

Archaeological watching brief at Land of Himbleton Road, Worcester

for
The University of Worcester

January 2019



Worcestershire Archaeology

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Worcestershire Archaeology
Archive and Archaeology Service
The Hive, Sawmill Walk,
The Butts, Worcester
WR1 3PD

Local planning authority:	Worcester City Council
Planning reference:	P18J0124
Central NGR:	SO 8360 5575
Commissioning client:	David Norman on behalf of The University of Worcester
WA project reference:	P5463
WA report reference:	2628
HER event reference	WCM 102332
Oasis reference:	fieldsec1-334784

Issue	Date	Status	Details/prepared by	Checked by
Ver 1	06.11,18	Draft	Graham Arnold	Tom Rogers
Ver 2	07/01/2018	Final	Graham Arnold	Tom Rogers

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Archaeological watching brief at land off Himbleton Road, Worcester

Graham Arnold

Background information

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken at land off Himbleton Road, Worcester on behalf of David Norman, University of Worcester. A general ground reduction was being undertaken prior to piling for University Accommodation. Planning permission for the development was granted by Worcester City Council (ref P18J0124) including a condition requiring archaeological access to the site.

The site was located over a disused, backfilled gravel quarry from which a Palaeolithic Acheulian hand axe was recovered in 1915 (HER ref WSM00750; Smith 1922; Shaw 2013). The area had been backfilled and levelled during the 20th Century as part of modern development of the area.

The flint implement is described in Shaw 2014 as :

8.5 Henwick, Worcester, Worcestershire (?SO 833 560)

8.5.1 The Worcester City Museum collection contains a single fluviially rolled cordate handaxe with the broad provenance to Henwick, Worcester. Its condition demonstrates that it is derived from a fluvial deposit.

8.5.2 Historic maps (OS County Series 1:2500, 1928 and 1940) show several sand and gravel pits were active in this area of Worcester (SO 833 560) from the 1920s and through the 1940s. The deposits in this area are mapped by the British Geological Survey as belonging to the Holt Heath Member of the Severn Valley Formation (BGS 1:50,000 Geology Digimap). The majority of these sediments are thought to be deposited by outwash from the late Devensian (MIS 2) ice sheet. The handaxe is likely to have been incorporated into these from earlier deposits.

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, within the constraints of the client's construction works.

Methods

General specification for fieldwork

WA 2012

Sources consulted

HER

Dates of fieldwork

26 October and 31 October 2018

Area of site

c 900m²

Access to or visibility of deposits

Observation of the excavated areas was undertaken during and after machine excavation. The exposed surfaces were sufficiently clean to observe well-differentiated archaeological deposits. The reduced dig was observed by an archaeologist prior to the piling mat being installed. Excavations were a total of 0.70m below the existing ground level and modern made ground was observed throughout the footprint of the building.

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

Maximum dimensions: Length: 30.00m Width: 30.00m Depth: 0.00 – 0.70m

Ground level - 30.20m AOD

Maximum depth below ground level 29.49m AOD

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
100	Modern made ground	Mixed loose type 1 gravels and orangey brown silty clay with frequent modern bricks, concrete and stone.	0.00 – 0.70m

Discussion and Conclusions

All of the area for site reduction consisted of modern made ground, cut by modern services and drainage. No natural ground was observed at the maximum depth of the excavations. The current works did not impact on any significant archaeological deposits.

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 David Norman on behalf of the University of Worcester at land off Himbleton Road, Worcester (NGR SO 8360 5575). The ground was being reduced for a piling mat to construct University accommodation. The site was located over a gravel quarry that had been in use from the 1920s to 1940s and where a Palaeolithic hand axe (WSM00750) was found during gravel extraction works. The gravel quarry had been backfilled in with modern material. All of the ground monitored consisted of modern made ground. No natural deposits or archaeologically significant deposits were recorded during the works.

Acknowledgements

Worcestershire Archaeology would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project, David Dyde, Project Manager, Novus Solutions, David Norman, University of Worcester and James Dinn, Archaeological Advisor for Worcester City Council.

