

**10 HIGH STREET,  
KENILWORTH**

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
WATCHING BRIEF**

**AUGUST 2006**

**Project No. 1486**

**10 HIGH STREET, KENILWORTH:  
AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF, 2006**

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AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

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(Removed)

## **SUMMARY**

*An archaeological watching brief was carried out at a site to the rear of 10 High Street, Kenilworth (HER 307787) (NGR SP 2856 7255) in July and August 2006, an area possibly within the extent of the Kenilworth medieval settlement (HER MWA9581). The work was undertaken by Birmingham Archaeology on behalf of Gordon Mitchell. The watching brief, required by the Warwickshire County Council Planning Archaeologist as a condition of planning permission, took place during a programme of groundworks as part of a residential development. It was thought that there was potential for survival of archaeological features and artefacts associated with the Kenilworth medieval settlement.*

*No significant archaeological features, deposits or finds were recorded during the watching brief and no evidence of medieval settlement activity was found.*

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## **1 INTRODUCTION**

In July and August 2006 Birmingham Archaeology carried out an archaeological watching brief on land to the rear of 10 High Street, Kenilworth (*NGR SP 2856 7255*), hereafter referred to as the site. The work was commissioned by Mr. Gordon Mitchell in advance of proposed residential development with access onto Fancett Drive at the rear of 10 High Street (Planning Application Numbers: W01/1438; W96/0884). The watching brief was undertaken as a requirement by Warwickshire County Council, as a response to Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 (DoE 1990), *Archaeology and Planning*.

This report outlines the results of the watching brief, which was undertaken in accordance with a design brief produced by Warwickshire County Council (Warwickshire Museum 2006), and a Written Scheme of Investigation (Appendix 1) which was approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of works. The watching brief conformed to guidelines set out by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA 2001).

## **2 LOCATION AND GEOLOGY**

The site is located at 10 High Street, Kenilworth, Warwickshire and is centred on *NGR SP 2856 7255* (Fig. 1) approximately 800 metres northeast of Kenilworth Castle, one the area's historic focal points.

The underlying geology is of the Kenilworth Sandstone Formation (British Geological Survey, 1974). The site is currently maintained as a garden plot and lies to the rear of property fronting onto the High Street. The site covers an area of 0.09 hectares.

## **3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The principle aim of the project was to assess the survival and potential significance of any archaeology at the site.

More specific aims were to:

- Monitor all below-ground works.
- Record the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains affected by the development works.
- Identify all previously unrecorded sites in order to update the SMR.
- Preserve all archaeological deposits 'by record', and recover for long term conservation and future analysis artefactual/ecofactual material recovered from the site.
- Provide sufficient information to enable any subsequent archaeological works or excavation to be conducted within clearly defined research aims.

## **4 METHODOLOGY**

A detailed methodology as set out in a Written Scheme of Investigation can be found in Appendix 1.

Groundworks comprised the machine stripping of overburden with a JCB excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket and the excavation of foundation trenches. All stratigraphic sequences were recorded, even where no archaeology was present. Features were planned, and sections were drawn through a representative sample of cut features and significant vertical stratigraphy. A comprehensive written record was maintained using a continuous numbered context system on *pro-forma* context and feature cards. Photographs supplemented written records and scale plans. All available maps and HER data were examined in order to produce an historical and archaeological context for the site.

## 5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The following paragraphs provide a summary of the known historical and archaeological evidence for the site and its immediate locality. Named sites and buildings and their Historic Environment Record Numbers are illustrated in Fig. 2. The proposed development lies to the rear of 10 High Street, Kenilworth, 10m north of the suggested extent of medieval settlement at Kenilworth (HER MWA9581), an area of significant archaeological potential.

The 11<sup>th</sup> century settlement, as recorded in the Domesday Book, is considered to have been in the High Street and Fieldgate Lane area (HER MWA9561). The monastic precinct boundary walls of the 15th century Kenilworth Abbey (MWA3201), founded originally as a priory in 1122 (Krawiec 2005, 3), ran west to east, south of the High Street, approximately 150m from the site. Kenilworth Castle, constructed around the same period as the priory (*ibid.*), is situated southwest of the study area. The extent of medieval settlement associated with the abbey and castle is less clearly defined, though may have extended to the north of High Street.

