

**Archaeological watching brief
at land adjacent to 2 Atkinson Street,
Childswickham
Worcestershire**

WSM 41861

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20th January 2010

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Introduction

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken at land adjacent to 2 Atkinson Street, Childswickham, Worcestershire (WSM 41861; SP 0746 3866; Fig 1) at the request of Mr G Reid, according to a brief provided by Worcestershire County Archaeology Service (planning ref W/03/1399). This was undertaken during the excavation of footings for a new domestic dwelling

Brief background to the site

Documentary research took place on 30th November 2009 at Worcestershire County Record Office and the Worcestershire Historic Environment Record.

The map evidence

No title map survives of Childswickham. There is an inclosure award of 1763 but no accompanying map. The earliest available map is therefore the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1885 (Fig 2). This shows the location of the site as a garden, possibly an orchard. The only other available historic map is the 1938 Ordnance Survey map. The location of the site was still clearly a garden but, due to the circumstances of the time, shows little or no detail.

Information from Worcestershire Historic Environment Record

The earliest nearby activities recorded in the Historic Environment Record are the presence of an iron age pit and ditch (WSM 31092) at the former Aston Garage site in Broadway Road and unstratified finds of Roman pottery (WSM33959) north of New Street. The next activity takes place during the medieval period, the evidence for which are various finds of medieval pottery near the vicarage (WSM 33957), south of Brook Street (WSM 33931), north of Brook Street (WSM 33939) and north of New Street (WSM 33958).

Secular buildings date from the 15th century with a house at 23 New Street (WSM 38257), with Weathervane Cottage, Vicarage Lane (WSM 38253) being of the 17th century, The Finches, 6 Atkinson Street (WSM 35352) of the early 18th century and 21 New Street (WSM 38256) being *c* 1800. It is believed that The Finches lies at the core of the medieval occupation of the area (WSM 24577) due to its proximity to church (WSM 1823), a moated site (WSM 5293) the village cross (WSM 1824) and the earthworks of a shrunken medieval village (WSM 4853).

Analysis

The fieldwork

Fieldwork took place on the 8th December 2009. Only brief descriptions of the deposits are given here. Full descriptions of the contexts are given in Appendix 1.

The trenches were excavated by mini-digger to a depth of approximately 1.0m. The typical deposit profile (Fig 3) comprised the topsoil (context 001) overlying the natural subsoil: a light yellow orange sandy gravel (context 002). There were no features cut into the natural subsoil within the limits of the trenches.

The finds

No finds were recovered from the excavations or subsequently from the spoil heap.

Discussion

The site lies within an area known to have been a garden in the last 130 years. The topsoil (context 001) was deep, clearly rich and fertile and free of all but the smallest stones. This may be a clue to the lack of finds (of any date) in an area that has produced a quantity of medieval pottery as casual finds. It may be that the soil has been carefully tended and regularly sieved resulting in the removal

of all course aggregate, including sherds of pottery. The lack of sub-surface features is more definitive and, in the absence of any evidence for the site being truncated, must mean that the location of the development has been favoured for agricultural or horticultural use to the exclusion of anything else.

Summary

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken at land adjacent to 2 Atkinson Street, Childswickham, Worcestershire during excavations of footings for a dwelling. The watching brief demonstrated that activity resulting in disturbance to the subsoil, apart from that of an agricultural or horticultural nature, had not taken place on the site of the development.

Acknowledgements

The author would particularly like to thank Mr G Reid and Mike Glyde of Worcestershire County Council for their kind cooperation.

