



**Archaeological watching brief
on land at the former cattle market site
Stratford Upon Avon, Warwickshire
June - August 2017**

Report No. 17/109

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Illustrator: Olly Dindol



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OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		OASIS No: molanort1-294116	
Project title	Archaeological watching brief on land at the former cattle market site, Stratford Upon Avon, Warwickshire, June – August 2017		
Short description	An Archaeological watching brief was carried out during the residential development of land at the former cattle market site, Stratford Upon Avon, Warwickshire. The observed works comprised the excavation of service and foundation trenches and excavation for the cropping of piles after installation. No archaeological finds were recovered and no archaeological features were observed.		
Project type	Archaeological watching brief		
Previous work	None		
Current land use	Derelict land / construction site		
Future work	None		
Monument type and period	None		
Significant finds	None		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County	Warwickshire		
Site address	Former cattle market site, Alcester Road, Stratford Upon Avon		
Easting Northing	SP 19584 55154		
Area (sq m/ha)	2.2ha		
Height aOD	c 44-48m aOD		
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation	MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology)		
Project brief originator	Warwickshire County Council		
Project Design originator	MOLA Northampton		
Director/Supervisor	Ian Fisher & Conor Murphy (MOLA Northampton)		
Project Manager	Anthony Maull (MOLA Northampton)		
Sponsor or funding body	CgMs Consulting Ltd		
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Start date	15/06/2017		
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Archaeological watching brief on land at the former cattle market site Stratford Upon Avon, Warwickshire June – August 2017

Abstract

An archaeological watching brief was carried out during the residential development of land at the former cattle market site, Stratford Upon Avon, Warwickshire. The observed works comprised the excavation of service and foundation trenches and excavation for the cropping of piles after installation. No archaeological finds were recovered and no archaeological features were observed.

1 INTRODUCTION

CgMs Consulting, on behalf of Galliford Try, commissioned Museum of London Archaeology (MOLA) to carry out an archaeological watching brief during the residential development of land at the former cattle market site, Stratford Upon Avon, Warwickshire (NGR SP 19584 55154; Fig 1).

The archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI), approved by Warwickshire County Council, which set out the methodology to be applied during those works (MOLA 2017).

MOLA is a Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) registered organisation. This report has been prepared in accordance with the current best archaeological practice as defined in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance: Archaeological watching brief* (CIfA 2014a), the *Code of Conduct* (CIfA 2014b) and the Historic England (HE) procedural document *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)* (HE 2015).

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Location and geology

The site lies to the north of the present town centre, on the north side of Alcester Road. It is situated just beyond the western edge of the Stratford Upon Avon Conservation Area, immediately to the east of the station and railway. To the north of the site lies the Stratford Hospital and to the east is The Rother House Medical Centre and The Stratford Hotel. The investigation area occupies a 2.2ha site of derelict land lying across Brunel Way.

The underlying geology has been mapped by the British Geological Survey as comprising Mercia Mudstone (BGS 2017).

2.2 Historical and archaeological background

The site lies to the north of the present town centre in the County of Warwickshire.

The archaeological and historical background to the site has been described in a Desk-Based Assessment (DBA) (Weaver 2012) and a Summary Heritage Statement (Dawson 2015). No designated or non-designated archaeological remains are recorded within the investigation area.

Few prehistoric remains have been recorded within the town with only occasional chance finds of Bronze Age pottery recorded, along with a single flint flake of undetermined date.

The present Alcester Road, which lies immediately to the south of the site, lies on the line of the Salt Way, a former Roman road.

Stratford Upon Avon is believed to have its origins in the 7th century AD, and is recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086AD as *Stradforde*, at this time being a village containing 28 villagers, and having a priest and a mill.

Evidence suggests that the investigation area lies in land used for agricultural activity during the medieval period.

