



Land to the south of

36 Bretforton Road

Badsey, Evesham, Worcestershire

Land south of

36 Bretforton Road

Badsey, Evesham, Worcestershire; archaeological
evaluation

NGR: SP 07381 43675

Site code: BRD15

WSM 67373

OASIS ID: 110archa1-248497

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April 2016

one ten archaeology

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SUMMARY

An archaeological evaluation was carried out during March 2016 at land to the south of 36 Bretforton Road, Badsey. Evesham, Worcs. as part of a planning permission granted for the erection of three detached dwellings.

Historic mapping (OS 1885) shows the study site as formerly situated within the north-east part of a large open field stretching south from the Bretforton Road.

There is clear evidence of Iron Age and Roman occupation within the parish of Badsey with unstratified finds from these periods recovered to the north-west and south-west.

Approximately 130m to the west of the study site at 52 Bretforton Road an evaluation revealed deposits containing quantities of probable Iron Age pottery and animal bone indicative of settlement (WSM47978).

Excavation within the study site itself revealed a stratigraphic sequence characteristic of an open rural environment comprising natural gravel overlain by a relict subsoil, sealed in turn by the existing topsoil. The absence of any archaeological deposits and a lack of finds would suggest little human activity within the study site apart from that associated with agricultural activities. The evidence also suggests that the Iron Age deposits recorded to the west at 52 Bretforton Road do not extend this far to the west.

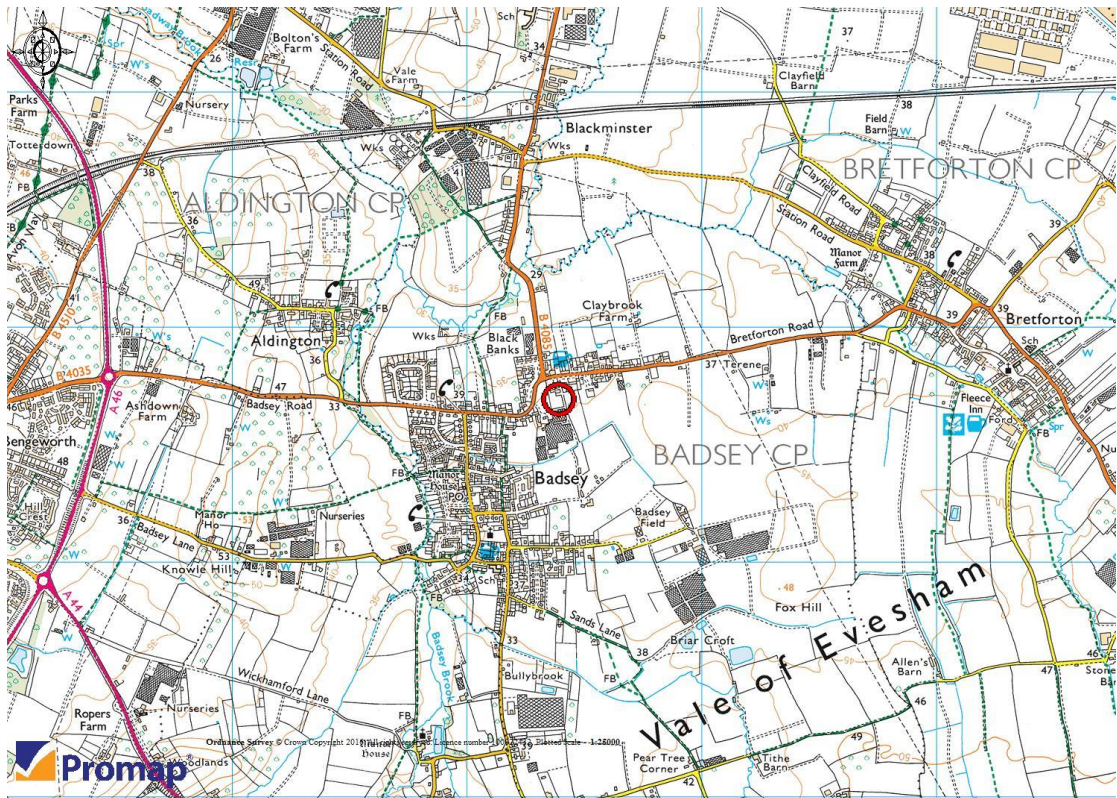


Fig. 1; site location (circled in red)

