

Marches Archaeology

Land adjacent to Church House Llandegley Powys

**A report on a
archaeological watching brief**

June 2004

Marches Archaeology Series 344

This report is produced by

Marches Archaeology

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**Land adjacent to Church House
Llandegley
Powys**

**A report on an
archaeological watching brief**

NGR: SO 1382 6297

**Report by
Jo Wainwright**

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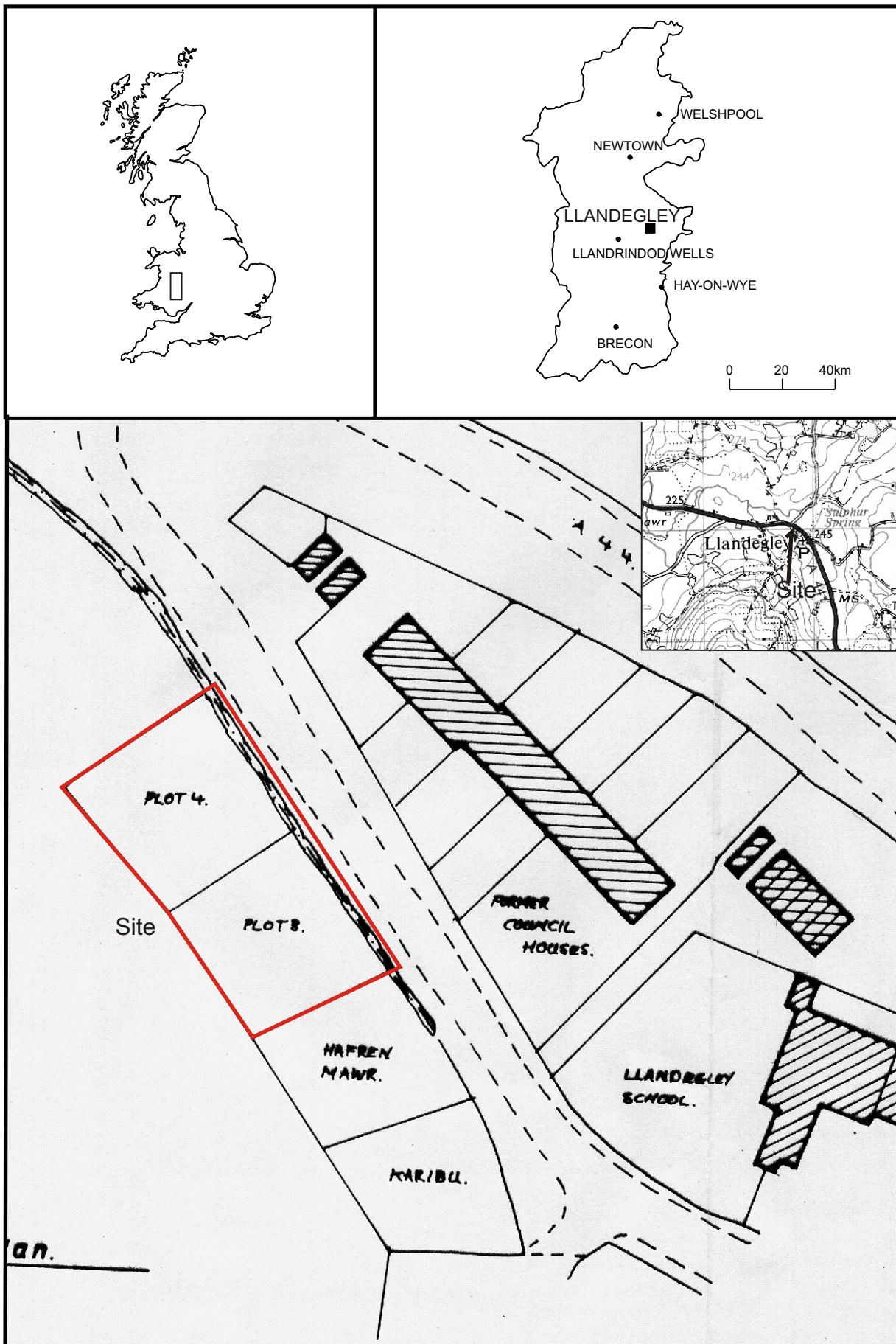


