

Archaeological evaluation at Lyne Hill Industrial Estate, Boscomoor Lane, Penkridge, Staffordshire

Worcestershire Archaeology
for Persimmon Homes West Midlands

December 2019



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LYNE HILL INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, BOSCOMOOR LANE, PENKRIDGE, STAFFORDSHIRE

Archaeological evaluation report



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SITE INFORMATION

Site name: Lyne Hill Industrial Estate, Boscomoor Lane, Penkridge, Staffordshire

Local planning authority: South Staffordshire Council

Planning reference: 12/00497

Central NGR: SJ 92362 13037

Commissioning client: Persimmon Homes West Midlands

WA project number: P5357

WA report number: 2759

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1	17/12/2019	Tim Cornah	Draft for comment	Tom Vaughan

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Archaeological evaluation at Lyne Hill Industrial Estate, Boscomoor Lane, Penkridge, Staffordshire

By Tim Cornah

Illustrations by Carolyn Hunt

Summary

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at Lyne Hill Industrial Estate, Boscomoor Lane, Penkridge, Staffordshire (NGR SJ 92362 13037). It was commissioned by Persimmon Homes West Midlands, in advance of residential development. A planning application has been submitted.

The evaluation was able to test only approximately one third of the area originally intended, due to the development of the site having started before trenching was commenced. It was clear from the single excavated trench that truncation had already taken place across the area, up to a depth of 1.7m, although a disturbed soil layer, containing 19th century debris was identified across parts of the trench. At the south-east end of the trench was the truncated remnant of a brick structure, which based upon map evidence dated to late 19th century or the start of the 20th century. No significant archaeological features, layers, structures or horizons were identified, nor artefacts recovered.

Report

1 Introduction

1.1 Background to the project

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Worcestershire Archaeology (WA) in October 2019 at Lyne Hill Industrial Estate, Boscomoor Lane, Penkridge, Staffordshire (NGR SJ 92362 13037). This was originally intended to be comprised of four trenches, although ultimately only a single trench was possible. The project was commissioned by Persimmon Homes West Midlands, in advance of residential development of the site. A planning application has been submitted to South Staffordshire Council (12/00497).

The archaeological advisor to the local planning authority considered that the proposed development had the potential to impact upon possible heritage assets. Previous research into the site identified the former Lyne Hill Farm site at the southern boundary of the development area (AJA 2013). Initially a watching brief of the groundworks was to be undertaken within the area of the former Lyne Hill Farm site, identified as the 'Area of Continuous Archaeological Monitoring' (CAM). The Client requested that evaluation of the area be undertaken instead, in advance of their groundworks. This was approved by the archaeological advisor. During a site visit on 7 January 2019 it was determined that groundworks had already been undertaken within the western approximately two-thirds and south-eastern side of the CAM. Trial trenching was eventually undertaken within the remaining third of the site.

No brief has been prepared by the archaeological advisor, but the project aims to conform to the generality of briefs which have been previously issued. A written scheme of investigation (WSI) was prepared by Worcestershire Archaeology (WA 2019) and approved by the archaeological advisor. The evaluation also conforms to the industry guidelines and standards set out by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists in *Standard and guidance: for archaeological field evaluation* (CIfAa 2014)

1.2 Site location, topography and geology

The site is located 1km to the south of the centre of the village of Penkridge. The development site extended over a 10 hectare area, with the 'Area of Continuous Archaeological Monitoring' comprising 2,519m². Of that, 731m² was available for trial trenching on the north-east side of the CAM area.

The site is bounded by modern industrial development to its north, and rural lanes with farmland beyond to the south and east. To the west, the site is bounded by the A449. The site has until recently been used as an industrial estate, built sometime before 1972. It is located on broadly flat ground at a height of approximately 86m AOD.

The underlying geology comprises is recorded as Helsby Sandstone Formation of the Triassic period. No superficial deposits are recorded (BGS 2019)

2 Archaeological and historical background

A Cultural Heritage Assessment of the site was undertaken by Andrew Joseph Associates (AJA 2013). The findings presented in assessment are summarised below.

