

Archaeological evaluation of Pershore Northern Link Road, Pershore, Worcestershire

for Jacobs

November 2018



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Archaeological evaluation of Persnore Northern Link Road, Persnore, Worcestershire



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Contents
Summary

1

Report

Illustrations by Carolyn Hunt	1
1 Background.....	2
1.1 Reasons for the project	2
2 Aims.....	2
3 Methods.....	2
3.1 Personnel.....	2
3.2 Documentary research	2
3.3 List of sources consulted	2
3.4 Fieldwork strategy	3
3.5 Structural analysis	3
3.6 Artefact methodology	3
3.7 Environmental archaeology methodology	3
3.8 Statement of confidence in the methods and results	3
4 The application site	3
4.1 Topography, geology and archaeological context.....	3
4.2 Current land-use	4
5 Results	4
5.1 Structural analysis	4
5.1.1 Phase 1: Natural deposits	4
5.1.2 Phase 2: Undated deposits	4
5.1.3 Phase 3: Modern deposits	4
6 Synthesis	4
7 Significance and impact of the development	4
8 Publication summary	5
9 Acknowledgements	5
10 Bibliography	5

Archaeological evaluation of Pershore Northern Link Road, Pershore, Worcestershire

Tim Cornah

Illustrations by Carolyn Hunt

Summary

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken of the proposed route of the Pershore Northern Link Road, Pershore, Worcestershire (NGR 395633 247840). It was undertaken for Jacobs on behalf of Worcestershire County Council, who intends to provide a direct link road between the existing A44/B4083 roundabout and the B4083 roundabout for which a planning application will be submitted.

The site lies 2km to the north of the centre of the town of Pershore and 1km to the north-west of the River Avon. Research into the area suggested a low potential for archaeologically significant features and deposits with the majority of records for the area relating to medieval and later agricultural practices.

Whilst five trenches were originally planned, most could not be excavated due to access and health and safety constraints. In the event a single L-shaped trench was excavated. This revealed no significant archaeological features, layers, structures, horizons or deposits, nor artefacts predating the modern period.

Report

1 Background

1.1 Reasons for the project

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken of the proposed route of the Pershore Northern Link Road, Pershore, Worcestershire (NGR 395633 247840). It was commissioned by Jacobs on behalf of Worcestershire County Council, who intends to provide a direct link road between the existing A44/B4083 roundabout and the B4083 roundabout. A planning application will be submitted to Wychavon District Council.

The proposed development site was considered to include potential heritage assets the significance of which may have been affected by the application.

No brief was prepared for this project but it conformed to the generality of briefs. A Written Scheme of Investigation was produced (Jacobs 2018).

The project also conforms to the *Standard and guidance: Archaeological field evaluation* (ClfA 2014a) and the *Standards and guidelines for archaeological projects in Worcestershire* (WCC 2010).

2 Aims

The specific aims of the trial trenching are:

- To establish the presence/absence, extent and significance of any previously unknown archaeological assets within the Scheme;
- To disseminate the results of the trial trenching in a format and manner appropriate to their significance;
- To generate an accessible and useable archive which will allow future research of any evidence identified to be undertaken.

In addition, further, more detailed, research aims may be generated from the results of the trial trenching. Where this is the case, these will be formally agreed and added to this document as an addendum.

3 Methods

3.1 Personnel

The project was led by Timothy Cornah (BA (hons.), MSc, ACIfA); who joined Worcestershire Archaeology in 2006 and has been practicing archaeology since 2004, Hazel Whitefoot (BA (hons); MSc (Oxen)). The project manager responsible for the quality of the project was Tom Vaughan (BA (hons. Dunelm); MA; MCIIfA). Illustrations were prepared by Carolyn Hunt (BSc (hons.); PG Cert; MCIIfA).

3.2 Documentary research

The archaeological background to the site was covered in a previous Scoping Report (CH2M 2017), which was summarised within the Written Scheme of Investigation (Jacobs 2018).

3.3 List of sources consulted

Cartographic sources

- 1st edition, 1884, Ordnance Survey, scale 1:10,560
- 1905 Ordnance Survey, scale 1:10,560
- 1947 Ordnance Survey, scale 1:10,560

Documentary sources

Published and grey literature sources are listed in the bibliography (Section 10).

3.4 Fieldwork strategy

A detailed specification has been prepared by Jacobs (2018).