Fig. 1 Location of site

**Land adjacent to Church House
Llandegley
Powys**

NGR: SO 1382 6297

**A report on an
archaeological watching brief**

Summary

A watching brief on the site strip, levelling of the house plot areas and excavation of the foundation trenches revealed no features or deposits of archaeological significance. A soil had built up over the natural clays and in the south-eastern corner of house plot 3 a deposit of sand and gravel underneath the natural clays was interpreted as an old water course or sudden flood deposit.

1 Introduction

Planning permission was granted by the local planning authority for permission to erect two dwellings on land adjacent to Church House, Llandegley, Powys. The site is situated at NGR: SO 1382 6297 (Fig. 1).

The site is noted in the Regional Sites and Monuments Record as forming part of the historic core of Llandegley (Radnorshire Historic Settlements Survey, 1994). The Local Planning Authority's Archaeology Advisor advised that in order that the archaeological resource was adequately protected an archaeological watching brief be carried out during ground works associated with the proposed development.

The Local Planning Authority's Archaeology Advisor produced a "Brief for an archaeological watching brief". Inklines, on behalf of the client, commissioned Marches Archaeology to provide the archaeological services detailed in the Brief.

2 Aims and objectives

The scope of the project was defined in the Brief as:

Observation of all topsoil stripping, other earthmoving and trench excavation until natural subsoil was reached

Recording of the sequence of soil deposits present and all archaeological deposits and features

The collection, identification and cataloguing of all artefacts

If significant archaeology had been identified the archaeologist on site would have informed the County Archaeological Officer and Project Engineer immediately in order that appropriate action may have been taken to minimise the damage to such deposits and to record them appropriately.

The objective of the project was defined in the Brief as:

To ensure that any previously unrecorded archaeological features exposed by the construction works were adequately recorded and interpreted

The purpose of an archaeological watching brief is defined by the Institute of Field Archaeologists as:

‘to allow, within the resources available, the preservation by record of archaeological deposits, the presence and nature of which could not be established (or established with sufficient accuracy) in advance of development or other potentially disruptive works’

and:

‘to provide an opportunity, if needed, for the watching archaeologist to signal to all interested parties, before the destruction of the material in question, that an archaeological find has been made for which the resources allocated to the watching brief itself are not sufficient to support a treatment to a satisfactory and proper standard’.

3 Methodology

Documentary research

The Brief summarises the interest of the site. As the watching brief did not uncover significant archaeology further documentary research was not carried out.

Fieldwork

Observations and appropriate recording were undertaken of the site strip, levelling of the areas of the house plots and the excavation of the foundation trenches. Excavation was carried out using mechanical excavators with toothed buckets and occasionally toothless buckets. The site strip was to a maximum depth of about 400mm. The levelling of the house plots removed a maximum of 1.1 metres of soil in the south-eastern corner of plot 3 but in the north, south and west of the two plots, spoil was re-deposited to create a level area. The foundation trenches within the two plots were excavated to a maximum depth of 1.2 metres below the finished floor levels of the proposed houses, except where soft spots of natural deposits required deeper excavation.

An archaeologist was on site for 5 days between the 19th May 2004 and the 26th May 2004. Because the initial results of the fieldwork were negative it was agreed by the Local Planning Authority’s Archaeological Advisor, Marches Archaeology and the client that further observations associated with the development would not be needed.

The recording system included written, drawn and photographic data. The primary written record was by means of site notes, accompanied by sketches. Context numbers were allocated and context record sheets were completed. Plans and sections were made. The photographic record was made using black and white negative and colour transparency film. After an initial assessment the artefactual data was discarded.

Office work

On completion of fieldwork a site archive was prepared. The written, drawn and photographic data was catalogued and cross-referenced.