Whilst there is known Iron age and Roman settlement within the vicinity of Penkridge, the origins of the village are thought to have been in late Saxon, developing through the medieval era, with a market charter granted in 1244. More pertinent to the site is the history of Lyne Hill, located immediately to the south-east of the development site. The settlement here was first recorded in 1237 and in the 16th and 17th centuries it was described variously as both being part of and separate from the Manor of Penkridge.

There is no clear suggestion that the medieval settlement of Lyne Hill extended into the development site. A building is shown within the southern area of the site on a map of 1790, with much clearer

detail of a courtyard farm with a south-east entrance fronting onto Lyne Hill Lane shown on the 1890s Ordnance Survey map. The farmhouse is orientated broadly east to west, with its farm ranges butting to the south. Four additional out buildings had been constructed by the 1902 Ordnance Survey map, including to the east of the farmyard, and another two by the 1924 map. By 1967 the farm buildings had largely been demolished and the farmhouse itself would appear to have been altered. The whole complex was demolished before 1972, by which time a substantial industrial building took its place. No recorded archaeological works have previously taken place within the site.

3 Project aims

The aims and scope of the project were to undertake sufficient fieldwork to:

- determine the presence or absence of archaeological deposits beyond reasonable doubt;
- identify their location, nature date and preservation;
- assess their significance;
- assess the likely impact of the proposed development (where detailed foundation plans have been provided to WA).

4 Project methodology

A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was prepared by Worcestershire Archaeology (WA 2018). Fieldwork was undertaken on 24 October 2019.

A single T shaped trench, amounting to 87m² in area, was excavated. The original CAM area was 2,519m², although the majority of this was built upon, such that only 731m² available for trenching. The trenching covered a sample of 12% of the available CAM area, or 3.5% of total CAM area. The trench as excavated was the maximum area possible within the site constraints. The location of the trench is indicated in Figure 2.

Deposits considered not to be significant were removed under constant archaeological supervision using a 360° tracked 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) and trench and feature locations were surveyed using a differential GPS with an accuracy limit set at <0.04m. On completion of excavation, trenches were reinstated by replacing the excavated material.

All fieldwork records were checked and cross-referenced. Analysis was undertaken through a combination of structural and artefactual evidence, allied to the information derived from other sources.

The project archive is currently held at the offices of Worcestershire Archaeology. Subject to the agreement of the landowner it is anticipated that it will be deposited at The Potteries Museum and Art Gallery Museum.

5 Archaeological results

5.1 Introduction

The features recorded in the trench are shown in Figure 2 and Plates 1-3. The trench inventory is presented in Appendix 1.

5.2 Phasing

5.2.1 Natural deposits

Natural undisturbed geological deposits consisted of pinkish and orange sands with some sandstone pieces (102) (Plate 1), consistent with the recorded geology of the area. They were recorded of a depth of 1.37m below the ground surface (BGS).

5.2.2 Phase 1: Post-medieval

Across much of the trench there was a moderately compact dark blackish brown sandy silt with frequent charcoal flecks and some brick fragments (101) that was of late post-medieval date, though could not be recorded in detail due to the depth of the deposit (up to 1.41m BGS).

Cutting (101) was the corner of a brick-built structure. The foundations walls, 0.23m wide, comprised orangey greyish red handmade unfrogged bricks, 23x11x6.5cm in dimension (103) (Figure 2; Plate 3). This ran south-west to north-east turning to run to the south-east. This lay at 1.08m BGS, and was the truncated corner of a probable out building, which, based on the location of the trench when compared to the historic map was one of the four out buildings that were constructed between 1890 and 1902 from the map evidence.

5.2.3 Phase 2: Modern

Across all of the trench was a moderately compact mid reddish brown sandy silt with occasional inclusions of sandstone pieces and modern debris such as metal and concrete (100). This was a mixed deposit, up to 1.70m in depth, that was a result of the ground having been turned over as part of the present development.