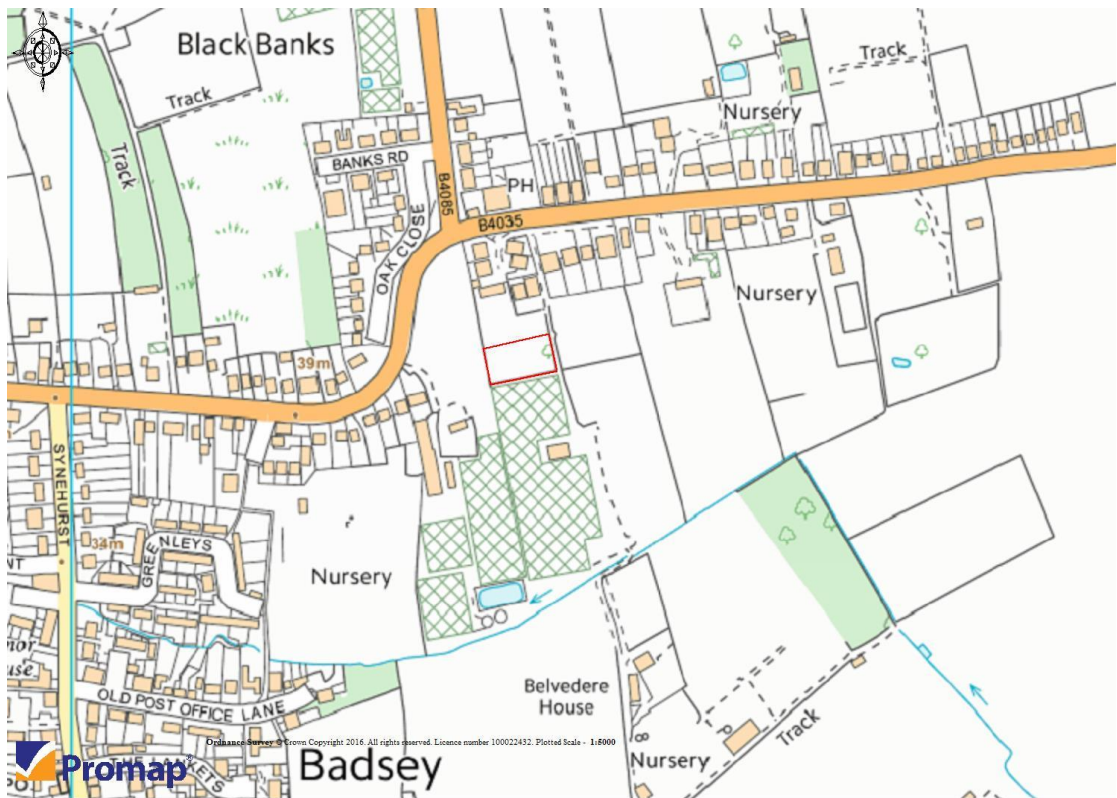


Fig. 2; study area (outlined in red)

INTRODUCTION

Location and scope of work (Figs. 1 & 2)

This document details the results of an archaeological evaluation during 21st and 22nd March 2016 at land to the south of 36 Bretforton Road, Badsey. Evesham, Worcs., at the request of Latimer Planning (the agent) on behalf of the owner Mr Chapman and in accordance with a brief issued by Worcestershire Archive & Archaeology Service (Scruby, A., 2nd October 2015). The work is being carried out as part of a planning application (Ref: W/14/02071) to Wychavon District Council for the erection of three detached dwellings.

The site is located in an area of some archaeological potential, in a topographically favourable area for early settlement. Prehistoric and Roman remains are known to exist in the area. Unstratified Romano-British have been reported in the Black Banks and Foxhill areas (WSM7207, WSM30329, WSM02744, WSM30142,) to the north and west of the Site, while further unstratified finds have been reported to the south of the Site (WSM 32618, WSM40399, WSM57174) and include quantities of Iron Age and Romano-British pottery, and an Iron Age coin. An evaluation undertaken in 2013 on land at 52 Bretforton Road (WSM48205) revealed a small cluster of archaeological features in two of the trenches.

