

Archaeological works at Grange Farm, Honeybourne, Worcestershire



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Archaeological works at Grange Farm, Honeybourne, Worcestershire

Tim Cornah and Tom Rogers

With contributions by Laura Griffin

Summary

A programme of archaeological works was undertaken at Grange Farm, Honeybourne, Worcestershire (NGR SP1163143747). It was undertaken on behalf of Ian Davies of Taylor Wimpey who have obtained planning permission for residential development of the site from Wychavon District Council.

The site lies to the south of the village of Honeybourne between High Street to the west and Weston Road to the east, which follows the approximate line of Roman Riknild Street.

A desk-based assessment of the site was carried out prior to the application which identified a high potential for the survival of archaeological features of Roman date due to the proximity of this road of archaeological features of medieval date was also identified due to proximity of the village High Street. A subsequent geophysical survey identified sinuous linear anomalies in the southern part of the site thought to represent cultivation furrows. In the northern and southern parts of the site a range of generally weak linear and discrete anomalies of potential archaeological origin were recorded as well as areas of magnetic debris interpreted as of recent origin.

Following this an archaeological evaluation of the site was undertaken. This identified the remains of cultivation furrows in the southern part of the site whilst in the northern part of the site a feature made of closely packed stone was associated with six fragments of Roman roof tile. This was thought to be a post-medieval drainage feature, although it was noted that the tile fragments might suggest the presence of a building in the vicinity.

Subsequent to these surveys, permission for residential development of the site was granted subject to conditions including a programme of archaeological works. Works carried out subsequent to permission were carried out by Worcestershire Archaeology and are described in this report. A brief prepared by the Planning Advisory Section of Worcestershire Archive & Archaeology Service described the requirement for an archaeological watching brief. However following consultation, it was agreed that the nature of the stone packed feature should be investigated prior to works. A 5m² area around the feature was opened in which it was established that the feature comprised a Roman structure or surface. At a later date this area was further widened and it was established that the feature was linear in plan and likely to represent a Roman road. Following further consultation, and a site meeting, a programme of archaeological recording was agreed, in which a 12m section of the road should be exposed, cleaned and recorded and further sections should be preserved in situ within the development. Furthermore, two evaluation trenches were excavated to establish the line of the road in the southern part of the site.

The road comprised two to three stone surfaces set in a shallow depression and flanked by roadside ditches. The evaluation trenches confirmed that the road continued through the site, surviving less well to the south.

It is concluded that the road recorded during this programme of works represents the original Roman road, known as Riknild Street. The current line of Weston Road/Station Road performs a distinct eastward kink as it passes through the village of Honeybourne and it is now clear that this represents a divergence from the original line. The reason for this divergence is not clear; it is apparent on the 1778 Cow Honeybourne Inclosure Map and does not appear to be associated with a particular building or landscape feature.

The remaining deposits and features relate to the agricultural use of the site in the post-medieval and modern eras as confirmed by cartographic evidence.

Report

1 Background

1.1 Reasons for the project

An archaeological programme of works was undertaken at Grange Farm, Honeybourne, Worcestershire (NGR SP1163143747). It was undertaken on behalf of Ian Davies of Taylor Wimpey. Wychavon District Council has granted planning permission for residential development on the site (reference number W12/1020).

A desk-based assessment (CSa Environmental Planning 2012) of the site was carried out prior to the application which identified a high potential for the survival of archaeological features of Roman date due to the proximity of this road and another Roman road which is thought to join from the west. A further potential for the survival of archaeological features of medieval date was also identified due to proximity of the village High Street.

A subsequent geophysical survey identified sinuous linear anomalies in the southern part of the site thought to represent cultivation furrows. In the northern and southern parts of the site a range of generally weak linear and discrete anomalies of potential archaeological origin were recorded as well as areas of magnetic debris interpreted as of recent origin.

A further archaeological evaluation of the site (Headland Archaeology 2012) identified the remains of cultivation furrows in the southern part of the site whilst in the northern part of the site a feature made of closely packed stone was associated with six fragments of Roman roof tile.