The depth of the truncation represented by (100) was confirmed by a modern ceramic foul drainage below (100) in the centre of the trench. Given the sub-surface nature of such drains, it suggests truncation of any other previously extant features.

6 Artefactual evidence

Recovery of artefacts was undertaken according to standard Worcestershire Archaeology practice (WA 2012). In the event no artefacts pre-dating the later post-medieval and modern periods were identified which were considered to be suitable for analysis.

7 Environmental evidence

Environmental sampling was undertaken according to standard Worcestershire Archaeology practice (WA 2012). In the event no deposits were identified which were considered to be suitable for environmental analysis.

8 Significance and Impacts

Given the late date of the surviving structural remains in the southern end of the trench, as well as the high degree of truncation of it, the significance is considered to be negligible.

The depth of modern made ground, between 1.08-1.70m BGS, indicates the extent of disturbance associated with the current development. It is therefore considered that any further impacts will be low or negligible.

9 Conclusions

The evaluation was able to test approximately one third of the CAM area, due to the development of the site having started before trenching was commenced. It was clear from the single excavated trench that truncation had already taken place across the area, up to a depth of 1.70m, although a

disturbed soil layer, containing 19th century debris was identified across parts of the trench. At the southern end of the trench was the truncated remnant of a brick structure which based upon map evidence dated to the late 19th century or the start of the 20th century. No significant archaeological features, layers, structures or horizons were identified, nor artefacts recovered.

The methods adopted allow a high degree of confidence that the aims of the project have been achieved. Conditions were suitable in all of the trenches to identify the presence or absence of archaeological features. It is considered that the nature, density and distribution of archaeological features provides an accurate characterisation area tested, though this was reduced by the ongoing development programme.

10 Project personnel

The fieldwork was led by Tim Cornah, ACIFA, assisted by Jem Brewer, PCIfA.

The project was managed by Tom Vaughan, MCIFA. The report was produced and collated by Tim Cornah. Specialist contributions and individual sections of the report are attributed to the relevant authors throughout the text.

11 Acknowledgements

Worcestershire Archaeology would like to thank the following for the successful conclusion of the project: (Dean Weldon, Graduate Planner, Persimmon Homes West Midlands) and Shane Kelleher (County Archaeologist, Staffordshire Council).

