

Archaeological watching brief (Phase 2) at Northwick Farm, Broadway, Worcestershire



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Worcestershire Archaeology
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Illustrations by Carolyn Hunt

Background information

<i>Client</i>	Robert Cadle
<i>National Grid reference</i>	SP 08595 37637
<i>Historic Environment Record event reference</i>	WSM 70196
<i>Planning authority</i>	Wychavon District Council
<i>Reference</i>	17/02217/CU
<i>Brief</i>	WCC 2014
<i>Project design</i>	WA 2017
<i>Project parameters</i>	ClfA 2014

The site lies on flat land (Plate 1) at the foot of the Cotswold escarpment on superficial Head deposits of gravel, sand silt and clay, overlying Charmouth Mudstone Formation (BGS 2018).

Previous archaeological work on the site

A previous phase of archaeological work was undertaken in February 2016 by Worcestershire Archaeology, consisting of a watching brief that identified a furrow at the north-east edge of the site (Lovett 2016; WSM 67771).

Previous archaeological work on associated sites

The development site lies within an area of extensive prehistoric and Roman activity. To the north-west is a large circular enclosure with two entrances and internal divisions (WSM 06743); to the north-east are cropmarks indicating a multi-phase Iron Age and Roman enclosure and associated cemetery (WSM 01861); to the east and south-east are a series of enclosures recorded via aerial photography of cropmarks (WSM 04138) and to the west, further cropmarks of enclosures (WSM 01860). To the south-east is a large multi-phase site encompassing Bronze Age through to Roman enclosures, and medieval ridge and furrow (WSM 68324).

There is also widespread evidence for ridge and furrow in the surrounding landscape (WSM 10063, 10064, 10065 and 10066).

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

The development involved the stripping of an area for car parking spaces and the excavation of service trenches (Plates 1-4; Figure 2). These trenches have been numbered 6 and 7, to carry on from the original phase of watching brief on the site (Lovett 2016; WSM 67771).

General specification for fieldwork

WA 2012

Sources consulted

HER

Date(s) of fieldwork

1 February 2018

Area of site

c 1,880m²

Sampling area sampled c 94.61m². Indicated on Fig 2
 sample size c 5%

Dimensions of excavated areas observed –

Services	length 17.2m, with two 4m perpendicular spurs width 0.6m depth 0.55m
Roads/floors	length 10m width 8m depth 0.18m

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, though any less clear may have not been identified.

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

The description of the deposits is given in Appendix 1.

Discussion

The service trench, Trench 6, was a long, thin trench with two perpendicular spurs for installation of services to connect two new log cabins to existing services (recorded as Trench 2 in Phase 1; Lovett 2016; WSM 67771). This reached a depth of 0.55m. This trench revealed topsoil (600) and subsoil (601) deposits, as well as patches of the underlying natural strata (602) at 72.53m AOD. While patches of natural strata were visible in a few areas, the majority of the trench did not go deeper than the subsoil deposits. Due to the depth of this trench, the shallow linear feature interpreted as a furrow that was observed in Trench 2 of the previous phase of work on this site was not visible in this trench.

The car parking space, Trench 7, was excavated to a depth of 0.18m, and was identified as still within the topsoil.

The only find recovered came from the topsoil of Trench 6, and consisted of a corroded metallic National Transport bus token dated 1949, suggesting limited scope for domestic activity in the immediate vicinity.

It is worth noting that the client had found evidence of extensive deposits of modern debris elsewhere on site by a previous landowner, suggesting that there may be unexpected levels of modern truncation and dumping over parts of the site (Robert Cadle pers comm).

Conclusions

No significant archaeological features, layers, structure or horizons were revealed, nor were artefacts predating the 20th century recovered. The shallow nature of the excavations coupled with the greater depth of topsoil and subsoil site meant that the natural strata was not generally exposed, so it was not possible to observe any potential archaeological deposits. As such, this watching brief can only confirm the findings of the previous phase of groundworks, that the natural was not generally exposed, so can provide little clarification of the nature of any potential archaeology within the development area. The lack of residual archaeological material in the topsoil and subsoil deposits is worth noting however, considering the extensive cropmark activity recorded on the HER for this area.

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 Robert Cadle at Northwick Farm, Broadway, Worcestershire (NGR SP 08595 37637; HER ref WSM70196). This followed a previous watching brief of groundworks on the site in 2016. The excavation of two trenches was monitored during construction of parking and services for two log cabins. Natural geology was only seen in brief patches in one of the trenches, meaning it was not possible to see potential archaeological deposits. This, coupled with the limited impact of the construction project, precluded any further archaeological investigation. The only find recovered was of mid-20th century date, indicating a general lack of domestic archaeological activity in the immediate vicinity.