4 Site description

The site is situated on the north-western periphery of the village of Llandegley (Fig. 1). The church of St. Tecia is about 150 metres to the south-east of the site. Before development the site was part of a pasture field. The north-eastern boundary is a hedge with a road behind. To the south a fence marks the boundary between the site and Hafren Mawr. Initially no boundary existed between the field in the north-west and the site. A fence has now been erected here. The land slopes down from the roadway to the west where it begins to flatten out. The underlying drift geology comprises of Radnorshire clays.

5 The watching brief (Fig. 2)

The earliest layer excavated was seen in the foundation trenches in the south-eastern corner of plot 3. This was a sequence of natural bands of yellow clays and greyish brown silts [6] which sloped down to the south-west. This deposit was a minimum 300mm thick. Above this and only seen in the south-eastern corner of plot 3 was a loose grey sand with gravel and river pebbles [5]. This was a minimum 300mm thick.

Overlying [5] and seen in all the foundation trenches was a dense plastic but firm orange brown clay [4]. Above [4] and again seen in all the foundation trenches and during part of the house plot levelling was a firm orange clay [3]. This layer contained lenses of grey clay, occasional charcoal flecks and pebbles and angular stones.

Overlying [3] and seen during the site strip and levelling operation was a layer of orangey brown clay with a very small percentage of silt [2]. This also contained moderate pebbles, sub-angular stones and charcoal flecks and was a maximum 800mm thick. In the far south-eastern corner of plot 3 layer [2] directly overlay [5]. Above [2] was the topsoil which was a humic light beige brown clay with 10% silt and occasional pebbles, sub-angular stones and charcoal flecks [1]. The topsoil was not homogenous across the site and in places lenses of orange clay were apparent. Nineteenth and twentieth century pottery and vessel glass was recovered from [1]. This was discarded.

6 Discussion

No features or deposits of archaeological significance were excavated. The underlying natural clay [4] was seen in all the foundation trenches. Beneath this, in the south-eastern

corner of the site, was either an old water course deposit or sudden flood deposit [5]. The bands of clay and silt [6] excavated beneath [5] represent the natural build up on the hillside near the valley bottom.

Layer [3] is probably the interface between the natural clays [4] below and the soil build up [2] above. It is probable that [2] has built up over a considerable period of time presumably as a result of the site being under pasture. However, it cannot be discounted that the site has been ploughed sometime in the past.

7 Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank Hayden Olds (the client) and Ray Collard (the contractor) for their co-operation during this project.

8 References

Published reference

Radnorshire Historic Settlements Survey, 1994, Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust

9 Archive

The site code is PBL04A. The archive consists of:

- 6 context sheets
- 1 context index sheet
- 1 drawing index sheet
- 4 field drawings on 1 sheet
- 2 sheets of site diary and notes
- 3 photographic record sheets
- 1 film of black and white photographic negatives
- 2 films of colour photographic transparencies

The archive is currently held by Marches Archaeology awaiting transfer to the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust.

