

ARCHAEOLOGICAL
WATCHING BRIEF
AT
LOWER NORCHARD FARM
AND FURZE FARM,
PEOPLETON,
WORCESTERSHIRE



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The Hive
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Status:
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Watching brief at Lower Norchard Farm and Furze Farm, Peopleton, Worcestershire

Graham Arnold

Background information

<i>Client</i>	Worcestershire Wildlife Trust
<i>Site address</i>	Lower Norchard Farm, Peopleton
<i>National Grid reference</i>	SO 39349, 25070
<i>Site address</i>	Furze Farm, Peopleton
<i>National Grid reference</i>	SO 39352, 25268
<i>Historic Environment Record reference</i>	WSM 48222
<i>Project design</i>	WA 2012
<i>Project parameters</i>	IfA 2012

Background

An archaeological watching brief was carried out on behalf of Worcestershire Wildlife trust, in partnership with the Environment Agency, at two sites on the Bow Brook. This watercourse has issues with siltation and lowered diversity and as part of this solution two wetland habitats were created in the vicinity of Peopleton. Advice was been sought from the Planning Advisory Service of Worcestershire County Council who considered that the works had the potential to affect buried archaeological remains. It was advised that watching briefs be carried out on the two sites at Lower Norchard Farm and Furze Farm.

Archaeological background

No previous archaeological work has been undertaken on either site.

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

WA 2012a

Dates of fieldwork

06-03-2013 – 25-03-2013

Area of site - see figure 2 and 3

Dimensions of excavated areas observed –

Lower Norchard Farm

Pond 1 diameter 25.00m
 depth 2.10m

Pond 2 diameter 15.00m
 depth 1.00m

Furze Farm

Pond area 50m²
 depth 0.45m max observed

Access to or visibility of deposits

Observation of the excavated areas was undertaken during machine excavation. The exposed surfaces were sufficiently clean to observe well-differentiated archaeological deposits

Statement of confidence

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

*Deposit description***Lower Norchard Farm****Fish Refuge 1**

Maximum dimensions: Length: 25.00m Width: 25.00m Depth: 0.30 – 2.10m

Orientation: Southwest corner of field (see fig 2)

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
100	Topsoil	Friable dark brown rich silty loam with a high humic content	0 – 0.30m
101	Natural	Firm, compact light brownish yellow clay with occasional sandstone and slate	0.30m – 0.80m
102	Natural	Compact blue grey clay with frequent gravels. No organics or artefacts observed. Sterile gravelly band in river bank	0.80m – 1.10m
103	Natural	Yellow mottled blue grey gleyed clay. No organics; naturally waterlogged.	1.10m – 1.80m
104	Natural geology	Compact reddish orange gravel. Natural geological substrate	1.80m – 2.10m

Fish Refuge 2

Maximum dimensions: Length: 12.00m Width: 12.00m Depth: 0.30 – 0.75m

Orientation: Southeast corner of field (see fig 2)

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
100	Topsoil	Friable dark brown rich silty loam with a high humic content	0 – 0.30m
101	Natural clay	Firm, compact light brownish yellow clay with occasional sandstone and slate and occasional blue grey clay mottling	0.30m – 0.75m

Furze Farm**Fish Refuge**

Maximum dimensions: Length: c12m Width: c10m Depth: 1.2m

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
200	Topsoil	Dark greyish brown silty loam with occasional residual post-medieval tile and lias	0.15 – 0.30m
201	Subsoil	Moderately compact yellowish orange silty clay	0.30 – 0.45m
202	Fill of furrow	Subsoil within plough marks	0.30 – 0.45m
203	Cut of furrow	Linear orientated NW – SE across site	0.30 – 0.45m
204	Natural	Compact yellow orange river gravels	0.45m +

Discussion

The works observed showed only natural alluvial clays and gravel deposits at Lower Norchard Farm (plates 1-3). Evidence of ridge and furrow orientated northwest – southeast was observed on Furze Farm with occasional post-medieval tile fragments within the topsoil fill of the furrows (Plate 5). No further archaeological deposits or finds were present.

Conclusions

Apart from the ploughed out remains of ridge and furrow observed at Furze Farm, no other archaeological evidence was found on the site during the works.

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.

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken on behalf of Worcestershire Wildlife Trust at Lower Norchard Farm and Furze Farm, Peopleton, Worcestershire (NGR ref SO 39349, 25070 & SO 39352, 25268, WSM 48222). The works involved the creation of Fish Refuges and the topsoil strip was monitored. The ploughed out remains of ridge and furrow, a remnant of strip field agriculture, was observed at Furze Farm but no further archaeological finds or features were present.