Subsequent to these surveys, permission for residential development of the site was granted subject to conditions including a programme of archaeological works. A brief (WA 2014) prepared by the Planning Advisory Section of Worcestershire Archive & Archaeology Service described the requirement for an archaeological watching brief. However, further consultation was undertaken in which a programme of works was agreed which are described in this report.

The project conforms to the Brief and to *Standards and guidelines for archaeological projects in Worcestershire* (WCC 2010). The event reference for this project, given by the HER is WSM66235.

2 Aims

The aims of the watching brief were to establish the presence and significance of archaeological deposits, and of artefactual and ecofactual assemblages to inform the research cycle taking into account local, regional and national research frameworks.

3 Methods

3.1 Personnel

The project was undertaken by Tim Cornah BA; who joined Worcestershire Archaeology in 2006 and has been practicing archaeology since 2004. Further field work was undertaken by Andy Walsh BA MSc AIFA who joined Worcestershire Archaeology in 2013 and has been practicing archaeology since 2004 as well as Andy Mann BA MSc who joined Worcestershire Archaeology in 2004 and has been practicing archaeology since 2001. The project manager responsible for the quality of the project was Tom Rogers BA, MSc. Illustrations were prepared by Carolyn Hunt. Laura Griffin BA (Hons), AIFA contributed the artefact methodology and analysis.

3.2 Documentary research

An archaeological desk-based assessment (DBA) was undertaken on behalf of Taylor Wimpey (CSa Environmental Planning 2012). The results of the DBA are outlined within the archaeological context given within section 4.1. This included the relevant cartographic information.

Documentary sources

Published and grey literature sources are listed in the bibliography.

3.3 Fieldwork strategy

A detailed specification has been prepared by Worcestershire Archaeology (WA 2014).

Fieldwork was undertaken between the 29th of September 2014 and the 3rd of November 2014. The site reference number and site code is WSM66235.

Initial works comprised the opening of a 5m² area around the stone packed feature identified in Trench A of the evaluation. Once a Roman date for the surface had been established, a wider area was opened to further understand its nature. This exercise established the linear nature of the surface and a site meeting with the client and Mike Glyde, Historic Environment Planning Officer was held, in which a programme of works was established.

These works comprised the exposure, cleaning and recording of a 12m section of the road (Trench 1) and a drawn section. A vertical photographic record of the surface of the road was taken, with a view to the creation of a photo-mosaic which is presented in Figure 5.

Two further evaluation trenches (Trenches 2 and 3) to establish the line of the road in the southern part of the site. The location of the trenches is indicated in Figure 2.

It was also established that a further section of the road should be preserved *in situ* in open spaces within the proposed residential scheme.

Deposits considered not to be significant were removed using a 360° tracked excavator, employing a toothless bucket and under archaeological supervision. Subsequent excavation was undertaken by hand. Clean surfaces were inspected and selected deposits were excavated to retrieve artefactual material and environmental samples, as well as to determine their nature. Deposits were recorded according to standard Worcestershire Archaeology practice (WA 2012a).

3.4 Structural analysis

All fieldwork records were checked and cross-referenced. Analysis was effected through a combination of structural, artefactual and ecofactual evidence, allied to the information derived from other sources.

3.5 Artefact methodology, by Laura Griffin

3.5.1 Artefact recovery policy

The artefact recovery policy conformed to standard Worcestershire Archaeology practice (WA 2012; appendix 2).

3.5.2 Method of analysis

All hand-retrieved finds were examined. They were identified, quantified and dated to period. A terminus post quem date was produced for each stratified context. The date was used for determining the broad date of phases defined for the site. All information was recorded on a pro forma Microsoft Access 2007 database.

3.5.3 Discard policy

The following categories/types of material will be discarded after a period of 6 months following the submission of this report, unless there is a specific request to retain them (and subject to the collection policy of the relevant depository):

- where unstratified
- post-medieval pottery, and;
- generally where material has been assessed as having no obvious grounds for retention.

3.6 Statement of confidence in the methods and results

The methods adopted allow a high degree of confidence that the aims of the project have been achieved.

