

DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT OF  
LAND NEXT TO  
STATION ROAD,  
HONEYBOURNE,  
WORCESTERSHIRE

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With contributions by Elizabeth Curran

Illustrations by Carolyn Hunt

17 October 2011

Revised 2 November 2011

Revision 2 19 April 2012 revised planning application

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Project 3769  
Report 1874  
WSM 46044



# Contents

<b>Summary</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Report</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>1. Background</b>	<b>2</b>
1.1 Reasons for the project	2
1.2 Aims	2
1.3 Methods	2
1.3.1 Documentary research	2
1.4 Hedgerows	2
1.5 Walkover survey	3
<b>2. The application site</b>	<b>3</b>
2.1 Location	3
2.2 Topography, geology and soils	3
2.3 Current land-use	3
2.4 Archaeological and historical background	3
<b>3. Heritage assets</b>	<b>4</b>
3.1 Designated heritage assets	4
3.2 Undesignated heritage assets	5
3.2.1 Ridge and furrow earthworks	5
3.2.2 Hedgerows, by Elizabeth Curran	5
3.2.3 Pond	5
3.2.4 Scatter of Roman and later artefacts	5
<b>4. Significance</b>	<b>5</b>
4.1 Ridge and furrow earthworks	5
4.2 Pond	6
4.3 Scatter of Roman and later artefacts	6
4.4 Hedgerows	6
<b>5. Potential impact of development</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>6. Publication summary</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>7. Acknowledgements</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>8. Personnel</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>9. Sources and bibliography</b>	<b>8</b>



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## **Desk-based assessment of land next to Station Road, Honeybourne, Worcestershire**

**Darren Miller and Simon Woodiwiss**

**With contributions by Elizabeth Curran**

### **Summary**

A desk-based assessment was undertaken of land next to Station Road, Honeybourne, Worcestershire (NGR SP 11680 44650). It was undertaken on behalf of Arthur Amos Associates, whose client (Lioncourt Homes Ltd) intends to undertake residential development, for which a planning application will be submitted.

This report describes and assesses the significance of the heritage assets (and potential heritage assets) that are potentially affected by the application. The setting of heritage assets is also considered.

The report identifies heritage assets in the form of ridge and furrow earthworks, two post-medieval hedgerows, and a former pond. The ridge and furrow earthworks are of late medieval date (or origin) and are judged to be of local significance as rare survivals of features that are common elsewhere. The hedgerows are judged to be important, using criteria in statutory regulations. The former pond is judged to be of limited local significance. A field evaluation undertaken as a result of an earlier version of this assessment did not produced any significant evidence for prehistoric and/or Roman activity, beyond the scatter of Roman and later artefacts, probably resulting from the manuring of fields.

## Report

### 1. Background

#### 1.1 Reasons for the project

A desk-based assessment was undertaken of land off Station Road, Honeybourne, Worcestershire (NGR SP 11680 44650). It was undertaken on behalf of Arthur Amos Associates, whose client Lioncourt Homes Ltd intends to undertake residential development, for which a planning application will be submitted to Wychavon District Council.

The proposed development site is considered to include heritage assets and potential heritage assets with archaeological interest, the significance of which may be affected by the application.

An earlier version of this assessment recommended that field evaluation was undertaken, aiming to demonstrate the presence or absence of significant archaeological remains. A report on the field evaluation is presented in Appendix 3.

The project conforms to a project proposal (including detailed specification) prepared by HEAS (2011).

The project also conforms to the *Standard and guidance for archaeological desk-based assessment* (IfA 2008) and *Standards and guidelines for archaeological projects in Worcestershire* (HEAS 2010).

The event reference for this desk-based assessment given by the HER is WSM 46046.

#### 1.2 Aims

The aims of the assessment were:

- to describe and assesses the significance of heritage assets within the application site;
- to establish the nature, importance and extent of heritage assets;
- to assess the impact of the application on heritage assets.

#### 1.3 Methods

##### 1.3.1 Documentary research

The most relevant sources for the history of the proposed application site were collected and assessed.

Records of archaeological monuments and events within 500m of the application site of the area were obtained from the Worcestershire Historic Environment Record (HER) along with historic Ordnance Survey maps (HEAS 2011b). Aerial photographs and transcriptions held in the HER were also consulted. Archives and manuscript maps were studied at the Worcestershire Record Office. Other sources were obtained from the Internet. All sources are listed in Section 10.

Figure 2 shows the application area in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Undesignated heritage assets recorded in the HER are described in Appendix 1 and illustrated on Figure 3. Other heritage assets identified during the assessment are described in Appendix 2 and illustrated on Figures 4 and 5. The numbered photo locations shown on Figure 4 correspond to Plates 1-8.

#### 1.4 Hedgerows

The consideration of the application of the *Hedgerows Regulations 1997* is intended to be indicative rather than definitive. Searches relating to the information necessary for the regulations is restricted to those that are readily available. For instance, the Service will not usually have undertaken exhaustive searches of documents (particularly textual documents)

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held by a Records Office. Wildlife and landscape criteria are also beyond the scope of this archaeological project and have not been considered.

## 1.5 Walkover survey

Access to the application site was arranged through Arthur Amos Associates and a visit was made on 11 October 2011. Photographs were taken and notes were made on a large-scale Ordnance Survey map. A survey was subsequently undertaken on 18 April 2012 to identify the extents of ridge and furrow earthworks.

## 2. The application site

### 2.1 Location

The application site consists of an irregularly-shaped 17-acre field on the east side of Station Road, just north of the modern village of Honeybourne (Fig 1; NRG SP 11680 44650). Station Road – also known as Buckle Street and Ryknild Street - forms the west boundary of the civil parish of Honeybourne. The parish forms one of 109 parishes in the Wychavon District of south-east Worcestershire.

### 2.2 Topography, geology and soils

The application site is on the first terrace of the River Avon, around 50m above Ordnance Datum. The underlying geology is Jurassic Lower Lias (British Geological Survey 1974). The soils have been mapped as typical calcareous pelosols of the Evesham 2 Association (Soil Survey of England and Wales 1986).

### 2.3 Current land-use

At the time of the assessment, the application site was undeveloped, open, and managed as pasture, apart from a small stoned area inside a gate along the west boundary of the site (Fig 4). The southern part of the site is crossed by overhead and underground services.

### 2.4 Archaeological and historical background

Unlike other parishes in south-east Worcestershire, Honeybourne has received little attention from archaeologists and historians. Professional archaeological work has been limited to a watching brief on the installation of water main along Station Road (Appendix 1; WSM 26360; Pearson and Woodiwiss 2000, 7-8) and building recording at the Coach House, Grove Farm (WSM 32189), although amateur archaeologists have undertaken a valuable survey of ridge and furrow earthworks in and around the parish (Boocock and Colcomb 2001). Similarly, the history of the parish was researched in the early 1900s for the *Victoria History of the County of Worcester* (Curtis 1906) but since then, most work has been undertaken by amateur historians on 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century topics (Boocock 2000). The following summary must therefore be based on limited evidence.

