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# **Fox Studio, King Street, Much Wenlock, Shropshire TF13 6BL.**

**April 2017  
V 1.0**



Archaeological Watching Brief  
Project Code: A0109.1  
Report no. 0125

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**Fox Studio, King Street,  
Much Wenlock, Shropshire TF13 6BL.**

**April 2017**

Report no. 0125 v1.0

Archaeological Watching Brief

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Project Code: A0109.1  
Date: 27/04/2017  
Client: Mrs Pam Myers  
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## **1.0 NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY**

Aeon Archaeology was commissioned by Mr and Mrs D. Myers (owner) to carry out an archaeological watching brief during the extension and conversion of an existing studio building to form two residential units and one commercial unit at Fox Studio, King Street, Much Wenlock, Shropshire as a condition of full planning permission.

The extension trench uncovered a stony rubble spread at the southern end of the trench that produced two sherds of medieval ceramic upon cleaning. Once recorded this deposit was removed which revealed the edge of a cut in the southwest corner of the trench, possibly of a pit, and which was infilled by the rubble deposit.

The identity of the remains is uncertain but a possible medieval foundation trench, wall and demolition spread has been postulated.

## 2.0 INTRODUCTION

Aeon Archaeology was commissioned by Mr and Mrs D. Myers (owner) to carry out an archaeological watching brief during the extension and conversion of an existing studio building to form two residential units and one commercial unit at Fox Studio, King Street, Much Wenlock, Shropshire (NGR SO 62175 99855) (Planning Permission: 16/03876/FUL) (figures 01 and 02).

The archaeological watching brief was undertaken as part of mitigatory works during the groundworks associated with the construction of a new extension located at the southern end of the western elevation of the property in order to satisfy the following planning condition:

### *Condition 5*

*No development approved by this permission shall commence until the applicant, or their agent or successors in title, have secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (WSI). This written scheme shall be approved in writing by the Planning Authority prior to the commencement of works.*

### *Reason*

*The area is of archaeological potential and it is important that any archaeological features and finds are properly recorded.*

An archaeological brief was not prepared by the Senior Archaeological Advisor at Shropshire Council however the following comments were made as part of the recommendation for the archaeological condition (Orchard, C. 27<sup>th</sup> July 2015):

*The proposed development site lies on the edge of the medieval urban form of Much Wenlock (HER PRN 05029) as defined by the Central Marches Historic Towns Survey and within a group of Tenement plots to the north of High St, east of Smithfield Road (HER PRN 05041).*

*More importantly it is also located immediately adjacent to the supposed site of St John's Leper Hospital (PRN 05010). An evaluation carried out on the Leper Hospital site in 2012 determined that significant archaeological features, deposits and structural remains of medieval date are present on the site. These are overlain by archaeological deposits of early post-medieval date which also have the potential to inform us about the development of this part of Much Wenlock during this period.*

*Although the site has been built over during the Post Medieval period, the archaeological potential of the site, particularly at depth, remains moderate to high.*

*Any below ground archaeological remains are likely to be affected by the construction of the proposed extension and any ground disturbance associated with the conversion of the existing studio.*

A written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was undertaken by Aeon Archaeology in March 2017 (appendix I) which outlined the principle aims of the watching brief and the methods by which they would be met. This formed the basis of a method statement submitted for the work.

The use of such a condition is in line with the guidance set out in paragraph 141, Section 12 (Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment) of the National Planning Policy Framework (2012), published by the Department for Communities and Local Government and Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment, Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 2 (Historic England 2015); and Policy MD13 of the SAMDev component of the

Shropshire Local Plan.

Reference will be made to the guidelines specified in Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Brief (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2014).



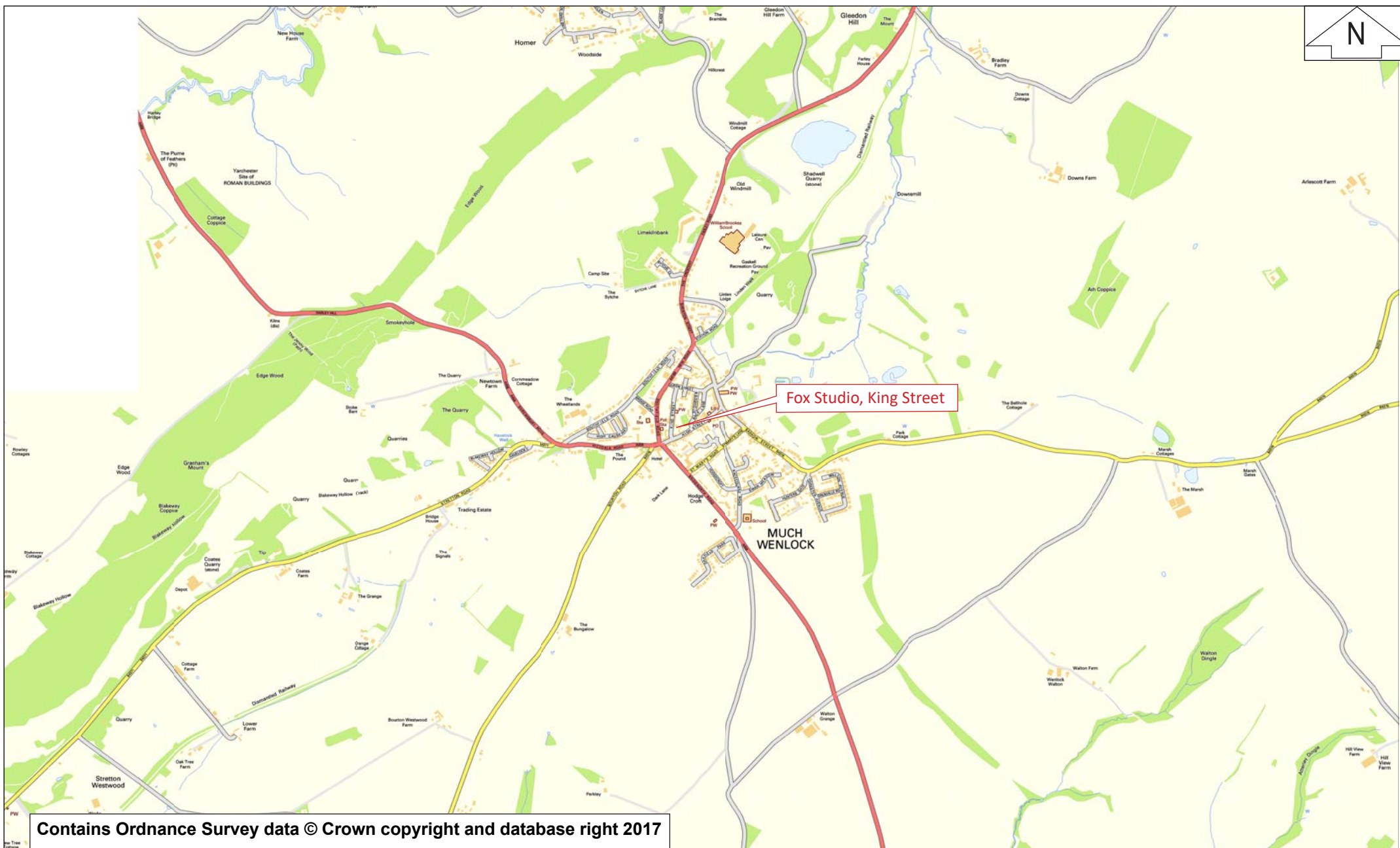
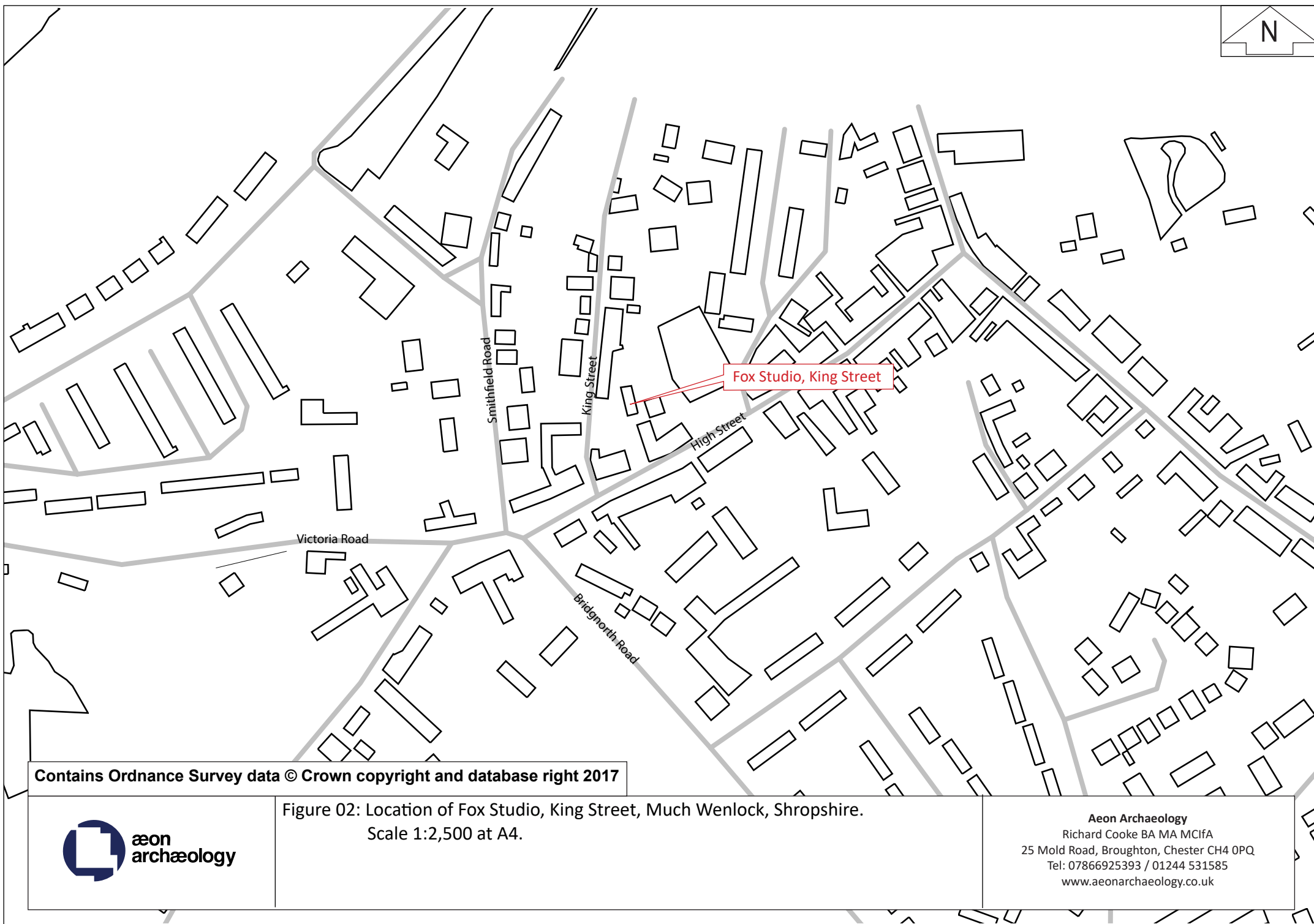