4 The application site

4.1 Topography, geology and archaeological context

The site is located to the north east of the historic core of Honeybourne within the broader setting of the Vale of Evesham. The bedrock geology is of blue lias and charmouth mudstone formation and, whilst the specific superficial deposits on site are not known, they are likely to have variable sand/clay content (British Geological Survey 2014).

A desk-based assessment was carried out for this site (CSa Environmental Planning 2012), the results of which are summarised below. This included an assessment of the available Historic Environment Record data as well as a map regression.

The first known archaeological deposits within the vicinity of the site relate to roads built within the Roman period. Such a former Roman road, known as Ryknild Street (WSM30300), was thought to have run along the eastern boundary of the site under the line of the current Weston Road. Another road (WSM30628) is thought to have run from the west and joined to Ryknild Street immediately to the north of the site. In such a situation, it seems likely that there would have been some further archaeological activity at this period associated with the road junction, a situation which may be confirmed by the number of artefacts of this period recovered from locations around the village. These included pottery, coins and a brooch of this date though none of these were found within the immediate vicinity of the site.

Two deserted medieval villages, lie in the vicinity of Honeybourne, one (WSM02831) about 350m to the east of the site and another about 900m to its east (WSM02828). This latter is a scheduled monument and is the remains of Ponden. Also about 300m to the north east of the site is also St Egwins Church (WSM02825) which was dedicated in 1295. This gives a picture of development at this time and it remains possible some of this may have been located along the line of the former road, especially when a junction is considered. To what extent the High Street to the west of the site was developed at this time is similarly unknown. Within the site itself, there is evidence for ridge and furrow, which is likely to have been in use from the medieval period, suggesting a primarily agricultural use.

. Much of post-medieval Honeybourne is focused to the west of the site along the High Street and exists in the form of buildings, many of which are listed. The earliest of these is the Thatch Tavern which dates to the 16th century as well other houses of 17th century and later date (English Heritage 2014). Cartographic evidence suggests that the site was agricultural during this period, apart from the strip which joins the High Street to the west which is shown as developed into a house plot by the time of the Ordnance Survey map of 1923 and 1938.

4.2 Current land-use

The site has been used up until recently as two fields. The southernmost of these was used for the grazing of horses. On the western side of the site is a large modern shed the use of which appears to be agricultural. The strip which joins High Street was used for a house plot within the 20th century.

5 Structural analysis

The trenches and features recorded are shown in Fig 2. The results of the structural analysis are presented in Appendix 1.

5.1.1 Phase 1: Natural deposits

Natural deposits observed across all three trenches can be described as a firm mid yellow grey sandy clay. These were numbered (103), (203) and (302) respectively within each trench. Three further features were seen in Trench 3 that had indistinct edges and were recognised as discolouration within the natural deposits and were numbered as (308), (309) and (310). These appear to have been created by natural processes such as rooting but were not excavated. A similar such feature also existed in Trench 2 recorded as (212). This was similarly not excavated so its exact nature cannot be confirmed.

5.1.2 Phase 2: Roman deposits

Within Trench 1, the road was made up of three distinct surfaces laid on top of each other and set within a very shallow depression [107]. The section demonstrating is depicted on Plate 2 and Fig 4.

Feature [107] was a very shallow sided concave depression cut into the natural deposits below. Though only a small area of it was seen in plan, it appeared to run in a north to south direction. It was about 4.90m wide and 0.14m deep.

This depression was filled directly by feature (106) which made up a broadly flat surface. This was comprised of a very compact layer of small rounded stones with occasional angular limestone pieces that were laid flat. This surface did not extend outside of cut [107], and was 3.02m wide and up to 0.13m deep. The full length of both [107] and (106) was not determined as they were only identified within an excavated 2m wide slot. Features (106) and [107] together appeared to make up the earliest phase of the road.

Surface (106) was in turn overlain by deposit (105) which is 5.86m wide and 0.15m deep. This was made up of an orange grey silty clay which contained frequent angular limestone pieces, mostly laid flat. This deposit extends outside the of cut feature [107] so it clearly did not relate to the first phase of its construction. As many of the stones were laid flat, it is possible that it represented surface in its own right though its high clay content allows the interpretation that it is a clay packing below (104).