At present, there is no evidence for prehistoric activity in Honeybourne, although a brooch of late Iron Age or Roman date was found by metal-detecting to the west of the village in the neighbouring parish of Cow Honeybourne (Appendix 1, WSM 38609). However, in view of discoveries elsewhere, it is likely that the area was settled and farmed in the Neolithic and Bronze Age, and exploited even earlier by Mesolithic hunters and gatherers (Garwood 2011; Hurst 2011).

In the Roman period, Honeybourne was crossed by a major road on the same line as Station Road. This road, known latterly as Ryknild or Icknild Street ran for 112 miles between Bourton on the Water in Gloucestershire and Rotherham in South Yorkshire (Davies 2002, 171). In 1997, remains of the Roman road were found beneath the modern road near the northern parish boundary and at another point opposite Blenheim Farm (Appendix 1; WSM 26360; Pearson and Woodiwiss 2000, 7-8).

Among the metal-detected finds from Cow Honeybourne are two Roman brooches, a strap-fitting or decorative mount, and a coin of AD 269-295 (Appendix 1: WSM 38609). These finds, and earlier finds of Roman pottery, suggest a wider distribution of material. Here again, by analogy with discoveries elsewhere, it is likely that the area was settled and farmed throughout the Roman period (Esmonde-Cleary 2011).

Estates at Honeybourne, and at Poden in the east of the parish, were clearly established by the 8<sup>th</sup> century, when they became part of the endowment of the abbey of Evesham, founded c AD 709 (Hooke 1990, 46-57). An Anglo-Saxon *sceatta* or coin dating to c AD 705-715, found to the west of the village in 2005 provides material evidence of Anglo-Saxon activity. In 1086, the Honeybourne estate, as described in Domesday Book, was evidently well-developed and strongly arable, with four demesne ploughs cultivating around 400 acres and ten villeins cultivating another 300 acres or so (Thorn and Thorn 1982, 10, 9).

There is little surviving documentation for the medieval period, although 27 of the wealthier tenants were recorded in a lay subsidy roll of 1275 (Willis-Bund and Amphlett 1893, 87-88) and an Evesham cartulary records significant sums raised by other taxes in this period (British Museum, Harley 3763). In 1291, the manor of Church Honeybourne was valued at £4 13s 4d *per annum*, of which £3 came from the abbey's demesne of three carucates, or around 300 acres (Astle, Ayscough, and Caley 1802). In 1541 the manor was valued at £11 8s per annum, of which roughly came from rents, and half from the demesne, which was then being leased (Caley, Ellis, and Bandinel 1819, 46).

Most of the ridge and furrow earthworks that survive in the parish are likely to date to the late medieval period (Boocock and Colcomb 2001). Most of the manor will have been cultivated in this way, in fields divided into blocks of furlongs. Later sources suggest a four-field system with rotating shifts of wheat, barley, and pulses (Yelling 1969). Recent finds of medieval coins and other artefacts to the west of the village probably represent a wide distribution of such material (Appendix 1; WSM 38609).

After the dissolution, the manor was granted to the newly-founded Dean and Chapter of Westminster who held it (with two brief interruptions) until 1869 (Curtis 1906, 367). There is little evidence for tenurial and agricultural arrangements for most of this period, but by the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, the manor was fully enclosed and divided between two large farms and a small glebe (WRO ref. 152, BA 823; WRO ref. 152, BA 1636). A farm known as Grove Farm by 1841 covered most of the land between Station Road and Stratford Road. Another farm known as Church Farm lay between Stratford Road and the Poden Estate. The tithe award of 1841 describes both farms with reference to the earliest large-scale map of the manor (WRO ref. r892/179, BA 1581). The application site formed part of Grove Farm, owned by Underhill Caldicott and occupied by Charles Caldicott. The field was called Broad Acres and was managed as pasture.

The later history of land-use is depicted on successive Ordnance Survey maps (OS 1885, 1891, 1923, 1955, 1971, 1999). The main changes since 1841 have been the construction and redevelopment of the railway line which crosses the parish and residential developments along Station Road and Stratford Road.

### 3. **Heritage assets**

In accordance with current planning guidance (DCLG 2010), the term 'heritage asset' is used in this report to denote components of the historic environment that have significance because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest. Heritage assets include designated assets such as Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Listed Buildings, and undesignated assets that may be of equal significance. The term 'potential heritage asset' is used to denote undesignated assets that may exist in the form of archaeological deposits.

#### 3.1 **Designated heritage assets**

No designated heritage assets are recorded within or near the application site. The nearest designated heritage asset is the Conservation Area which straddles part of the High Street in neighbouring Cow Honeybourne.



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## 3.2 Undesignated heritage assets

### 3.2.1 Ridge and furrow earthworks

The application site contains ridge and furrow earthworks of medieval or post-medieval date (Fig 5). The earthworks were recorded in 2001 as part of a wider survey (Boocock and Colcomb 2001, parcel 0065/18). The recorders noted an extensive block of 33 ridges or 'lands' aligned approximately east-west and a smaller block of 8 ridges running parallel to the east boundary of the site. In 2001, the ridges were approximately one foot wide, an average of six inches wide, and six feet apart. They were described as being in poor condition. The same earthworks were noted, but not recorded, during the walkover survey. Figure 5 indicates the extents of the earthworks.

### 3.2.2 Hedgerows, by Elizabeth Curran

The hedgerows that form the east and west boundaries of the application site can be identified as heritage assets (Fig 4). Both hedgerows were evidently established before 1841, as they are shown as field boundaries on the tithe map and, with hedgerow trees, on the Ordnance Survey map of 1885 (Fig 2).

The long hedgerow along Station Road (Fig 4, hedge 1) is approximately 250m long. A post and wire fence runs along either side. The hedgerow is dense but untrimmed and overgrown. There appears to be some non-native species along the southern length of the hedgerow. The hedgerow is broken towards the north end by a gate giving access into the site. The length of hedgerow south of the gate does not have a continuous canopy.

The short hedgerow forming the east boundary of the site (Fig 4, hedge 2) was originally 220m long but was truncated to 60m in the 1980s or 1990s, when the houses to the south of the site were built. It is in better condition than the long roadside hedge. It appears to have been trimmed recently and is dense along most of its length. It is broken by narrow gap leading to the neighbouring field.

### 3.2.3 Pond

A former pond in the west of the application site can be regarded as a heritage asset with potential archaeological significance. It is shown on the 1841 tithe map and on all successive Ordnance Survey maps. The most recent Ordnance Survey map gives its dimensions as 26m east-west by 20m north-south. It was evidently open in 2001 when the ridge and furrow earthworks were recorded (Boocock and Colcomb 2001, parcel 065/18) and is depicted on the most recent maps, although is no longer extant on the ground.

### 3.2.4 Scatter of Roman and later artefacts

Whereas, it was possible (due to the proximity of the Roman Ryknild Street and other finds in within the parish) that the site contained the remains of prehistoric or Roman settlement and land-use, a field evaluation (Appendix 3) indicated only a scatter of Roman and later artefacts which are most likely to result from historic manuring of fields.