The site is part of an extended garden plot, belonging, at present, to 10 High Street (known as Latimer House), a much altered late 18<sup>th</sup> century listed building (HER 307787), which is situated on the northern side of the High Street. There have been no known significant archaeological finds within this area.

The two houses that flank 10 High Street and have adjoining extended rear plots of land are also listed. To the east is 6 to 8 High Street known as Clarendon House Hotel (SP 28597, 72526), a stucco-faced, timber framed building thought to date to circa 1539 (HER 307786). To the west lies 12 to 14 High Street (SP 2857572518), an, at present undated, timber-framed house with a 18<sup>th</sup> century frontage (HER 307788). There have been no significant archaeological finds within the plots to the rear of either of these properties.

There are many other listed properties, dating from the 17<sup>th</sup> century to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, east and west of 10 High Street and also on the southern side of the High Street. No known archaeological finds of significance have been found within the plots to the rear of any of these properties.

There is scant early cartographic evidence for the site and surrounding area. No enclosure, tithe or Board of Health maps are available. The nineteenth century Ordnance Survey maps provide the first visual clues as to the nature of settlement activity within this area. The maps illustrated (Figs. 3 to 6) cover the period 1888 to 1938 and portray an almost unchanging scene. The study area was maintained as a garden plot throughout the period, with an outhouse at the very rear of the property. The outhouse no longer exists, having been replaced by a drive and garden shed.

## 6 RESULTS

Groundworks comprised the excavation by JCB excavator of ten interconnecting foundation trenches (Fig. 7, Plates 1 and 2). All trenches were 1m in depth and 0.60m in width (Plate 3).

As illustrated by Trenches 1 and 4 (Fig. 8, Plate 2) each trench exhibited a close similarity in terms of stratigraphy, a red-brown sandy gravel subsoil (1002, 4001) sealed by a deep layer of dark-brown organic topsoil (1001, 4000), between 0.50m to 0.60m in depth (Fig. 8, Plate 3). The only deviation from this was observed in Trench 9, where a deposit of Victorian or early twentieth century building material was located (9002; Plate 4). The finds which were recovered dated to the later post-medieval period and included sherds of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century pottery and the corroded remains of a small ferrous metal box containing a mass of linked copper safety pins.

## **7 CONCLUSION**

No significant, surviving archaeological features were observed during the course of groundworks and no evidence for medieval occupation was encountered. The deep layer of organic topsoil is consistent with the site having been maintained as a garden plot over a long period of time. The artefacts that were recovered dated to the later post-medieval period.

## **8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Mr. Gordon Mitchell commissioned Birmingham Archaeology to undertake the project. Thanks are due to him and his groundworks team for their co-operation and assistance throughout the project. Thanks also go to Anna Stocks, Planning Archaeologist, who monitored the project on behalf of Warwickshire County Council. The assessment was undertaken by Mark Charles who produced the written report, which was illustrated by Bryony Ryder and Nigel Dodds, and edited by John Halsted. Mark Hewson managed the project for Birmingham Archaeology.

## **9 CARTOGRAPHIC SOURCES**

Ordnance Survey 1888  
Ordnance Survey 1905  
Ordnance Survey 1925  
Ordnance Survey 1938  
Ordnance Survey Modern Edition  
British Geological Survey 1:50,000 Series England and Wales Sheet 184 Warwick, Solid and Drift Geology, 1974

## **10 REFERENCES**

Department of the Environment (DoE) 1990. Planning Policy Guidance Note 16: Archaeology and Planning.

Institute of Field Archaeologists, 2001. *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief*. Institute of Field Archaeologists

Krawiec, K. 2005. *Land Adjacent to The Wantage, 1 Castle Hill, Kenilworth. An Archaeological Evaluation 2005*. Birmingham Archaeology report No.1334.

Warwickshire Museum, 2006. Brief for archaeological work. Land to the rear of 10 High Street, Kenilworth, Warwickshire.





**Plate 1**



**Plate 2**





**Plate 3**



**Plate 4**