Acknowledgements

Worcestershire Archaeology would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project, Robert Cadle (the client), Seven Coombs (Arena Construction Ltd), and Aidan Smyth (Archaeology and Planning Advisor, Wychavon and Malvern Hills District Councils).

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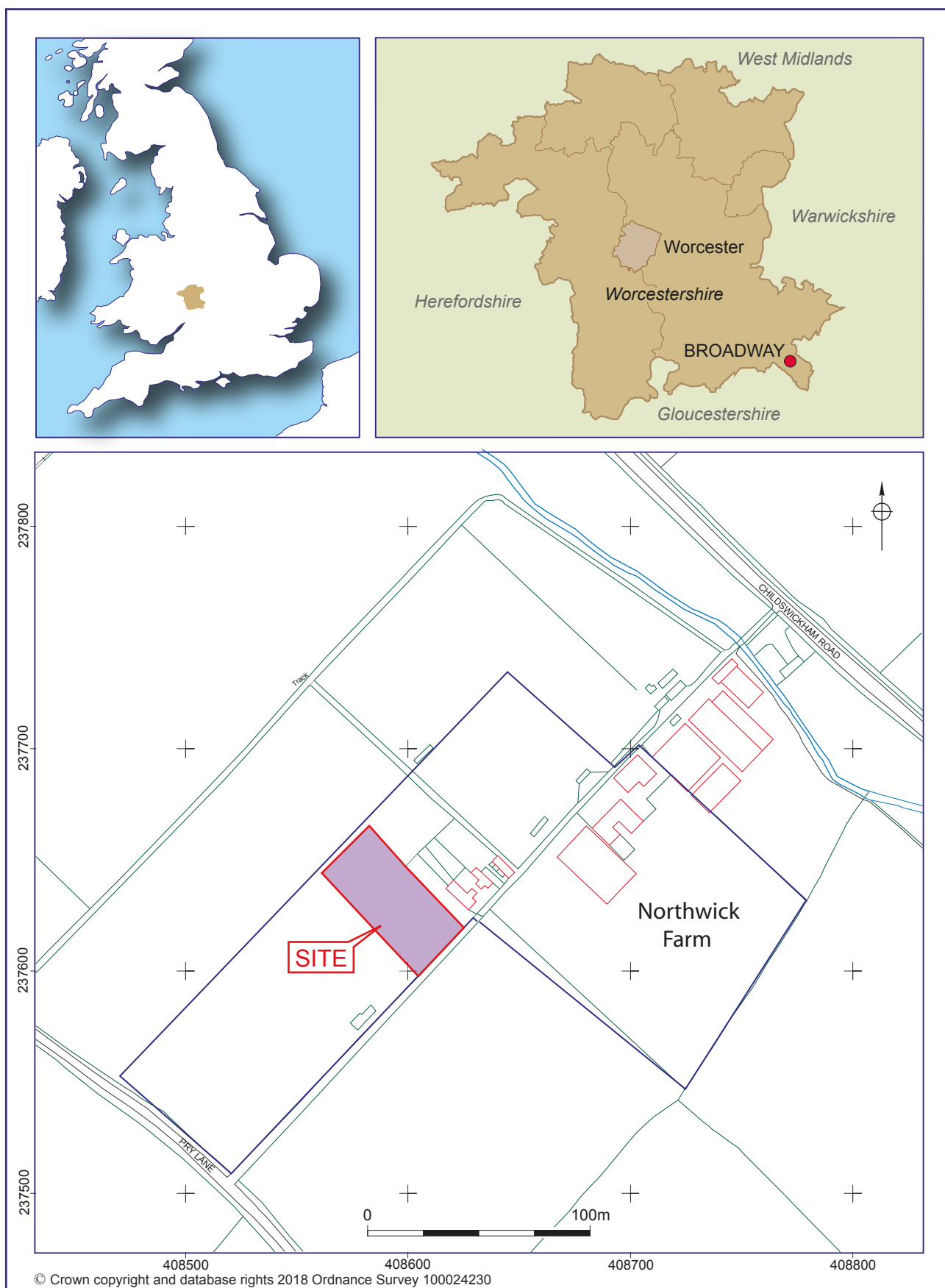
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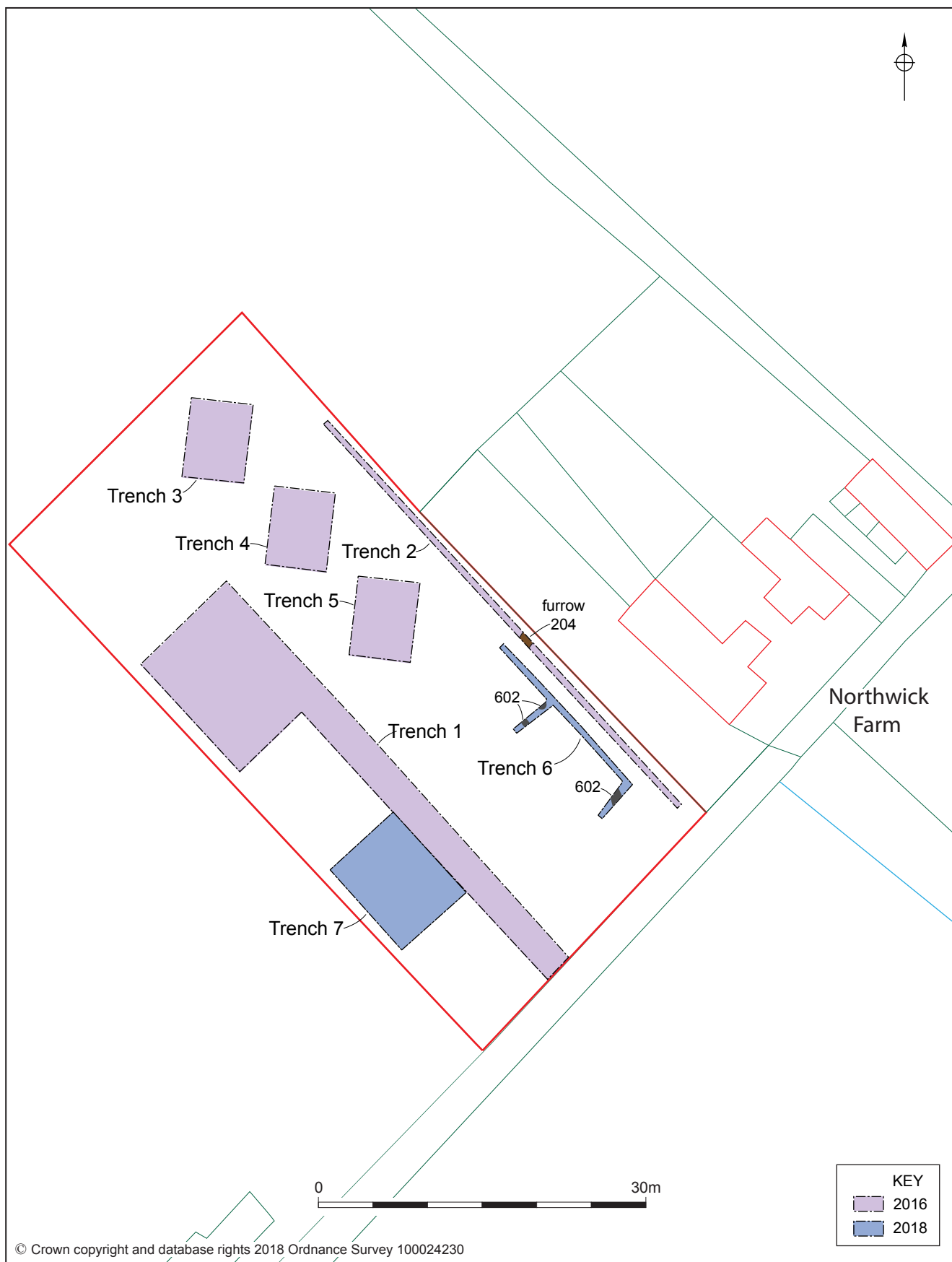
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Figures



