



The Orchards

25 Lyfs Lane, Kempsey, Worcestershire

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Archaeological recording

SO 84975 49408

WSM 66615

Site code: LLK 15

OASIS ID: 110archa1-290899

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July 2017

one ten archaeology

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Front cover; excavated foundation trench, view south-east

SUMMARY

Archaeological recording was carried out in May 2017 at The Orchards, 25 Lyfs Lane, Kempsey, Worcestershire, during the erection of a detached bungalow. The Historic Environment Record (HER) showed that Kempsey lies in an area rich in archaeological remains and that the village has a long history. The site is close to a promontory fort of probable Iron-Age date and Roman deposits suggesting occupation have been found within the village. A Saxon ecclesiastical settlement is well documented around the church and the village continued to develop during the medieval period

Historic maps show the site lying on the northern periphery of the village in outlying fields named in 1840 as 'Brewers Close' and 'Marshy Furlong'. By 1885-6 these has become part of a larger area clearly used as orchard. Post-war, the land was sub-divided and Orchard House was constructed within a small corner plot to the south-east along the north side of Lyfs Lane between 1955-1970.

The stratigraphic sequence of deposits recorded during the excavation suggests an open rural environment with little or no human activity prior to the occupation of the site in the second half of the C20. The lack of residual finds from the excavation supports this interpretation.

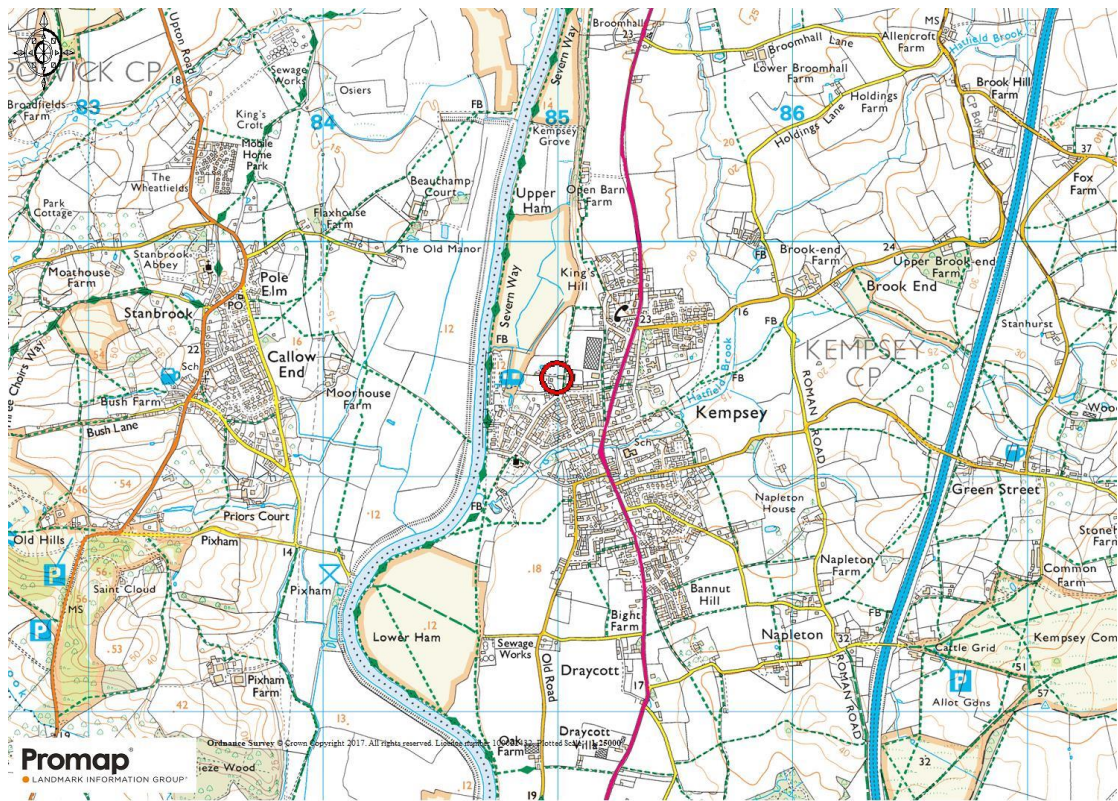


Fig. 1; site location (circled in red)



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

INTRODUCTION

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

This document sets out the results of archaeological recording ('watching brief') carried out during 23rd and 24th May 2017 at The Orchards, 25 Lyfs Lane, Kempsey, Worcs., WR5 3JN at the request of the owner. The agent was Ain Designs Ltd. The development comprised the erection of a detached bungalow.

