



60 Port Street

Evesham, Worcestershire

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Evesham, Worcestershire

Archaeological recording

SO 04285 43576

WSM67009

Site code: PSE15

OASIS ID: 110archa1-243354

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February 2016

one ten archaeology

6 Elm Close, Pebworth, Stratford upon Avon, Warwickshire., CV37 8XL

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SUMMARY

Archaeological recording was carried out at 60 Port Street, Evesham, Worcestershire during construction of a rear detached single-storey dwelling.

Historic mapping (OS 1886) shows the site much as it is today as part of a ribbon of terraced properties fronting Port Street with long thin garden plots to the rear. These properties are associated with the earlier medieval burgage plots and the rear gardens are likely to contain pits related to their former occupation. Earlier archaeological work in 2008 on land to the rear of 50-64, Port Street and Church Street revealed pitting associated with the occupancy of Medieval tenements along Port Street producing pottery indicating occupation from the 11th to 15th centuries.

The study site is described as an early 19th century three-storey terraced range. Whether this has replaced an earlier medieval or post medieval building is unclear, but evidence of this may survive within the building itself. The stone well recorded outside the area of excavation may be related to construction of the existing building although the use of masonry in the construction suggests that it may be an earlier feature, perhaps associated with an earlier phase of construction.

Also shown on the historic mapping to the rear of the building is a small detached square structure. The purpose of this feature is unclear, but it may have been an outside privy.

Truncation of the underlying deposits appears to have been confined to the central length of the excavation area and is characterized by a number of later features. A deposit situated in the south-west corner of the excavation which also appears to have been associated with later truncation associated with probable garden cultivation produced early 18th century pottery.

A subsoil layer representing a relict soil horizon immediately overlay the natural substrate. Although undated this is probably related to the earliest occupation of the site.



Fig. 1; site location (circled in red)