Figure 01: Location of Fox Studio, King Street, Much Wenlock, Shropshire.  
Scale 1:20,000 at A4.



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### 3.0 PROJECT AIMS

The aim of the watching brief works was to characterise the known, or potential, archaeological remains uncovered during groundworks associated with the construction of a new extension to the property of Fox Studio.

The broad aims of the archaeological watching brief were to:

- To allow, within the resources available, the opportunity to gain information about and record the presence/absence, nature and date of archaeological remains on the Site affected by excavations and groundworks, the presence and nature of which could not be established with sufficient confidence in advance of works which may disturb them.
- To provide the facility to signal to the relevant authorities, before irreversible impact to remains that an archaeological and/or historic find has been made for which the resources allocated to the watching brief itself are inadequate to support their treatment to an adequate and satisfactory standard.

The detailed objectives of the archaeological watching brief were to:

- To observe and recover any artefacts of archaeological significance.
- To record the location, dimensions and nature of any deposits, features, structures or artefacts of archaeological significance.
- To recover samples of any deposits considered to have potential for analysis for palaeoenvironmental data should the opportunity arise.

The management of this project has followed the procedures laid out in the standard professional guidance *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment Project Manager's Guide* (English Heritage 2006; rev 2015), and in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists *Archaeological Watching Brief* (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2014). Five stages are specified:

Phase 1: project planning

Phase 2: fieldwork

Phase 3: assessment of potential for analysis and revised project design

Phase 4: analysis and report preparation

Phase 5: dissemination

The current document reports on the phase 4 analysis and states the means to be used to disseminate the results. In this instance it was not necessary to prepare a revised project design as alluded to in Phase 3; as there was a paucity of evidence recovered in Phase 2 in terms of archaeological features and the residual ceramic finds only offered minimal potential for analysis and therefore did not warrant any alteration to the initial project design.

The site is to be set in its landscape context so that its full character and importance can be understood. All the information is to be presented in a report that will be held by the Shropshire Historic Environment Record (HER) and Oasis online database so that it can be accessible to the

public and future researchers. This phase of work also includes archiving the material and documentary records from the project.

## **4.0 METHODOLOGY – ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

### **4.1 Watching Brief**

The CIfA maintains a standard for archaeological watching brief which states that:

*An archaeological watching brief will record the archaeological resource during development within a specified area using appropriate methods and practices. These will satisfy the stated aims of the project, and comply with the Code of conduct and other relevant by-laws of CIfA.*

An archaeological watching brief is defined by the CIfA as a formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons (CIfA 2014a). The watching brief will take place within a specified area within the Site where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits may be disturbed or destroyed.

The CIfA further identifies the purpose of a watching brief as allowing, within the resources available, the preservation by record of archaeological deposits, the presence and nature of which could not be established in advance of development or other potentially disruptive works.

It is also important to note that a watching brief provides an opportunity, if needed, for a signal to be made to all interested parties, before the destruction of the archaeological materials, that an archaeological find has been made for which the resources allocated to the watching brief itself are not sufficient to support treatment to a satisfactory and proper standard.

A watching brief is, therefore, not intended to reduce the requirement for excavation or preservation of known or inferred deposits, and it is intended to guide, not replace, any requirement for contingent excavation or preservation of possible deposits.

Once the existing tarmac was removed using a conventional toothed bucket, all subsequent soil removal was undertaken using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. A photographic record was maintained throughout, using a digital SLR camera (Canon 6000D) set to maximum resolution and any subsurface remains were to be recorded photographically, with detailed notations and measured drawings being undertaken if required.

In the event of archaeological discovery features were to be excavated by hand and fully recorded using Aeon Archaeology pro-formas, digital photographs, and plan and section drawings taken at a suitable scale (usually 1:20 for plan drawings and 1:10 for section drawings).

The archive produced is held at Aeon Archaeology under the project code **A0109.1**.

### **4.2 Data Collection from Site Records**

A database of the site photographs was produced to enable active long-term curation of the photographs and easy searching. The site records were checked and cross-referenced and photographs were cross-referenced to contexts. These records were used to write the site narrative and the field drawings and survey data were used to produce an outline plan of the site.

All paper field records were scanned to provide a backup digital copy. The photographs were organised and precisely cross-referenced to the digital photographic record so that the Shropshire Historic Environment Record (HER) can curate them in their active digital storage facility.

### **4.3 Artefact Methodology**

All artefacts were to be collected and processed including those found within spoil tips. They would be bagged and labelled as well any preliminary identification taking place on site. After processing, all artefacts would be cleaned and examined in-house at Aeon Archaeology. If required artefacts would be sent to a relevant specialist for conservation and analysis.

The recovery policy for archaeological finds was kept under review throughout the archaeological watching brief. Any changes in recovery priorities would be made under guidance from an appropriate specialist and agreed with the Client and the Senior Archaeological Advisor at Shropshire Council. There was a presumption against the disposal of archaeological finds regardless of their apparent age or condition.

### **4.4 Environmental Samples Methodology**

The sampling strategy and requirement for bulk soil samples was related to the perceived character, interpretational importance and chronological significance of the strata under investigation. This ensured that only significant features would be sampled. The aim of the sampling strategy was to recover carbonised macroscopic plant remains, small artefacts particularly knapping debris and evidence for metalworking.

Advice and guidance regarding environmental samples and their suitability for radiocarbon dating, as well as the analysis of macrofossils (charcoal and wood), pollen, animal bones and molluscs would be obtained from Oxford Archaeology if required.

### **4.5 Report and dissemination**

A full archive including plans, photographs, written material and any other material resulting from the project was prepared. All plans, photographs and descriptions were labelled, and cross-referenced, and will be lodged within a suitable repository to be agreed with the archaeological curator within six months of the completion of the project.

A draft copy of the report has been sent to the client and upon written approval from them paper and digital copies of the report will be sent to the regional HER, the Senior Archaeological Advisor at Shropshire Council, and will be logged with the online OASIS database. Copies of all notes, plans, and photographs arising from the watching brief will be stored at Aeon Archaeology under the project code **A0109.1** with the originals being lodged in a suitable repository to be agreed with the archaeological curator.

## 5.0 HISTORIC BACKGROUND

The town of Wenlock is known to have grown up around an abbey or monastery founded around 680 by Merewalh, a son of King Penda of Mercia, with the small town within its parish boundaries (Finberg, 1961). King Penda installed his daughter Milburga as abbess in 687. Milburga of Wenlock was credited with many miraculous works and the abbey flourished until around 874 when it is thought that a Danish Viking attack occurred.

In the 11th century another religious house was built on the same site by Leofric, Earl of Mercia and Countess Godiva his wife. In the 12th century this was replaced by a Cluniac priory, established by Roger de Montgomerie after the Norman Conquest, the ruins of which can still be seen and which is now in the hands of English Heritage. It prospered until the Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1539.

The Domesday Book of 1086 records the manor as 'Wenloch' and forming part of the hundred of Patton. It was already at this time a fairly large settlement, with 73 households. The abbey is also recorded in the Book, separately. The borough of Wenlock was incorporated under the "Bailiff, Burgesses and Commonalty" by Edward IV in 1468 at the request of Sir John Wenlock, and "in consideration of the laudable services which the men of the town performed in assisting the king to gain possession of the crown," and the charter was confirmed in 1547 by Henry VIII and in 1631 by Charles I.

Other architectural attractions include the 16th century Guildhall, many other historic buildings in the Early English style and an annual well dressing at St Milburga's Well on Barrow Street.

An eleven-year-old Alice Glaston from Little Wenlock was hanged together with two men in Much Wenlock on 13 April 1546, for an unknown crime. She is the youngest known girl legally executed in Great Britain (Butler, 1861).

In the 19th century the town and much of the surrounding land came into the possession of James Milnes Gaskell, from his wife's family the Williams-Wynns. James was MP for Wenlock for many years. His son Charles Milnes Gaskell restored the Priory lodging as a home with his wife Lady Catherine, daughter of the Earl of Portsmouth. There they entertained many famous people of the day, writers, politicians, artists and explorers, among them Thomas Hardy, Henry Adams, Henry James, Thomas Woolner, Henry Morton Stanley, Isabella Bird and Phillip Webb (Gamble, C. 2015)

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Archenfield Archaeology in 2006 which involved the excavation of two trenches in advance of proposed residential development located approximately 58.0m to the south of Fox Studio. The evaluation uncovered medieval building remains including a bread oven and fireplace (Shropshire HER).

