

A Watching Brief at
***Cheney Longville House, Cheney
Longville, Craven Arms, Shropshire***

by
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Archaeology Service



Archaeology Service Report Number 309
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February 2012

**A WATCHING BRIEF AT CHENEY LONGVILLE HOUSE,
CHENEY LONGVILLE, CRAVEN ARMS, SHROPSHIRE**

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A report for
Treasure and Son Ltd.

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SUMMARY

In January 2012 groundworks were carried at Cheney Longville House, Cheney Longville, Craven Arms, Shropshire, in advance of building work for extensions to the house. The study area lay within the medieval settlement of Cheney Longville, and it was considered possible that archaeological remains might be encountered during the groundworks for the development. A watching brief on the groundworks was carried out by the Archaeology Service, Shropshire Council. No significant archaeological features or deposits were seen during the course of the watching brief.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Cheney Longville is a small village situated about 1.5km northwest of Craven Arms in south Shropshire. In January 2012 work began on groundworks for an extension to the rear of Cheney Longville House (NGR SO 420 848). The proposed work would include demolitions, rebuilding, and construction of extensions and re-modeling of stone steps.

1.2 Cheney Longville village can trace its origins back to the late Saxon period at least. The present Cheney Longville House (Historic Environment Record [HER] No. 14892) is a late 17th century house with mid-18th century additions. The proposed development site was considered to have moderate archaeological potential and any below ground archaeological remains were likely to be affected by the groundworks associated with the development.

1.3 Because of the potential significance of the archaeological resource it was considered necessary that the groundworks associated with the development be accompanied by the implementation of a programme of archaeological work.

1.4 The programme of archaeological work was to include a photographic survey of the affected structures to Level 1 standards as defined in English Heritage's "*Understanding Historic Buildings – a guide to good recording practice*" 2006, and a watching brief on groundworks.

1.5 The aim of the programme of archaeological work was to allow for the preservation by record of any archaeological remains that were encountered during the works.

1.6 The Archaeology Service, Shropshire Council, was commissioned by Treasure and Son Ltd., the building contractor, to carry out the archaeological watching brief in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (WSI) approved by the Historic Environment Team, Shropshire Council. The photographic record would be undertaken by Treasure and Son Ltd.

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Cheney Longville (*Languefelle*) is first mentioned in the Domesday survey of 1086. The Survey records that before 1086 the manor was held by Roger of Montgomery. In c. 1083 he restored the manor to its pre-Conquest owner, the Saxon thegn Siward – a relative of King Edward the Confessor and Shropshire's chief landowner before the Norman Conquest – in exchange for his manor of the Shrewsbury suburb of St Peter's (Abbey Foregate), where Earl Roger founded Shrewsbury Abbey. Siward later also gave Cheney Longville to Shrewsbury Abbey, who in turn exchanged it with Henry de Say, lord of Clun, for Brompton (nr Cross Houses). (Thorn & Thorn, 1986, 4,27,32 and notes).

A ringwork castle of probable 11th or early 12th century date (HER 00161) lies at the northwest end of the village, and is the probable site of the Domesday manor house. The ringwork was succeeded, probably in the later 12th or early 13th century, by the moated site (Castle Farm Moat) (HER 00162) at Castle Farm. The manor was held by the Cheney family from the early 14th century, and in 1395 Roger de Cheney was granted a licence to crenellate the manor house.

Cheney Longville House, at the eastern end of the village, was built by the Dupper family circa 1683 with later additions in 1767 (HER No. 14892). A service wing adjoining the northwest corner of the main house is of a similar date, dating from the 16th to mid-18th centuries (HER No 14891).

3 THE WATCHING BRIEF

3.1 The ground to the south of the buildings (HER 14891) is occupied by a garden with a small orchard, and lies about 2m above the ground floor level of the buildings to the north and east. The building to the east was terraced into the garden, and a stone terrace wall revetted the northern edge of the garden, with a narrow yard immediately between it and the building to the north. Access to the garden was by a flight of stone steps through the terrace wall.

3.2 The terrace wall was removed by hand, and the ground behind reduced in height by machine under archaeological supervision. Immediately south of the revetment wall at a depth of 2m below the garden level, and at about the same level as the yard, a layer of natural hard grey clay (4) with rock fragments was exposed at the base of the excavations. This lay below a layer of natural yellowish brown clay (Figure 3; 3) up to 0.8m thick. The top of this layer lay at a depth of 0.5m below ground level in the southern part of the study area, dropping away to c.0.9m below ground level behind the terrace wall. Above this was a buried soil layer of dark greyish brown clay loam (2) 0.35m thick which contained some 17th to 19th century pottery.