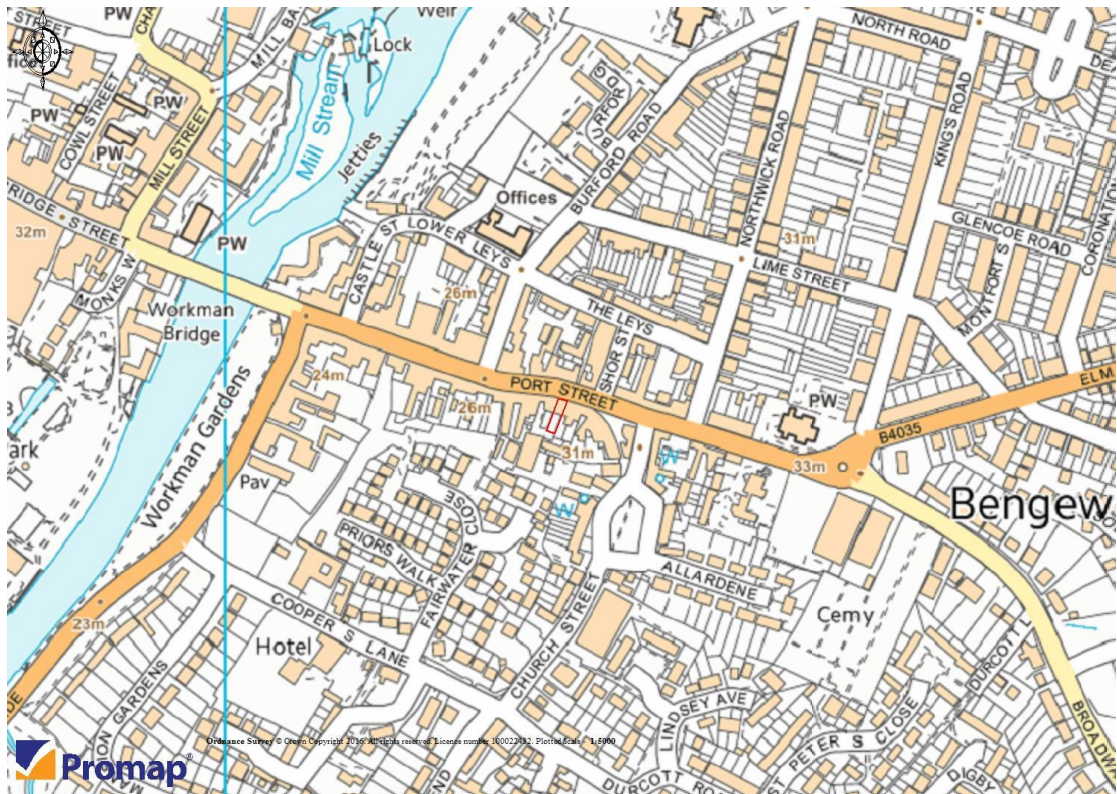


Fig. 2; area of study (site outlined in red)

INTRODUCTION

Location and scope of works (Figs. 1, 2 & 3)

This document sets out the results of archaeological recording 'watching brief' at 60 Port Street, Evesham, Worcestershire, WR111AP during 23rd September 2015 at the request of the owner Mr Thomas. The proposed development comprises the conversion of the ground floor and a new rear extension. The programme of archaeological work was required as a condition of planning permission granted in respect of an application (Ref: W/13/02615) to Wychavon District Council and will be undertaken in accordance with a brief issued by Worcestershire County Council Historic Environment & Archaeology Service (April, 2015). The proposed development is located within an area which is known to contain archaeological deposits relating to the medieval town of Evesham. It was anticipated that archaeological deposits associated with this period may be impacted on during the development.

Geology and topography

The study site (no. 60) is represented by a roughly north-east to south-west orientated rectangular plot of land situated on the south side of Port Street to the rear of the building. The site lies at a height of about 31m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) and the underlying geology comprises Second Terrace river gravels of the River Avon (BGS, 1974). This was confirmed during excavation.

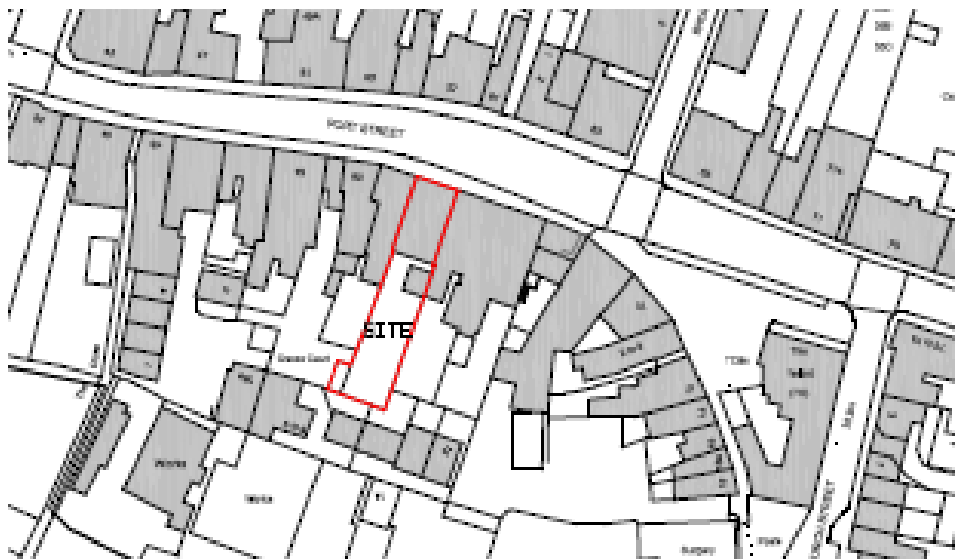


Fig. 3; site boundary

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Historic Environment Record (summary)

An HER search was carried out on a 500m radius of the provided grid reference (SP 04285 43576) on 03/07/2015 as specified in the search request. The search area is located atop a flattish landscape around a meander of the River Avon. The underlying geology consists of Blue Lias Formation and Charmouth Mudstone Formation bedrock beneath superficial deposits of sand, gravel and alluvium. The area is dominated by the historic town of Evesham, the planned medieval origins of which are still visible within the historic core. During the 20th century the town expanded and much of the settlement on the periphery of the search area dates to this period. The settlement pattern in this landscape is one of historic town, new town and modern expansion.