Location of the site

Figure 1



Trench location plan

Figure 2

Plates



Plate 1: The site, looking north



Plate 2: Trench 6, looking north-west (1m scales)



Plate 3: Section of Trench 6, looking north-east (0.5m scale)



Plate 4: Trench 7, looking south-east (1m scales)

Appendix 1 Trench descriptions

Trenches 1-5 were observed during the Phase 1 watching brief (Lovett 2016; WSM 67771).

Main deposit descriptions

Trench 6

Length: 17.2m, with two 4m perpendicular spurs Width: 0.6m Depth: 0.55m

Context	Classification	Description	Depth (top and bottom of deposits)
600	Topsoil	Friable dark brownish grey clay silt.	0.00-0.30m
601	Subsoil	Moderately compact mid greyish brown silty clay, with occasional subangular cobbles and pebbles.	0.30-0.55m
602	Natural	Limestone brash in a moderately compact yellowy orange silty clay matrix.	0.55m+

Trench 7

Length: 10m Width: 8m Depth: 0.18m

Context	Classification	Description	Depth (top and bottom of deposits)
700	Topsoil	Friable dark brownish grey clay silt.	0.00-0.18m+

Appendix 2 Technical information

The archive (site code: WSM 70196)

The archive consists of:

- 1 Field progress reports AS2
- 1 Photographic records AS3
- 19 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

A copy of the report will be deposited with the appropriate Historic Environment Record (HER).