## 4. Significance

### 4.1 Ridge and furrow earthworks

The ridge and furrow earthworks can be described as locally significant in view of their survival and (to a lesser extent) their condition. In the first place, the application site is one of only eight fields in Honeybourne (excluding Poden) which contain ridge and furrow earthworks. Elsewhere, these once-ubiquitous and characteristic features have been eroded by modern mechanised ploughing. In the second place, they are not in good condition (as noted in 2001) but they are still highly visible and evocative features. However, the earthworks no longer form part of a relict field system and are not associated with other upstanding or buried medieval remains. Moreover, although ridge and furrow earthworks are now rare in Honeybourne, they are common throughout Wychavon and very common across a large area

extending south-eastwards into Gloucestershire (Hall 2001, fig 13). For these reasons, the earthworks cannot be regarded as more than locally significant.

#### 4.2 **Pond**

The former pond can be described as a relict feature of limited local significance. Like ten similar ponds mapped in 1841 (generally on or near field boundaries), it was probably dug to extract clay or to create a dew pond for watering livestock. Either way, it is unlikely to contain material bearing on past land-use or past environments.

#### 4.3 **Scatter of Roman and later artefacts**

The sample trenches were sufficient to be confident that no settlement activity or other archaeological site that may be considered to be of any significance. With three sherds of Roman, and nine sherds of medieval pottery it is likely this scatter results from manuring which is not generally considered to represent an asset of any great significance.

#### 4.4 **Hedgerows**

The significance of the hedgerows described above can be established to some extent with reference to *The Hedgerow Regulations 1997*. This statutory instrument sets out historical criteria for determining 'important' hedgerows (in addition to wildlife and landscape criteria which are beyond the scope of this report). To qualify as 'important', a hedgerow must fulfil the first criterion in Table 1 and at least one of the succeeding criteria. On this basis, it is clear that the roadside hedge is important, though the short, truncated hedgerow is a marginal case.

Criteria	Hedge 1	Hedge 2
Hedge has existed for 30 years or more.	Yes	Yes
On parish boundary (pre-1850).	Yes	No
Incorporates a feature which is part of a scheduled ancient monument (can be wholly or partly within, or adjacent to, such sites, and must be associated with such sites).	No	No
Incorporates a feature which is part of a site registered with the HER/SMR (pre-24 March 1997; can be wholly or partly within, or adjacent to, such sites, and must be associated with such sites)	No	No
Marks the boundary of a pre-1600 AD estate or manor registered with the HER/SMR (pre-24 March 1997), or is visibly related to a building or other feature of such an estate or manor.	Yes	No
Marks the boundary of a pre-1600 AD estate or manor in a document held by a Record Office (pre-24 March 1997), or is visibly related to a building or other feature of such an estate or manor.	Yes	No
Recorded in a document held by a Record Office (pre-24 March 1997) as an integral part of a field system predating the Inclosure Acts, or is part of, or visibly related to, any building or other feature associated with such a system (the system must be substantially complete) or part of a historic landscape characterisation adopted for development control purposes pre-24 March 1997).	Yes	Yes

*Table 1: Importance of hedgerows.*

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## 5. **Potential impact of development**

The application will propose a residential development as indicated in Figure 5. This is generally focussed on areas where the ridge and furrow earthworks are absent or not easily visible (such as the north-west corner and the western boundary). It will, however, involve the removal of a proportion (approximately 22%) of the ridge and furrow earthworks. This loss is, however, offset by the retention of a greater proportion within the proposed open space, including retaining the variation in alignment. It is understood that Lioncourt Homes Ltd intend to create a community orchard. Both ridge and furrow earthworks and orchards are a historic feature of the Worcestershire landscape, and a number of instances are known where both are present in the same field. The presence of existing instances where these earthworks are combined with ridge and furrow also serve to demonstrate that the earthworks are not significantly damaged by trees. The provision of informal open space will also enhance the amenity value of the historic asset facilitating greater public access to, and familiarity with, this asset type.

The proposed development will also require the removal of part of the roadside hedgerow, to provide access from Station Road and to link new services to existing mains.

## 6. **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.

*A desk-based assessment and evaluation was undertaken on behalf of Arthur Amos Associates of land off Station Road, Honeybourne, Worcestershire (NGR SP 11680 44650; HER ref WSM 46046).*

*The assessment identified heritage assets in the form of ridge and furrow earthworks, two post-medieval hedgerows, a scatter of Roman and later artefacts and a former pond. The ridge and furrow earthworks are probably of late medieval date (or origin).*

## 7. **Acknowledgements**

The Service would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project, Andy Faizey (Lioncourt Homes Ltd) Julia Mussett (Arthur Amos Associates) and Adam Mindykowski and Oliver Russell (Archive and Archaeology Service, Worcestershire County Council).

## 8. **Personnel**

The assessment was led by Darren Miller. Elizabeth Curran did the walkover survey, commented on the hedgerows, and examined aerial photographs. The illustrations were drawn by Carolyn Hunt. The project managers responsible for the quality of the project were Tom Vaughan, Tom Rogers and Simon Woodiwiss.

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## Plates



*Plate 1: Application site, facing south-east*



*Plate 2: Ridge and furrow earthworks, facing east*





*Plate 3: Ridge and furrow earthworks and hedge 2, facing east*



*Plate 4: Stoned area and hedge 1, facing north-west*





*Plate 5: Ridge and furrow earthworks, facing north*



*Plate 6: Former pond and hedge 1, facing north-north-east*



*Plate 7: Ridge and furrow earthworks and hedge 1, facing west-north-west*



*Plate 8: Ridge and furrow earthworks and hedge 2, facing north-north-east*

**Appendix 1: Undesignated heritage assets within 500m of the application site (after Worcestershire Historic Environment Record, 2001 ridge and furrow survey, and Portable Antiquities Scheme database)**

HER number	Site name	Grid reference	Date	Description
WSM 08577	Railway Station	SP 1146 4483	19 <sup>th</sup> century	Site of 19 <sup>th</sup> century railway station. Opened 1853 as a station on the Oxford, Worcester and Wolverhampton Railway. Enlarged 1862 to serve new line from Stratford on Avon to Cheltenham. Closed and demolished 1969. (Rebuilt and re-opened 1985)
WSM 31664	Railway	n/a	19 <sup>th</sup> – 20 <sup>th</sup> century	19 <sup>th</sup> century railway line. Opened 1853 as part of the Oxford, Worcester and Wolverhampton Railway.
WSM 21577	Vicarage	SP 1192 4409	Post-medieval	No further information in HER record
WSM 21579	Crossing of Gate Inn Brook	SP 1167 4408	Roman	Modern bridge and site of Anglo-Saxon ford. 'Stony ford' documented in charter of AD 709.
WSM 26360	Watching brief on installation of water pipeline along Roman Ryknild Street, 1997	SP 1135 4596 and 1141 4550	Roman	Deposits interpreted as <i>agger</i> (central raised ridge) of Roman Ryknild Street observed at two points north of Honeybourne railway station.
WSM 30300	Ryknild Street	SP 1126 4623	Roman	Length of Roman Ryknild Street from Alcester in Warwickshire to Bourton-on-the-Water in Gloucestershire.
WSM 30457	Pace Farm, Sheenhill Road	SP 1144 4495	Post-medieval	Cow house, shelter shed and threshing barn
WSM 32141	Coach House, Grove House	SP 1204 4497	19 <sup>th</sup> century	Brick Coach House adjacent to a mid 18 <sup>th</sup> century farmhouse
WSM 33122	Cold War food store	SP 1139 4473	20 <sup>th</sup> century	Site of two large hanger-like building used for the storage of sewage during the Cold War
WSM 34242	Unstratified Find in 2004 of Silver Seal Matrix by metal detecting	SP 1182 4405	Post-medieval to 19 <sup>th</sup> century	Find of silver seal matrix in 2004
WSM 35897	Ridge and furrow S of Blenheim Farm	SP 1170 4539	Medieval to post-	Ridge and furrow earthworks running roughly NNW to SSE.



