

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
WATCHING BRIEF  
AT  
WHITTINGTON ROUNDABOUT,  
WHITTINGTON,  
WORCESTERSHIRE

Graham Arnold

Illustrated by Carolyn Hunt

2 April 2012

© Worcestershire County Council



Worcestershire Archaeology,  
Worcestershire Archives and Archaeology Service,  
Worcestershire County Council,  
The Hive,  
Sawmill Walk,  
The Butts,  
Worcester, WR1 3PB

Project 3747  
Report 1913  
WSM 46048



---

# Archaeological watching brief at Whittington Roundabout, Whittington, Worcestershire

**Graham Arnold**

---

## Background information

<i>Client</i>	Worcestershire County Council Highways
<i>Site address</i>	Whittington Roundabout, Whittington, Worcestershire
<i>National Grid reference</i>	SO 874 526
<i>Historic Environment Record reference</i>	WSM 46048
<i>Project parameters</i>	IfA 2008

## Background

The works consisted of a number of trial holes and two areas of ground reduction for road widening and the regrading of a bank to create a new slip-road on the south-west side of the roundabout. An archaeological watching brief was requested by Mike Glyde, Worcestershire County Council Historic Environment Planning Officer as the works may affect an area of archaeological importance to the south-east of the site (WSM 29572).

## Previous archaeological work on associated sites

The background to the surrounding archaeological sites is covered in the report by Hurst (1998). Excavation of a medieval site at Whittington was carried out in 1991 in advance of widening the M5 motorway, to the south-east of the present site (WSM 29572). The site was located in the vicinity of a medieval moat, and the excavation revealed a number of features relating to occupation dating to the 13<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> centuries. This was superseded by ridge and furrow cultivation, probably dating to the later 13<sup>th</sup> or 14<sup>th</sup> centuries, which had been abandoned by the 15<sup>th</sup> century. It is possible that a park was then established here, which continued in use until the early 19<sup>th</sup> century (Hurst, 1998).

Crookbarrow Hill, also known as Whittington Tump, to the south of the site is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM 239). Although it has never been intrusively investigated, it is thought to be a medieval castle motte (<http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/resultsingle.aspx?uid=1014900>).

---

## Aims

The aim of the watching brief was to observe and record archaeological deposits, and to determine their extent, state of preservation, date and type, as far as reasonably possible.

---

## Methods

General specification for fieldwork	Worcestershire Archaeology 2012
Sources consulted	Worcestershire HER
Date(s) of fieldwork	25 October 2011 to 21 March 2012
Area of site	c 1.2 hectares
Sampling	Indicated on figure 2
Dimensions of excavated areas observed	
Trench 1	length 2.75m width 0.30m depth 0.70m
Trench 2	length 5.00m

---

---

	width 0.30m depth 0.70m length 5.30m
Trench 3	width 0.30m depth 0.80m length 5.04m
Trench 4	width 0.35m depth 0.67m
Trench 5	length 38.00m width 14.00m depth 0.30m
Trench 6	length 50.00m width 14.00m depth 0.30 - 2.25m

*Access to or visibility of structure/deposits*

Observation of the excavated areas was undertaken during and after machine excavation. The exposed surfaces were sufficiently clean to observe well-differentiated archaeological deposits. Access to deep trenches was not made for safety reasons.

*Statement of confidence*

Access to, and visibility of, deposits allowed a high degree of confidence that the aims of the project have been achieved.

**Trenches 1-6 - deposit descriptions**


---

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
100	Turf and topsoil	Grass over firm greyish brown silt loam with occasional inclusions of small sub-rounded gravels and occasional fragments of modern cbm and porcelain	0 – 0.10m
101	Subsoil	Firm mid brown and reddish brown silt with occasional small gravels	0.10 – 0.35m
102	Natural	Compact red marl with occasional lenses of blue grey clay	0.35m +

**Discussion**

The stratigraphy was very similar in nature across all of the narrow trenches (1-4) and larger strips (5-6). Only natural deposits were observed. Within Trenches 1-4 (Plates 1-3) some modern disturbance relating to services and redeposited material from previous works in the area were observed. Within Trenches 5 and 6 for the soil strip and ground reduction (Plates 4-7) only natural deposits were exposed.