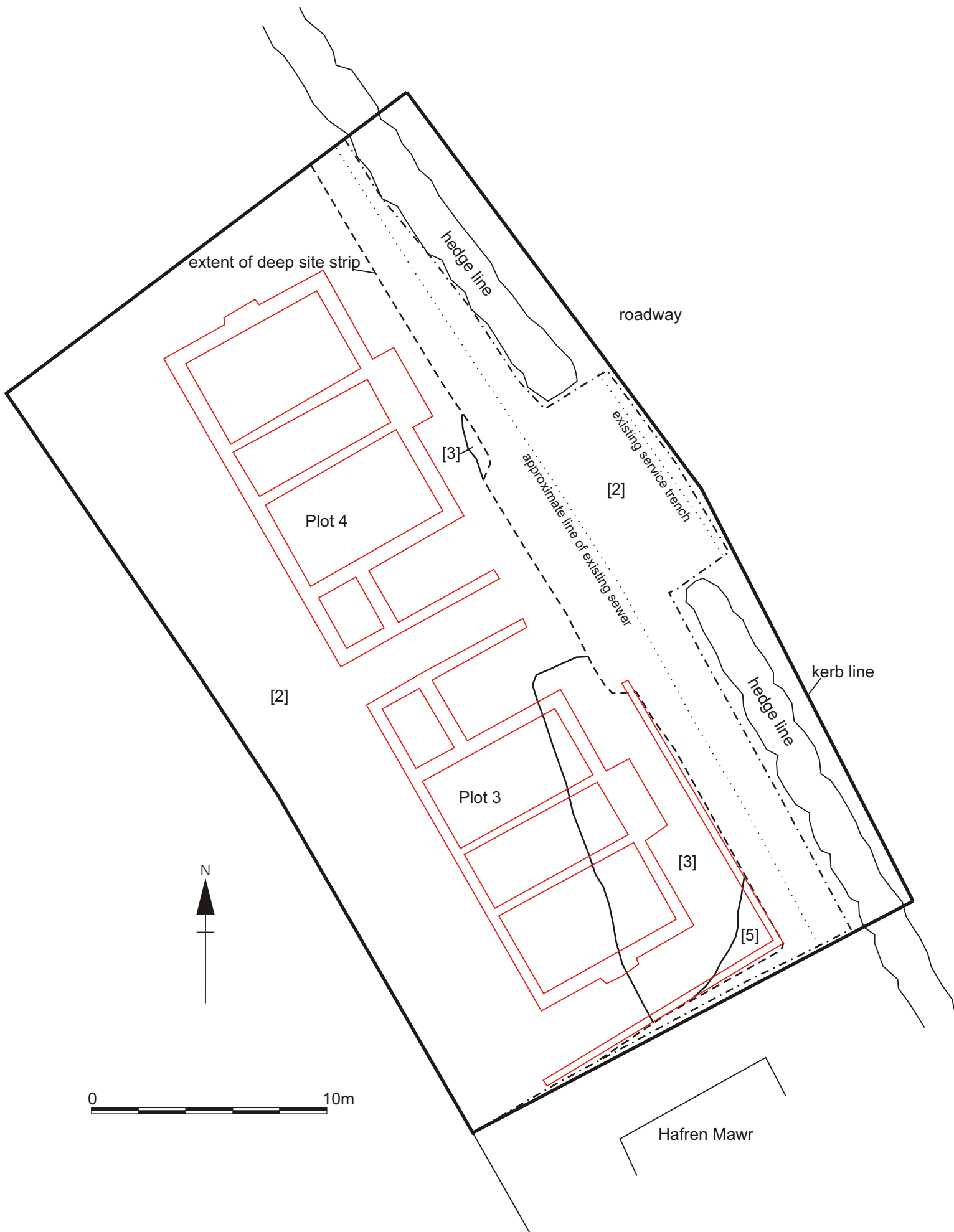


Fig. 2 Areas of excavation seen (based on architects drawings)

Marches Archaeology

Land adjacent to Church House
Llandegley, Powys

Project Proposal for a watching brief

Introduction

A planning application has been submitted to the local planning authority for permission to erect two dwellings on land adjacent to Church House, Llandegley. The site is situated at NGR: SO 1382 6297.

The site is noted in the Regional Sites and Monuments Record as forming part of the historic core of Llandegley (ref:Radnorshire Historic Settlements Survey, 1994). The Local Planning Authority's Archaeology Advisor has advised that in order that the archaeological resource is adequately protected an archaeological watching brief be carried out during ground works associated with the proposed development.

The Local Planning Authority's Archaeology Advisor has produced a "Brief for an archaeological watching brief". Inklines, on behalf of the client, has requested Marches Archaeology to quote for providing the archaeological services detailed in the Brief.

This project proposal is based on the Brief and will follow its stipulations, unless specified below. This proposal forms a written scheme of investigation for the archaeological works and should be read in conjunction with the Brief and its attached plan(s). Any subsequent alterations to the brief will be agreed in writing between Marches Archaeology and the Local Planning Authority's Archaeology Advisor.