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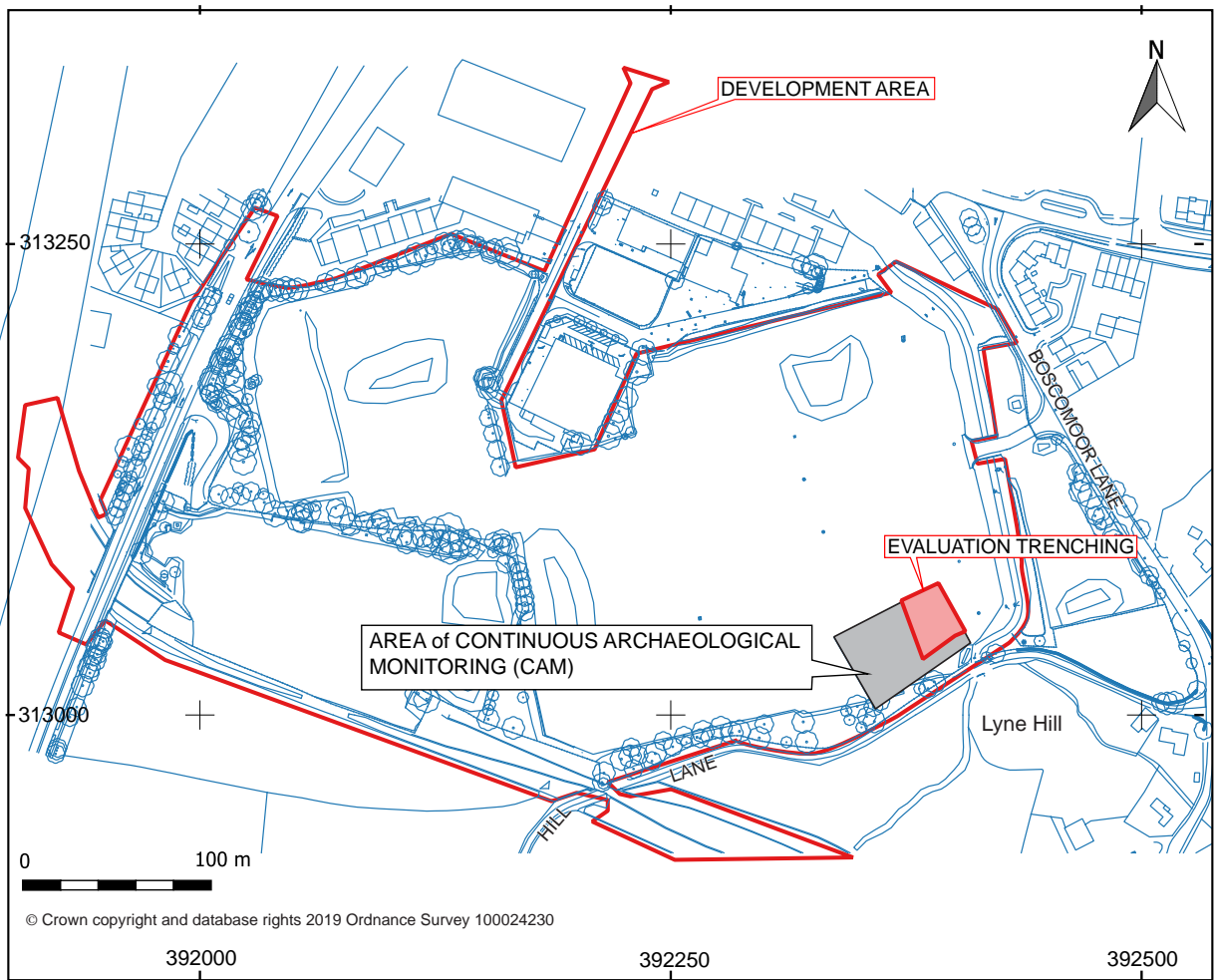
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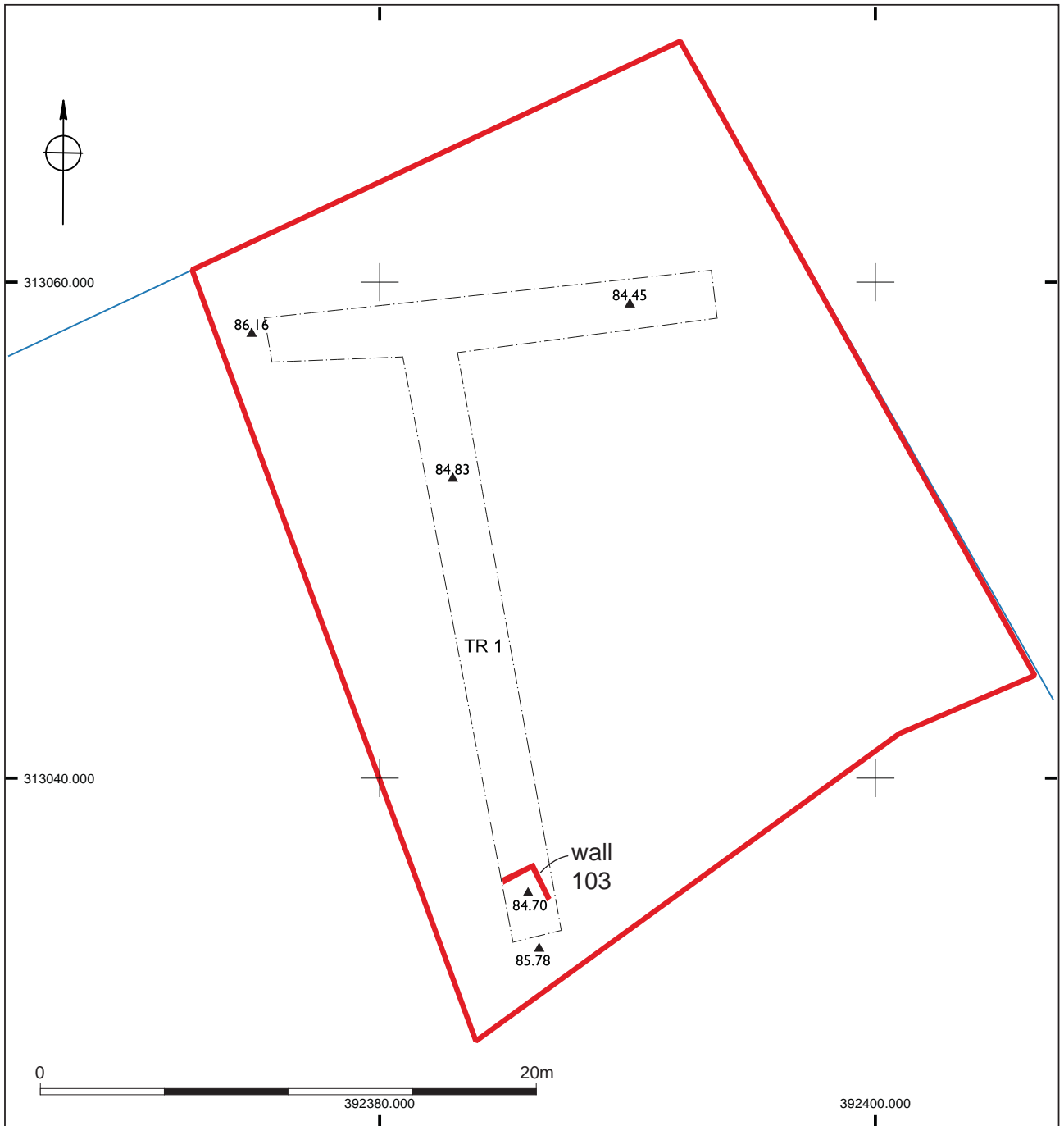
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Figures