The proposed development site lies on the edge of the medieval urban form of Much Wenlock (HER PRN 05029) as defined by the Central Marches Historic Towns Survey and within a group of Tenement plots to the north of High St, east of Smithfield Road (HER PRN 05041).

More importantly it is also located immediately adjacent to the supposed site of St John's Leper Hospital (PRN 05010). An evaluation carried out on the Leper Hospital site in 2012 determined that significant archaeological features, deposits and structural remains of medieval date are present on the

site. These are overlain by archaeological deposits of early post-medieval date which also have the potential to inform us about the development of this part of Much Wenlock during this period.



## **6.0 QUANTIFICATION OF RESULTS**

### **6.1 The Documentary Archive**

The following documentary records were created during the archaeological watching brief:

Watching brief day sheets	1
Context sheets	5
Digital photographs	12

### **6.2 Environmental Samples**

No environmental samples were taken as part of the watching brief as no suitable archaeological deposits were encountered.

### **6.3 Artefacts**

Two sherds of medieval ceramic and four sherds of post-medieval ceramic were recovered during the watching brief and are discussed separately in section 7.0 below.

## 7.0 SPECIALIST ANALYSIS – ARTEFACTS

### Summary

The Fox Studio extension finds assemblage comprised the following range of artefacts: 2 sherds of late medieval pottery and 4 sherds of post-medieval pottery.

The finds span approximately a 600 year period between the later medieval period through to the 20th century.

Table 1: Quantification of all finds by category and context

Context	Artefact Type	Period	Quantity	Weight (g)
1003	Unglazed pink/white firing ware	Medieval	1 x sherd	9
1003	Green-glazed red/grey firing ware	Medieval	1 x sherd	8
Unstrat.	Cream glazed stone-ware bottle base	Post-medieval	1 x sherd	232
Unstrat.	Cream glazed stone-ware bottle sherd	Post-medieval	1 x sherd	88
Unstrat.	Blue and white willow-ware plate sherd	Post-medieval	1 x sherd	58
Unstrat.	Blue and white willow-ware plate sherd	Post-medieval	1 x sherd	117

### Medieval Pottery

Two broad ware groups were identified; these comprised red/grey-firing wares and pink/white-firing wares. In Cheshire and the North West and West Midlands in general, red/grey-firing wares were made from local clays from at least c.1250 whilst pink/white wares were made from the so called Coal Measure clays and were produced in the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries. The pink/white wares – a classification which can often be somewhat misleading as vessels can often have surfaces ranging from buff to orange (with light grey reduced cores); were produced in the Ewloe/Buckley area of Flintshire and in the West Midlands (McCarthy & Brooks 1988) (plate A).

Table 2: Quantification of medieval pottery by ware group and context

Ware Groups	Red/Grey		Pink/White	
Context	No.	Wt.	No.	Wt.
1003	1	8	1	9

#### Context (1003)

This context produced two medieval body sherds, one of a pink/white ware and one of a red/grey ware respectively. The pink/white ware sherd is unglazed but has incised horizontal line decoration internally. The sherd is likely from a domestic ware jar or jug.

The red/grey ware sherd has splashes/patches of green glaze both internally and externally as well as incised concentric circle decoration externally. The sherd is likely from a domestic ware jar or cup. Considering the firing wares a postulated 15<sup>th</sup> Century date is suggested for both sherds (Harrison & Davey 1977, 98).



**Plate A:** Medieval ceramic sherds from Fox Studio, King Street, Much Wenlock. Scale 0.05m.

## Post-Medieval Pottery

The post-medieval pottery comprised a limited range of wares with two sherds of cream glazed stoneware from separate vessels, and two sherds of blue and white transfer willow ware from a single dish.

Table 3: Quantification of post-medieval pottery by ware group and context

Ware Groups	Cream glazed stoneware		Blue and white willow ware	
	<i>No.</i>	<i>Wt.</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>Wt.</i>
Unstrat.	2	320	2	175

### Unstratified

This context produced a base sherd of a cream glazed stoneware bottle measuring 68mm external diameter and printed 'Bridgnorth' at the bottom of a logo motif, the upper half of which is missing and therefore the manufacturer is unknown. The bottle almost certainly contained ginger beer and dates to the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

A second sherd of cream glazed stoneware was recovered unstratified, this time a body sherd from a large vessel, probably a large jar. The internal surface has part of a darker glazed cream/orange stripe suggesting decoration and is also likely to be late 19<sup>th</sup> Century in date.

The context also produced a base and rim sherd from a blue and white transfer willow ware plate, depicting oriental garden scenes. This vessel is tentatively dated to the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century (plate B).



**Plate B:** Post-medieval ceramic sherds from Fox Studio, King Street, Much Wenlock. Scale 0.05m.

## **8.0 RESULTS OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

### **8.1 Garage Extension – Fox Studio, King Street, Much Wenlock (figures 1-6; plates 1-7)**

The archaeological watching brief was maintained by Richard Cooke BA MA MCIfA, archaeological contractor and consultant at Aeon Archaeology. The site was attended on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2017 and the weather conditions were bright and sunny.

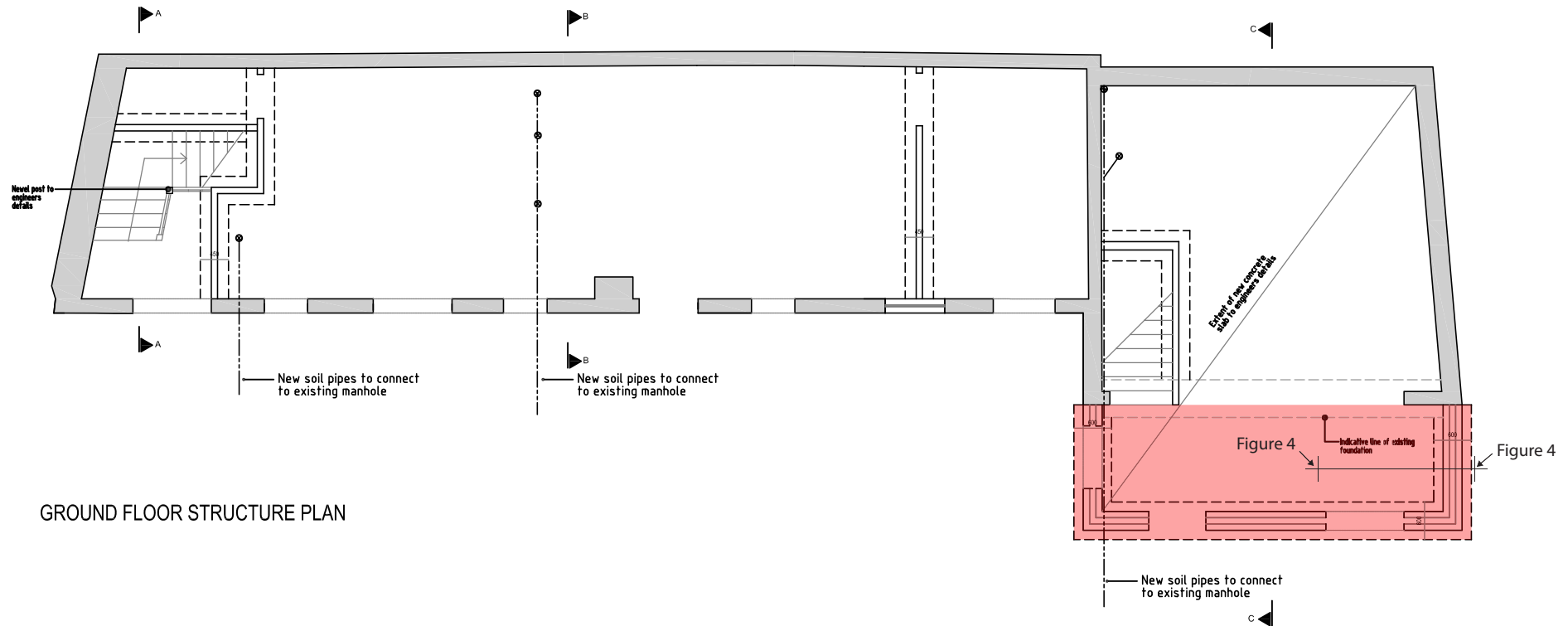
The watching brief was maintained during the removal of the existing tarmac using a tracked excavator fitted with conventional toothed bucket across an area measuring 6.5m in length by 2.0m in width orientated north to south, located at the southern end of the west facing elevation. The trench was excavated through a 0.23m deep tarmac and hardcore layer (1001) across the entirety of the extension footprint, before the excavator fitted a toothless ditching bucket. The excavation then continued through a 0.6m deep black-grey clay-silt (1002) which contained frequent brick and concrete fragment inclusions. This deposit also produced a cream glazed stoneware bottle base sherd, a cream glazed stoneware jar sherd, and two sherds from a blue and white willow ware plate, all of which were of post-medieval date between the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

The central part of the foundation trench was excavated to a depth of 0.65m below current ground level and thus remained within deposit (1002). Around the perimeter of the excavation an edge beam trench was excavated measuring 0.6m in width and 1.2m depth below current ground level, which showed that deposit (1002) lay immediately above the natural orange clay glacial substrata (1004) horizon at 1.18m below current ground level.

At the southern end of the trench and centred on NGR SO 62173 99848 a stony rubble deposit (1003) was uncovered within the perimeter edge beam slot. This consisted of a spread of medium and small sized sub-angular stone cobbles within a dark black-grey silt-clay matrix. Although unbonded the stony spread appeared to be in-situ and produced two sherds of medieval ceramic of probable 15<sup>th</sup> Century date during cleaning. The deposit measured >2.0m in length by >2.0m in width by 0.35m in depth and continued into the southern and western limits of excavation.