HER number	Site name	Grid reference	Date	Description
			medieval	
WSM 38609	Metal-detected artefacts	SP 1143 (generalised reference)	Iron Age to Medieval.	Recorded by the Portable Antiquities Scheme, 2005-2007 <i>Late Iron Age or Roman</i> Brooch (c 200 BC- AD 200) <i>Roman</i> Brooch Brooch (c 200) Coin (269-295) Strap fitting/decorative mount <i>Anglo-Saxon</i> <i>Sceatta</i> (Saroaldo type, AD 705-715) <i>Medieval</i> Casket mount (c 1150) Coin (farthing or halfpenny) Coin (Henry II, minted in Oxford) Coin (cut halfpenny, 1180-1227) Harness pendant (c 1100 – 1400) Stirrup (c 1100)
WSM 44903	Ridge and furrow SW of Middle Barn	SP 1244 4465	Medieval to post-medieval	Ridge and furrow earthworks observed on 2005 aerial photographs.

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**Appendix 2: Other heritage assets identified during the assessment**

<b>Description</b>	<b>Grid reference</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Date</b>
Ridge and furrow earthworks	SP 11680 44650 (centre)	Boocock and Colcomb 2001; Walkover survey	Late medieval/post-medieval
Hedge 1	SP 11545 44788 to SP 11620	Walkover survey	Post-medieval
Hedge 2	SP 11824 44685 to 11855 44637	Walkover survey	Post-medieval
Former pond	SP 11619 44708	Walkover survey	Post-medieval

## **Appendix 3: Field evaluation report**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
EVALUATION OF LAND  
BETWEEN STATION ROAD  
AND DUDLEY ROAD,  
HONEYBOURNE,  
WORCESTERSHIRE



ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
EVALUATION OF LAND  
BETWEEN STATION ROAD AND  
DUDLEY ROAD, HONEYBOURNE,  
WORCESTERSHIRE

Darren Miller

With a contribution by Dennis Williams

Illustrations by Carolyn Hunt

Revision 1  
24<sup>th</sup> January 2012

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Project P3812  
Report 1895  
WSM 46073





# Contents

**Part 1: Summary** **1**

## **Part 2: Report**

<b>1. Planning background</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Aims</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>3. Methods</b> .....	<b>3</b>
3.1 Desk-based research .....	3
3.2 Fieldwork methodology .....	3
3.3 Artefact methodology, by Dennis Williams .....	4
3.4 Statement of confidence in methods and results .....	4
<b>4. Results</b> .....	<b>4</b>
4.1 Stratigraphy .....	4
4.2 Artefact analysis, by Dennis Williams .....	4
<b>5. Synthesis</b> .....	<b>7</b>
5.1 Roman cultivation .....	7
5.2 Medieval and post-medieval cultivation .....	7
5.3 Modern land-use .....	7
5.4 Research frameworks .....	8
<b>6. Significance</b> .....	<b>8</b>
6.1 Significance of a site with archaeological interest .....	8
6.2 Assessment of significance .....	8
6.3 Potential impact of the development .....	9
<b>7. Publication summary</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>8. Acknowledgements</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>9. Personnel</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>10. Bibliography</b> .....	<b>10</b>



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# Archaeological evaluation of land between Station Road and Dudley Road, Honeybourne, Worcestershire

**Darren Miller**

**With a contribution by Dennis Williams**

## Part 1: Summary

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken of land between Station Road and Dudley Road, Honeybourne, Worcestershire (NGR SP 11680 44650). It was undertaken on behalf of Lioncourt Homes to inform a planning application for a mixed residential and business development.

The archaeological implications of development had been considered in a desk-based assessment. The assessment identified heritage assets in the form of ridge and furrow earthworks, two hedgerows, and a former pond. It also identified some potential for remains of prehistoric and/or Roman activity. The evaluation aimed to investigate this potential by means of sample trenching and post-fieldwork analysis.

Twenty-five trenches were excavated across the application site. The trenches were located in a modified grid array which provided comprehensive coverage while avoiding constraints in the form of a high pressure gas main and overhead electricity cables. The trenches also followed the lines of ridge and furrow earthworks to minimise damage and facilitate re-instatement.

No significant deposits or features were found in any of the trenches. Apart from a few land drains, the trenches showed only uniform profiles of loams over clays. Thirty artefacts were recovered from these soils, including sherds of Roman, medieval, and post-medieval pottery. These artefacts represent the long-established practice of mixing domestic refuse with manure. They show that the site was cultivated in the Roman period and complement the ridge and furrow earthworks as evidence for later cultivation.

The multi-period ‘manure scatter’ can be regarded as a heritage asset alongside those identified in the desk-based assessment. It is not particularly significant, however, and the same is probably true of any pre-modern deposits in the backfilled pond. The only heritage assets worth considering as material concerns are the ridge and furrow earthworks and the two hedgerows.

The ridge and furrow earthworks are best preserved in the south and east of the application site. According to current outline plans, most of this area would be open space. The impact of the development on these heritage assets would therefore be limited. The proposed access arrangements would have some impact on the hedgerow that forms the west boundary of the site, albeit on a limited basis with most of the hedge remaining within the development and the shorter hedgerow between Dudley Road and the railway would not be affected.



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## Part 2: Report

### 1. **Planning background**

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken of land between Station Road and Dudley Road, Honeybourne, Worcestershire (NGR SP 11680 44650). It was undertaken on behalf of Lioncourt Homes to inform a planning application for a mixed residential and business development with public open space, landscaping and detailed access arrangements.

An archaeological desk-based assessment of the application site was undertaken before the application was submitted (Miller 2011). The assessment identified heritage assets in the form of ridge and furrow earthworks, two hedgerows, and a former pond. The assessment also identified some potential for remains of prehistoric and/or Roman activity, including remains of a Roman road along the west side of the application site.

The application was submitted to Wychavon District Council (ref. W/11/2531). On the advice of the Planning Advisory Service of the Worcestershire Historic Environment and Archaeology Service, it was suggested that more information on potential heritage assets was required by means of a field evaluation.