Within the search area lie 44 listed historic buildings dating from the medieval period to the 19th century as well as 41 unlisted historic buildings dating largely to the 18th and 19th centuries. A Historic England project to identify the Historic Farmsteads of Worcestershire also recorded a single 19th century farmstead within the search area. The building that forms the focal point of this search, 60 Port Street, is a grade II listed early 19th century terraced range. Also present within the search area are two Scheduled Monuments, Evesham Abbey and the west porch of Bengeworth Old Church.

In addition to the built environment, various monuments have been recorded within the search area, the earliest of which is a multi-period enclosure site dating to the Early Iron Age. The medieval period is well represented by the sites of a castle, fishpond, church, mill and occupation sites. Monuments from the post-medieval period are also present and include the sites of buildings and a graveyard. Monuments dating from World War Two include support buildings, residences and weapon emplacements. Various finds have been recorded within the search area through the Portable Antiquities Scheme, ranging in date from the 5th century to the 16th and including a brooch, coins and a dress hook. Additional unstratified finds recorded within the parish of Evesham include Roman pottery and Iron Age coins.

There has been a moderate amount of archaeological investigation within the search area, including evaluations and watching briefs. This is reflected in the wider landscape meaning that the survival of archaeology within the search area is relatively well known. There is excellent preservation of below ground remains

and good survival of above ground remains from the medieval period to the present. There is an excellent potential for below ground archaeology from the Roman period through to the post-medieval. A Historic England project to identify the potential for Palaeolithic Archaeology in Worcestershire recorded sand and gravel deposits within the search area with the potential for archaeology dating back to 113050 BCE. The area is highly sensitive to change.

RESULTS (Fig. 4)

Method and nature of the excavation

Archaeological recording was undertaken to obtain a record of any archaeological deposits or finds disturbed or exposed during excavation of the site. Machine excavation was only used for the removal of non-archaeologically significant material (modern deposits) and was used to excavate these layers stratigraphically. All machining was conducted under constant and close archaeological supervision at all times using a toothless bucket. The trench was 0.60m wide and varied between approx. 0.80-1m deep throughout the excavation.

Description of deposits

Context 102 (natural geology)

The surface of the geological horizon (context 102), a natural substrate comprising a Light orangey-brown sandy-gravelly clay with a large component (30-40%) of small to medium rounded pebbles and some greyish-brown mottling from root penetration, was exposed throughout the excavated foundation trench. The surface of this deposit was recorded throughout the excavation at a height of approx. 31m AOD and was truncated during machining generally to a depth of about 0.40m. No archaeological features were observed cut into or overlying this layer.

Context 101 (layer)

Overlying the natural substrate throughout most of the east and west sides of the excavated trench was the relict subsoil layer (context 101), comprising a Light greyish-brown sandy-clayey silt with a small component (10-15%) of rounded pebbles and a lesser component (3-5%) of small to medium sized flecks of charcoal. The deposit was absent from the majority of the central areas of the

trench where significant truncation had already been carried out in connection with pit/trenches 103, 106 and 109 and also with structure 107.