**Conclusions**

No archaeologically significant deposits were observed, nor finds recovered from the spoil. All of the ceramic material observed was of later post-medieval and modern date. It was recovered from the topsoil, probably originally deposited as a result of manuring and previous landscaping. This demonstrates that the activity associated with of the medieval settlement (WSM 29572) and other

---

sites surrounding Crookbarrow Farm, such as the Scheduled Ancient Monument of Crookbarrow Hill (SAM 239) does not extend into the area of the present works.

---

### Publication summary

The Service has a professional obligation to publish the results of archaeological projects within a reasonable period of time. To this end, the Service intends to use this summary as the basis for publication through local or regional journals. The client is requested to consider the content of this section as being acceptable for such publication.

*An archaeological watching brief was undertaken on behalf of Worcestershire County Council Highways at Whittington Roundabout, Whittington, Worcestershire (NGR ref SO 874 526; HER ref WSM 46048). Observation was made of four trial pits and two areas of ground reduction. No archaeologically significant features or deposits were observed, and only later post-medieval and modern ceramic material was noted within the topsoil. This indicates that the medieval activity previously identified to the south and south-east does not extend into the area of the present works.*

---

### Acknowledgements

The Service would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project, Andrew Wynn and Kate Passant (Worcestershire County Council Highways) and Mike Glyde (Historic Environment Planning Officer, Worcestershire County Council).

---

### Bibliography

Barclay, W J, Green, G W, Holder, M T, Moorlock, B S P, Smart, J G O, Strange, P J, and Wilson, D, 1988 *Bristol Channel (sheet 51°N-04°W): solid geology*, 1:250,000 map, British Geological Survey, Keyworth

English Heritage 2012 The National Heritage List for England, website <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/protection/process/national-heritage-list-for-england/> accessed 29 March 2012

HEAS 2008 *Standards and guidelines for archaeological projects in Worcestershire*, Historic Environment and Archaeology Service, Worcestershire County Council, unpublished document dated November 2008

Hurst, D, 1998 *Excavation of a medieval site at Whittington, Worcestershire*, Historic Environment and Archaeology Service, Worcestershire County Council, unpublished report, **645**

Hurst, D, 2000 *Excavation of a medieval site at Whittington*, Transactions of the Worcestershire Archaeological Society, 3<sup>rd</sup> Series, vol **XVII**, 161-186