Surface (104) was made up of sub-angular stones up to about 0.28m in length as well as occasional pieces of Roman period coarse building material. Some sandy patches were also seen within this surface that are likely to have been used as a bedding. The stones were mostly laid flat and tightly packed, though the surface became dispersed towards its eastern and western edges, likely to be due to the later robbing of stones. This feature was also aligned broadly north to south but was slightly variable in its shape. At its southern end it had a distinct convex camber, but this was not uniform as at its northern end, this became convex. Though no wheel ruts or any other such features were seen, this surface was interpreted as the latest phase of the road. In total it measured 12m in length, 4.95m in width and up to 0.12m in depth and is shown in plate 1.

Two further features were identified within Trench 1. These were north-south aligned ditches that ran parallel to the road surface on either side. To the east of road surface 104 was a wide shallow ditch [109] which measured 2.50m in width and 0.54m in depth. This was in turn filled by deposit (108) which was mid brown orange silty clay that is likely to have formed as a result of siltation. To the west of road surface was ditch [111]. This was smaller than [109] but with steeper sides measuring 0.66m in width and 0.17m in depth. This was filled by deposit (110) which was a light brownish grey silt clay which again is likely to have formed by siltation. Neither of these ditches contained any dating material but their alignment suggest that they are contemporary with the road and formed roadside drainage ditches. These features are shown in Plates 3 and 4 as well as Fig 4.

Within Trenches 2 and 3, two further stone surfaces were present. Within Trench 2 this was numbered (205) and consisted of stones measuring up to 0.25m in length, mostly laid flat. Areas of smaller rounded stones were also seen that may have been either bedding for the larger stones or as an earlier phase of the road. This surface was not excavated so this cannot be confirmed. It had

a slight convex camber to it though an area in the middle appeared to have been robbed of its stone. Its total width was about 5.50m and it ran the full extent of the 2m wide trench. Within trench 3, surface (303) was less complete. It consisted of a single layer of sub-angular stones, many laid flat and directly on natural deposit (302). The surface was patchy in its extent with no obvious camber. It extended the full width of the 2m wide trench and was 5.15m in width. Both of these surfaces were interpreted as a continuation of the road surface observed in Trench 1 as they follow its projected course. These surfaces are shown on Plates 5 and 7 as well as Fig 3.

. Within Trench 2, road surface (205) was again flanked by two north south aligned ditches, ditch [209] about 4.20m to its east and ditch [211] about 2.50m to its west. Of these, only [209] was excavated and was a wide shallow feature 1.93m in width and 0.28m in depth that ran the full width of the 2m wide trench. Its fill, (208), is made up of a light grey brown silty clay that is, again, likely to be a result of siltation. This is shown on Plate 6. Ditch [211] was 1.25m wide and ran the full width of the trench. Within Trench 3, a single feature that is likely to be a ditch was seen to the east of surface (303) and also running north-south. Its width was 0.75m. It was not excavated so its depth and profile cannot be determined. No dating was recovered from these ditches but it seems likely that they are drainage ditches for the adjacent road as observed in Trench 1.

5.1.3 Phase 3: medieval deposits

All of the deposits and features discussed in the previous section were sealed by a layer of subsoil seen in all three trenches and numbered (101), (202) and (301) respectively. This comprised of a firm, light yellow brown sandy clay with occasional sub-rounded stones and charcoal flecking. This deposit was between 0.20 and 0.45m in depth. Its dating was not confirmed by artefactual evidence but appears to have formed between the end of Roman period and the post-medieval period.

5.1.4 Phase 4: post-medieval deposits

One further ditch, [207], was also seen in Trench 2 that was also aligned north-south. It was 1.90m in width, 0.50m deep and extended the full width of the trench. This had relatively shallow convex sides and a narrow concave base and was filled by deposit (206). This was a fairly compact mid orange clay silt that contained some pieces of coal and was stratigraphically later than sub-soil layer (202). This is likely to be a drainage ditch of post-medieval date. Another feature in Trench 3 [307] is likely to be another ditch. It ran in a north-west to south-east direction for 3.0m and was 0.55m wide. This was also not excavated.