The stony spread was fully recorded using photogrammetry techniques and was carefully removed by the tracked excavator, which showed that the majority of the deposit lay directly above the natural glacial substrata (1004). The exception to this was in the southwest corner of the trench where the cut of a probable pit [1005] was encountered. This measured >0.6m in length by >0.2m in width orientated north to south and continued into the southern and western limits of excavation. The pit had been cut directly into the natural glacial substrata (1004) and appeared to have been filled by the stony rubble deposit (1003). Only the very upper limit of the pit was exposed as the required depth for the perimeter edge beam had been achieved and as such the depth and form of the pit remains unknown and preserved in-situ.

Due to the depth of the excavation and the loose friable deposits within the western limit of excavation it was not possible to safely record the trench section. As such measurements were taken from ground level and a sketch section produced which is shown in figure 05.



GROUND FLOOR STRUCTURE PLAN

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Figure 03: Location of area to be monitored by archaeological watching brief (shaded red) at Fox Studio, King Street, Much Wenlock, Shropshire. Scale 1:100 at A4.

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**Plate 01:** Pre-excitation photograph of extension location, from the north. Scale 1.0m.



**Plate 02:** Rubble spread (1003), from the west. Scale 1.0m.





**Plate 03:** Rubble spread (1003), from the north. Scale 1.0m.

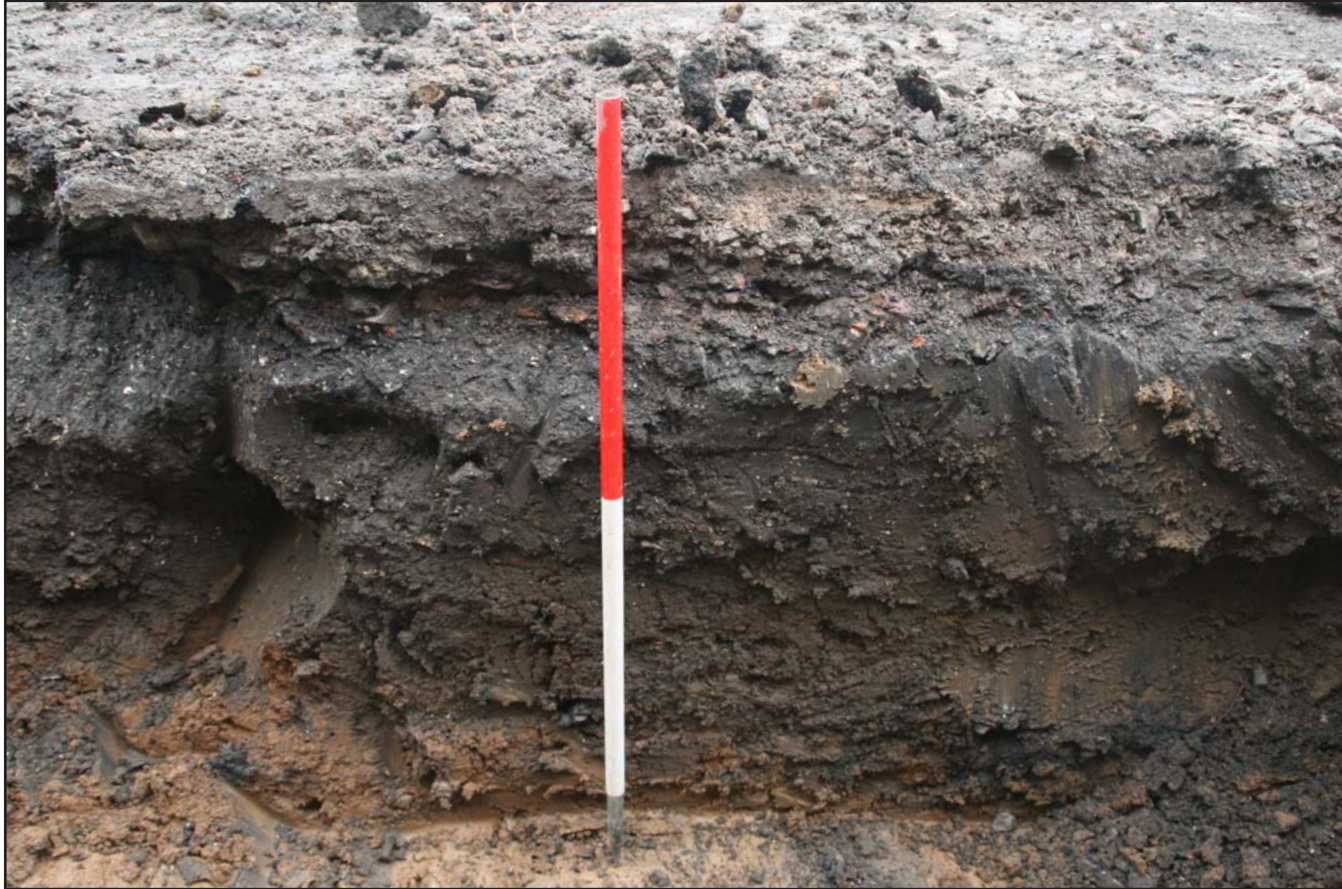


**Plate 04:** North facing section of rubble spread (1003), from the north. Scale 0.05m.





**Plate 05:** East facing trench section showing rubble spread (1003) and cut [1005], from the east. Scale 1.0m.



**Plate 06:** East facing trench section, from the east. Scale 1.0m.





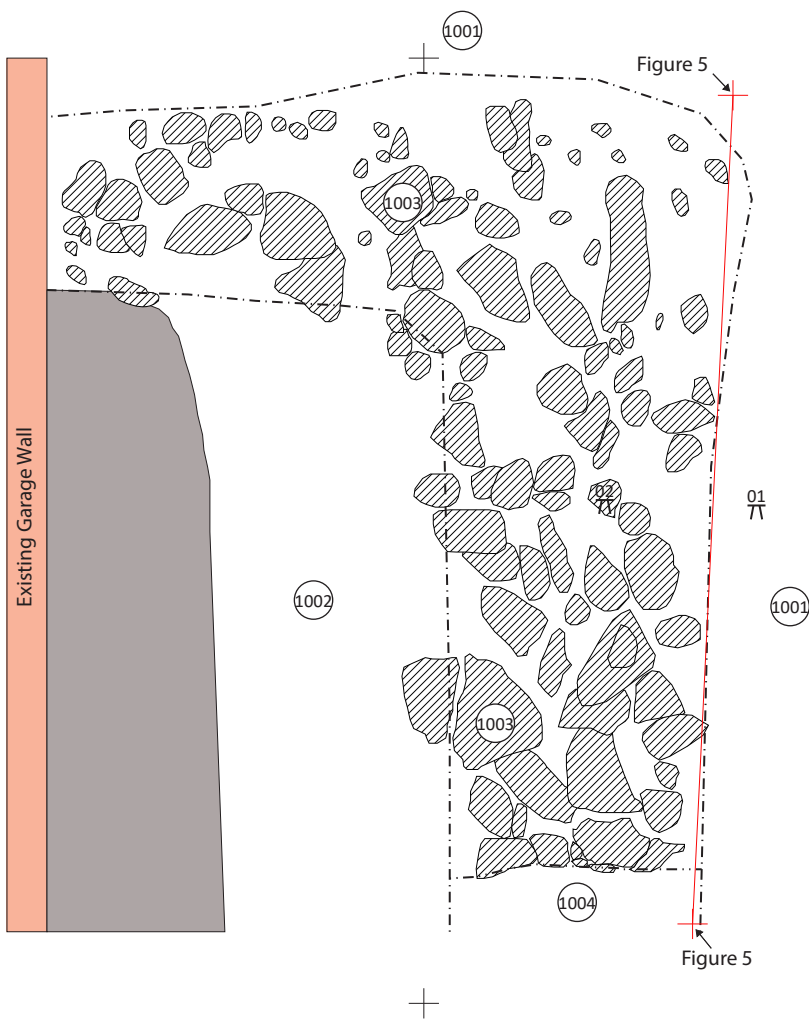
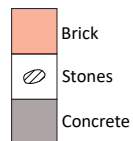
**Plate 07:** Post-excitation photograph of extension trench, from the north. Scale 1.0m.



Spot Heights - OD (m)

1 = 159.00

2 = 158.17



Located on figure 03.

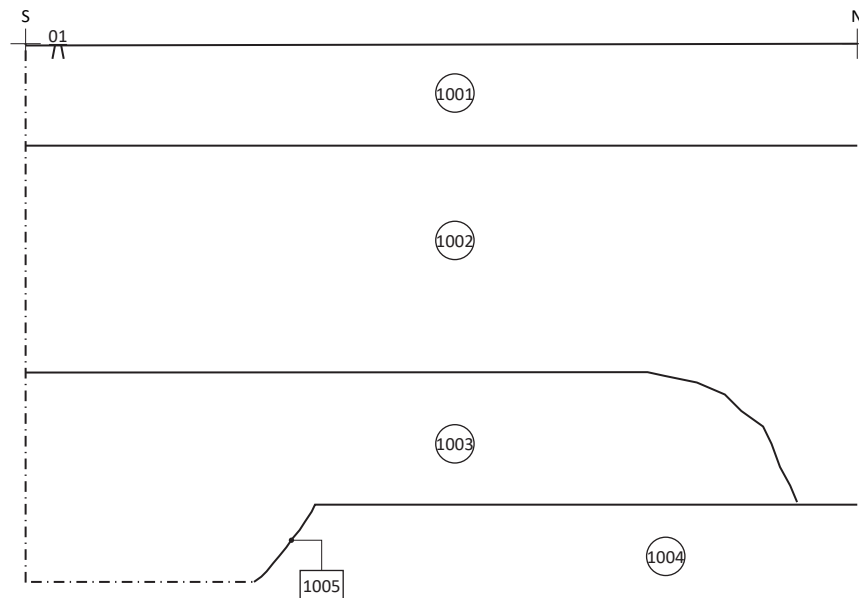


Figure 04: Plan of rubble spread (1003). Scale 1:20 at A4.