The development site is situated in an area of some archaeological potential (see Section 2 below) and WAAS, in their capacity as archaeological advisors to the local planning authority, recommended that in order to more fully determine the presence or absence, extent, date, character, condition and significance of any such remains and the likely impact of the proposed development upon them a programme of archaeological works would be required, commencing with an initial field evaluation of the development area.

Geology and topography

The village of Badsey lies on the south-east side of the county about two miles east of Evesham. The site which situated to north-east of the main focus of the village is within a relatively low lying area, at a height of about 39m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) and the underlying geology comprised gravel (a drift deposit of Fan Gravel; BGS, 1974). This was confirmed during the excavation.

Archaeological and historical background

The Worcestershire Historic Environment Record (HER) was consulted in 2015 with a search carried out over a 500m radius centred on the site. The search area is located in an area of rolling lowland topography atop Blue Lias and Charmouth Mudstone Formation bedrock and superficial deposits of Head and Alluvium. The search area is dominated by the settlement of Badsey and surrounding mixed-use fields. The settlement pattern is primarily one of nucleated row and modern expansion, and the field system mostly consists of nurseries and garden centres with smaller areas of field amalgamation and paddocks.

Within the search area are 5 Listed historic buildings ranging in date from the 16th to the 19th century as well as an additional 19 unlisted historic buildings that primarily date to the 19th century. A Historic England project to identify the Historic Farmsteads of Worcestershire also recorded 4 16th, 18th and 19th century farmsteads within the search area. In addition to the built environment, several monuments have been recorded within the search area, the earliest of which are an area of Iron Age occupation and an area of Romano-British occupation. Additional monuments date to the medieval and post-medieval periods and include occupation sites and the locations of buildings. Various unstratified finds have been recorded within the search area dating to the Iron Age and Romano-British periods, including a brooch, coins, pottery and metal objects. There has been a moderate amount of archaeological investigation within the search area and consequently the survival of archaeology is relatively well known. There is a strong potential for the survival of late prehistoric and Roman settlement remains throughout the search area. Finally, a Historic England project to identify the potential for Palaeolithic archaeology in Worcestershire recorded Head deposits within the search area with the potential for archaeology dating to 476050 BCE.

EXCAVATION METHODOLOGY

Aims of the work

The objective of the trial trenching was to determine the date, character, quality, survival and extent of the archaeological deposits within the application area likely to be threatened by the proposed development. Should significant finds or features had been identified then an appropriate excavation strategy would be

implemented as a final stage of mitigation by the planning advisory service. This would be the subject of a separate brief.

Sample size and scope of fieldwork

The evaluation comprised 60m² of trial trenching divided into two trenches 1.50m wide each located within the proposed plots and aligned east-west. Trench 1 was 15m long and trench 2 was 30m long. The separation between the two trenches respected the alignment of an existing water pipe trench.