Fieldwork was undertaken between 4 and 5 October 2018. The site reference number used by the Historic Environment Record to record archaeological "events", and site code used in the archive is WSM70506. The Worcestershire Archaeology project number is P5398.

Five 30m trenches were initially planned to be excavated across the site, both to the north and the south of the railway line (Figure 2). In the event, a single L shaped trench, amounting to 72m², was excavated on the northern side of the railway as the other proposed trenches were located on areas with significant depths of modern makeup and dense undergrowth. It was agreed with Aidan Smyth (Archaeology and Planning Advisor, Wychavon District Council) that this single trench would be sufficient to complete the project. The location of the trench is indicated in Figure 2.

Deposits considered not to be significant were removed under archaeological supervision using a wheeled excavator, employing a toothless bucket. 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 2012). On completion of excavation, trenches were reinstated by replacing the excavated material.

3.5 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.

3.6 Artefact methodology

Recovery of artefacts was undertaken according to standard Worcestershire Archaeology practice (WA 2012). In the event, no pre-modern material culture was present for retention and analysis.

3.7 Environmental archaeology methodology

Environmental sampling was undertaken according to standard Worcestershire Archaeology practice (WA 2012). No deposits suitable for environmental analysis were present.

3.8 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 lies 2km to the north of the centre of the town of Pershore and 1km to the north-west of the River Avon on low rolling land, at a height of approximately 31m AOD. The bedrock geology of the site is recorded as Charmouth Mudstone Formation formed in the Jurassic period. No superficial geology is recorded (BGS 2018).

The archaeological background given below is summarised from the Written Scheme of Investigation (Jacobs 2018).

A possible Bronze Age cemetery was discovered to the north of the site (WSM38130) on the line of the Wyre Piddle bypass, though was found to have been truncated upon further investigation. This subsequent excavation revealed evidence for a Romano British farmstead (WSM30575).

The evidence for the use of the area in the medieval periods was in the form of ridge and furrow (WSM57062, WSM20044, WSM66670, WSM20045 and WSM05013) and therefore agricultural in nature. An area of extant ridge and furrow earthworks was recorded across the southern part of the

site (WSM20044). The post-medieval use of the landscape was likely also to have been agricultural, seen by both former and extant farm buildings (WSM51318, WSM51317, WSM50904 and WSM52694), none of which were within the site itself.

Within the modern era, Pershore racecourse (WSM42191) extended across the southern part of the site and a communal air raid shelter (WSM31296) was located c 230m to the north-west.

Further to the above, four archaeological investigations have taken place within the immediate vicinity of the site, which revealed evidence primarily for medieval agricultural activities. The archaeological potential within the site itself was therefore deemed to be low.

4.2 Current land-use

The site was unused and overgrown scrub, which had previously been built up on both sides of the railway with bunds of redeposited soils, up to a height of c 5m in some areas.

5 Results

5.1 Structural analysis

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

5.1.1 Phase 1: Natural deposits

The geological deposits (1003) consisted compact yellow clays with patches of rounded gravels, at a depth of 0.70-0.79m below the present ground surface (where there was not extensive modern dumping).

5.1.2 Phase 2: Undated deposits

Sealing deposit (1003) was a dark yellowish brown silty clay former topsoil deposit (1002) which was interpreted as a former plough soil, at a depth of 0.50m below the current ground surface. No dateable residual material culture was present within this deposit.

5.1.3 Phase 3: Modern deposits

Two modern made ground deposits were present (1000 and 1001). These consisted of dark greyish brown friable silty clay loams and contained modern inclusions such as CBM, plaster, concrete and plastic, none of which were retained. These deposits were part of makeup deposits which extended across the whole of the site.

6 Synthesis

The archaeological background to the site suggested a low potential for archaeological remains within its boundaries. In the event, no significant archaeological features, layers, structures, or horizons were present, albeit within a reduced sample of trial trenching. The extensive depth of modern overburden deposits across the majority of the site is likely to prevent any further possible features being extensively impacted upon by or during construction of the proposed development.

7 Significance and impact of the development

No significant archaeological deposits or features were present within the trench. Any that remain in the wider site are likely to be under a substantial depth of modern made ground and therefore beyond the likely impact of the development. The development's archaeological impact is therefore likely to be negligible.

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.