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Spot Heights - OD (m)

1= 159.00



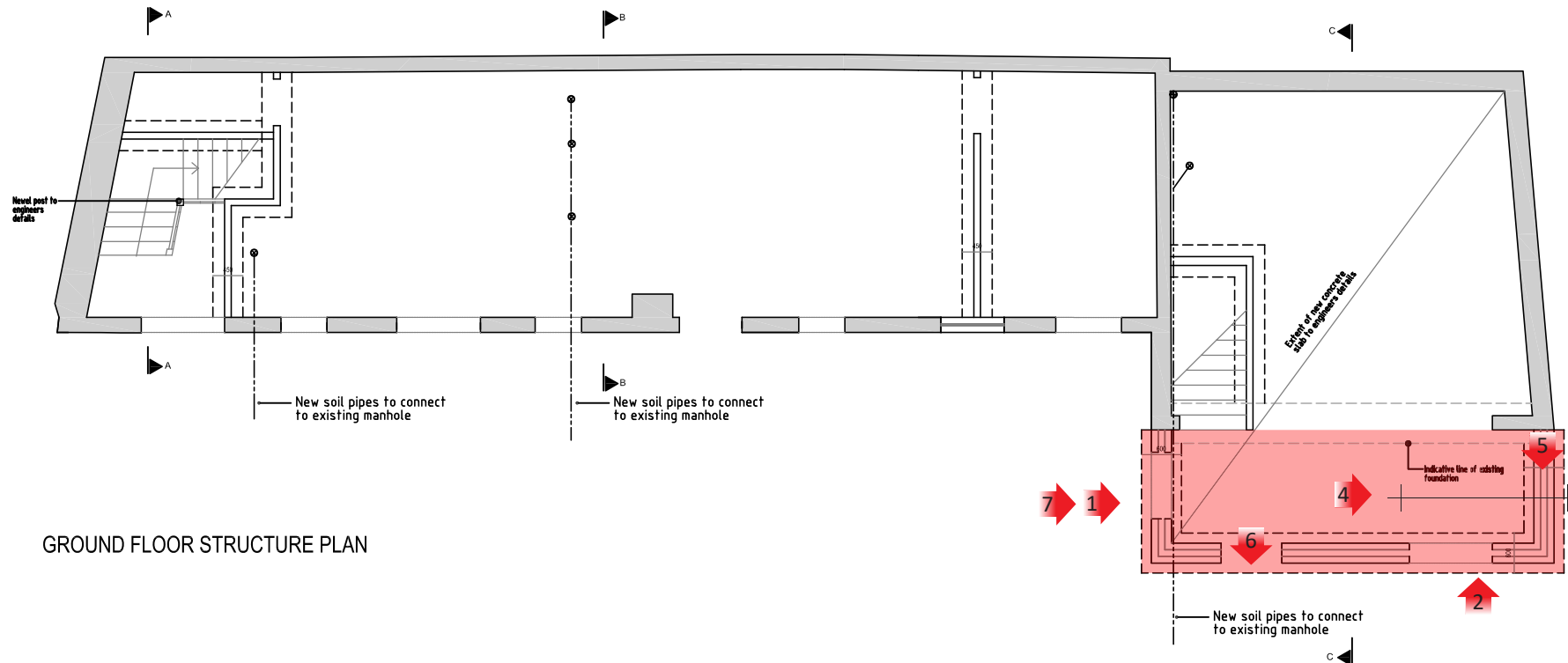
Located on figure 04.

0 2m 1:20 Scale



Figure 05: East facing trench section sketch showing rubble spread (1003).  
Scale 1:20 at A4.

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## GROUND FLOOR STRUCTURE PLAN

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Figure 06: Location and orientation of photographs at Fox Studio, King Street, Much Wenlock, Shropshire. Scale 1:100 at A4.

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## **9.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The archaeological watching brief at the Fox Studio, King Street, Much Wenlock uncovered the remains of a stony rubble spread at the southern end of the trench, which continued into the southern and western limits of excavation. The rubble spread appeared to be in-situ and produced two sherds of medieval ceramic during cleaning. The function of the deposit is however unclear as it appeared too uneven to represent a floor surface and too wide to suggest that it was the foundation of a wall. Upon removal it was found that a cut, possibly of a pit, was located at the south-western corner of the trench and continued south and west outside of the trench limits. This pit was not excavated as the required trench depth had been achieved but appeared to be in-filled with the stony deposit which then continued beyond the pit limits to the north and east.

At this stage it is impossible to identify exactly what the stony spread and possible pit cut represent, although the discovery of the medieval ceramic sherds during cleaning suggests that the rubble, and by association the pit cut, are of this date. It is possible that the cut is not of a pit at all and that it is the foundation trench for a wall continuing outside of the trench limits and represented by the rubble deposit, with the stony spread being that of the associated demolition layer.

Whatever the identity of the remains uncovered at the Fox Studio the watching brief has shown that medieval features are present around the level of the natural glacial substrata (1.18m BGL; 157.82m OD) and continue into the existing tarmac car park. As such it is recommended that any future ground disturbance in this area is similarly monitored by archaeological watching brief.

The watching brief can be seen as having fulfilled the spirit and intent of the archaeological condition and it is recommended that the condition now be discharged.

## **10.0 SOURCES**

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The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2014 Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Brief

## **APPENDIX I: WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**



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**Fox Studio, King Street,  
Much Wenlock, Shropshire.**

**Written Scheme of Investigation  
for Archaeological Watching Brief.**

**March 2017 V 1.0**



Project Code: A0109.1  
Planning Ref: 15/01850/FUL

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Planning permission has been secured by Mr and Mrs D. Myers (owner) for the extension and conversion of an existing studio building to form two residential units and one commercial unit at Fox Studio, King Street, Much Wenlock, Shropshire (NGR SO 62175 99855) (Planning Permission: 16/03876/FUL).

This Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) addresses the following:

### *Condition 5*

*No development approved by this permission shall commence until the applicant, or their agent or successors in title, have secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (WSI). This written scheme shall be approved in writing by the Planning Authority prior to the commencement of works.*

### *Reason*

*The area is of archaeological potential and it is important that any archaeological features and finds are properly recorded.*

An archaeological brief was not prepared by the Senior Archaeological Advisor at Shropshire Council however the following comments were made as part of the recommendation for the archaeological condition (Orchard, C. 27<sup>th</sup> July 2015):

*The proposed development site lies on the edge of the medieval urban form of Much Wenlock (HER PRN 05029) as defined by the Central Marches Historic Towns Survey and within a group of Tenement plots to the north of High St, east of Smithfield Road (HER PRN 05041).*

*More importantly it is also located immediately adjacent to the supposed site of St John's Leper Hospital (PRN 05010). An evaluation carried out on the Leper Hospital site in 2012 determined that significant archaeological features, deposits and structural remains of medieval date are present on the site. These are overlain by archaeological deposits of early post-medieval date which also have the potential to inform us about the development of this part of Much Wenlock during this period.*

*Although the site has been built over during the Post Medieval period, the archaeological potential of the site, particularly at depth, remains moderate to high.*

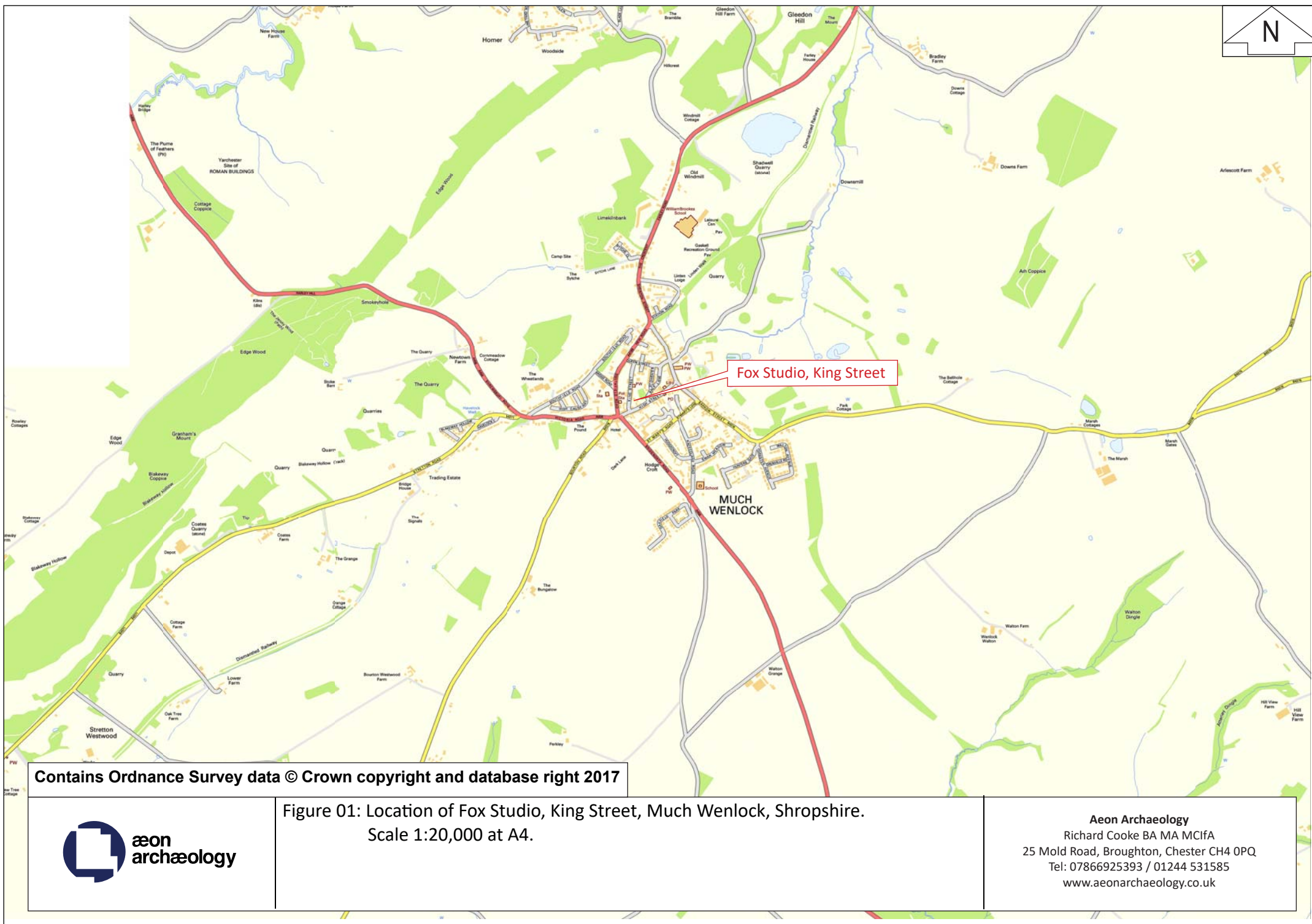
*Any below ground archaeological remains are likely to be affected by the construction of the proposed extension and any ground disturbance associated with the conversion of the existing studio.*