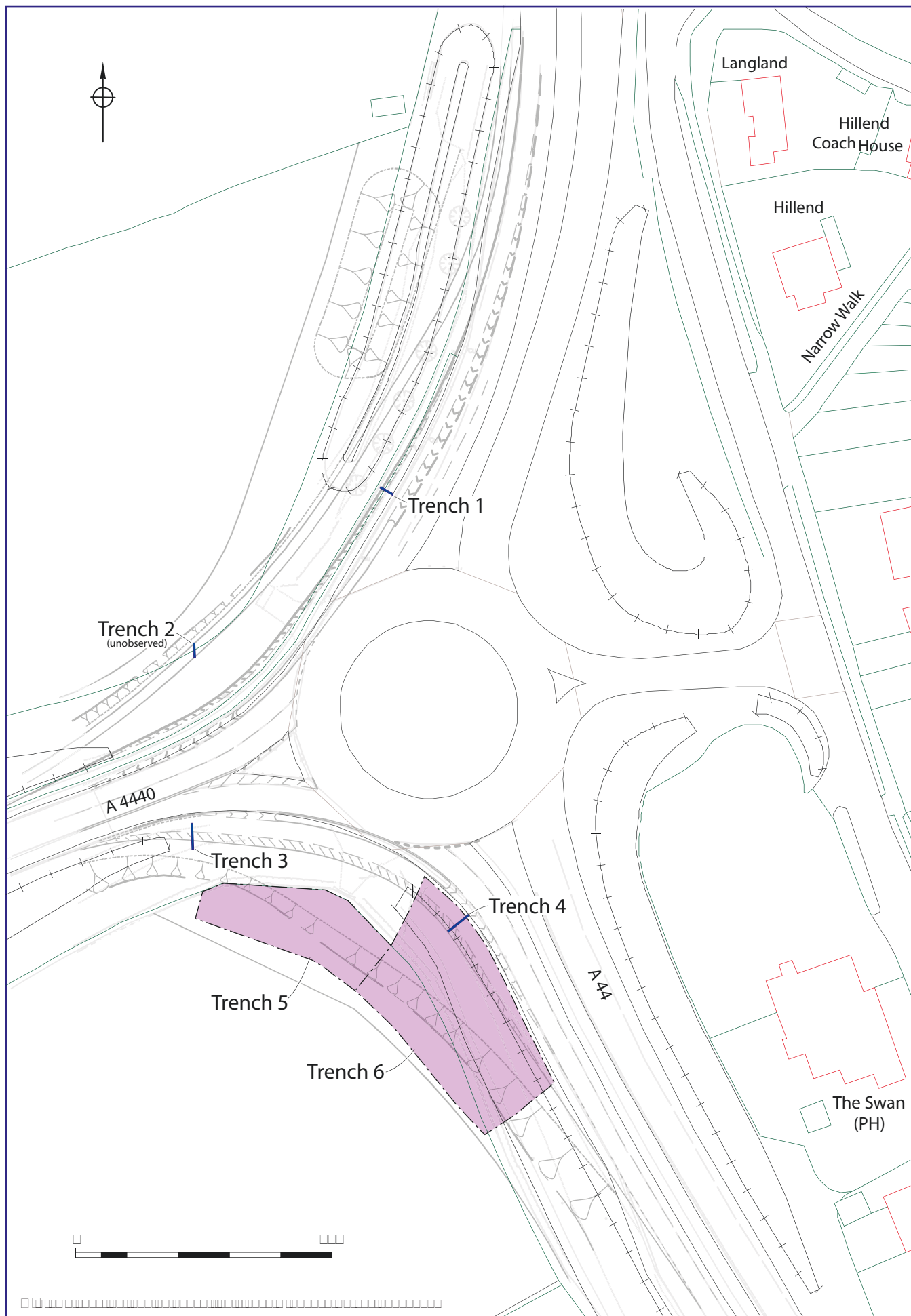
IfA 2008 *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief*, Institute for Archaeologists

Worcestershire Archaeology 2012 *Manual of Service Practice: recording manual*, Worcestershire County Council, unpublished report, **1842**

---

## Figures







## Plates



*Plate 1 Trench 1, looking north-west*



*Plate 2 Trench 3, looking north-west*





*Plate 3 Trench 4, looking east*



*Plate 4 Trench 5 topsoil strip, looking south-east*





*Plate 5 Trench 6 section of bank being re-graded, looking west*



*Plate 6 Trench 6 topsoil strip and bank re-grading, looking north-west*



*Plate 7 Trench 6 topsoil strip and bank re-grading, looking south-east*

---

## Appendix 1 Technical information

### The archive (site code: WSM 46048)

The archive consists of:

3	Field progress reports AS2
1	Photographic records AS3
27	Digital photographs
1	Scale drawings
6	Trench record sheets AS41
1	Computer disk
1	Copy of this report (bound hard copy)

The project archive is intended to be placed at:

Worcestershire County Museum  
Museums Worcestershire  
Hartlebury Castle  
Hartlebury  
Near Kidderminster  
Worcestershire DY11 7XZ  
Tel Hartlebury (01299) 250416