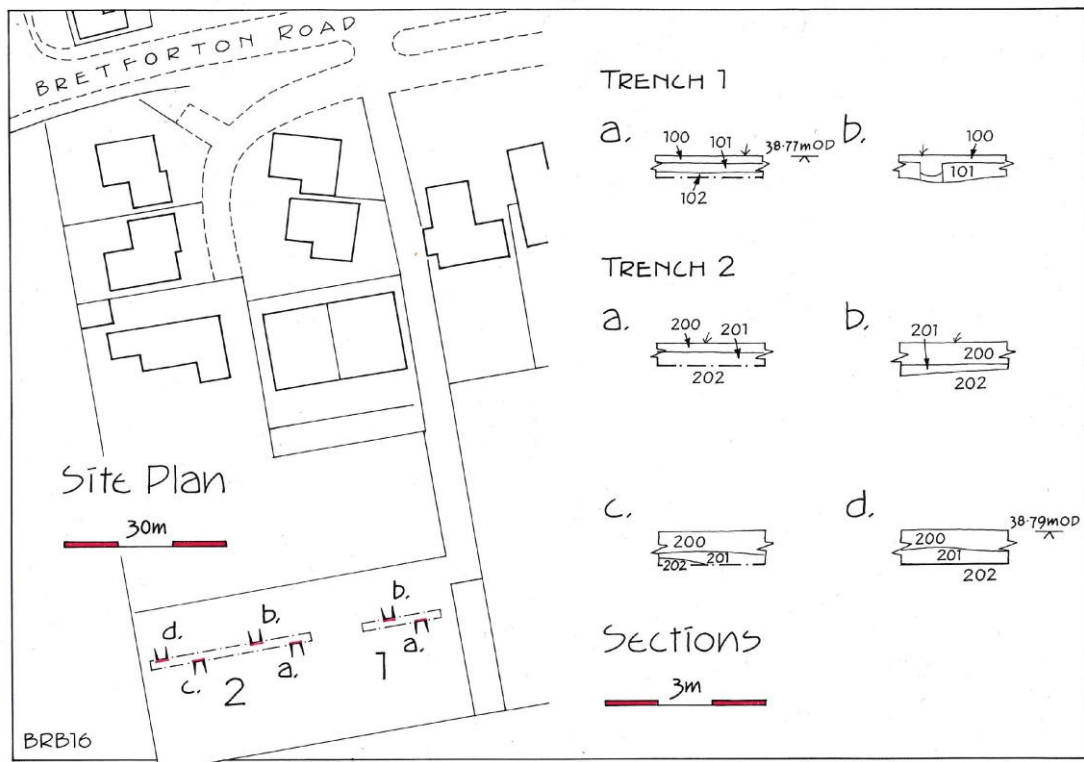


Fig. 3; site plan with trench locations and sections

Fieldwork methods and recording

The archaeological field work and post-excavation was carried out in accordance with standards and guidance for archaeological field evaluations produced by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA, 2014). All deposits were excavated removing the overburden under close archaeological supervision and investigated for archaeological features. A plan and section of the trench was made and recorded during excavation.

RESULTS: GENERAL (Fig. 3)

Soil and ground conditions

Conditions were generally dry during excavation, the deposits showing some moisture retention. Excavation was relatively smooth being made through alternate layers of topsoil and underlying subsoil leaving a clean and visible surface on the natural substrate. An unexcavated gap was left between the two trenches to avoid a known water pipe trench.

Reliability of field investigation

No truncation of the underlying deposits was observed within any of the six excavated trenches and deposits appear to have remained relatively intact across the site.

Distribution of archaeological deposits

Although the natural substrate was encountered throughout the majority of the excavation no archaeological deposits associated with early occupation were recorded either within or overlying this layer. It was sealed in all three trenches by a relict cultivation (subsoil), of varying thickness throughout all of the trenches, in some places there was no subsoil at all and the natural bedrock was directly overlain by the existing topsoil layer.

Presentation of results

The results of the excavation (below) are described from the earliest to the latest deposits. The trench was attributed context numbers with a numerical value equivalent to the number of the trench.

RESULTS: DESCRIPTIONS (Fig. 3)

TRENCHES 1 & 2

Contexts 102 & 202 (natural substrate)

The surface of the natural substrate comprised a light yellowish-brown gravel and was exposed throughout the length of both trenches. In trench 1 the surface of this deposit was at 38.47m AOD whilst in trench 2 it was situated at 38.19m AOD. No features or deposits were observed cut into or overlying this layer.

Contexts 101 & 201 (relict subsoil)

Overlying the natural gravel throughout both trenches at a depth varying between 0.15m and 0.35m was a relict subsoil comprising a dark light orangey-brown clayey-silt with a small pebble component. No finds were recovered from these equivalent layers. A pipe trench was observed within context (layer) 101 aligned north-south across the trench. This was backfilled initially with re-deposited orange gravel and light brown clay whilst topsoil formed the upper fill.

Contexts 100 & 200 (topsoil)

Overlying the relict subsoil layer in the two trenches was the existing topsoil layer comprising a dark greyish-brown loam. This varied in depth from between 0.15-35m throughout both trenches. No finds were recovered from this deposit.