5.1.5 Phase 5: modern deposits

The site was overlain by topsoil deposits recorded as (100), (201) and (300) respectively and was of a depth of between 0.24m and 0.35m. It was a dark grey brown clay loam with small occasional sub-rounded stones and frequent rooting. These deposits are interpreted as a plough soil. Land drains were seen in all three trenches as well as a geological test pit at the west end of trench 3.

6 Artefact analysis, by Laura Griffin

The site assemblage totalled 113 finds (weighing 4476g) from four contexts (Tables 1 and 2), and was dominated by fragments of Roman building material. Level of preservation was fair with material displaying moderate levels of surface abrasion.

period	material class	object specific type	Count	Weight (g)
?Roman	fired clay	?mould	1	2
Roman	ceramic	imbrex	3	145
Roman	ceramic	pot	1	5
Roman	ceramic	tegula	17	2303
Roman	ceramic	tile	90	2018
modern	ceramic	pot	1	3
total			113	4476

Table 1: Quantification of the assemblage

6.1.1 Summary artefactual evidence by period

All material has been quantified, but, due to a lack of diagnostic pottery, contexts could only be dated to general period.

6.1.1.1 Roman

Ceramic building material

Material of Roman date consisted primarily of fragments of roofing tile. In total, 110 fragments were retrieved, including 17 pieces of *tegula* and three of *imbrex*. The majority of this tile was associated with the road (context 104), where it appeared to have been used in surface repairs (Rob Hedge, pers comm).

A large proportion of fragments were of a fine fabric made up from poorly mixed white and red clays, resulting in a distinctive marbled appearance. This is the most commonly identified Roman tile fabric in Worcestershire with a widespread distribution. Remaining fragments were of a sandier fabric which was oxidised throughout with marl, sandstone and small rounded black inclusions.

Due to the abraded nature of the *tegulae* fragments, few pieces were measurable but in general, thickness varied between 16–24mm. Diagnostic features seen on the *tegulae* included a quadruple arc signature mark, two upper cutaways and one lower. In addition, a number of flanges had a distinctive shallow groove along the top which ran the length of the tile. The form of the lower cutaway may suggest a 2nd century date for these tiles (Warry 2006), although, in the absence of further cutaways or diagnostic pottery, this date must be treated with caution.

The three fragments of *imbrex* came from a single tile (context 106). The fabric of this tile was different to those seen in the *tegulae* assemblage, being largely of fine sand but with occasional, large quartz sandstone inclusions. The tile measured 18mm thick, well within the standard range for this form.

In addition to the above roofing tile, there were also four fragments of possible *bessalis* (square tile used in the pillars or *pilae* of a hypocaust), measuring 40mm thick. This tile was of the same marbled fabric as described above.

Other finds

Remaining material considered of Roman date came from the cleaning layer of Trench 1 (context 102) and consisted of a single, highly abraded sherd of a reduced, sandy ware and a small fragment of fired clay. This latter object featured a dense black interior often indicative metalworking moulds.

6.1.1.2 Modern

A single fragment of modern flowerpot was retrieved from the same cleaning layer as the Roman sherd described above.

context	material class	object specific type	count	weight (g)	start date	end date	spot date of context
102	ceramic	pot	1	5	M1C	4C	modern
102	fired clay	?mould	1	2	M1C	4C	
102	ceramic	pot	1	3	L18C	20C	
102	ceramic	tile	17	236	M1C	4C	
104	ceramic	tile	41	1026	M1C	4C	Roman
104	ceramic	tegula	11	2084	M1C	4C	
105	ceramic	tegula	6	219	M1C	4C	Roman
106	ceramic	tile	32	756	M1C	4C	Roman
106	ceramic	imbrex	3	145	M1C	4C	

Table 2: Summary of context dating based on the artefactual assemblage

6.1.2 Significance

The Roman building material forms a useful artefactual assemblage in itself, with a range of diagnostic features and fabric types present. Though of limited significance in itself, the use of such tile for road repairs may well signify post-Roman activity, which would be of much greater significance, as that is rarely found in the archaeological record of this region.