Archaeological and historical background

The Brief summarises the interest of the site.

Further study will be undertaken if the results of the fieldwork warrants it.

Scope and aims of the project

The scope of the project is defined in the Brief as:

- ◆ observation of all topsoil stripping, other earthmoving and trench excavation until natural subsoil is reached
- ◆ the sequence of soil deposits present and all archaeological deposits and features shall be recorded
- ◆ all artefacts shall be collected, identified and catalogued
- ◆ if significant archaeology is identified the archaeologist on site should inform the County Archaeological Officer and Project Engineer immediately in order that

appropriate action may be taken to minimise the damage to such deposits and to record them appropriately.

The purpose of an archaeological watching brief is defined by the Institute of Field Archaeologists as:

‘to allow, within the resources available, the preservation by record of archaeological deposits, the presence and nature of which could not be established (or established with sufficient accuracy) in advance of development or other potentially disruptive works’

and:

‘to provide an opportunity, if needed, for the watching archaeologist to signal to all interested parties, before the destruction of the material in question, that an archaeological find has been made for which the resources allocated to the watching brief itself are not sufficient to support a treatment to a satisfactory and proper standard’.

Methodology

Documentary research

Primary and secondary sources will be consulted in order to inform the fieldwork phase. Initially a site visit will be made and the appropriate local Sites and Monuments Record consulted. The following sources will also be considered, as appropriate and subject to availability:

Ordnance Survey maps; Tithe maps; Estate maps and other historical maps;
Previous published and unpublished archaeological reports and archive work;
Written non-archaeological sources; Air photographs; Geological maps;
Borehole and other engineering data.

Fieldwork

Before the project commences two full sets of any existing relevant drawings (plans, elevations, sections etc.) including the development site and any building(s) as existing and as proposed will be provided to Marches Archaeology by the client. Two copies of any amendments or revisions to such drawings and of any additional drawings will be provided as the project continues. Copies will also be provided to Marches Archaeology of any additional relevant historical, archaeological, structural or other information that is held by the client.

Observations and appropriate recording will be undertaken of all ground breaking activity in association with this proposed development will be made, unless otherwise prior agreement is made between Marches Archaeology, the Local Planning Authority’s Archaeological Advisor and the client.

The archaeologist(s) shall have the power to suspend work on the excavation of material for short periods of time, normally less than fifteen minutes, for the purpose of investigating areas of potential archaeological interest. If an area is deemed to require more detailed

recording the archaeologist(s) shall have the power to suspend work in that area for the purpose of small scale excavation and recording of archaeological data in order to fulfil the requirements of the Brief.

The recording system will include written, drawn and photographic data. The primary written record will be by means of site notes, accompanied by sketches. Context numbers will be allocated and context record sheets completed as appropriate. A running matrix will be maintained as appropriate. Plans (normally 1:20), sections (normally 1:10) and other appropriate drawings of significant data will be made. Plans will normally be multi-context, but certain features may require single context planning. The photographic record will be made using black and white negative and colour transparency film. Samples will be taken of deposits considered to have environmental, technological or scientific dating potential.

If deposits or features are encountered for which the resources allocated to the watching brief are not sufficient to support a treatment to a satisfactory and proper standard the client, the Local Planning Authority's Archaeological Advisor and any other relevant parties will be informed in order to discuss, agree and implement an appropriate response, either within a previously agreed contingency arrangement or supplemental thereto.

This project proposal does not cover the eventuality that there are human remains within the area to be investigated as additional legal requirements then come into force.

Office work

On completion of fieldwork a site archive will be prepared. The written, drawn and photographic data will be catalogued and cross-referenced and a summary produced. The artefactual and ecofactual data will be processed, catalogued and cross-referenced and summaries produced. After an initial assessment any unstratified non-diagnostic artefacts and ecofacts and non-diagnostic samples will be discarded. Further dispersal of artefacts and ecofacts will be in line with the collection policy of the recipient repository and will be documented in the archive. The checked site matrix will be produced if appropriate.