To the west of the existing extension, the buried soil lay beneath a mixed deposit of light brown clay and dark grey humic loam (8) 0.2m thick. The late 19th century brick foundations (5) of the extension's west wall were terraced (7) into this deposit. A topsoil of very dark grey humic loam (1) up to 0.2m thick covered these deposits.

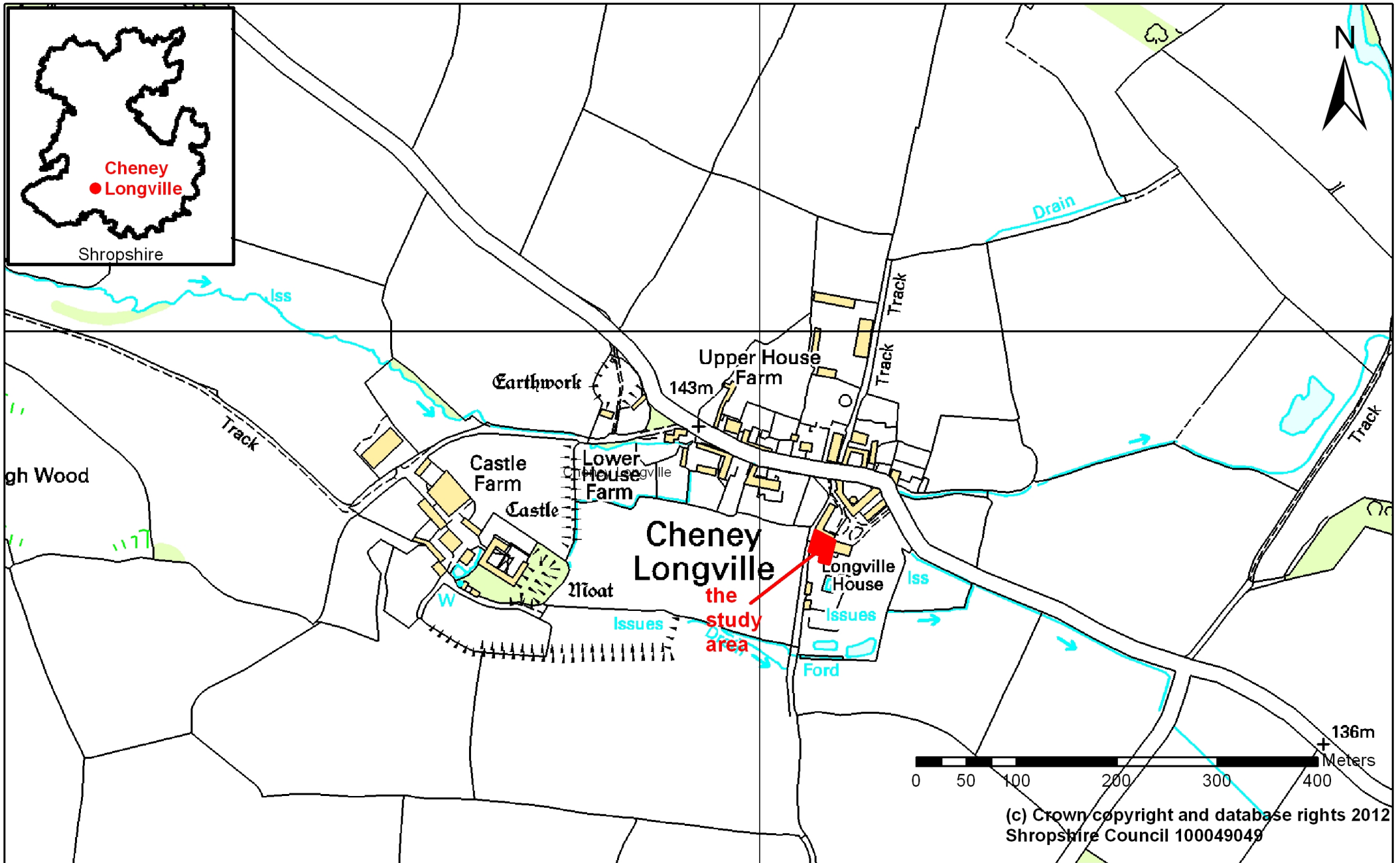
On the south side of the extension, a thin deposit 0.15m thick of very dark grey loam (9) with cinders, brick rubble, and angular gravel lay between the top of the yellowish brown natural clay (3) and the topsoil (1).

