

Watching brief of sewer works on land off High Street, Honeybourne, Worcestershire



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Worcestershire Archaeology
Archive and Archaeology Service
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Status:

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Project reference: P4180

Report reference: 2054

HER reference: WSM 49772

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Graham Arnold and Tom Vaughan

Background information

<i>Client</i>	NMCNomenca acting for Severn Trent Water
<i>National Grid reference</i>	SP 11558 44019
<i>Historic Environment Record reference</i>	WSM 49772
<i>Planning authority</i>	Wychavon District Council
<i>reference</i>	n/a (permitted development)
<i>Brief</i>	WCC 2013
<i>Project parameters</i>	IfA 2008

Previous archaeological work on the site

There has been no previous archaeological work undertaken on site.

Previous archaeological work on associated sites

A HER search was undertaken prior to the project commencing. Relevant information includes that a Roman road (WSM 30300) extending from Alcester to Gloucestershire is known to run through the village on a north to south alignment and a number of unstratified finds have been recorded by the Portable Antiquities Scheme (WSM 38609) including Roman and medieval coins, metal horse harnesses and Roman brooches. There are also a number of records of extant medieval ridge and furrow earthworks in the area of the surrounding fields (WSM 35897 and 44903).

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

Sources consulted

HER

Dates of fieldwork

20 August – 6 September 2013

Area of site

Indicated on Fig 1

Dimensions of excavated areas observed –

Compound length 10.00m

width 8.50m

depth 0.10m

Access tracks length 35.00 m

width 5.00m

depth 0.10m

Pipe Trench (Trenches 1 and 2)

length 205m

width 1.00m

depth 0.52 – 1.20m

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, although any less clear may have not been identified. Selected areas were cleaned by hand. Access to deep trenches was not made for safety reasons.

Statement of confidence

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

It was originally planned that a general site strip be undertaken along the route of the pipe trench. In the event this was not deemed necessary so was not carried out.

Deposit description

See Appendix 1 for full details of the deposits observed.

Discussion

The areas monitored revealed natural sandy clay, 102 and 204, at 0.52-0.56m below ground level, with a well-developed subsoil and topsoil above. The access tracks and compound were excavated to a shallow depth, which exposed only the topsoil (Plates 1 and 2).

Evidence of medieval ridge and furrow, 103 and 104, orientated north to south, was found within Trench 1 across the main field (Plate 3). Otherwise, no significant archaeological finds, features or deposits were present. A modern made ground, 201, was found in Trench 2 within the paddock, comprised of blue clay over the relict topsoil, presumably dumped from elsewhere on site (Plate 4).

All finds from the topsoil were of later post-medieval and modern date, identified on site as residual and discarded. No earlier finds were encountered during the works.

Conclusions

The presence of medieval ridge and furrow corresponds with other examples found in the area, showing that the area was used for agriculture in the medieval period, although no dateable finds were recovered from the features. No evidence of occupation related to the Roman activity in the wider area was encountered although the sewer pipe trench was only 1.00m wide so evidence may still survive in those areas that remain untouched.

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 NMCNomenca acting for Severn Trent Water of sewer works on land off High Street, Honeybourne, Worcestershire (NGR SP 11558 44019; HER ref. WSM 49772). A series of furrows orientated north to south relating to medieval field systems were recorded. No significant archaeological finds or features were uncovered, with natural sandy clays at 0.52-0.56m below ground level.

Acknowledgements

Worcestershire Archaeology would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project, Craig Sharp (Site Manager, Severn Trent Water), John Hopkins (Senior Quantity Surveyor, NMCNomenca), and Mike Glyde (Historic Environment Planning Officer, Worcestershire County Council).

Personnel

The project fieldwork was undertaken by Michael Nicholson (BSc) and Peter Lovett (BSc). Graham Arnold (BA MSc) led the report preparation. The project manager responsible for the quality of the project was Tom Vaughan (BA MA Alfa). Illustrations were prepared by Carolyn Hunt.