The programme of archaeological work was required as a condition of planning permission granted in respect of an application (Ref: 14/00728/OUT) to Malvern Hills District Council and was undertaken in accordance with a brief issued by Worcestershire County Council Historic Environment & Archaeology Service (Glyde, M., Sept., 2014). While no archaeological fieldwork had taken place within the proposed development area, investigations in the vicinity have revealed prehistoric, Romano British and medieval deposits and remains. Given the scale and anticipated remains the impact of the proposed development on the historic environment was offset by an archaeological programme of works as a condition of planning consent.

Geology and topography

Kempsey is a village and civil parish in the Malvern Hills District in the county of Worcestershire. It is bounded by the River Severn on the west, and the A38 main road runs through it and is about 3 miles south of Worcester. The parish is watered by the Severn and a tributary, the Hatfield Brook. The village and a large part of the parish lie very low in the Severn Valley at 15m or less above the ordnance datum. Kempsey Common is about 30m above the ordnance datum, and the land rises north-eastward to a height of 60m. The Orchards is a property situated on the north-eastern edge of the village. The development site is represented by a roughly rectangular plot of land, approx. 800m² in size forming the southern part of the plot currently occupied by The Orchards. The site lies at approx. 14m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) and the underlying geology is Third Main Terrace river gravels (BGS, 1993). This was confirmed during excavation.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

A total of 18 monument records and 19 event records are identified from the Worcestershire Historic Environment Record (HER) within a 500m radial search area centred on the site. A summary of the more significant information is outlined below.

Prehistoric

WSM02113; Site of Hillfort, Kempsey Earthwork, Kempsey. Excavations in 1956 (WSM34720) revealed the profile of the ditch and a piece of Iron-Age pottery was recovered from one of the lower fills (O'Neil, 1956). The evidence showed that the ditch had been badly damaged by gravel extraction during the 19th century.

WSM30124; An archaeological desk based assessment for the Kempsey Flood Alleviation Scheme.

Summarised below:

"Whilst the two areas specified for the scheme do not directly affect any known sites, the length of human occupation and the density of sites in the surrounding area make it likely that significant archaeological deposits will be encountered during any development.

The archaeological landscape in this area is very rich with apparently continuous occupation from prehistoric times to the present day. Whilst there are no known sites directly affected in the proposed areas of development the area surrounding the brook is likely to provide the right conditions for the preservation of environmental evidence of land use over the centuries. The Hatfield Brook has not changed its course since it was first mapped in 1840 [4]. Paleolithic activity is always a possibility in the Severn Valley particularly on loops such as there is at Kempsey, and would leave no above ground traces. The proximity of the promontory fort (WSM 02113) and the enclosures to the south (WSM 02109; 02110) also make it likely that trackways would be crossing the area. It is common to find extensive field systems surrounding prehistoric enclosures. The land to the south has probably been in agricultural use since the Neolithic period, and field boundaries may exist which have not shown up on the aerial photographs. Similarly, occupation sites are often found scattered within the fields. There would appear that the later occupation was concentrated to the north of the brook out of the development area, so it is likely that any prehistoric

features or deposits to the south should be in a good state of preservation with little post depositional disturbance" (Appleton-Fox, 1998).

Roman

WSM02125; Unstratified finds, The Moors, Kempsey. In 1835-9 in field called the Moors, gravel-diggers found small number of pits containing ash, burnt bone and teeth of a horse, a few fibulae, coin of Nero, pottery including samian and 'red earth ware' Pits c 6' square of 6' x 8' and probably rubbish pits, 'such as regularly occur near dwelling houses.

WSM02121; Fragments of Romano-British milestone, Kempsey. Roman milestone lying in 2 pieces found 4' deep in West Wall of kitchen garden of parsonage farm (now court house) along with other stones which were cemented together forming a foundation. Roman tiles found nearby indicating building. A flat slab of free stone. VAL(ERIO) CONSTANTINO P(IO) INVICTO AUG(USTO) Beginning lost but possibly (ERATORI) CAES(ARI) FL(AVIO) Constantine the Great Emperor 308-337. Said to have been found in the west wall of the kitchen garden of the Parsonage Farm. Bequeathed by Rev. Rudd of Kempsey to the Museum of Worcestershire Natural History Society. Must have been brought to Kempsey, perhaps in medieval times and it could not have been in its original setting.