Acknowledgements

Worcestershire Archaeology would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project, Mr Peter Case of the Worcestershire Wildlife Trust and Mike Glyde, Historic Environment Planning Officer for Worcestershire County Council.

Bibliography

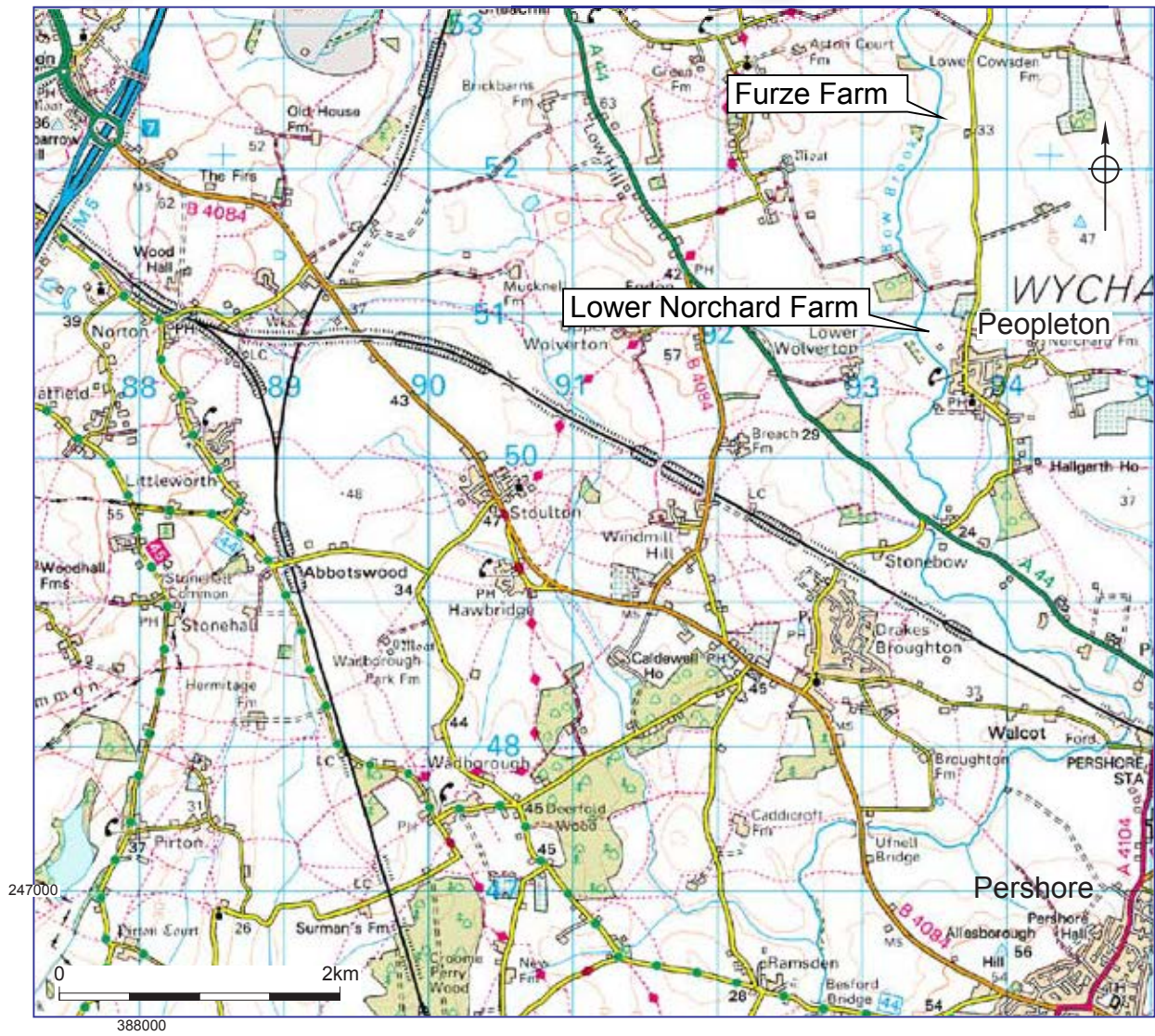
IfA 2008 *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief*, Institute for Archaeologists

WA 2012a *Manual of service practice, recording manual*, Worcestershire Archaeology, Worcestershire County Council, report **1842**