Bibliography

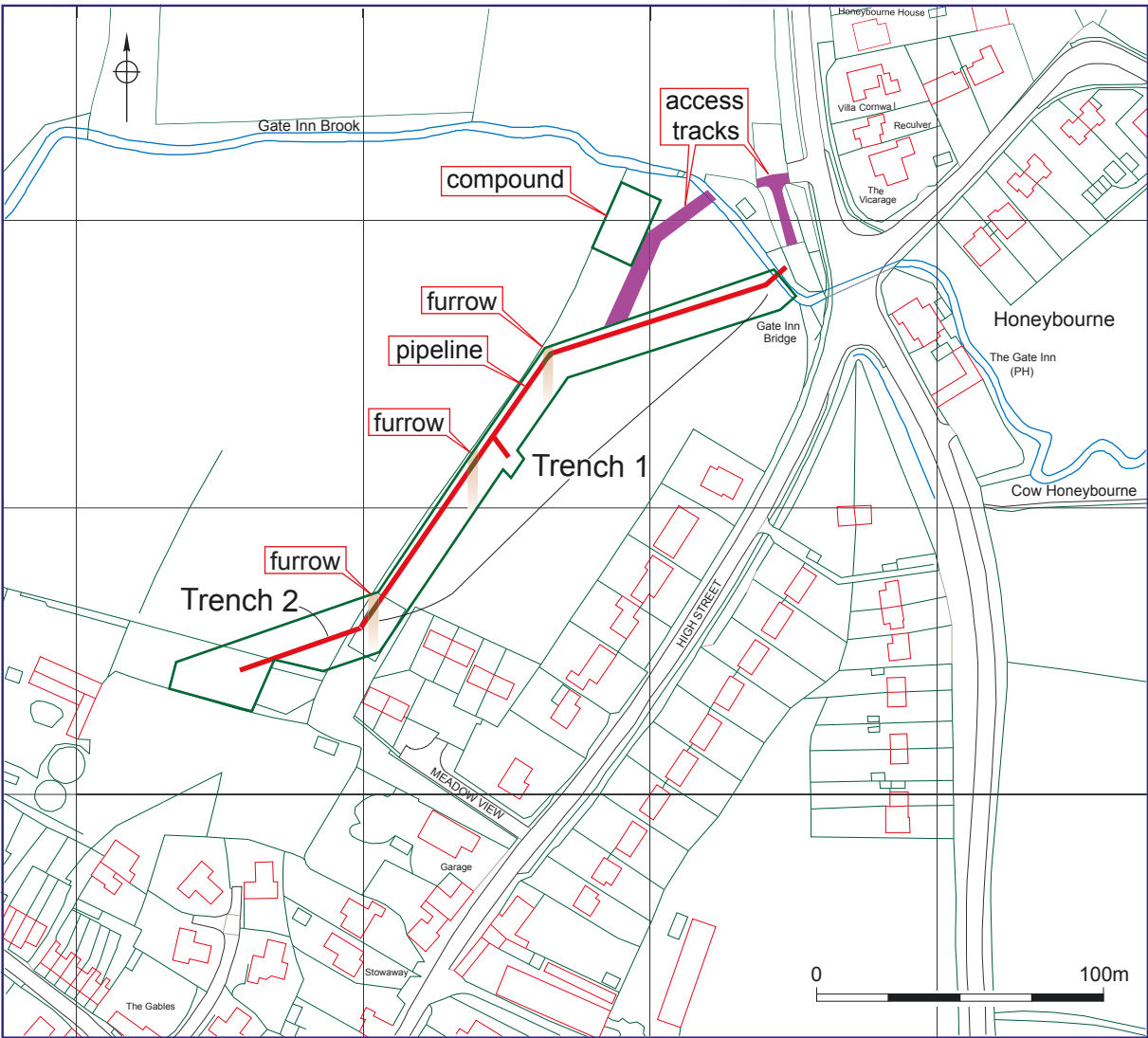
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WCC 2010 *Standards and guidelines for archaeological projects in Worcestershire*, Planning Advisory Section, Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service, Worcestershire County Council unpublished report **604**, amended July 2012

WCC 2013 *Requirements for a programme of archaeological work during sewer rehabilitation works on land off High Street, Honeybourne, Worcestershire*, Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service, Worcestershire County Council, unpublished document dated 18 July 2013

Figures



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Location of the pipeline

Figure 1

Plates



Plate 1, View of compound strip looking north-west



Plate 2, View of access strip with topsoil removed; looking north



Plate 3 View of one of the furrow fills within the pipe trench; looking east



Plate 4, Blue clay deposit, 201, within Trench 2 section; looking south-east within paddock



Plate 5, View of pipe trench; looking south-west

Appendix 1 Trench descriptions

Trench 1

Site area: Pipe trench through main field

Maximum dimensions: Length: 170.00m Width: 1.00m Depth: 1.20m

Orientation: NNE-SSW and NE-SW

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
100	Topsoil	Mid greyish brown silty clay with frequent root disturbance and occasional small rounded stones.	0 – 0.29m
101	Subsoil	Medium orange friable silty sand with worm sorting and root action present in upper 0.10m. Also cut by water pipe trench.	0.10 – 0.56m
102	Natural	Soft mid blueish greenish yellow sandy clay with occasional stones	0.20 – 0.56m
103	Fill of furrows	Light brown silty clay similar to topsoil	0.56m +
104	Cut of furrow	Linear features 0.70m in width and crossing trench, cut into the natural clay and aligned North- South	0.56m

Trench 2

Site area: Pipe trench through paddock

Maximum dimensions: Length: 35.00m Width: 1.00m Depth: 0.52m

Orientation: NE-SW

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
200	Topsoil	Mid greyish brown silty clay with frequent root disturbance and occasional small rounded stones.	0 – 0.16m
201	Layer	Blue clay with occasional small sub-rounded stones	0.16 – 0.27m
202	Former topsoil	Dark brown loam with occasional small rounded stones	0.27 – 0.45m
203	Subsoil	Medium orange friable silty sand with worm sorting and root action present in upper 0.10m. Also cut by water pipe trench.	0.45 – 0.52m
204	Natural	Soft mid blueish greenish yellow sandy clay with occasional stones	0.52m +

Appendix 2 Technical information

The archive (site code: WSM 49787)

The archive consists of:

7	Field progress reports AS2
2	Photographic records AS3
105	Digital photographs
1	Scale drawing
4	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