4 REFERENCES

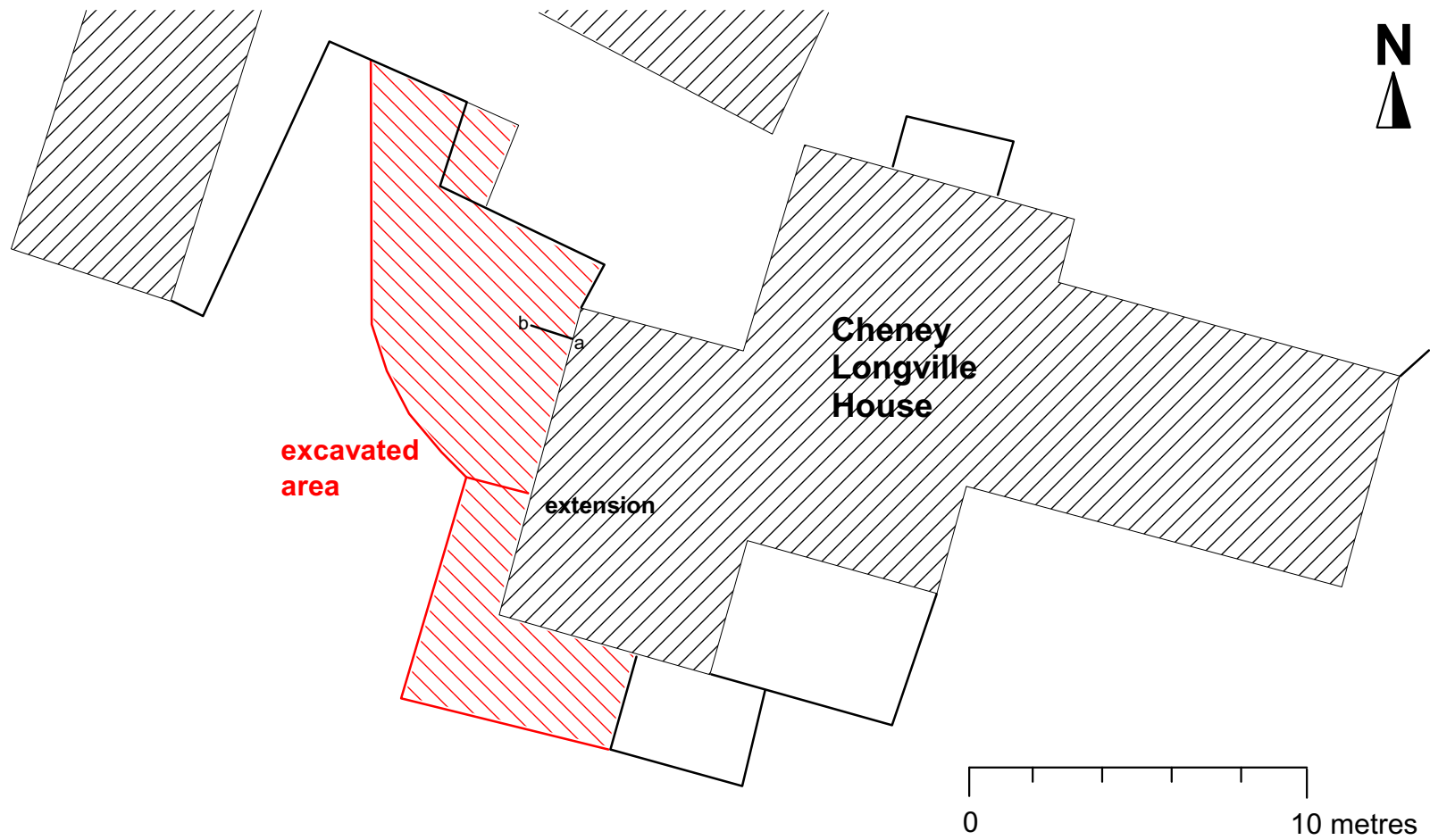
Thorn, F and Thorn, C (eds), 1986: *Domesday Book: Shropshire*, Phillimore, Chichester