The evaluation conformed to a brief prepared by the Planning Advisory Service (HEAS 2011a), and to a proposal prepared by the Field Section (HEAS 2011b). It also conformed to the Institute of Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (IfA 2008).

### 2. **Aims**

The aims of the evaluation were:

- to provide more information on potential heritage assets in the form of buried archaeological deposits
- to establish the nature, extent, and importance of such deposits

The opportunity has also been taken in this report to reassess the archaeological significance of the application site and consider the potential impact of the proposed development.

### 3. **Methods**

#### 3.1 **Desk-based research**

The topography, archaeology, and history of the application site are fully covered in the desk-based assessment (Miller 2011). The assessment also describes and discusses the ridge and furrow earthworks and historic hedgerows.

#### 3.2 **Fieldwork methodology**

A detailed specification was prepared by the Field Section (HEAS 2011b). The proposal envisaged the excavation of 28 trenches, arranged in a modified grid array which provided comprehensive coverage while avoiding constraints in the form of a high pressure gas main crossing the south of the application site and overhead electricity cables crossing the south-west corner (Fig 2). The layout also followed the lines of ridge and furrow earthworks to minimise damage and facilitate re-instatement.

The fieldwork was undertaken between 16 and 20 December 2011, though backfilling continued until 21 December. The site reference number and site code is WSM 46073.

In the event, only 25 trenches were excavated (Fig 2). Fourteen trenches were excavated as planned and eleven were moved slightly to lie along ridges rather than furrows. One trench was shortened due to an unmapped fence (Trench 1) and another trench was shortened to avoid blocking a gate at the end of a garden on Dudley Street (Trench 22). All excavation was undertaken by a 360° tracked excavator fitted with a 2.1m wide ditching bucket.

Two trenches were to have been excavated in a stoned area along the west side of the application site but in the light of the negative results from adjacent trenches, it was decided to leave this useful feature intact. Another trench was to have been excavated in the south-west of the site but adjustments to adjacent trenches left only a small area between the last trench and the buffer along the south side of the gas main.

All machine excavation took place under the supervision of the Project Leader. The trenches were located and surveyed using a Leica Net rover GPS. Written and photographic records were made according to standard Field Section practice (HEAS 2012). Artefacts were recovered from spoil heaps (contexts 1000, 2000, 3000 etc) and, where possible, from stratified soils (see below). Once recorded, the trenches were backfilled with the excavated spoil and the profiles of ridges were reformed as far as possible.

### 3.3 **Artefact methodology, by Dennis Williams**

The artefact recovery policy conformed to standard Service practice (CAS 1995; appendix 2). Method of analysis

All hand-retrieved finds were examined. They were identified, quantified and dated to period. A *terminus post quem* date range was produced for each stratified context. This was used for determining the broad date of each phase defined for the site. All information was recorded on *pro forma* sheets.

The pottery and ceramic building material was examined under  $\times 20$  magnification and recorded by fabric type and form according to the fabric reference series maintained by the service (Hurst and Rees 1992 and online at [www.worcestershireceramics.org](http://www.worcestershireceramics.org)).

### 3.4 **Statement of confidence in methods and results**

The Project Team are confident that the method of evaluation was appropriate to the aims of the project and the nature of the site. We are also confident that the application site contains no concentrations of buried archaeological deposits. At all events, all parts of the application site were investigated and the results were emphatically negative. Moreover, each trench was excavated slightly deeper than necessary, to ensure that no features were missed. And finally, although three trenches could not be excavated, and two were shortened, the use of a wider ditching bucket than usual meant that the total excavated area was slightly larger than anticipated (some 1543m<sup>2</sup>, or 4% of the application site).

## 4. **Results**

### 4.1 **Stratigraphy**

The trenches all showed uniform profiles of loamy over clayey soils (Plates 5 and 6). The topsoil was a soft day greyish brown clay loam with common fine roots, a strong blocky structure and clear lower boundary (context 1001, 2001, 3001 etc). Beneath this were two units of subsoil: an upper unit of mid olive brown silty clay (contexts 1002, 2002, 3002 etc) and a lower unit that was slightly finer and paler (context 1002, 2002, 3002 etc). Both units had a weak blocky structure. At the base of the profile was the parent material: a structureless light olive to light grey clay with occasional limestone gravel inclusions (context 103, 203, 303 etc). The topsoil was typically 0.20m deep, the upper subsoil 0.10m deep and the lower subsoil either 0.10m or 0.15m deep. The whole profile was much as mapped and described by the Soil Survey of England and Wales (SSEW 1983; Ragg *et al* 1984)

The only features noted were narrow ceramic land drains in Trenches 2 and 25 and a larger land drain crossing Trench 14 on a north-east to south-west alignment.

### 4.2 **Artefact analysis, by Dennis Williams**

The artefactual assemblage recovered is summarised in Table 1. The finds came from 17 contexts and could be dated from the Roman period onwards. The level of preservation was variable, with the Roman and medieval pottery sherds being particularly abraded.

Period	Material class	Material subtype	Object specific type	Count	Weight (g)
medieval	ceramic	earthenware	pot	7	100
post-medieval/ modern	ceramic	earthenware	pot	1	12
post-medieval	ceramic	-	clay pipe	1	4
post-medieval	ceramic	earthenware	pot	9	84
post-medieval	ceramic	stoneware	pot	1	70
Roman	ceramic	earthenware	pot	3	22
undated	ceramic	-	brick/tile	5	36
undated	ceramic	-	land drain	1	12
undated	metal	iron	nail	1	1
undated	stone	limestone	-	1	764
			Totals:	30	1105

Table 1: Quantification of the assemblage

### Pottery

All sherds were grouped and quantified according to fabric type (Table 2). Only two diagnostic form sherds were present and could be dated accordingly, but the remaining sherds were datable by fabric type to their general periods or production spans. Where mentioned, all specific forms are referenced to the type series within the report for Deansway, Worcester (Bryant 2004).

Period	Fabric code	Fabric common name	Count	Weight (g)
medieval	69	Oxidized glazed Malvernian ware	9	107
post-medieval/ modern	85	Modern china	1	12
post-medieval	78	Post-medieval red wares	5	29
post-medieval	81	Stonewares	1	70
post-medieval	91	Post-medieval buff wares	1	6
post-medieval	100	Miscellaneous post-medieval wares	1	42
Roman	12	Severn Valley ware	3	22
		Totals:	21	288

Table 2: Quantification of the pottery by period and fabric-type

The pottery from this site was characterised by a very narrow range of fabrics. Roman pottery was present as Severn Valley ware (fabric 12), in contexts 3002, 23000 and 23001. This was typical of material manufactured in Worcestershire, but all the sherds were small and undiagnostic in terms of form and could only be assigned to a general 1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> century date range.

Medieval pottery was confined to oxidized, glazed Malvernian ware (fabric 69), also produced within the county, and recovered from contexts 2002, 3001, 4002, 5001, 19000, 21001, 22000 and 23000. All these medieval sherds were undiagnostic in terms of form, except for a strap handle with a distinct external groove, found in topsoil 5001. This was



possibly from a large jar, similar to the Deansway form Fig.186:7, late 14<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> century in date (Bryant 2004).