WA 2012b *Proposal for an archaeological watching brief at Lower Norchard Farm and Furze Farm, Peopleton, Worcestershire*, Worcestershire County Council, unpublished document dated 22 October 2012, **P3974**

WCC 2010 *Standards and guidelines for archaeological projects in Worcestershire*, Planning Advisory Section, Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service, Worcestershire County Council unpublished report **604**, amended July 2012

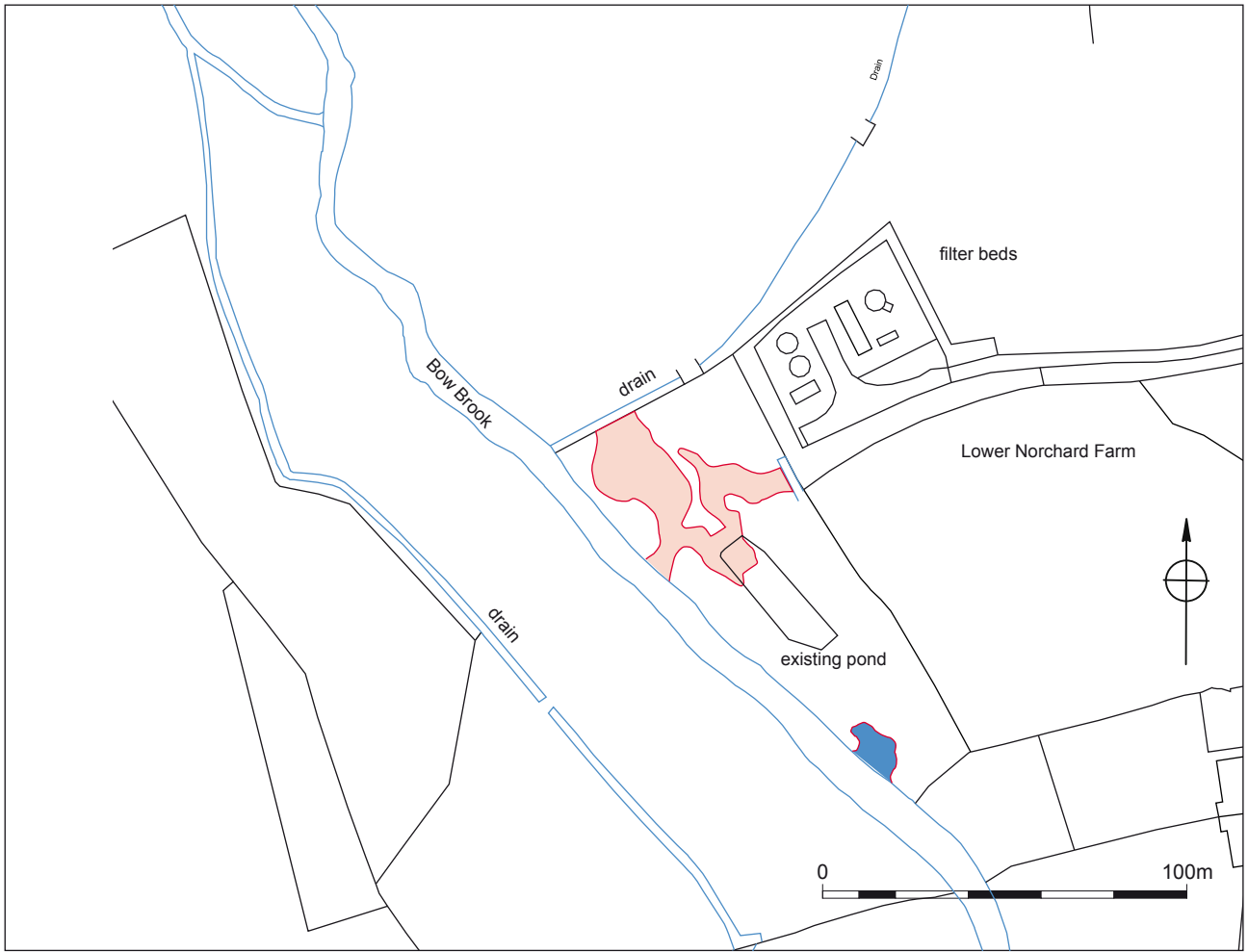
Figures



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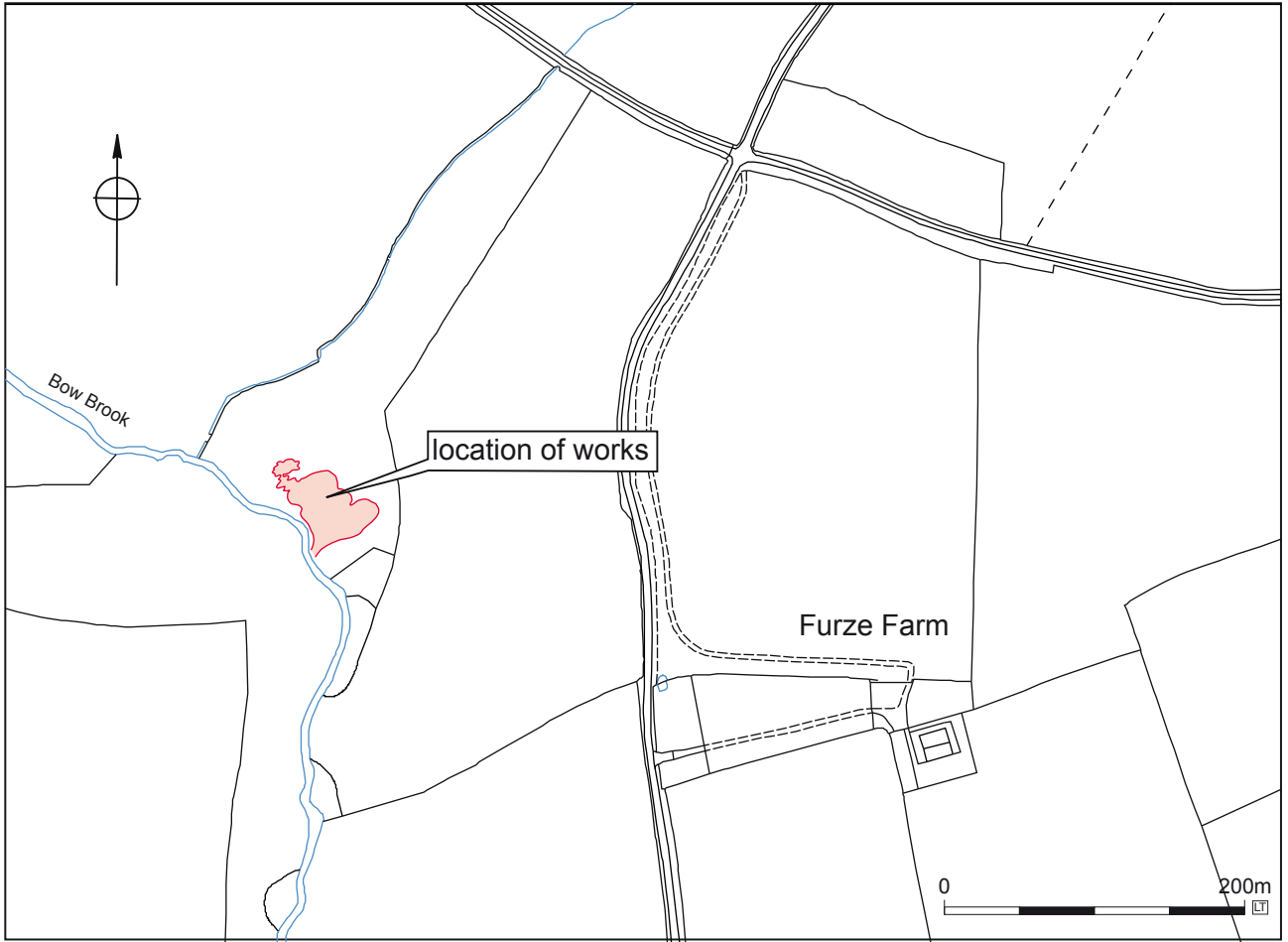
Location of the site

Figure 1



Location of Fish Refuges 1 and 2 at Lower Norchard Farm

Figure 2



Location of Fish Refuge at Furze Farm

Figure 3

Plates



Plate 1 Lower Norchard farm fish refuge 1 view southwest



Plate 2 General view of fish refuge 1 at Lower Norchard Farm under excavation, view southeast



Plate 3 Lower Norchard farm area 2 clay view south



Plate 4 General view of topsoil strip at Furze Farm overall, view southwest



Plate 5 Furze farm topsoil strip showing furrows running northwest-southeast. View southeast



Plate 6 Example of natural river gravels under the furrows and subsoil. View north

Appendix 1 Technical information

The archive (site code: WSM 48222)

The archive consists of:

- 1 Field progress reports AS2
- 1 Photographic records AS3
- 80 Digital photographs
- 2 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