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9 Acknowledgements

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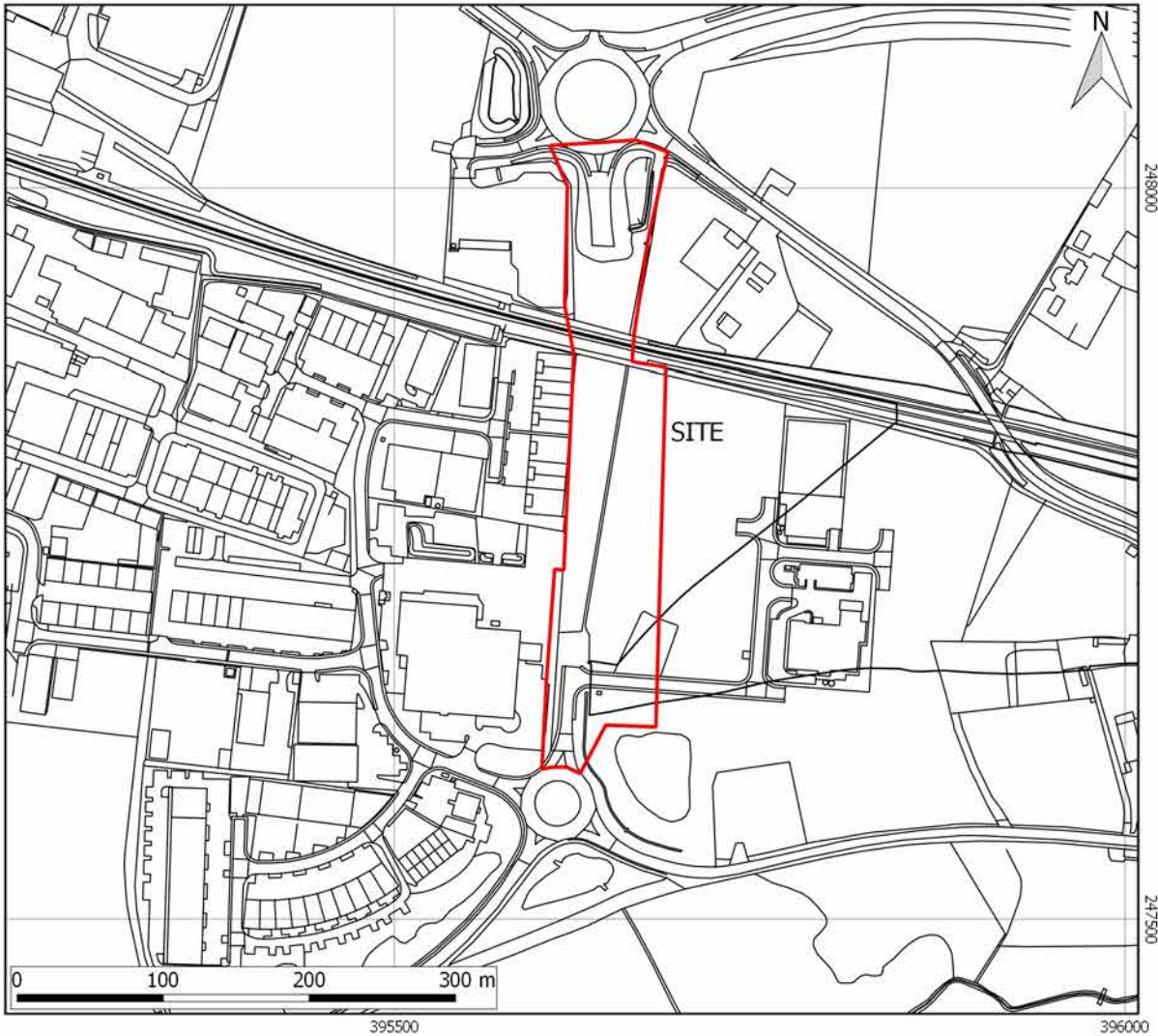
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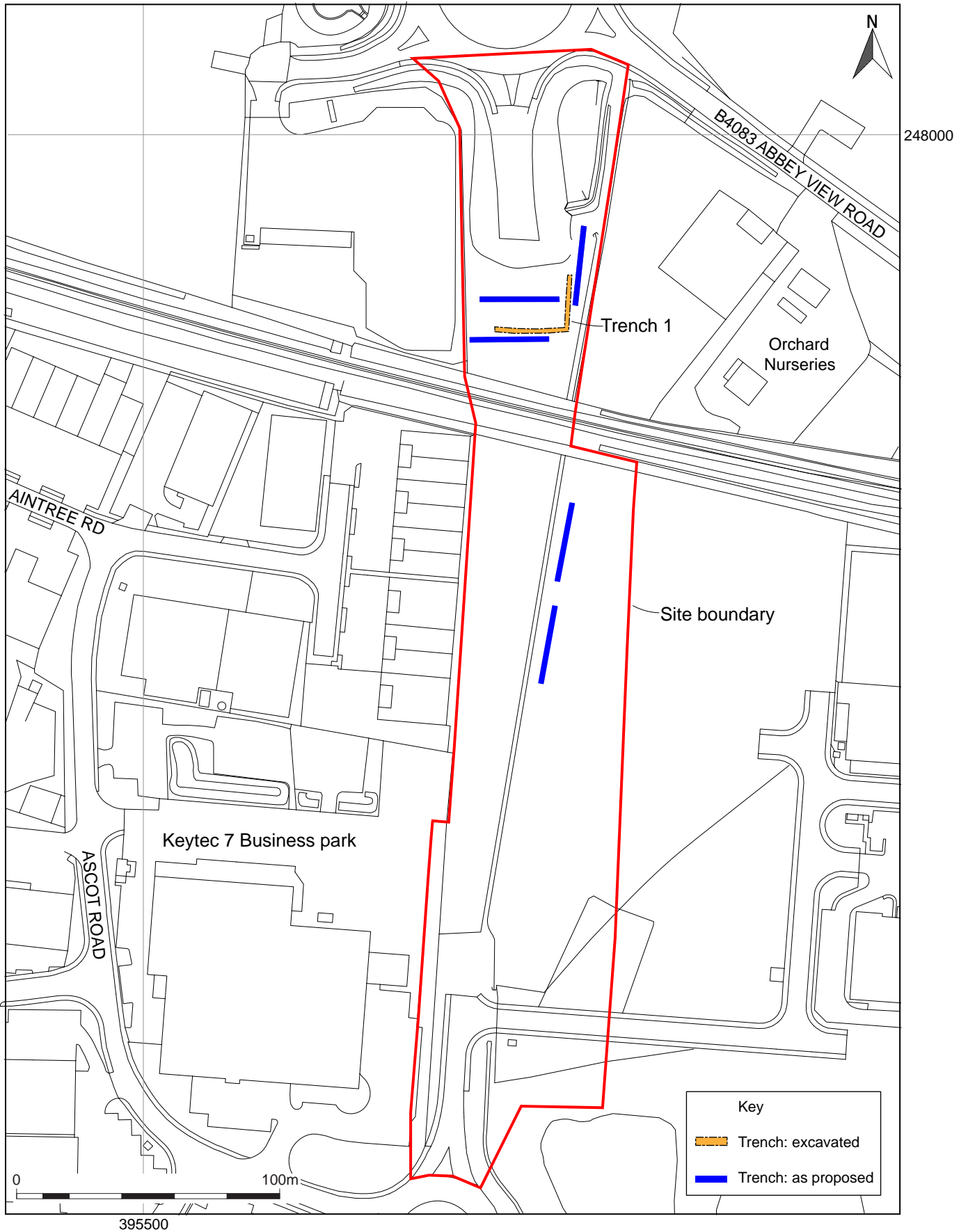
Figures



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Location of the site

Figure 1



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Location of excavated trench and trenches as originally proposed

Figure 2

Plates



Plate 1 The site, general view south



Plate 2 Trench 1, general view south, 2x 1m scales



Plate 3 Trench 1, general view east, 2x 1m scales

Appendix 1 Trench description

Main deposit descriptions

Trench 1

Maximum dimensions: Length: N-S 20m, E-W 28m Width: 1.5m Depth: 0.79m

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
1000	Modern made ground	Dark greyish brown friable silty clay loam with moderate sub-rounded stones and occasional modern inclusions such as CBM, plaster, concrete and plastic	0-0.50m
1001	Modern made ground	Same as (1000) but with a higher silt content	0.50-0.70m
1002	Topsoil	Dark yellowish brown silty clay with moderate sub-rounded and rounded stones.	0.50-0.79m
1003	Natural	Compact yellow clay with rounded gravel patches	0.70-0.79m+

Appendix 2 Technical information

The archive (site code: WSM70506)

The archive consists of:

- 1 Field progress reports AS2
- 1 Photographic records AS3
- 23 Digital photographs
- 1 Trench record sheets AS41
- 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 Historic Environment Record (HER) and the National Monuments Record (NMR) as appropriate.