Post-medieval pottery comprised black-glazed red wares (fabric 78), buff ware with slip-trailed decoration (fabric 91) and white-glazed stoneware (fabric 81) recovered from surface and topsoil contexts (9001, 11000, 21001, 23000, 24001 and 25001). All of this material was likely to have been manufactured within a 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> century date range.

Modern china with a blue willow pattern (fabric 85), and part of a terra cotta bowl (fabric 100), both of 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century date, were recovered from topsoils 10001 and 25001 respectively.

#### **Other artefacts**

A single fragment of clay pipe stem, from a broad 16<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century date range, was found in topsoil 10001. An iron fragment recovered from subsoil 4002 was possibly a hobnail. Ceramic building material, consisting of brick, tile, or land drains, from contexts 22000, 25001 and 27002, was probably post-medieval or modern but too fragmentary to provide precise dating evidence. A single piece of limestone slab, found in topsoil 4001, was very abraded, so it was unclear whether this had been used as building material or alternatively shaped by accidental or natural processes.

#### **Overview of artefactual evidence**

The pottery finds from this site were indicative of Roman and medieval occupation in the area, although much, if not all of this material may have been residual, since it was recovered from surface, topsoil or shallow sub-soil contexts at scattered locations across the site. Post-medieval finds were also of a domestic nature, while it was noted that the ceramic building materials were all from trenches close to modern housing situated on the south side of the site. *Terminus post quem* date ranges for the various contexts are shown in Table 3.

Context	Material class	Object specific type	Fabric code	Count	Weight (g)	Start date	End date	<i>Terminus post quem</i> range
2002	ceramic	pot	69	1	1	1200	1620	1200-1620
3001	ceramic	pot	69	1	6	1200	1620	1200-1620
3002	ceramic	pot	12	1	16	43	400	43-400
4001	stone	-	-	1	764	-	-	-
4002	ceramic	pot	69	1	4	1200	1620	1200-1620
	metal	nail	-	1	1	-	-	
5001	ceramic	pot	69	1	66	1350	1500	1350-1500
9001	ceramic	pot	78	1	4	1600	1800	1600-1800
10001	ceramic	pot	85	1	12	1800	1950	1800-1950
	ceramic	clay pipe	-	1	4	1600	1900	
11000	ceramic	pot	78	1	4	1600	1800	1600-1800
19000	ceramic	pot	69	1	12	1200	1620	1200-1620
21001	ceramic	pot	69	2	4	1200	1620	1600-1800
	ceramic	pot	78	1	1	1600	1800	
22000	ceramic	brick/tile	-	1	10	-	-	1200-1620

Context	Material class	Object specific type	Fabric code	Count	Weight (g)	Start date	End date	<i>Terminus post quem</i> range
22000	ceramic	pot	69	1	8	1200	1620	1200-1620
23000	ceramic	pot	78	1	8	1600	1800	1700-1800
	ceramic	pot	91	1	6	1700	1800	
	ceramic	pot	12	1	2	43	400	
	ceramic	pot	69	1	6	1200	1620	
23001	ceramic	pot	12	1	4	43	400	43-400
24001	ceramic	pot	81	1	70	1700	1900	1600-1900
2500	ceramic	pot	100	1	42	1800	1900	1800-1900
2501	ceramic	brick/tile	-	3	18	-	-	1800-1900
	ceramic	land drain	-	1	12	-	-	
	ceramic	pot	78	1	12	1600	1800	1600-1800
27002	ceramic	brick/tile	-	1	8	-	-	-

Table 3: Summary of context dating based on artefacts

## 5. Synthesis

### 5.1 Roman cultivation

Roman cultivation was indicated by three sherds of Roman pottery: one from Trench 3 and two from Trench 23. The sherds probably represent a thin scatter of Roman pottery across the application site. Such scatters are generally interpreted as the product of manuring with farmyard manure, i.e. a mixture of muck and domestic refuse. Previous work suggests that such manuring was infrequent and generally restricted to core arable land. It is therefore likely that the scatter represents more than one application of manure, and that a farmstead or hamlet stood within easy carting distance of the application site.

### 5.2 Medieval and post-medieval cultivation

Later cultivation was indicated by sherds of medieval and post-medieval pottery. Nine sherds of medieval pottery were recovered: two from Trench 21 and one each from Trenches 1-4, 19, 22, and 23. Single sherds of post-medieval pottery were recovered from Trenches 9, 11, 21, 24, and 25 and two sherds came from Trench 23. The date ranges of the earlier and later sherds overlap, however, so they probably represent a scatter formed by continuous cultivation and occasional manuring. During this period, the application site lay within one of four large open fields in Honeybourne (Miller 2011, 4). The ridge and furrow earthworks will have been created and maintained throughout this period, in line with established practice across the region. Although difficult to maintain, they served at once to drain the land and define individual shares and cropping units.

### 5.3 Modern land-use

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the application site and several acres to the north were taken out of open field cultivation, defined by newly-laid hedges, and converted from arable to pasture. This typical example of enclosure is attested by the surviving hedgerows and the absence of 19<sup>th</sup> century pottery. It is also confirmed by the evidence of the Honeybourne tithe map and award of 1841-2, as described in the desk-based assessment (Miller 2011, 4). For most of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, it appears that the field was managed as pasture, with the only change being the construction of the railway in the 1850s, which gave the application site its present boundaries. However, the condition of the ridge and furrow earthworks and their absence in

the west of the site suggest that the site was cultivated occasionally during this period, or that some effort was made to reduce the ridges.

#### 5.4 **Research frameworks**

The largely negative results of the evaluation contribute little to current research frameworks. 'Manure scatters' of the kind described above are ubiquitous and do not provide useful information unless they are studied extensively, alongside other archaeological and historical evidence (*cf* Gaffney and Tingle 1989; Jones 1999; Gerrard, Aston and Reynolds 2007). However, the slight evidence for Roman cultivation is the first of its kind from Honeybourne and has clear implications for settlement nearby.

### 6. **Significance**

#### 6.1 **Significance of a site with archaeological interest**

The aim of an archaeological evaluation is to provide the client and the planning authority (and its advisors) with sufficient information to assess the significance of a site or heritage asset with archaeological interest, in line with *Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment* (DCLG 2010: Policy HE6). More detailed guidance on assessing the significance of a site with archaeological interest is set out in the *Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide* (DCLG/DCMS/EH 2010: Section 5, Development Management). This advises that an evaluation should establish the nature, importance and extent of the archaeological interest in order to provide sufficient evidence for confident prediction of the impact of the proposal.

#### 6.2 **Assessment of significance**

The archaeological significance of the application site was assessed on the basis of limited evidence in the desk-based assessment (Miller 2011, 5-6). This assessment can now be updated in the light of the evidence from the evaluation.