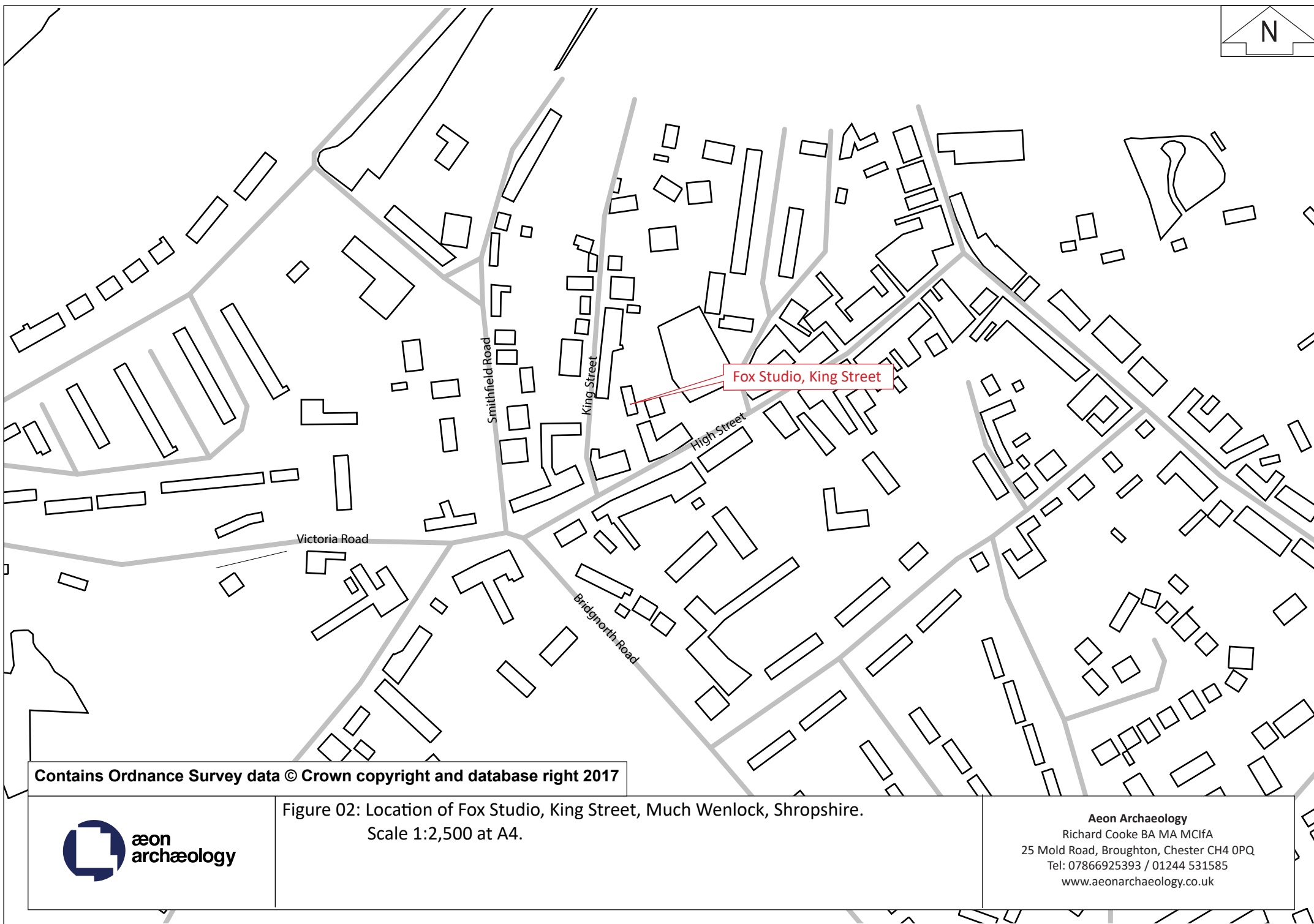
The watching brief will be maintained during intrusive groundworks, as detailed below.

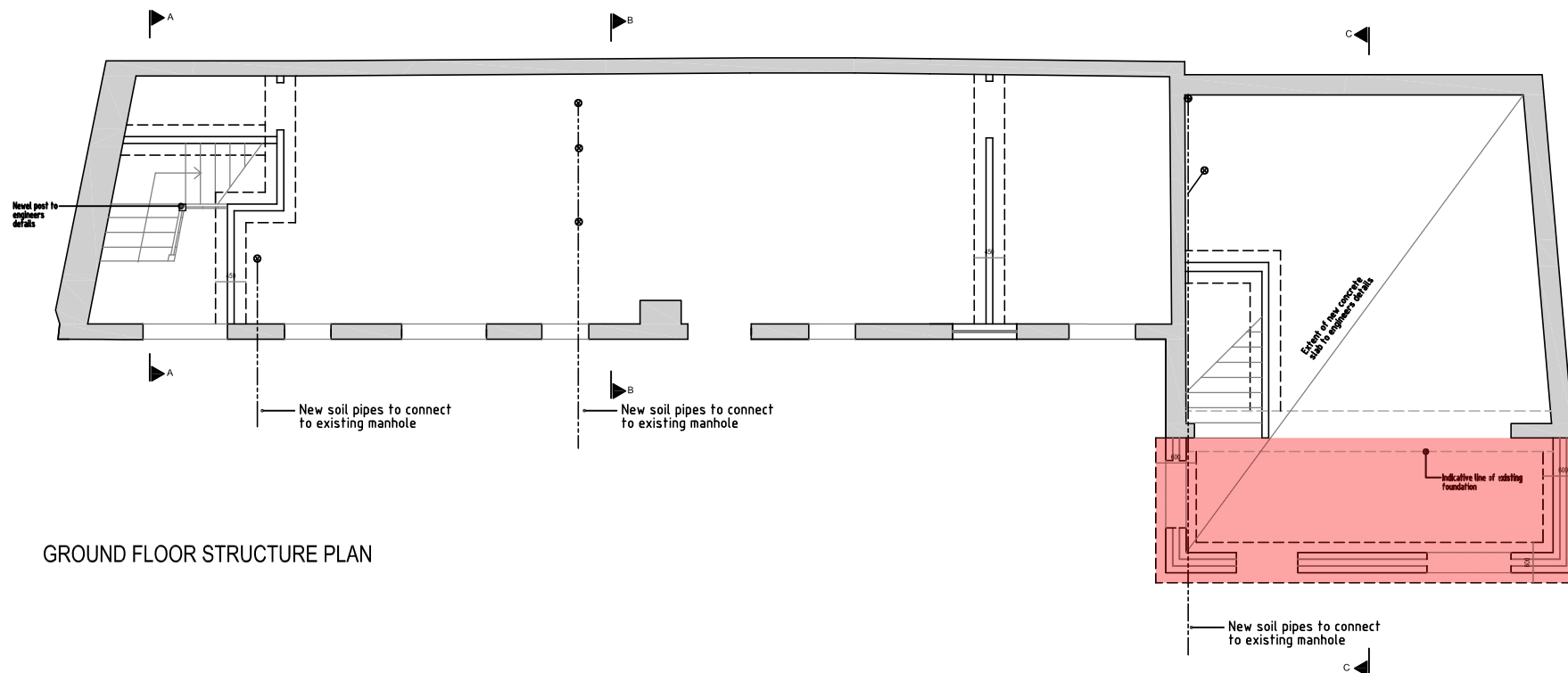
This WSI states the aims, objectives and methodology for implementing the archaeological watching brief so as to meet the spirit and intent of the archaeological condition.

The use of such a condition is in line with the guidance set out in paragraph 141, Section 12 (Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment) of the National Planning Policy Framework (2012), published by the Department for Communities and Local Government and Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment, Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 2 (Historic England 2015); and Policy MD13 of the SAMDev component of the Shropshire Local Plan.

Reference will be made to the guidelines specified in Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Brief (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2014).







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Figure 03: Location of area to be monitored by archaeological watching brief (shaded red) at Fox Studio, King Street, Much Wenlock, Shropshire. Scale 1:100 at A4.