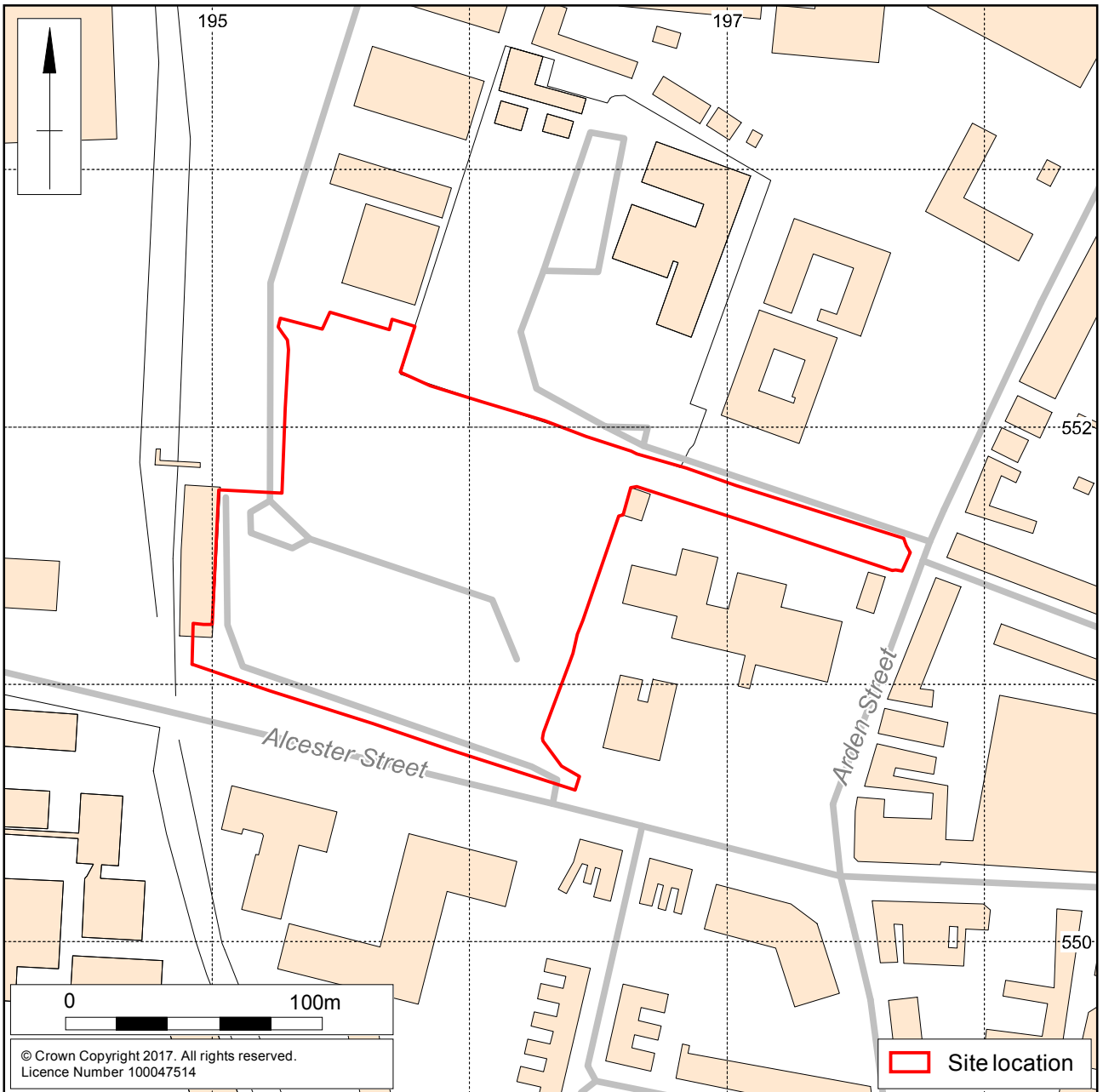
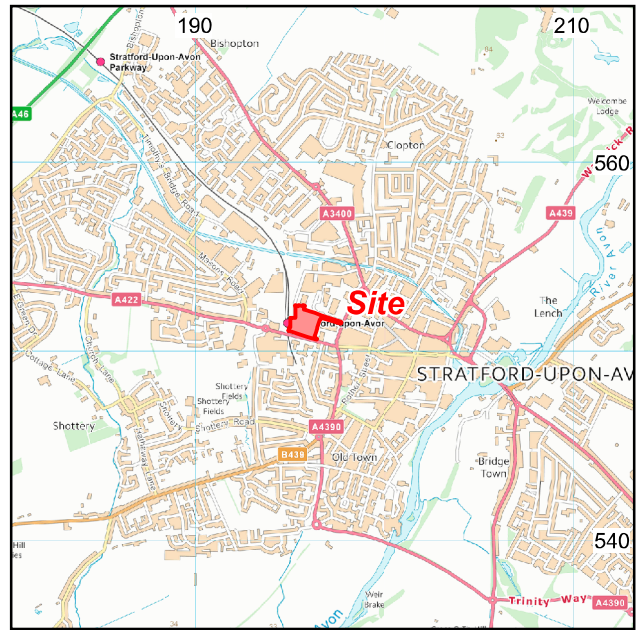
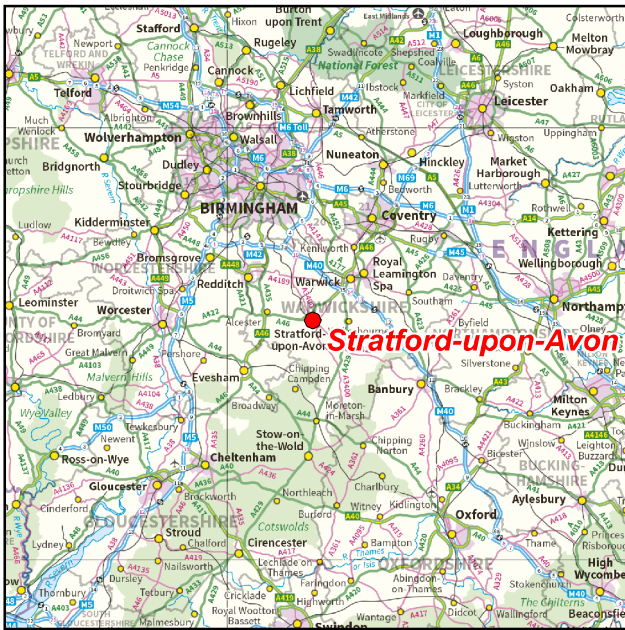
Up to the present application, the site has comprised an area of derelict land with former structures associated with the cattle market having been removed in, or prior to, 2012.

