcestershire Ceramics*  
<https://www.worcestershireceramics.org/fabrics/categorized/dategenperiod> Accessed  
 19 August 2019

**APPENDIX C: OASIS REPORT FORM**

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		
Project Name	Land to the south of Lark Hill Road, Worcester, Worcestershire	
Short description	<p>An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in August 2019 at Land to the south of Lark Hill Road, Worcester, Worcestershire. Four trenches were excavated.</p> <p>No features, finds or deposits of archaeological significance predating the post-medieval period was identified during the evaluation. The site is in proximity to known Civil War battlefield sites, but despite this potential no associated remains were found.</p>	
Project dates	5-7 <sup>th</sup> August 2019	
Project type	Evaluation	
Previous work	Mike Napthan Archaeology, 2003, Evaluation at Lark Hill Orchard, Worcester WCM 101033	
Future work	Unknown	
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>		
Site Location	Lark Hill Road, Worcester, Worcestershire	
Study area (M <sup>2</sup> /ha)	0.5ha	
Site co-ordinates	386260 254121	
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Brief originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Ray Kennedy	
Project Supervisor	Adam Howard	
<b>MONUMENT TYPE</b>	none	
<b>SIGNIFICANT FINDS</b>	none	
<b>PROJECT ARCHIVES</b>		
	Intended final location of archive	Content
Physical	Worcester City Museum	Pottery, cbm
Paper	Worcester City Museum	Trench sheet, photo register
Digital	Worcester City Museum	Survey Data, digital photos
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>		
<p>CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2019 <i>Land to the south of Lark Hill Road, Worcester, Worcestershire: Archaeological Evaluation</i>. CA typescript report <b>CR0141_1</b></p>		



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**PROJECT TITLE**  
 Land to the south of Lark Hill Road,  
 Worcester, Worcestershire

**FIGURE TITLE**  
 Site location plan

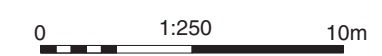
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- Site boundary
- Evaluation trench
- Field drain



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**PROJECT TITLE**  
 Land to the south of Lark Hill Road,  
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**FIGURE TITLE**  
 Trench location plan

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Trench 1, looking north-west (1m scales)



Trench 2, looking north-west (1m scales)



Trench 3, looking east (1m scales)



Trench 3 section, looking south-east (1m scale)


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FIGURE TITLE  
**Photographs**

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Trench 4, looking north-east (1m scales)



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PROJECT TITLE

Land to the south of Lark Hill Road,  
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FIGURE TITLE

**Photograph**

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