7 Synthesis

7.1 Roman period

The archaeological works described in this report have established that Ryknild Street, previously thought to have run beneath the line of Weston Road, which forms the eastern boundary of the

site, in fact runs on a parallel line through the eastern side of the site. The current line of Weston Road/Station Road performs a distinct eastward kink as it passes through Honeybourne and it is now clear that this represents a divergence from the original line of the road. The reason for this divergence is not clear; it is apparent on the 1778 Cow Honeybourne Inclosure Map and does not appear to be associated with a particular building or landscape feature.

The line of the road, also traced in Trenches 2 and 3 demonstrates that, as it continues south, the road begins to converge with Weston Road to join, presumably at some point to the south. The roadside ditches in this part of the site may have been the origin of two parallel anomalies recorded as a11 in the geophysical survey.

Davies (2002) characterises roads of this period as being made up of raised central section that that is usually comprises of a hard surface usually constructed with a compact stone layer. This is often cambered in shape and flanked by at least one parallel ditch on either side in order to provide drainage. Roman roads in Britain average about 6.51m in width in terms of the actual road surface, though it is considered that a width of only 4.42m is required for two carts to pass. Surface 104 measured 4.95 in width, 105 was 5.86 in width and 106 was 3.02m wide. This latter may have been damaged and was placed within a shallow cut measuring 4.90m wide. These features therefore fit closely with the accepted character of Roman roads and are broadly repeated in Trenches 2 and 3 though one of the roadside ditches in Trench 3 is not remaining. The dating of these features falls broadly within the 1st to 4th centuries, further confirming its interpretation. There may be some suggestion that some of the material culture found, especially from surface (104) may have been deposited in the post-Roman period.

A number of other sections have been excavated through Ryknild Street, though further to the north east such as at the junction with Watling Street, during the construction of the A5 trunk road and near the town of Wall (McKinley 2008). These were broadly similar in character but with a significant difference in that they were much wider. The metalled road surface measured between 7.3 and 8.38 metres in width and the distance between the parallel ditches varied from 17.5m to 21m. This is compared to the 10m width recorded from Trench 1.

The road surface itself in Trench 1 had at least two distinct phases but possibly three, suggesting a significant length of use for this feature. The road had also been mended, partly with building materials, including tegulae and imbrex also implying long usage, which may post-date Roman occupation. Furthermore the presence of *bessalis* might suggest the presence of a high status residence in the vicinity.

Davies (2002) suggests that there is great variety in the structure and construction of road surfaces from paved slab surfaces to rough stone surfaces as exists here. Between the three trenches there is noticeable variety in the character of the road surface. This may be mainly due to preservation levels but the possibility remains that the best laid parts of the road were reserved for the area closest to the hypothesised road junction to the north. No further remains were identified from this period.

7.2 Medieval Period

The build-up of sub-soil within this period suggests that there was a period of abandonment, and that the road fell out of use. It seems likely that it was in this period that the road changed its alignment. The southern area of the site shows the remains of ridge and furrow, the product of strip field agriculture which was prevalent in the medieval period and continued into the post-medieval period. A lack of any further features of this period would suggest an agricultural use across the site.

7.3 Post Medieval period

Apart from drainage ditches in Trenches 2 and 3, no post-medieval features were recorded and it is thought likely that the site was agricultural in this period, as suggested by cartographic evidence.

7.4 Modern period

The modern period is characterised by the continuing prominence of an agricultural use. This is seen by the presence of a plough soil, ceramic drainage pipes and confirmed mapping. The only exception to this is in the western side of the site that connects to the High Street which was developed as a hose plot in the 20th century.

7.5 Research frameworks

Ryknild Street is considered to have been a strategic military road which is early in date and ran to the fort at Alcester to the north. Bidford on Avon to the north of Honeybourne developed at this period alongside Ryknild Street, so it seems likely that further settlement is possible at such a road junction such as suggested here. Whilst the larger settlements such as Alcester are relatively well understood in the Roman period, this is not the case with the smaller ones such as is likely to exist here (Booth 1996). Indeed, "villages" of this period within this region are considered to be absent (Esmonde Cleary 2011) so any information that could highlight a settlement here would be significant.