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

In order to record the archaeological resource within the proposed development area the objectives of the investigation were to:

- Identify, investigate and record all archaeological deposits, exposed during the groundworks for the new development and any associated groundworks;
- Determine and record the date, extent, character, state of preservation and depth of burial of any archaeological deposits;
- Establish the relationship of any archaeological deposits within the wider contemporary landscape;
- Create a permanent archive and record of the archaeological information collected during the course of the fieldwork and analysis.

Should archaeological remains have been identified, the regional research framework for the West Midlands, as given by Watt (2011) would have been discussed.



Scale 1:2,500

Site location Fig 1

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General site overview, looking south-west Fig 2



General site overview, looking north-west Fig 3

4 METHODOLOGY

The archaeological observation was undertaken according to the methodology stated in the approved WSI (MOLA 2017) as well as industry guidance documents (ClfA 2014a and b; HE 2015).

The watching brief included the excavation around concrete piles for ‘cropping’ and the excavation of service and foundation trenches across the site.

The concrete piles were driven into the ground. A small area was then excavated around the piles under archaeological supervision to ‘crop’ the piles; the size of the area was dependent upon the number of piles.

The service and foundation trenches were excavated by a 360° tracked excavator fitted with a toothless grading bucket under archaeological supervision.

Should any archaeological deposits have been encountered these would have been sampled sufficiently to determine their date and character, and recorded according to MOLA guidelines (MOLA 2014).

5 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

Piles

The area around the piles to be ‘cropped’ was excavated up to 1m in depth by machine under archaeological supervision. A section was cleaned and photographed. No topsoil or subsoil was present with the only deposit comprising was a layer of modern build-up which was observed across the whole site (Figs 2 - 4). The layer consisted of modern detritus and building demolition rubble.

No archaeological finds were recovered and no archaeological features were observed.



The stratigraphy within the piling excavation, looking south Fig 4

Service and foundation trenches

Two service trenches were excavated, up to a depth of 1.5m, on the north-eastern side of the site. No topsoil or subsoil was observed. The only deposit recorded was a modern layer. The natural geology was observed at a depth 1.2m and comprised of Mercia Mudstone (Fig 5).

The excavation of the foundation trenches for the construction of Block 3 in the north-western part of the site were undertaken under constant archaeological supervision. They were excavated up to a depth of 1.5m. The natural geology of Mercia Mudstone was recorded at 1.2m, but no topsoil or subsoil was observed. The only deposit comprised the layer of modern detritus and building demolition rubble, similarly observed during the excavation of the piles (Figs 6-8).

No archaeological finds were recovered and no archaeological features were observed in the trenches.



The stratigraphy within the service trench, looking north Fig 5



General shot of foundation trenches, looking north Fig 6



General shot of foundation trenches, looking south Fig 7



The stratigraphy within the foundation trench, looking north Fig 8

6 DISCUSSION

The archaeological works occurred on the former cattle market site in Stratford Upon Avon. Topsoil and subsoil was not present anywhere on the site. The only deposit present was a modern layer consisting of rubbish and building rubble which lay at least 1.2m deep over the natural site geology. This layer was probably the remnants of demolition of the cattle market and associated buildings.

The absence of topsoil and subsoil suggests major groundworks, associated with the former cattle market, have taken place across the site. This work did not reveal any archaeological features and no archaeological finds were recovered.

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