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## 2.0 HISTORIC BACKGROUND

The town of Wenlock is known to have grown up around an abbey or monastery founded around 680 by Merewalh, a son of King Penda of Mercia, with the small town within its parish boundaries (Finberg, 1961). King Penda installed his daughter Milburga as abbess in 687. Milburga of Wenlock was credited with many miraculous works and the abbey flourished until around 874 when it is thought that a Danish Viking attack occurred.

In the 11th century another religious house was built on the same site by Leofric, Earl of Mercia and Countess Godiva his wife. In the 12th century this was replaced by a Cluniac priory, established by Roger de Montgomerie after the Norman Conquest, the ruins of which can still be seen and which is now in the hands of English Heritage. It prospered until the Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1539.

The Domesday Book of 1086 records the manor as 'Wenloch' and forming part of the hundred of Patton. It was already at this time a fairly large settlement, with 73 households. The abbey is also recorded in the Book, separately. The borough of Wenlock was incorporated under the "Bailiff, Burgesses and Commonalty" by Edward IV in 1468 at the request of Sir John Wenlock, and "in consideration of the laudable services which the men of the town performed in assisting the king to gain possession of the crown," and the charter was confirmed in 1547 by Henry VIII and in 1631 by Charles I.

Other architectural attractions include the 16th century Guildhall, many other historic buildings in the Early English style and an annual well dressing at St Milburga's Well on Barrow Street.

An eleven-year-old Alice Glaston from Little Wenlock was hanged together with two men in Much Wenlock on 13 April 1546, for an unknown crime. She is the youngest known girl legally executed in Great Britain (Butler, 1861).

In the 19th century the town and much of the surrounding land came into the possession of James Milnes Gaskell, from his wife's family the Williams-Wynns. James was MP for Wenlock for many years. His son Charles Milnes Gaskell restored the Priory lodging as a home with his wife Lady Catherine, daughter of the Earl of Portsmouth. There they entertained many famous people of the day, writers, politicians, artists and explorers, among them Thomas Hardy, Henry Adams, Henry James, Thomas Woolner, Henry Morton Stanley, Isabella Bird and Phillip Webb (Gamble, C. 2015)

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Archenfield Archaeology in 2006 which involved the excavation of two trenches in advance of proposed residential development located approximately 58.0m to the south of Fox Studio. The evaluation uncovered medieval building remains including a bread oven and fireplace (Shropshire HER).

The proposed development site lies on the edge of the medieval urban form of Much Wenlock (HER PRN 05029) as defined by the Central Marches Historic Towns Survey and within a group of Tenement plots to the north of High St, east of Smithfield Road (HER PRN 05041).

More importantly it is also located immediately adjacent to the supposed site of St John's Leper Hospital (PRN 05010). An evaluation carried out on the Leper Hospital site in 2012 determined that significant archaeological features, deposits and structural remains of medieval date are present on the site. These are overlain by archaeological deposits of early post-medieval date which also have the potential to inform us about the development of this part of Much Wenlock during this period.



### 3.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The archaeological watching brief shall be maintained:

1. During the excavation of foundation trenches associated with the construction of the new extension to the existing Fox Studio building.

The CIfA maintains a standard for archaeological watching brief which states that:

An archaeological watching brief will record the archaeological resource during development within a specified area using appropriate methods and practices. These will satisfy the stated aims of the project, and comply with the Code of conduct and other relevant by-laws of CIfA.

An archaeological watching brief is defined by the CIfA as a formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons (CIfA 2014). The watching brief will take place within a specified area within the Site where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits may be disturbed or destroyed.

The CIfA further identifies the purpose of a watching brief as allowing, within the resources available, the preservation by record of archaeological deposits, the presence and nature of which could not be established in advance of development or other potentially disruptive works.

It is also important to note that a watching brief provides an opportunity, if needed, for a signal to be made to all interested parties, before the destruction of the archaeological materials, that an archaeological find has been made for which the resources allocated to the watching brief itself are not sufficient to support treatment to a satisfactory and proper standard.

A watching brief is, therefore, not intended to reduce the requirement for excavation or preservation of known or inferred deposits, and it is intended to guide, not replace, any requirement for contingent excavation or preservation of possible deposits.

The aims of the watching brief are:

- To allow, within the resources available, the opportunity to gain information about and record the presence/absence, nature and date of archaeological remains on the Site affected by excavations and groundworks, the presence and nature of which could not be established with sufficient confidence in advance of works which may disturb them.
- To provide the facility to signal to the relevant authorities, before irreversible impact to remains that an archaeological and/or historic find has been made for which the resources allocated to the watching brief itself are inadequate to support their treatment to an adequate and satisfactory standard.

The specific objectives of the watching brief are:

- To observe and recover any artefacts of archaeological significance.
- To record the location, dimensions and nature of any deposits, features, structures or artefacts of archaeological significance.
- To recover samples of any deposits considered to have potential for analysis for palaeoenvironmental data should the opportunity arise.

## **4.0 METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1 Archaeological Watching Brief**

The methodology for the watching brief has been prepared with reference to the CIfA's document Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Brief (2014) and will be kept under constant review during the project, in order to see how far it is meeting the terms of the aims and objectives, and in order to adopt any new questions which may arise.

Curatorial monitoring of the archaeological work will be carried out by the Shropshire Development Control Archaeologist. To facilitate the curatorial monitoring, the officer shall be provided with a minimum of two weeks' notice of the start of the archaeological work.

A suitably qualified and experienced archaeologist(s) from Aeon Archaeology will be commissioned for the maintenance of the watching brief. On arrival on site, the archaeologist(s) will report to the site manager and conform to the arrangements for notification of entering and leaving site. The archaeologist(s) will keep a record of the date, time and duration of all attendances at site, the names and numbers of archaeologists deployed and any actions taken. The archaeologist will be provided with a Health & Safety Induction by the construction contractor and wear a safety helmet, safety footwear and high visibility jacket/vest at all times.

If deposits and or artefacts are exposed during excavations for the development which require recording and recovery, it may be necessary to delay works whilst the proper investigation and recording takes place. Watching brief recording can often be undertaken without delay to groundworks, depending upon the specific circumstances and flexibility of all the staff on site.

Within the constraints of the terms of the watching brief work, the archaeologist will not cause unreasonable disruption to the maintenance of the work schedules of other contractors on site. In the event of archaeological discoveries the treatment of which (either arising from the volume/quantity of material and/or the complexity/importance of the material) is beyond the resources deployed the Client will be notified and a site meeting/telephone consultation arranged with the Shropshire Development Control Archaeologist. The aim of the meeting will be to confirm that an archaeological find has been made for which the resources allocated to the watching brief itself are not sufficient to support treatment to a satisfactory and proper standard and identify measures which would be sufficient to support treatment to a satisfactory and proper standard prior to destruction of the material in question.

Any archaeological deposits, features and structures identified which can be investigated and recorded under the terms of the watching brief will be excavated manually in a controlled and stratigraphic manner sufficient to address the aims and objectives of the project – subject to the limitations on site access.

It may not be necessary to excavate the complete stratigraphic sequence to geologically lain deposits but the inter-relationships between archaeological deposits, features and structures will be investigated sufficient to address the aims and objectives of the project and the complete stratigraphic sequence to geologically lain deposits will be investigated where practicable.

The method of recording will follow the normal principles of stratigraphic excavation and the stratigraphy will be recorded in written descriptions even where no archaeological deposits have been identified. The archaeologist will record archaeological deposits using proformae recording forms and locate them on a large-scale site plan related to the Ordnance Survey National Grid and Datum references.

The groundworks excavations shall be undertaken using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket.

The drawn record will comprise plans at scale 1:20 and sections at scale 1:10; propriety electronic hardware and software to prepare site drawings may be used as appropriate.

A photographic record will be maintained throughout, using a digital SLR camera (Canon 600D) set to maximum resolution and any subsurface remains will be recorded photographically, with detailed notations and measured drawings being undertaken if required.

The archive produced will be held at Aeon Archaeology under the project code **A0109.1**.

## **4.2 Watching brief report**

### **4.2.1 Post-excavation Assessment**

A report on the results of the watching brief, in accordance with the recommendations in *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment Project Manager's Guide* (English Heritage 2006; 2015), and in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists *Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (2014) will be required to be produced upon conclusion of the archaeological fieldwork. The report will be completed within a maximum of two months of completion of work on site and may include examination and quantification leading to the identification of function, form, date, method of manufacture, material/fabric type, source, parallels, attributes and condition of artefacts; of the exploitation of wild or domesticated resources; the reconstruction of environments; and the nature of human populations.

Full analysis of the results of the project, including: dating and interpretation of excavated features; pottery and other finds analysis; analysis of industrial residues by an appropriate specialist or specialists; analysis of samples for environmental data (including pollen, plant macrofossils and beetles) by an appropriate specialist or specialists; radiocarbon dating; discussion of the results in their local, regional and national context, including relating the excavated features and palaeoenvironmental data to evidence from nearby sites, and discussion of the results in their local, regional and national context may be required.

The scope of post-excavation assessment will subject to a specification for approval by the Shropshire Development Control Archaeologist, upon the conclusion of the fieldwork project and preliminary report.