Saxon/early medieval

WSM07192; Bishops Palace, Kempsey

The site of the bishop's palace is near the church of St. Mary in the middle of the village. In 799, thirty manses belonging to 'monasterium' at Kempsey were given by Coenwulf, King of Mercia, to Abbot Balthun and in 814, Coenwulf gave all monasteries belonging to Worcester to the monks of Worcester. Kempsey monastery was then given to Bishop Deneberht (798-822). Kempsey Manor was in the possession of Bishops of Worcester in 1086.

Medieval

WSM02123; The Church of St Mary the Virgin, Kempsey. 12th century.

WSM65914; Find-spot. Late 11th century AD silver coin

WSM27891; Medieval Settlement Area, Kempsey

First listed 'Kemesei' in c.799. Meaning 'Cemmi's island or well-watered ground'.

Post-medieval

WSM31556 Cobblers Cottage, 36 Church Street, Kempsey

Believed to date from the mid-16th century and used as a hospital by Cromwell in the Battle of Worcester. Brick and timber-frame construction with thatched roof, wattle and daub and exposed timbers. Late 17th century. Timber-framing with brick infill and thatched roof. Framed in square panels. One storey with attic. East wall has one window to left of door and two to right. Left-hand (south) gable wall has two windows on the ground floor, one between the tie-beam and the collar, and V-struts above the collar. Chimney on rear wall. See also photo in 1892.

WSM50393 Post Medieval Cobbled Surface, East of Kempsey

Salvage recording in 2000 identified cobbled surface of post-medieval date, but possibly related to Roman road (Bretherton, & Jones, 2000).

WSM22976; Site of Windmill, Windmill Lane, Kempsey

Post mill in Windmill Lane, burnt down in the 1870s. "It's in Clare Williams' garden". Newcomer to the village cleaned back garden and found timbers and base of windmill. Previously known from placename and documentary references to it burning down. Photograph by Benjamin Brecknell Turner, probably taken in the 1850's. [2]

Modern

WSM23828; Ferry Crossing, Kempsey

Ferry across the River Severn, from Kempsey village on the east bank. A track on the west bank led north west towards Stanbrook. The ferry is shown on the 2nd and 3rd Edition Ordnance Survey maps. The 1840 Kempsey tithe plan WRO BA1572 s760/376.1 shows that this field was known as Windmill at that time, and was the site of one of the two windmills in Kempsey (WSM no 22976).

WSM32886; Site of Baptist Chapel, Church Street, Kempsey

Baptist chapel on south side of Church Street, Built in 1860.

WSM37203; Second World War Bombing Incidents in parish of Kempsey

The bombs at Kempsey are thought to have been aimed at the Bombing Decoy Site close by.

WSM27542; Air Raid Shelter, 2 Lanes End, Kempsey

Defence of Britain Project site report form documenting the site of an air raid shelter that was demolished in 1998 prior to redevelopment of the site.

WSM29383; Communal Air Raid Shelter, Worcester Road, Kempsey

Defence of Britain site report form documenting the location of a communal air raid shelter. Brick built, converted into a garage sometime post Second World War. Demolished 2002, not seen on aerial photographs from 1999, probably due to tree cover.

WSM31316; Domestic Air Raid Shelter, Worcester Road, Kempsey

This was a small domestic air raid shelter. Shape digitised from 1999 aerial photograph, no longer visible on 2005 photographs as rear of property has been developed into a parking area.

WSM31318; Air Raid Shelter, East of Hatfield Brook, Squire's Walk, Kempsey

A small communal air raid shelter set in the hedgerow. It is now overgrown but appears to be in good condition.

WSM31320; Air Raid Shelter, Old Road, Kempsey.

A small communal shelter on the side of the road and built to serve the adjoining local authority houses.

Undated

WSM15750; Cropmarks, East of Moorhouse Farm, Powick One main ditch line as cropmark, but other slighter features just visible. May represent element of the historic water meadow identified along the western bank of the river. Aerial Photograph: Various. 1998. Aerial photographs.

WSM46137; Earthworks alongside the Hatfield Brook, Kempsey.

Possibly fishpond or mill site alongside Hatfield Brook. This feature is seen on aerial photographs, LiDAR imagery and from earthwork evidence. It is within a field under pasture, but not on any cartographic sources.