The freeholder(s) of the land to which this document relates has title to all objects (unless within the jurisdiction of the Treasure Act 1996) recovered from the land. The freeholder(s) shall agree to donate in perpetuity the archive, together with any artefacts and ecofacts recovered during the fieldwork, to an appropriate repository. Marches Archaeology will arrange for such deposition.

Assessment will be based on the site archive. Any artefacts and ecofacts which require specialist assessment will be submitted for such work.

An illustrated client report will be produced which will detail the aims, methods, and results of the project. A non-technical summary and details of the location and size of the archive will be included. Copyright of any reports is vested in Marches Archaeology.

The client will be provided with two copies of the report. Further copies will be deposited with the local Sites and Monuments Record, the Local Authority's archaeological service and the National Archaeological Record (one copy each).

If the project reveals that the quality and potential of the information resulting from the fieldwork is such that further analysis and/or formal publication is required the level of such work will be determined in discussions between the client, Marches Archaeology and the Local Planning Authority's Archaeological Advisor. Such works would be subject to a further Project Proposal which would be separately costed.

Management of the project

Marches Archaeology recognises the Code of Conduct, Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology, By-Laws, Standards and other documents produced by the Institute of Field Archaeologists. The project will be managed by a Member of the Institute of Field Archaeologists.

The Safety Policy and General Risk Assessment operated by Marches Archaeology will be implemented. Copies of these documents are available on request. A risk assessment specific to this project will be carried out before commencement of fieldwork to identify any risks not noted in the General Risk Assessment. If another body is responsible for Health and Safety on the site Marches Archaeology will conform to any policy which may be in force. If costs accrue due to Health and Safety issues not made apparent to Marches Archaeology by the time of submission of this Project Proposal these costs will be additional to any costs identified in the estimate. The requirements of Health and Safety legislation are deemed to take precedence over archaeological requirements.

Appropriate insurance cover will be held throughout the project.

The Local Planning Authority's Archaeology Advisor shall at any reasonable time be granted access to the site, with prior notice, for the purpose of monitoring the fieldwork.

Timetable

The timetable has not yet been finalised. This Proposal will be submitted for approval by the Local Planning Authority's Archaeology Advisor, who will be given at least one week's notice (or such shorter period as agreed between Marches Archaeology and the Local Planning Authority's Archaeology Advisor) of the commencement of the fieldwork. The report will be presented to the client within one month of the completion of the fieldwork, unless otherwise agreed. The results will be reported to the Local Planning Authority's Archaeology Advisor and the local Sites and Monuments Record within one month of presentation, unless otherwise agreed. A summary report will be submitted for publication in an appropriate medium within one year of completion of all fieldwork.

Resources

The project will be managed by either Richard Stone or Nic Appleton-Fox, both of whom are Members of the Institute of Field Archaeologists with a registered Area of Competence in Archaeological Field Practice. Other field and post-excavation staff will be appropriately experienced. Where trainees are used they will be closely supervised by senior members of the project team. Normal working hours are Mon-Thurs 8.30-4.30 and Fri 8.30-4.00. Additional hours constitute overtime.

The Project Director will undertake the documentary study, which will be completed before commencement of fieldwork.

Specialist sub-contractors will be used as appropriate. Specialists will normally be people approved by English Heritage Ancient Monuments Laboratory. Those who might be expected to be called upon (dependent upon availability) include:

Jeremy Evans (Rátkai and Evans PX Partners) Roman ceramics

Stephanie Rátkai (Rátkai and Evans PX Partners) medieval ceramics

David Barker (Stoke on Trent Museum) post-medieval ceramics

Liz Pearson (Worcestershire Archaeological Service) environmental remains

Ian Baxter (Freelance) animal bone

Megan Brickley (Birmingham Univ Field Archaeology Unit) human bone

26th April 2004