##### *Nature of the archaeological interest*

The heritage assets identified in the desk-based assessment comprised ridge and furrow earthworks, a former historic pond, and two hedgerows. The evaluation has identified another heritage asset in the form of the multi-period 'manure scatter' described above.

The ridge and furrow earthworks were described and illustrated in the desk-based assessment (Miller 2010, 4-5; fig 4). In summary, they comprise one group of earthworks in the centre and south of the site, aligned approximately north-east to south-west, and another group of earthworks in the east on a perpendicular north-west to south-east alignment. The ridges are convex, up to 0.40m high, and about 10m apart, from top to top.

The relict pond lies near the west boundary of the site, between Trenches 15 and 16 on Figure 2. As shown on historic maps, it measured approximately 26m east-west by 20m north-south. It was probably dug for clay extraction or to create a dew-pond for watering livestock.

The longer of the two historic hedgerows forms the west boundary of the application site. It is dense but untrimmed and overgrown. The shorter hedgerow forms the boundary of the site between Dudley road and the railway to the north. It is in better condition than the hedgerow to the west, but only a fraction of its original length.

##### *Relative importance of the archaeological interest*

The multi-period manure scatter identified in the evaluation is relatively unimportant as such scatters are ubiquitous and often more dense and informative (*cf* Evans *et al* 2008).

The ridge and furrow earthworks are important in local terms, as only eight other fields in Honeybourne still contain such remains. However, ridge and furrow earthworks are common throughout Wychavon and very common across a large area extending eastwards into Gloucestershire and Warwickshire (Hall 2001, fig 13). Moreover, as noted above, the ridge

and furrow earthworks in the west of the site have been truncated and denuded by modern land use.

The relict pond was one of ten similar ponds shown on the Honeybourne tithe map of 1841. Few of these ponds have survived modern agricultural improvements, although by their nature, and because of their location in farmland, none of them are likely to preserve significant archaeological remains.

The historic hedgerows are locally and regionally typical in terms of their date, composition, and condition. However, both hedgerows are 'important', according to the criteria set out in the statutory *Hedgerow Regulations 1997* (online at <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1997/1160/introduction/made>). The hedgerow along the west boundary of the application site is particularly important in marking an ancient parish and estate boundary.

#### *Physical extent of the archaeological interest*

The manure scatter can be assumed to extend across the application site. The ridge and furrow earthworks cover most of the site apart but are absent or slight in the west. The relict pond lies within this denuded area, while the hedgerows hardly impinge upon the site.

### 6.3 **Potential impact of the development**

The potential impact of the proposed development can be assessed on the basis of the evidence presented above and an outline layout plan provided by the client (Cadsquare Midlands, Development Framework, Drawing no. 11-030-DF01).

According to the plan, residential development would be restricted to the north of the application site, apart from a single plot in the far south-west. And apart from a business development beside this plot, the rest of the application site would be public open space. The plan shows three entrances from Station Road and one entrance from Dudley Road.

The proposed residential and business developments would require the levelling of ridge and furrow earthworks and the removal of soils containing artefacts of Roman and later date. However, the best-preserved ridge and furrow earthworks lie in the east and south of the site, and most of them would be preserved in the proposed open space.

The access arrangements would involve removing three relatively small lengths of the western hedgerow and filling in parts of an internal ditch. They may also require some landscaping across the footprint of the backfilled pond. However, the rest of the hedgerow would be preserved and it seems that the eastern hedgerow would be retained. It is also unlikely that any landscaping would be deep enough to affect pre-modern pond deposits.

## 7. **Publication summary**

The Service has a professional obligation to publish the results of archaeological projects within a reasonable period of time. To this end, and unless directed otherwise the Service intends to publish the following summary in the most appropriate journal or journals.

*In December 2011, the Field Section undertook an archaeological evaluation of land between Station Road and Dudley Road, Honeybourne, Worcestershire (NGR SP 11680 44650). It was undertaken on behalf of Lioncourt Homes to inform a planning application for a mixed residential and business development.*

*The archaeological implications of development had been considered in a desk-based assessment. The assessment identified heritage assets in the form of ridge and furrow earthworks, two hedgerows, and a former pond. It also identified some potential for remains of prehistoric and/or Roman activity. The evaluation aimed to investigate this potential by means of sample trenching and post-fieldwork analysis.*

*Twenty-five trenches were excavated across the application site. The trenches were located in a modified grid array which provided comprehensive coverage while avoiding constraints in the form of a high pressure gas main and overhead electricity cables. The trenches also*

*followed the lines of ridge and furrow earthworks to minimise damage and facilitate re-instatement.*

*No significant deposits or features were found in any of the trenches. Apart from a few land drains, the trenches showed only uniform profiles of loams over clays. Thirty artefacts were recovered from these soils, including sherds of Roman, medieval, and post-medieval pottery. These artefacts represent the long-established practice of mixing domestic refuse with manure. They show that the site was cultivated in the Roman period and complement the ridge and furrow earthworks as evidence for later cultivation.*

## 8. **Acknowledgements**

The Service would like to thank Andy Faizey of Lioncourt Homes, Ben Hudson of Greenhill and Brownfield, and Mike Glyde of Worcestershire County Council for their kind assistance.

## 9. **Personnel**

The fieldwork and report preparation was led by Darren Miller. The project manager responsible for the quality of the project was Tom Rogers. Fieldwork was undertaken by Darren Miller and Chris Gibbs, finds analysis by Dennis Williams, and illustration by Carolyn Hunt.