RESULTS (Figs. 3-5)

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. Excavation

comprised 0.60m and 0.45m wide strip foundations within an area of about 00m² and was carried out by machine using a toothless grading bucket under archaeological supervision. The area was initially stripped of topsoil and the foundations excavated within the underlying relict subsoil layer and natural gravel.

Description of deposits

Context 102 (natural substrate); context 101 (relict subsoil layer) & context 100 (topsoil layer)

The surface of the geological horizon (context 102), comprising a light reddish-brown sandy-gravel was exposed throughout the excavation at a level height of approx. 14m AOD. No archaeological deposits or cut features were observed overlying or cut into this layer. Overlying the natural substrate to depth varying between 0.30-40m across the excavated area was an undated relict subsoil layer (101) comprising a mid-greyish-brown sandy-silt. It was sealed by the modern topsoil (100) to a depth of 0.35m.

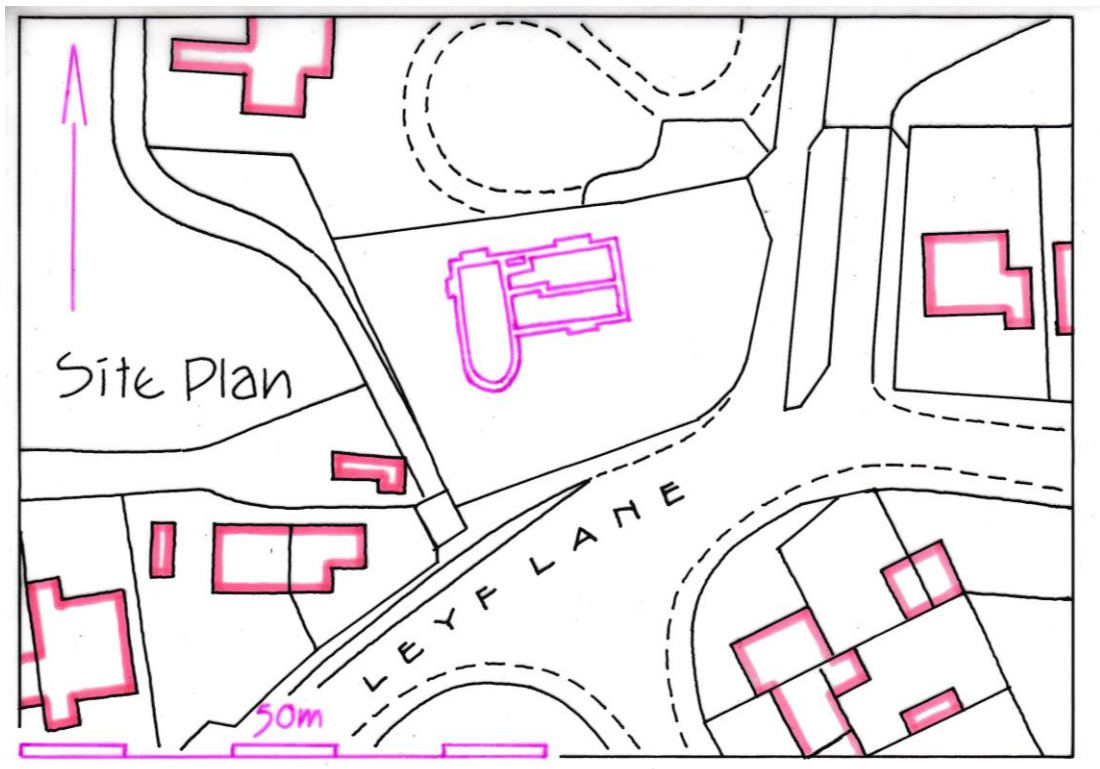


Fig. 3; site plan showing location of the development

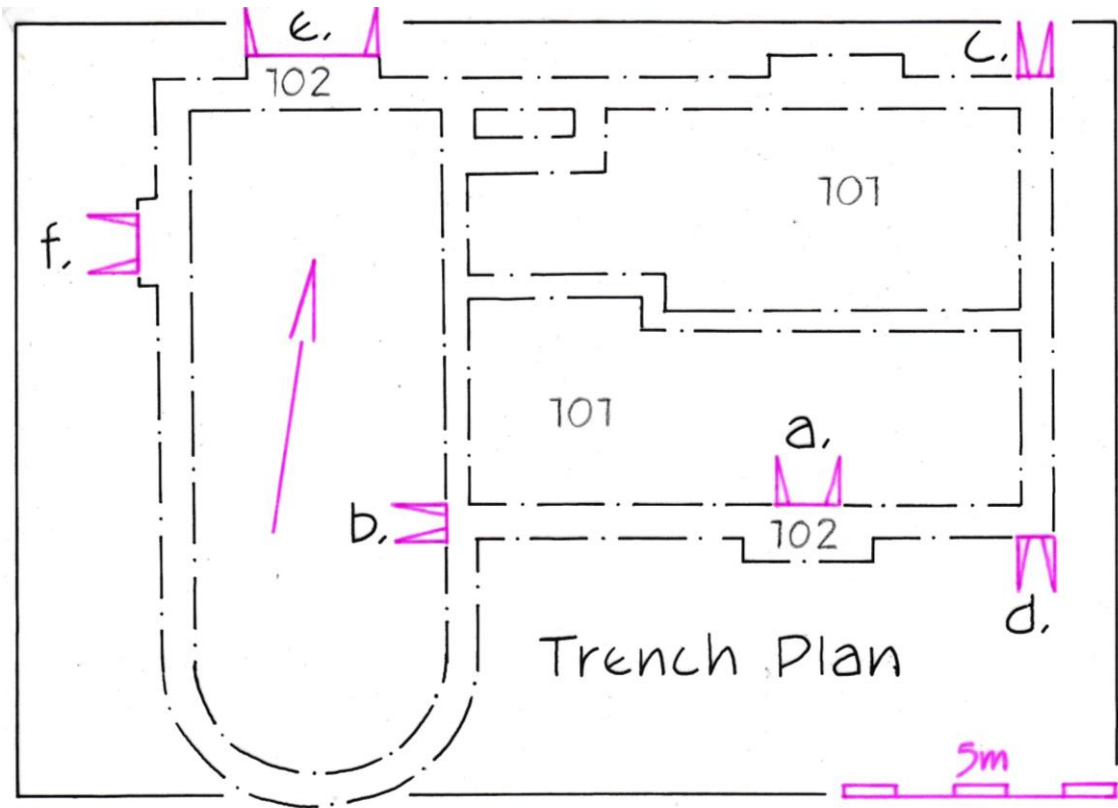


Fig.4; foundation plan with section locations

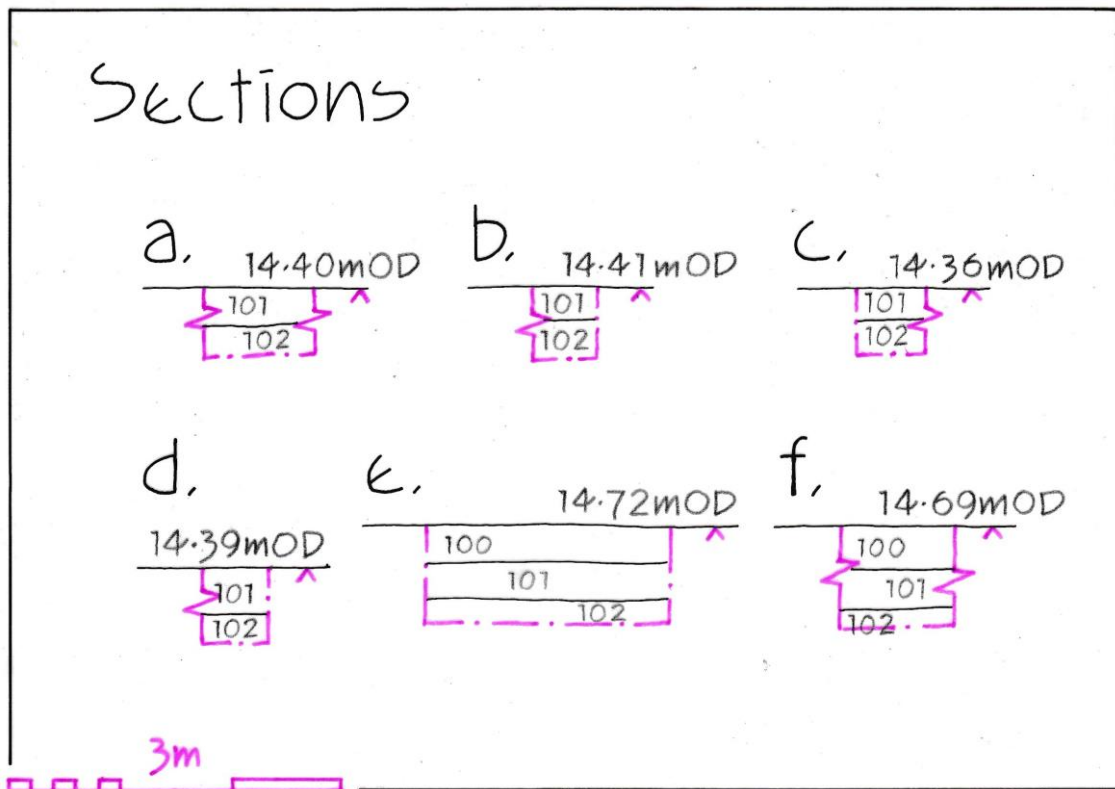


Fig. 5; trench sections

FINDS

No finds were recovered during the excavation.

Environmental data

None of the deposits exposed during the excavation proved suitable for palaeo-environmental sampling.



Plate 1; overall view of the excavation, view south-east



Plate 2; section 1a



Plate 3; section 1b



Plate 4; section 1d



Plate 5; section 1e



Plate 6; section 1f

DISCUSSION

The Historic Environment Record (HER) has shown that Kempsey lies in an area rich in archaeological remains from the prehistoric period to the present day (Appleton-Fox, 1998). The site is close to a promontory fort (WSM 02113) where excavations in 1956 (WSM34720) revealed the profile of the defensive ditch and a piece of Iron-Age pottery was recovered from one of the lower fills (O'Neil, 1956).