Bibliography

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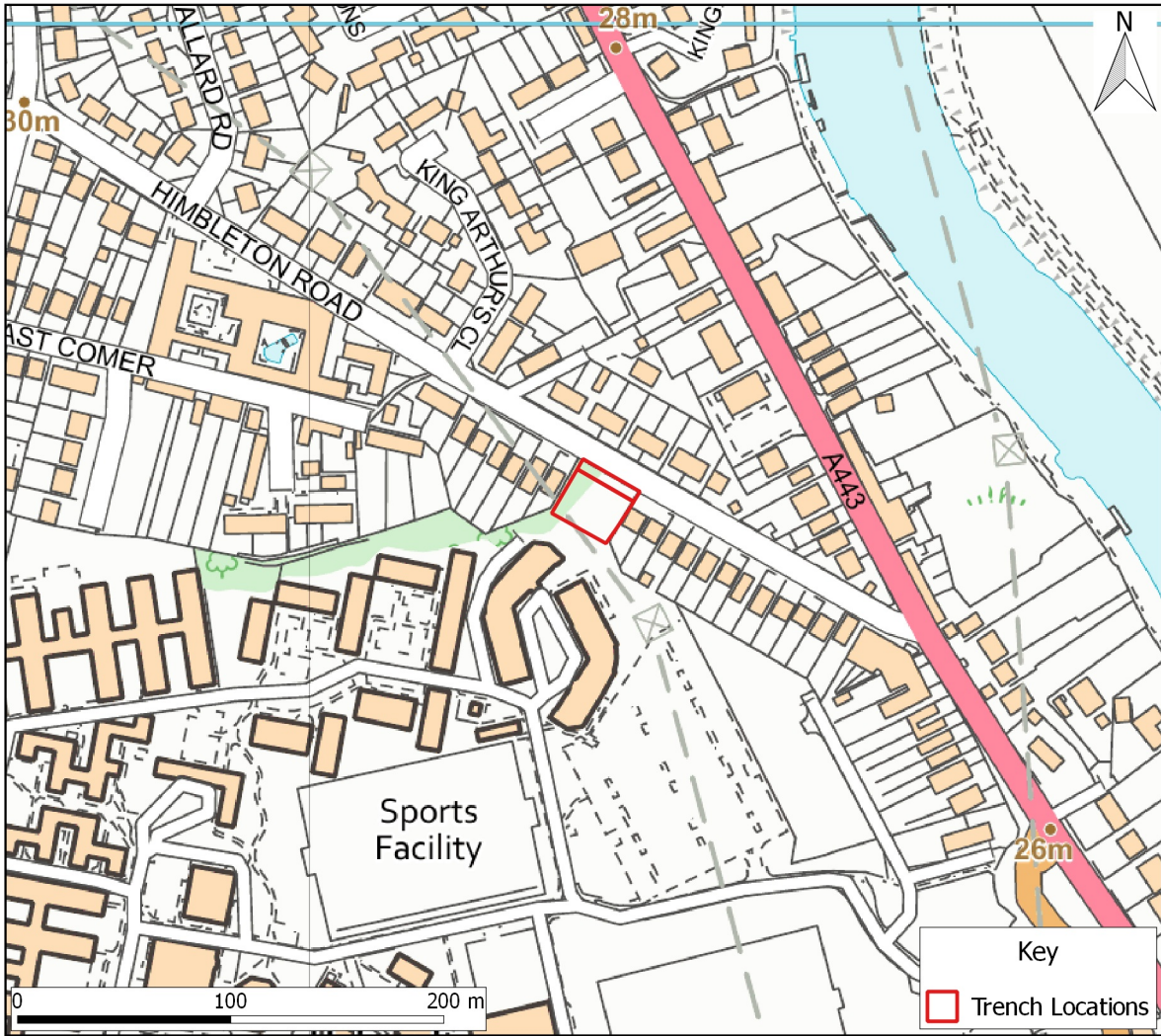
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Worcester City Council 2016 *Guidelines for archaeological work in Worcester*, version 1.1, dated December 2016

Figures



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Location of the site

Figure 1

Plates



Plate 1 General shot of reduced ground showing modern drainage. View north with 2x1m scales.



Plate 2 Northeast facing section of reduced ground. 1m scale and 0.5m scale.



Plate 3 Northwest facing section of groundworks showing made ground. 1m and 0.5m scales.



Plate 4 Northwest side of site stripped looking Northeast. 2x1m scales.



Plate 5 Southwest facing section of groundworks adjacent to Himbleton Road. In area for car parking with 2 x 1m scales.



Plate 6 The site with piling mat following excavation works looking north.