Roman roads themselves are well documented and around 380 stretches making up about 7000 miles are considered to date to this period (English Heritage 2014). Similarly their construction is well documented but the remains here can add to the general body of knowledge as overviewed by Davies (2002).

8 Publication summary

Worcestershire Archaeology has a professional obligation to publish the results of archaeological projects within a reasonable period of time. To this end, Worcestershire Archaeology 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.

A programme of archaeological works was undertaken at Grange Farm, Honeybourne, Worcestershire (NGR SP1163143747). It was undertaken on behalf of Ian Davies of Taylor Wimpey who have obtained planning permission for residential development of the site from Wychavon District Council.

The site lies to the south of the village of Honeybourne between High Street to the west and Weston Road to the east, which follows the approximate line of Roman Ryknild Street.

A desk-based assessment of the site was carried out prior to the application which identified a high potential for the survival of archaeological features of Roman date due to the proximity of this road of archaeological features of medieval date was also identified due to proximity of the village High Street. A subsequent geophysical survey identified sinuous linear anomalies in the southern part of the site thought to represent cultivation furrows. In the northern and southern parts of the site a range of generally weak linear and discrete anomalies of potential archaeological origin were recorded as well as areas of magnetic debris interpreted as of recent origin.

Following this an archaeological evaluation of the site was undertaken. This identified the remains of cultivation furrows in the southern part of the site whilst in the northern part of the site a feature made of closely packed stone was associated with six fragments of Roman roof tile. This was thought to be a post-medieval drainage feature, although it was noted that the tile fragments might suggest the presence of a building in the vicinity.

Subsequent to these surveys, permission for residential development of the site was granted subject to conditions including a programme of archaeological works. Works carried out subsequent to permission were carried out by Worcestershire Archaeology and are described in this report. A brief prepared by the Planning Advisory Section of Worcestershire Archive & Archaeology Service described the requirement for an archaeological watching brief. However

following consultation, it was agreed that the nature of the stone packed feature should be investigated prior to works. A 5m² area around the feature was opened in which it was established that the feature comprised a Roman structure or surface. At a later date this area was further widened and it was established that the feature was linear in plan and likely to represent a Roman road. Following further consultation, and a site meeting, a programme of archaeological recording was agreed, in which a 12m section of the road should be exposed, cleaned and recorded and further sections should be preserved in situ within the development. Furthermore, two evaluation trenches were excavated to establish the line of the road in the southern part of the site.

The road comprised two to three stone surfaces set in a shallow depression and flanked by roadside ditches. The evaluation trenches confirmed that the road continued through the site, surviving less well to the south.

It is concluded that the road recorded during this programme of works represents the original Roman road, known as Riknild Street. The current line of Weston Road/Station Road performs a distinct eastward kink as it passes through the village of Honeybourne and it is now clear that this represents a divergence from the original line. The reason for this divergence is not clear; it is apparent on the 1778 Cow Honeybourne Inclosure Map and does not appear to be associated with a particular building or landscape feature.

The remaining deposits and features relate to the agricultural use of the site in the post-medieval and modern eras as confirmed by cartographic evidence.

9 Acknowledgements

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Figures

Plates



Plate 1 Showing surface (104) within Trench 1, looking north.



Plate 2 Showing a section through road surfaces (104), (105) and (106) within Trench 1 looking south.



Plate 3 Ditch [109] within Trench 1, looking south.



Plate 4 Ditch [111] within Trench 1, looking south.



Plate 5 Surface(205) within Trench 2, looking north-east.



Plate 6 Ditch [209] within Trench 2, looking north.



Plate 7 Surface (303) within Trench 3, looking south-east.