Although there is no direct evidence of Roman settlement within the search area, a series of Roman rubbish pits (WSM48348) recorded north-east of the boat building yard and Roman tiles found near Court House, are clear evidence of occupation. An evaluation at Lyf's Lane (WSM29915) has also revealed possible Roman deposits (Fagan, 1993).

The village has a long history. Its name is derived from the Saxon "Kemys' Eye", or the island of Kemys. Kemys was a Saxon chief, whose island lay between marshes and the River Severn. Lyf's Lane itself, is named after another Saxon chief. A manor is documented at Kempsey in 799 when it was given to the Bishop of Worcester indicating that an early medieval settlement (WSM27891) had already become established by this time around the church. References (VCH, 1913) to a manorial chapel and the Bishop's Palace (WSM07192), sited near the 12th century church of St. Mary in the middle of the village suggests a significant ecclesiastical influence throughout the medieval period. The HER also records a late 11th century coin found at Kempsey (WSM65914).

Kempsey featured in the Civil War. Cobblers Cottage, 36 Church Street, (WSM31556) is a timber-frame construction with thatched roof, wattle and daub. It dates from the mid-16th century and was believed to have been used as a hospital by Cromwell in the Battle of Worcester. Salvage recording east of the village identified a cobbled surface of post-medieval date (WSM50393), but possibly related to a Roman road (Jones, 2000). Windmill Lane is the site of a former post mill (WSM22976) burnt down in the 1870s.