### 4.2.2 Post-excavation Report

Following completion of the stages outlined above, a report will be produced that will include:

- A non-technical summary.
- A table of contents.
- An introduction with acknowledgements, including a list of all those involved in the project and the location and description of the site.
- A statement of the project aims.
- An account of the project methodology undertaken, with an assessment of the same to include a statement on preservation bias and the means of data collection and sampling strategies.
- A factual summary of the history, development and use of the site.
- A statement setting out the nature, quantity and condition of the material archive (artefacts and ecofacts) including commentary on any bias observed due to collection and sampling strategies and commentary on long-term storage requirements.
- A statement setting out the nature and quantity of the documentary archive (notes, photographs, drawings, digital data).
- A general site plan indicating the position and size of the areas subject to watching brief and the locations of archaeological deposits identified and recorded during the works.
- Plans and sections at appropriate scales, augmented with appropriate photographs. All plans and sections will be related to the Ordnance Survey datum levels and to the National Grid.
- Other maps, plans, drawings, stratigraphic matrices and photographs as appropriate.
- Summary assessment reports on the artefact, bio-archaeological, dating and other assessments/analyses.
- A discussion of the location, extent, date, nature, condition, quality and significance of any archaeological deposits and finds identified during the project.
- A discussion of any research implications arising from the archaeological work.
- Notes on consultations with conservators and the nominated archive repository related to the immediate and long-term conservation and storage requirements for the data held in the site archive and recommendations of retention/discard of artefacts and ecofacts.
- A bibliography of sources consulted.
- Appendices to the report will include artefact catalogues, reports on assessments/analyses and an index to the project archive and a statement on its location/proposed repository.
- In addition the post-excavation report will summarise and draw together the findings of all of the phases of work.

### 4.3 Archive

A full archive including plans, photographs, written material and any other material resulting from the project will be prepared. All plans, photographs and descriptions will be labelled, and cross-referenced, and archived within a suitable repository to be agreed in advance with the Shropshire Development Control Archaeologist. Copies of the report will be lodged with the Shropshire Historic Environment Record (HER); Shropshire Development Control Archaeologist; and Oasis online database within six months of the completion of the project.

## 5.0 FURTHER ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORKS

The identification of significant archaeological features during the watching brief stage may necessitate further archaeological works. This will require the submission of new cost estimates to the contractor and may be subject to a separate WSI, to be agreed with the Shropshire Development Control Archaeologist prior to implementation.

This WSI does not include a methodology or cost for examination of, conservation of, or archiving of finds discovered during the watching brief, nor of any radiocarbon dates required, nor of examination of palaeoenvironmental samples associated with any peat deposits. The need for these will be identified in the post-fieldwork programme (if required), and a new WSI will be issued for approval by the Shropshire Development Control Archaeologist prior to implementation.

## 6.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SAMPLES

If necessary, relevant archaeological deposits will be sampled by taking bulk samples (a minimum of 10.0 litres and maximum of 30.0 litres) for flotation of charred plant remains. Bulk samples will be taken from waterlogged deposits for macroscopic plant remains. Other bulk samples, for example from middens, may be taken for small animal bones and small artefacts.

Bulk environmental samples will also be taken from any fills, deposits or structures which yield archaeological artefacts, charcoal flecks/ fragments, bone, or any other historic remains.

Advice and guidance regarding environmental samples and their suitability for radiocarbon dating, as well as the analysis of macrofossils (charcoal and wood), pollen, animal bones and molluscs will be obtained from Oxford Archaeology.

For guidance purposes the following volume criteria represent the minimum feature sampling requirements:

- 50% of each discrete feature (e.g. pits and postholes)
- 25% of the exposed areas of each liner feature and all terminals/intersections
- 50% of structural features (e.g. beamslots, ring-ditches)
- 50%-100% of domestic/industrial working features (e.g. hearths and ovens)

## 7.0 HUMAN REMAINS

Any finds of human remains will be left *in-situ*, covered and protected, and both the coroner and the Shropshire Development Control Archaeologist informed. If removal is necessary it will take place under appropriate regulations and with due regard for health and safety issues. In order to excavate human remains, a licence is required under Section 25 of the Burials Act 1857 for the removal of any body or remains of any body from any place of burial. This will be applied for should human remains need to be investigated or moved.

## 8.0 SMALL FINDS

The vast majority of finds recovered from archaeological excavations comprise pottery fragments, bone, environmental and charcoal samples, and non-valuable metal items such as nails. Often many of these finds become unstable (i.e. they begin to disintegrate) when removed from the ground. All finds are the property of the landowner; however, it is recommended that all finds are donated to an appropriate museum (Neath Port Talbot Museum Service) where they can receive specialist treatment and study. Access to finds must be granted to Aeon Archaeology for a reasonable period to allow for analysis and for study and publication as necessary. All finds would be treated according to advice provided within *First Aid for Finds* (Rescue 1999). Aeon Archaeology staff will undertake initial identification, but any additional advice would be sought from a wide range of consultants.

The recovery policy for archaeological finds will be kept under review throughout the fieldwork phase. Any changes in recovery priorities will be under guidance from an appropriate specialist and agreed with the Shropshire Development Control Archaeologist. There will be a presumption against the disposal of archaeological finds with the exception of unstratified items dating to the twentieth or twenty-first centuries AD which will be recorded by material, type, form, identification and weight, and discarded.

All finds will be collected and processed including those found within spoil tips. Their location will be recorded; finds numbers attributed, bagged and labelled as well as any preliminary identification taking place on site. Where specialist advice is required provision will be made to do so at the earliest possible convenience.

After processing, artefacts which are suitable will be cleaned and conserved in-house. Artefacts requiring specialist cleaning and conservation will be sent to the relevant specialist. All finds will then be sent to a specialist for analysis, the results of which will then be assessed to ascertain the potential of the finds assemblage to meet the research aims of the project. The value of the finds will also be assessed in terms of the wider educational and academic contributions.

## 9.0 UNEXPECTED DISCOVERIES: TREASURE TROVE

Treasure Trove law has been amended by the Treasure Act 1996. The following are Treasure under the Act:

- *Objects other than coins* any object other than a coin provided that it contains at least 10% gold or silver and is at least 300 years old when found.
- *Coins* all coins from the same find provided they are at least 300 years old when found (if the coins contain less than 10% gold or silver there must be at least 10). Any object or coin is part of the same find as another object or coin, if it is found in the same place as, or had previously been left together with, the other object. Finds may have become scattered since they were originally deposited in the ground. Single coin finds of gold or silver are not classed as treasure under the 1996 Treasure Act.
- *Associated objects* any object whatever it is made of, that is found in the same place as, or that had previously been together with, another object that is treasure.
- *Objects that would have been treasure trove* any object that would previously have been treasure trove, but does not fall within the specific categories given above. These objects have to be made substantially of gold or silver, they have to be buried with the intention of recovery and their owner or his heirs cannot be traced.

The following types of finds are not treasure:

- Objects whose owners can be traced.
- Unworked natural objects, including human and animal remains, even if they are found in association with treasure.

Objects from the foreshore which are not wreck.

All finds of treasure must be reported to the coroner for the district within fourteen days of discovery or identification of the items. Items declared Treasure Trove become the property of the Crown.

The British Museum will decide whether they or any other museum may wish to acquire the object. If no museum wishes to acquire the object, then the Secretary of State will be able to disclaim it. When this happens, the coroner will notify the occupier and landowner that he intends to return the object to the finder after 28 days unless he receives no objection. If the coroner receives an objection, the find will be retained until the dispute has been settled.

## **10.0 STAFF & TIMETABLE**

### **10.1 Staff**

The work will be managed and undertaken by Richard Cooke BA MA MCifA, Archaeological Contractor and Consultant at Aeon Archaeology.

### **10.2 Timetable**

The evaluation work can currently be undertaken from March 2017, although the client is encouraged to give as much notice as possible to Aeon Archaeology as project commitments are currently high.

## **11.0 HEALTH AND SAFETY**

Aeon Archaeology has a Health and Safety Policy Statement which can be supplied upon request. Furthermore, site-specific Risk Assessments and Method Statements are compiled and distributed to every member of staff involved with the project prior to the commencement of works.

## **12.0 INSURANCE**

Liability Insurance – Insignia Underwriting Policy 347002

- Employers' Liability: Limit of Indemnity £10m in any one occurrence
- Public Liability: Limit of Indemnity £2m in any one occurrence
- Legal Defence Costs (Health and Safety at Work Act): £250,000

The current period expires 07/09/17

Professional Indemnity Insurance – Insignia Underwriting Policy 347002

- Limit of Indemnity £500,000 any one claim

The current period expires 07/09/17



### 13.0 GENERAL

All project staff will adhere to the Code of Conduct of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.

The project will follow the requirements set down in the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Brief* prepared by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.

A Method Statement and Risk Assessment will be prepared prior to the commencement of fieldwork and circulated to all staff concerned.

Please note the following:

Aeon Archaeology will not be held responsible for any delays to the work programme resulting from the discovery of archaeological sites or finds.

The cost quoted does not include examination of, conservation of or archiving of finds discovered during the archaeological programme, nor of any radiocarbon dates required, nor of examination of palaeoenvironmental samples.

### 14.0 SPECIALISTS

Specialist advice required will be sought from the following list if required:

- Bone: Nora Bermingham
- Glass: Hilary Cool, Barbican Research Associates.
- Metal artefacts: Phil Parkes, Cardiff Conservation Services, Cardiff.
- Slag, burnt clay, hammerscale: Dr. Tim Young, Geoarch, Cardiff.
- Stone artefacts: Oxford Archaeology
- Wood artefacts: Jane Foley, Foley Conservation, Builth Wells.
- Leather: Quita Mould, Barbican Research Associates.
- Waterlogged environmental: Dr Mike Allen, Allen Environmental Archaeology.
- Environmental samples: Oxford Archaeology
- Numismatics: Peter Guest, Barbican Research Associates.
- Pottery (all periods): Oxford Archaeology
- Clay pipe: Oxford Archaeology

Depending upon the material of the remains the following experts will be consulted regarding the conservation of waterlogged material:

- Organic material: Mr Phil Parkes, Cardiff Conservation Services (tel: +44(0)29 2087 5628)
- Non-organic material: Mr Phil Parkes, Cardiff Conservation Services (tel: +44(0)29 2087 5628)

## 15.0 SOURCES

Butler, T. 1861. *The Cambrian Journal*, issue 49.

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