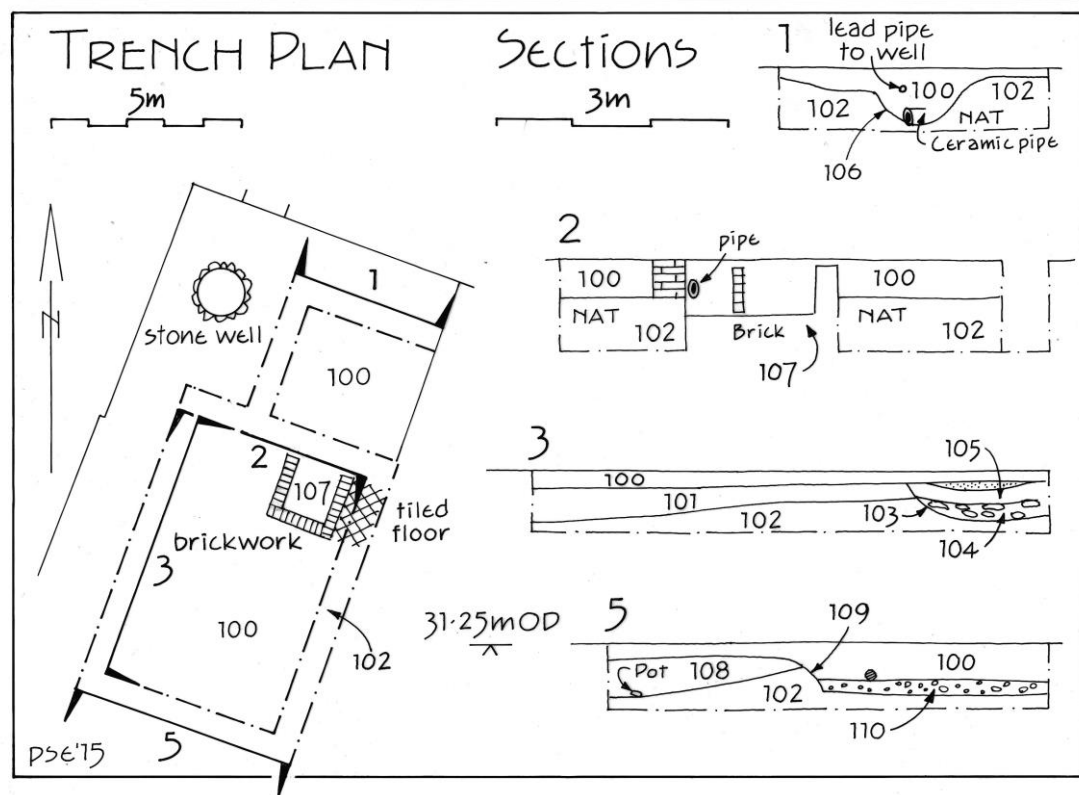


Fig. 4; trench plan & sections

Context 103 (?pit/trench) filled by contexts 104 & 105

Excavation of the trench revealed cut through the surface of context (layer) 101 was an undated shallow trench or pit-like feature (context 103). This was filled initially by context 104, comprising a greyish-brown sandy-silt with a large component of small fragments Lias and limestone. This was overlain by context 105, a deposit of soil comprising a dark-greyish brown clayey-sandy silt. This was then sealed by a thin deposit of gravel.

Context 106 (pipe trench) filled by context 100

Cut across the north-east end of the excavation is a linear trench associated with the insertion of a ceramic drain pipe and a lead pipe (associated with the stone well). This trench is filled by the existing topsoil (context 100).

Context 107 (brick structure)

Excavation of the central foundation trench revealed the north-east side of the brick structure (outside privy?) surveyed in 1886 as a small detached square-shaped building.

Context 108

Directly overlying the natural substrate in the south-east corner of the trench was a thick deposit (context 108) of a dark greyish-brown clayey-sandy silt (similar to fill/context 105). Finds recovered from the bottom of the deposit indicate an early 18th century date. Although there was no direct evidence for a pit or trench-like feature associated with this deposit, its deposition appears to be related to some form of activity, possibly gardening.

Context 109 (trench), filled by context 110 & 100

Cut across the south end of the trench (observed in both trench sections) was a shallow pit/trench like feature (context 109), this may equate with a similar feature (context 103) recorded in section 3. It is initially filled by context 110, comprising soil and gravel and subsequently sealed by the existing topsoil (context 100).

Stone well

Situated outside the trench in the north-west corner of the rear plot is a stone well measuring approx. 1.30m in diameter (outside edge). This was uncovered prior to the start of the excavation and infilled as part of the development. Recording of this feature was therefore limited.

FINDS

The pottery by Paul Blinkhorn

The pottery assemblage comprised 3 sherds with a total weight of 122g. They all occurred in context 103, and are from the same vessel, a press-moulded, Bristol/Staffordshire marbled Slipware dish. Such wares are common finds in the region, and generally of early 18th century date (Barton 1961). The sherds are in good condition, and appear reliably stratified.