Historic maps show the development site lying on the northern periphery of the village in outlying fields named in 1840 as 'Brewers Close' and 'Marshy Furlong'. By 1885-6 these has become part of a larger area clearly used as orchard. Post-war, the land was sub-divided and Orchard House was constructed within a small corner plot to the south-east along the north side of Lyfs Lane between 1955-1970.

The stratigraphic sequence of deposits recorded during the excavation suggests an earlier open rural environment with little or no human activity prior to

the occupation of the site in the second half of the 20th century. The lack of residual finds from the excavation supports this interpretation.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Archive Location

A digital (pdf) copy of the report (referenced with OASIS) will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service. A pdf copy of the report will also be deposited with the Historic Environment Record (HER).

APPENDIX 1: OASIS

Project name	The Orchards, 25 Lyfs Lane, Kempsey, Worcestershire; archaeological recording
Project dates	Start: 23-05-2017 End: 24-05-2017
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	LLK15 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Planning condition
Country	England
Site location	WORCESTERSHIRE MALVERN HILLS KEMPSEY The Orchards, 25 Lyfs Lane
Postcode	WR5 3JN
Study area	800 Square metres
Site coordinates	SO 84975 49408 52.142351345755 -2.219580410181 52 08 32 N 002 13 10 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 14m Max: 14m
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
Paper Contents	"none"
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	The Orchards, 25 Lyfs Lane, Kempsey, Worcestershire; archaeological recording
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Cook, S
Date	2017

Issuer or publisher	one ten archaeology
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