Appendix 1 Trench descriptions

Trench 1

Maximum dimensions: Length: 12.3m Width: 16.75m Depth: 0.97m

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
100	Topsoil	Dark grey brown clay silt loam with occasional small sub-rounded and angular stones. It has frequent root disturbance. It has a clear boundary with deposit 101	0.00-0.33m
101	Subsoil	Compact light brown silty clay with occasional small to medium sub-rounded stones and some root disturbance	0.33-0.63m
102	Cleaning layer	Layer likely to consist of the base of 101 but assigned to accurately assign a context to finds	0.53-0.63m
103	Natural	Firm mid yellowish grey brown sandy clay	0.53m-unknown
104	Road surface	Layer of tightly compacted small sub-angular and medium sized flat stones aligned broadly in a north-south direction.	0.38-50m
105	Road surface	Moderately compact mid orangey brown silty clay with frequent sub-angular and flat limestone pieces. Aligned in a broadly north to south direction.	0.51-0.64m
106	Road surface	Compact layer of small rounded and medium flat sub-angular stones within light orange brown clay silt matrix. Aligned broadly north to south	0.55-0.72m
107	Cut for surface 106	Shallow sided, wide linear feature running north to south	0.54-0.72m
108	Fill of 109	Cohesive mid brownish orange silty clay with occasional small rounded stones and snail shells.	0.54-0.98m
109	Ditch cut	Wide shallow sided ditch cut running north to south	0.54-0.98m
110	Fill of 111	Cohesive light brownish grey silty clay with some snail shell.	0.76-0.96m

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
111	Ditch cut	Small linear with moderate concave sides running north to south.	0.76-0.96m

Trench 2

Maximum dimensions: Length: 30m Width: 2m Depth: 0.75m

Orientation: east to west

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
201	Topsoil	Dark grey brown clay silt loam with occasional small sub-rounded and angular stones. It has frequent root disturbance	0-0.35m
202	Subsoil	Compact light brown silty clay with occasional small to medium sub-rounded stones and some root disturbance	0.30-0.45m
203	Natural	Firm mid yellowish grey brown sandy clay	0.50m-unknown
204	Cut	Probable robber cut running through the top of surface 205. Not excavated.	0.50m-unknown
205	Road surface	Layer of stones probably made up of a number of small to medium sub-rounded stones, many laid flat. Not excavated.	0.50m-unknown
206	Fill of 207	Mid orange yellow clay silt with rare coal pieces.	0.27-0.74m
207	Ditch cut	Post-medieval ditch cut running north to south	0.27-0.74m
208	Fill of 209	Mid light grey brown silty clay with occasional snail inclusions	0.44-0.70m
209	Ditch cut	Wide but shallow north south aligned ditch, probably associated road surface 205	0.44-0.70m
210	Fill of 211	Mid orangey brown silty clay	0.75m-unknown
211	Possible	Linear feature aligned north to south that	0.75m-unknown

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
	ditch cut	may be a ditch associated with 205	

Trench 3

Maximum dimensions: Length: 28m Width: 2m Depth: 0.78m

Orientation: East to west

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
300	Topsoil	Dark grey brown clay silt loam with occasional small sub-rounded and angular stones. It has frequent root disturbance	0-0.24m
301	Subsoil	Compact light brown silty clay with occasional small to medium sub-rounded stones and some root disturbance	0.24-0.41m
302	Natural	Firm mid yellowish grey brown sandy clay	0.51m-unknown
303	Road surface	Layer of sub-angular limestone pieces often laid flat, roughly aligned north to south.	0.51-0.61m
304	Fill of 304	Mid orangey brown silty clay	0.60m-unkown
305	Possible ditch cut	North south aligned linear feature, possibly a ditch associated with 303	0.60m-unkown
306	Fill of 307	Dark grey brown clayey silt	0.60m-unkown
307	Possible ditch cut	Linear aligned north west to south east, terminating within the trench.	0.60m-unkown
308	Layer	Mid orangey blue brown silty clay	0.60m-unkown
309	Layer	Mid orangey blue brown silty clay	0.60m-unkown
310	Layer	Mid orangey blue brown silty clay	0.60m-unkown

Appendix 2 Technical information

The archive (site code: WSM 66235)

The archive consists of:

10	Context records AS1
2	Field progress reports AS2
4	Photographic records AS3
213	Digital photographs
1	Drawing number catalogues AS4
5	Scale drawings
1	Context number catalogues AS5
3	Trench record sheets AS41
1	Box of finds
1	CD-Rom / DVDs

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