ABBREVIATIONS

HER	Historic Environment Record, Shropshire Council
OS	Ordnance Survey
SA	Shropshire Archives, Castle Gates, Shrewsbury
TSAS	Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological Society
 TSAHS	Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological and Historical Society

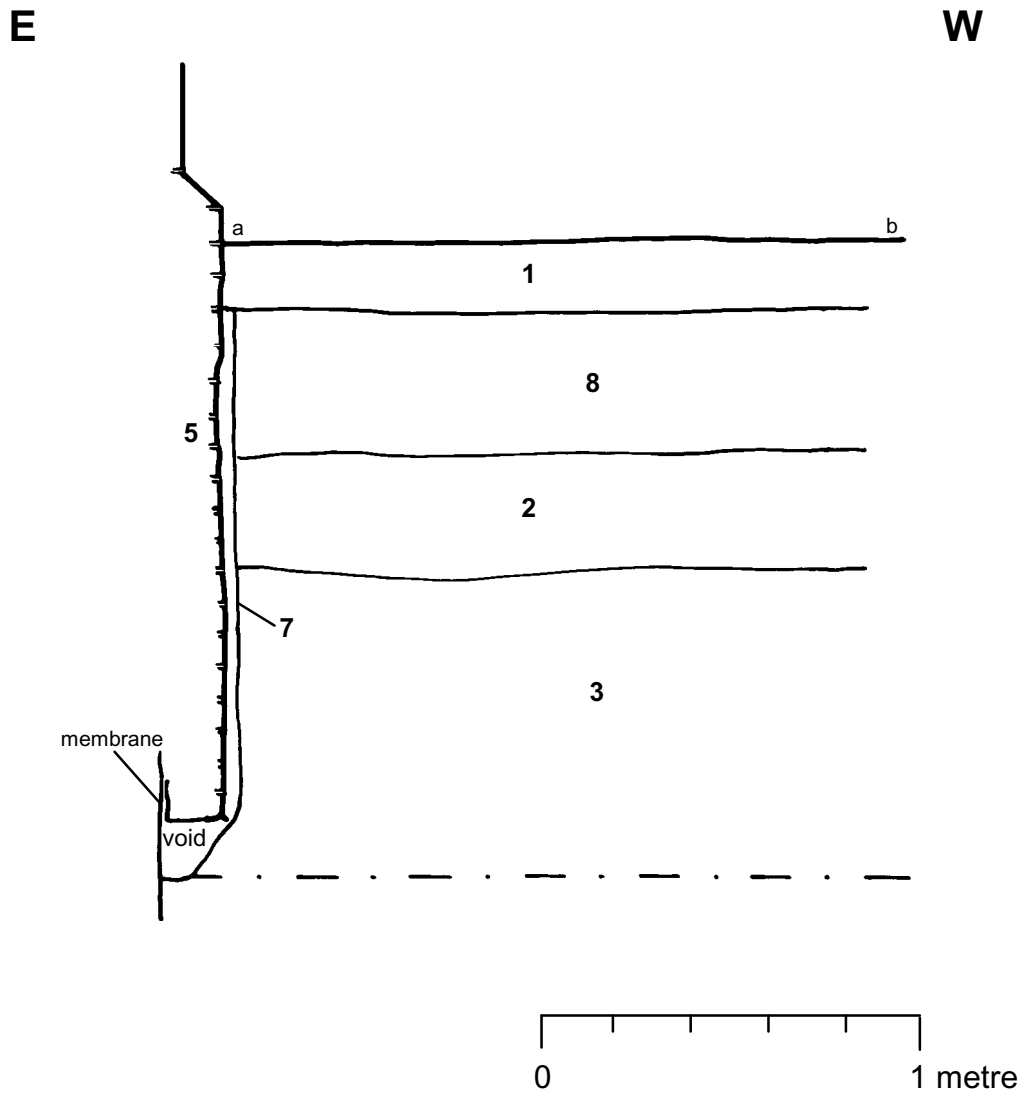


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CHENEY LONGVILLE HOUSE 2012

Figure 2: Plan view showing area of ground reduction; 1:200 scale



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Figure 3: North-facing section through reduced ground (for location see Figure 2); 1:20 scale



Photo 1: The study area looking northeast, before excavation



Photo 2: The deposits (1-3) south of the retaining wall, looking southwest (scale bar: 1m)



Photo 3: The deposits south of the existing extension, showing the top of the natural clay (3), looking northwest (scale bar 0.5m)