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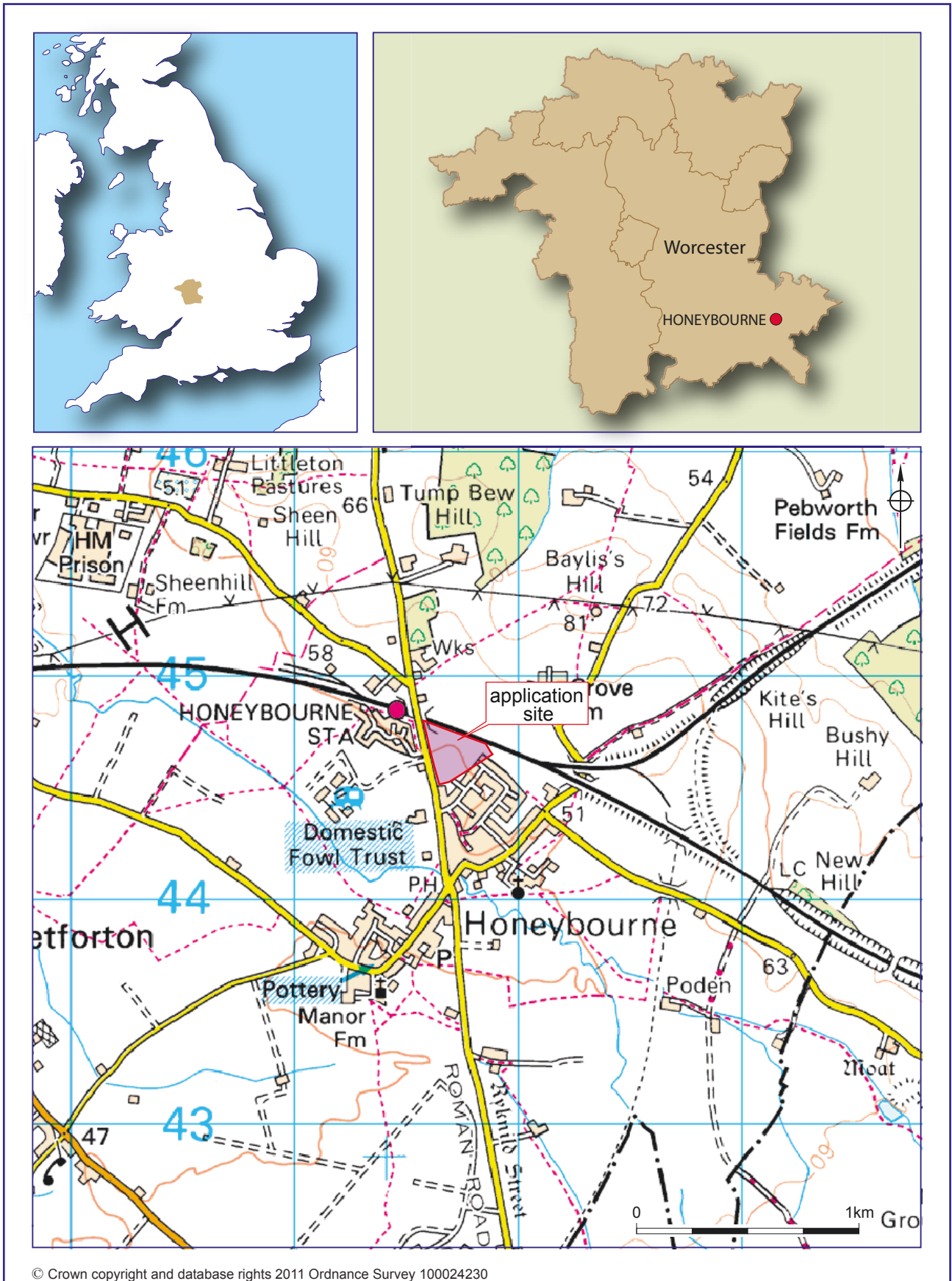
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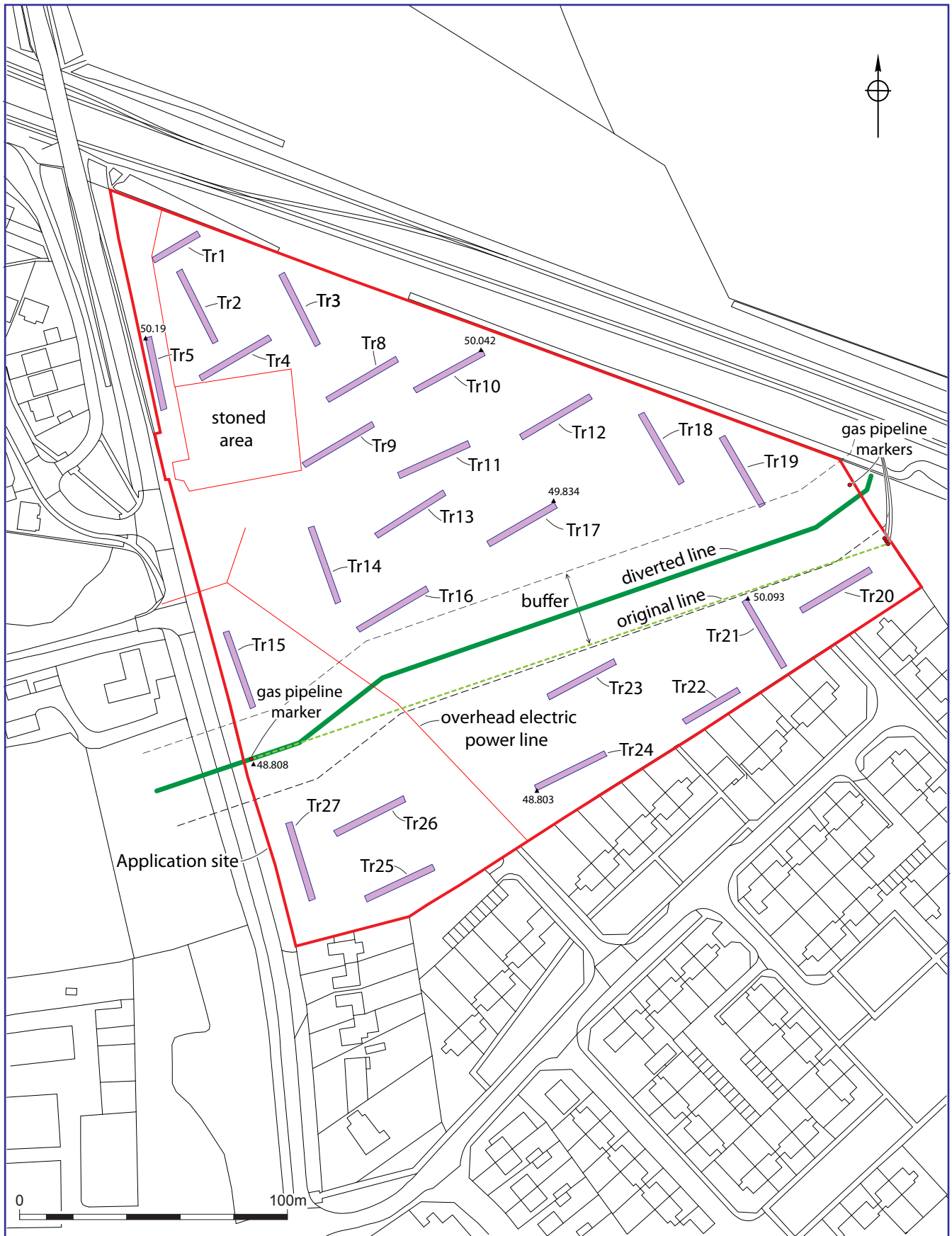
## Figures



Location of the application site

Figure 1





Location of trenches (and constraints).

Figure 2

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## Plates



*Plate 1: General view of sample trenches facing south across Trench 1*



*Plate 2: General view of sample trenches facing north across Trenches 25 and 26*

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*Plate 3: Representative sample trench (Trench 9, facing north-east)*





*Plate 4: Representative sample trench (Trench 24 facing north-east)*





*Plate 5: Representative section (Trench 14, facing west)*



*Plate 6: Representative section (Trench 25, facing north)*

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*Plate 7: Backfilled trenches (Trenches 2, 3, and 4 facing south)*



*Plate 8: Reinstated trenches (Trenches 23 and 24, facing north-west)*

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## **Appendix 1: The archive (side code WSM 46073)**

The archive consists of:

5	Field progress reports AS2
2	Photographic records AS3
96	Digital photographs
27	Trench record sheets AS41
1	Box of finds
1	CD
1	Bound copy of report

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