Plate 1; section 1a



Plate 2; section 1b



Plate 3; section 2a



Plate 4; section 2b



Plate 5; section 2c



Plate 6; section 2d



Plate 7; trench 1, from the west



Plate 8; trenches 1 & 2, from the north-east

FINDS

No finds were recovered from either the topsoil or subsoil layers during the excavation.

Environmental data

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

DISCUSSION

Historic mapping (OS 1885) shows the study site as formerly situated within the north-east part of a large open field stretching south from the Badsey Road. To the north the field is bounded by the Bretforton Road and to the south by a tributary stream of the Badsey Brook which lies further to the west. The only noticeable development within 500m of the site is a public house on the north side of the road and Badsey Leys Farm (WSM51727) which lies on the west side of the field. The farm has which was located within a loose farmstead cluster has since been demolished. It comprised a courtyard with three sides of this formed by working agricultural buildings with additional, prominent detached elements to the main plan. The farmhouse was detached and set away from the yard.

There is clear evidence of Iron Age and Roman occupation within the parish of Badsey. North-west of the site a number of unstratified finds from the Iron Age and Roman periods have been recovered from the Black Banks area (WSM30329; WSM29151 & WSM07207) whilst to the south-west Roman and medieval pottery sherds (WSM66969) have been found at the Manor House, High Street.

Approximately 130m to the west of the study site at 52 Bretforton Road an evaluation (WSM48205) revealed deposits associated with a probable Iron Age settlement (WSM47978). Features identified to the east of site comprised a ditch terminal and a pit/ditch terminal containing quantities of probable Iron Age pottery and animal bone. An undated pit/posthole and an undated ditch were identified in the north-western corner of site (Sheldon, 2013).

Excavation within the study site revealed a stratigraphic sequence characteristic of an open rural environment comprising natural gravel overlain by a relict subsoil which was in turn sealed by the existing topsoil. The absence of any archaeological deposits and a lack of finds would suggest little human activity within the study site apart from that associated with agricultural activities. The evidence also suggests that the Iron Age deposits recorded to the east at 52 Bretforton Road do not extend this far to the west.

Summary of results

The results of the evaluation suggest that there is unlikely to be any settlement activity within the study site and a lack of residual finds would tend to support this interpretation. The evidence indicates an open rural agricultural environment with little human activity.

Significance

The evaluation revealed a simple stratigraphic sequence of natural clay, overlain by a relict subsoil in turn sealed by the modern topsoil. There were no significant archaeological deposits within any of the trenches suggesting little or no activity within the proposed development site. A lack of residual finds would tend to support this interpretation.

Impact of development

The results of the trial trenching suggests that no archaeological deposits are present within the unexcavated areas of the application site and that the proposed development will have no impact.

Archive Location

The archaeological documentary archive arising from the work will be appropriately conserved and deposited with the Worcestershire County Museum. The digital archive arising from the work will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS)

Digital archive:

Pdf report

X8 digital images

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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APPENDIX 1 OASIS

Project name	Land south of 36 Bretforton Road; an archaeological evaluation
Short description of the project	An archaeological evaluation was carried out during March 2016 at land to the south of 36 Bretforton Road, Badsey. Evesham, Worcs. as part of a planning permission granted for the erection of three detached dwellings.
Project dates	Start: 21-03-2016 End: 22-03-2016
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	WSM 67373 - HER event no.
Any associated project reference codes	BRB15 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 10 - Orchard
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	'Targeted Trenches'
Development type	Rural residential
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)
Country	England
Site location	WORCESTERSHIRE WYCHAVON BADSEY 36 Bretforton Road, Badsey
Postcode	WR117XQ
Study area	1830 Square metres
Site coordinates	SP 07381 43675 52.090957881666 - 1.892255608054 52 05 27 N 001 53 32 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 38.19m Max: 38.47m
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	Landowner
Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	OASIS
Digital Contents	"none"
Digital Media available	"Text"
Paper Archive Exists?	No
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Land south of 36 Bretforton Road, Badsey; an archaeological evaluation
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	18 April 2016