Archive

The archive consists of

- 1 Annotated scale drawing
- 1 CD-ROM

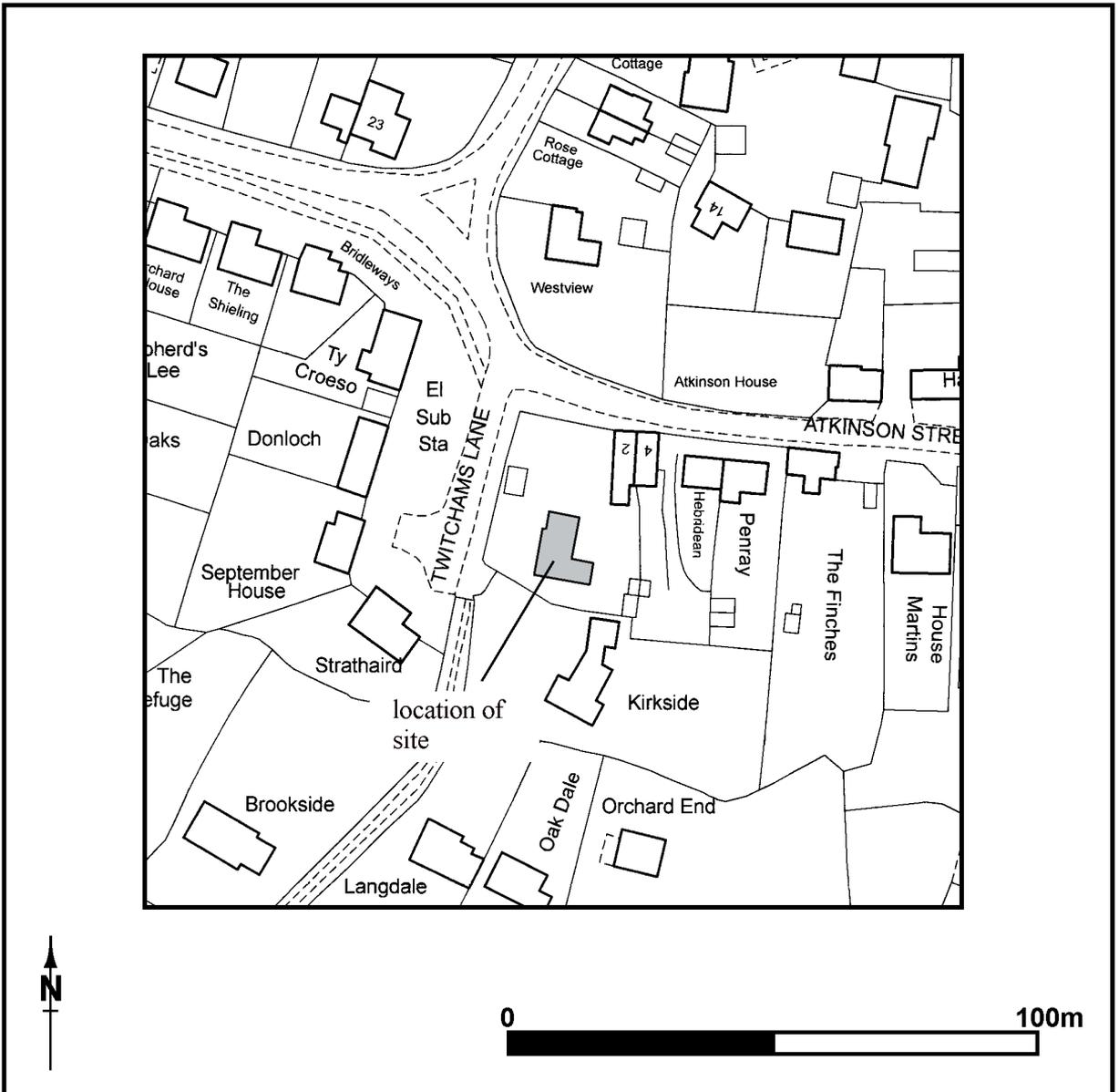
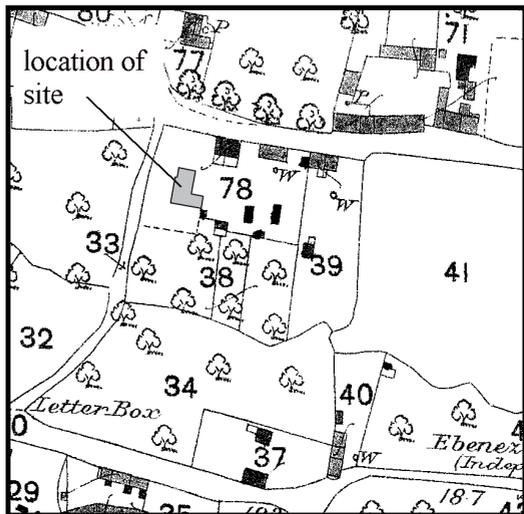