Environmental data

No animal bone was recovered and none of the deposits exposed during the excavation proved suitable for palaeo-environmental sampling.



Plate 1; north-east arm of trench 1 (section 1), from the south-east



Plate 2; section 1 (south-east end), detail



Plate 3; section 2 (central trench), from the north-east



Plate 4; section 3 (north-east end), from the north-west

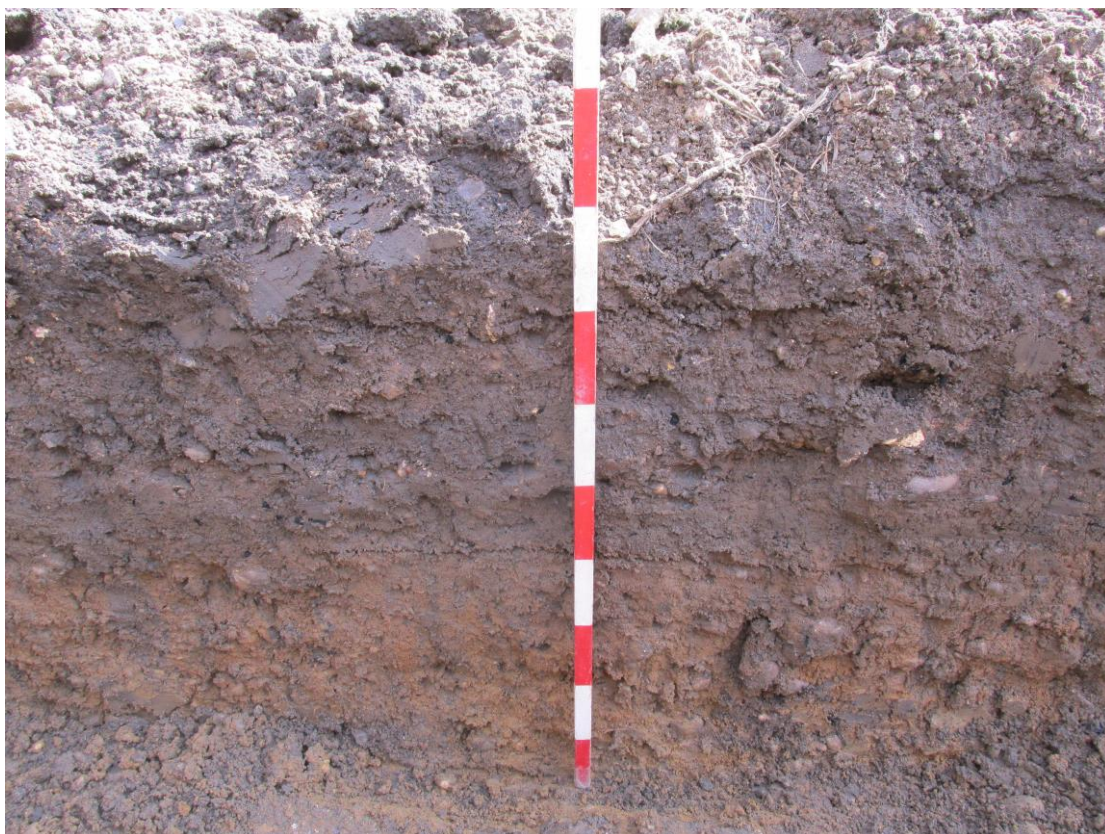


Plate 5; section 3 (centre), detail



Plate 6; foundation trench marking eastern boundary, from the north



Plate 7; section 5, from the north-east



Plate 8; section 5 (south-east end), from the north-east

DISCUSSION

Historic mapping (OS 1886) shows the site much as it is today as part of a ribbon of terraced properties fronting Port Street with long thin garden plots to the rear. These properties are associated with the earlier medieval burgage plots (Monument number WSM17306) that existed previously within a similar footprint and the rear gardens are likely to contain pits related to their former occupation (Dalwood, 1996). Archaeological and historic building recording (WSM 39880 & 39881) was carried out at the brewery building and land to the rear of 50-64, Port Street and Church Street in 2008 (Atherton & Cook, 2009). The Archaeological recording was carried during the excavation of strip foundations for new housing and associated drainage. Deposits essentially comprised pitting associated with the occupancy of Medieval tenements along Port Street. These features produced pottery indicating occupation from the 11th to 15th centuries. The rear of many of these plots have been subsequently developed and in some case further sub-divided.