Location of the site

Figure 1



Trench plan

Figure 2

Plates



Plate 1 Trench looking north, 2x 1m scales



Plate 2 Trench looking west, 2x 1m scales



Plate 3 Brick wall (103), looking north-east, 2x 1m scales

Appendix 1: Trench and deposit descriptions

Trench 1

Maximum dimensions: Length: 30m Width: 1.8m

Orientation: NW-SE

Context	Context Type	Feature Type	Description	Interpretation	Depth
100	Layer	Made ground	Moderately compact mid reddish brown sandy silt with occasional inclusions of sandstone pieces and modern debris such as metal and concrete	Modern made ground	0-1.70m BGS
101	Layer	Made ground	Moderately compact dark blackish brown sandy silt with frequent charcoal flecks and some brick fragments	Probable 19 th or made ground or disturbed soil	0.88-1.41m BGS
102	Layer	Natural	Pinkish and orange sand with some sandstone pieces	Natural	1.37m+ BGS
103	Structure	Wall	Corner of a brick built structure foundations walls 0.23m wide comprised of orangey grey red hand made unfrogged bricks of 23x11x6.5cm in dimension. Runs south-west to north-east turning to run to the south-east	Truncated corner of a brick structure, probably late 19 th century	1.08m BGS

Appendix 2: Summary of project archive

TYPE	DETAILS*
Artefacts and Environmental	Brick
Paper	Trench sheet, Diary (Field progress form), Photograph, Plan, Report, Survey
Digital	Database, GIS, Images raster/digital photography, Survey, Text

*OASIS terminology