Fig 1: Location of site

1885



1938

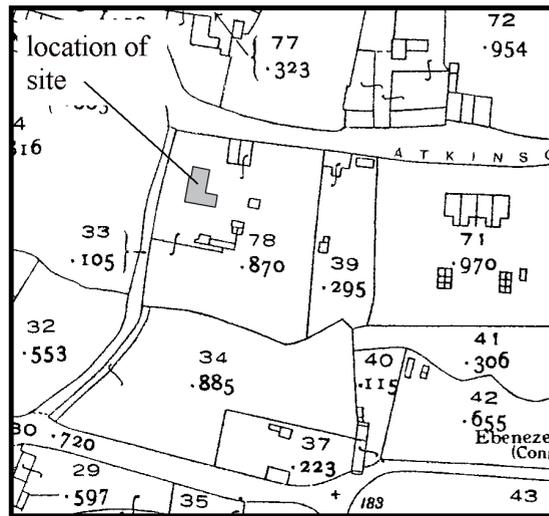


Fig 2: Historic mapping

Section 1

south north

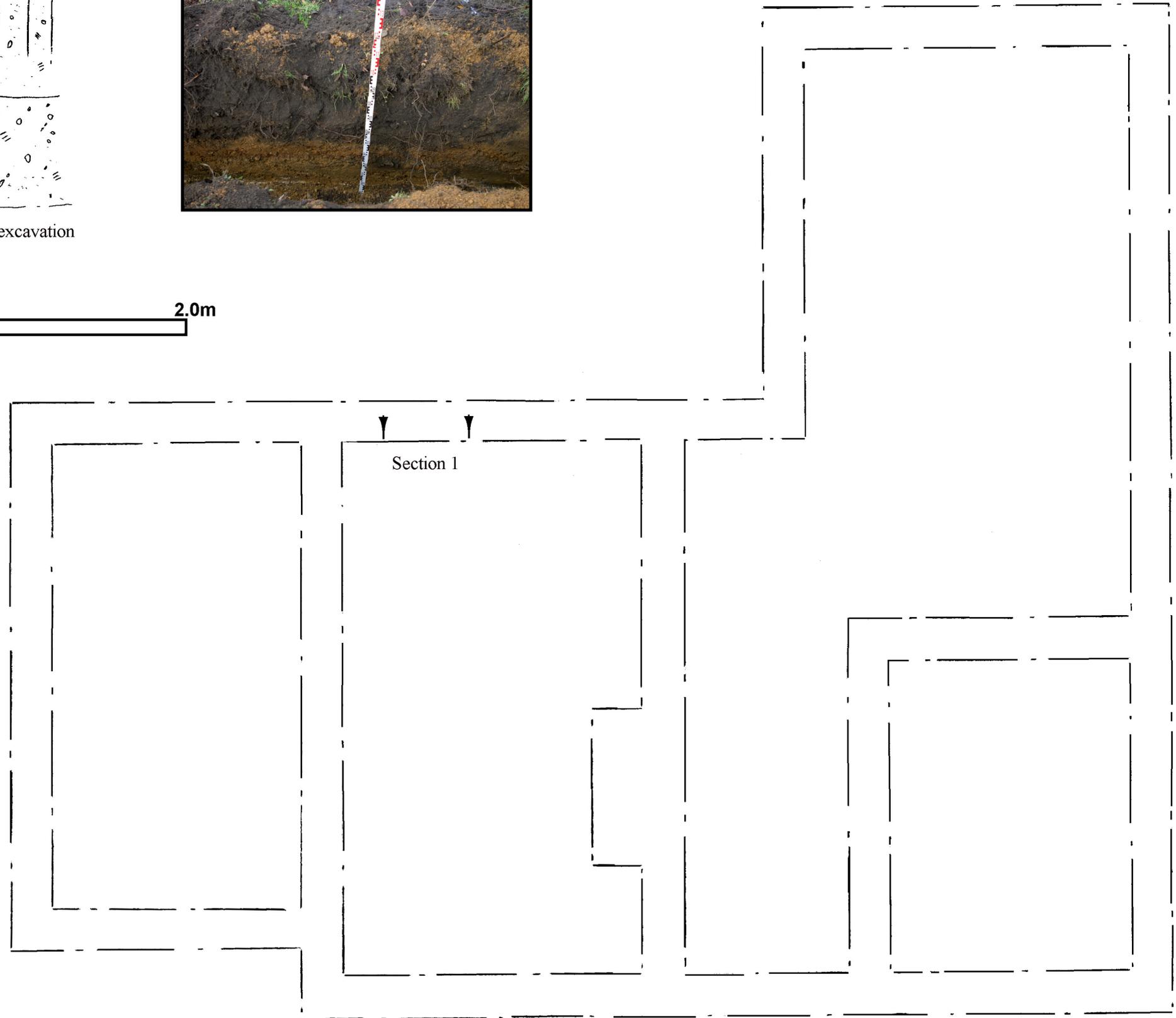
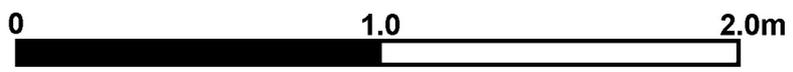
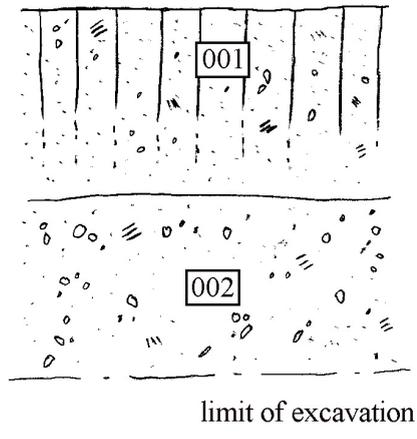


Fig 3: Site plan

Appendix 1: List of the contexts

Context number	Description	Interpretation
001	Dark grey brown sandy loam	Topsoil
002	Light yellow orange sandy gravel	Natural subsoil