The study site (WSM03422) is described as an early 19th century three-storey terraced range (Pevsner 1968). Whether this has replaced an earlier medieval or post medieval building is unclear, but evidence of this may survive within the building itself. The stone well recorded outside the area of excavation may be related to construction of the existing building although the use of masonry in the construction suggests that it may be an earlier feature, perhaps associated with an earlier phase of construction. A lead pipe found in the north of the excavation trench is aligned with the well and appears to be related indicating perhaps that a pump formerly existed within the study site servicing the house.

Also shown on the historic mapping to the rear of the building is a small detached square structure and this would equate with context 107, the north side of which was exposed in the central trench. The purpose of this structure is unclear, but it may have been an outside lavatory.

Truncation of the underlying deposits appears to have been confined to the central length of the excavation area and is characterized by a number of later features. These comprised a trench (context 106) associated with earlier drainage and lead piping (thought to be associated with the well) at the north end, construction of brick structure 107 in the central area of the trench and a large shallow trench or pit-like feature at the south end of the excavation as evidenced by contexts 103 & 109. Deposit 108, situated in the south-west corner, may also have been connected with later truncation, the depth of this deposit, immediately overlying the natural substrate, suggests probable garden cultivation. Finds from

the bottom of the deposit suggests this activity occurred during the early 18th century.

The earliest deposit to be recorded during the excavation was the undated context 101 which immediately overlay the natural substrate. This subsoil layer represents a relict soil horizon and although undated is likely to be related to the earliest occupation of the site. In places, where there is deposit is unaffected by later truncation it was show to be quite thick and this may be related to a gradual build-up of garden soils during occupation of the site prior to the 19th century.



Plate 9; no. 60 Port Street, front elevation, 2015

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Archive Location

The archaeological documentary archive arising from the work will be appropriately conserved and deposited with the Worcestershire County Museum. A pdf copy of the report will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) and the Historic Environment Record (HER).

Documentary archive:

X1 (unbound) report

Physical archive

x3 sherds of pottery

APPENDIX 1: OASIS

Project name	60 Port Street, Evesham; archaeological recording
Short description of the project	Archaeological recording carried out during construction of a rear detached single-storey dwelling.
Project dates	Start: 23-09-2015 End: 23-09-2015
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	WSM67009 - HER event no.
Any associated project reference codes	PSE15 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	POT Post Medieval
Investigation type	""Watching Brief""
Prompt	Planning condition
Project location	
Country	England
Site location	WORCESTERSHIRE WYCHAVON EVESHAM 60 Port Street
Postcode	WR111AP
Study area	80 Square metres
Site coordinates	SO 04285 43576 52.081834840574 -3.396951900641 52 04 54 N 003 23 49 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 31m Max: 31m
Project creators	
Name of Organisation	one ten archaeology
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	one ten archaeology
Project director/manager	sean cook
Project supervisor	sean cook
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Project archives	
Physical Archive recipient	county museum
Physical Archive ID	WSM67009
Physical Contents	"Ceramics"
Digital Archive recipient	OASIS

Digital Archive ID	110archa1-243354
Digital Contents	"none"
Digital Media available	"Text"
Paper Archive recipient	county museum
Paper Archive ID	WSM67009
Paper Contents	"none"
Paper Media available	"Report"
Project bibliography 1	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	60 Port Street, Evesham
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Cook, S.
Date	2016
Issuer or publisher	one ten archaeology
Place of issue or publication	warks
URL	http://www.oasis.ac.uk
Entered by	sean cook (seancook@btinternet.com)
Entered on	23 February 2016