



Land at the rear of

Ivanhoe

Blackminster, Badsey Worcestershire

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Ivanhoe

Blackminster, Badsey, Worcestershire, WR11 7YT.

Archaeological Evaluation

NGR: *SO 407314 244854*

Site code: *bad22*

HER ref: *wsm78077*

OASIS ID: *110archa1-505295*

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14th March 2022

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Front cover; View of the site from east.

SUMMARY

An archaeological evaluation was carried out at land to the rear of Ivanhoe, Blackminster, Badsey, Worcestershire in advance of residential development. The HER had showed that Roman and Anglo-Saxon activity is recorded within 500m of the site. Later development of the site occurred in the C19, mainly after the construction of the railway and led to increased industrial development either side of the line. The investigation revealed little evidence of archaeological deposits surviving within the development site, the results suggest that the area lies outside the focus of earlier occupation recorded in the wider area of the site and instead formed part of the agricultural belt within the local contemporary environment.

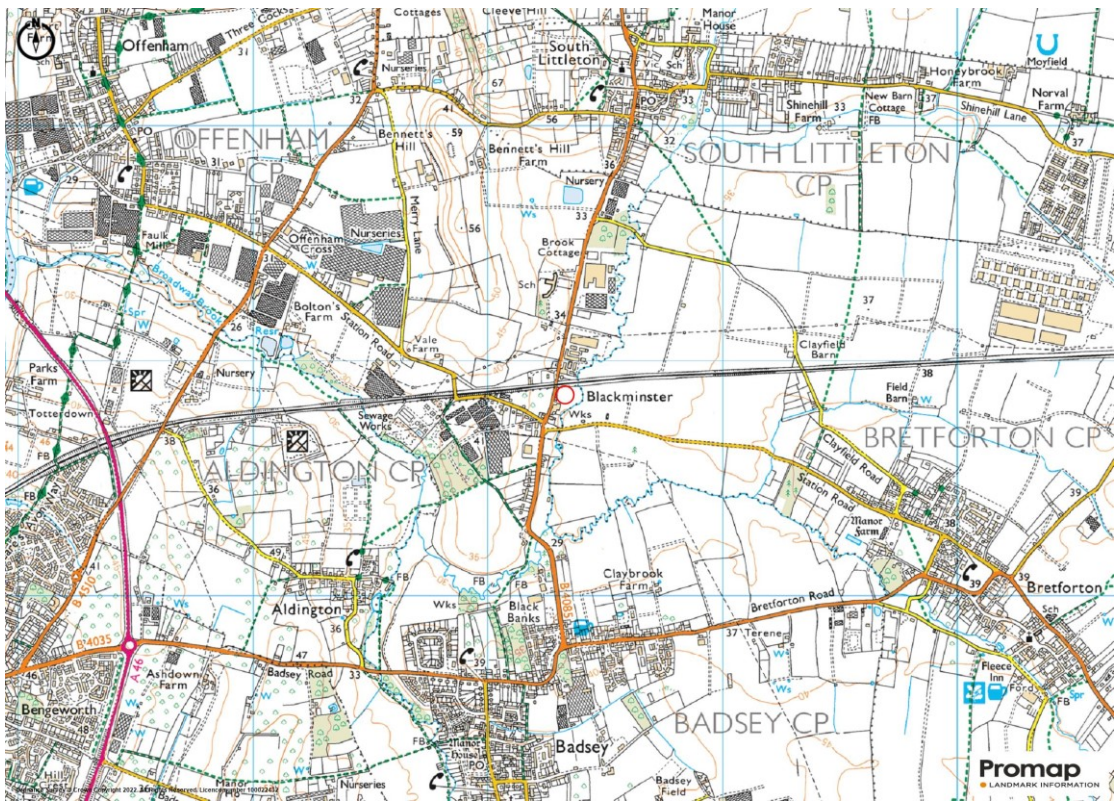


Fig. 1; Site location circled in red.

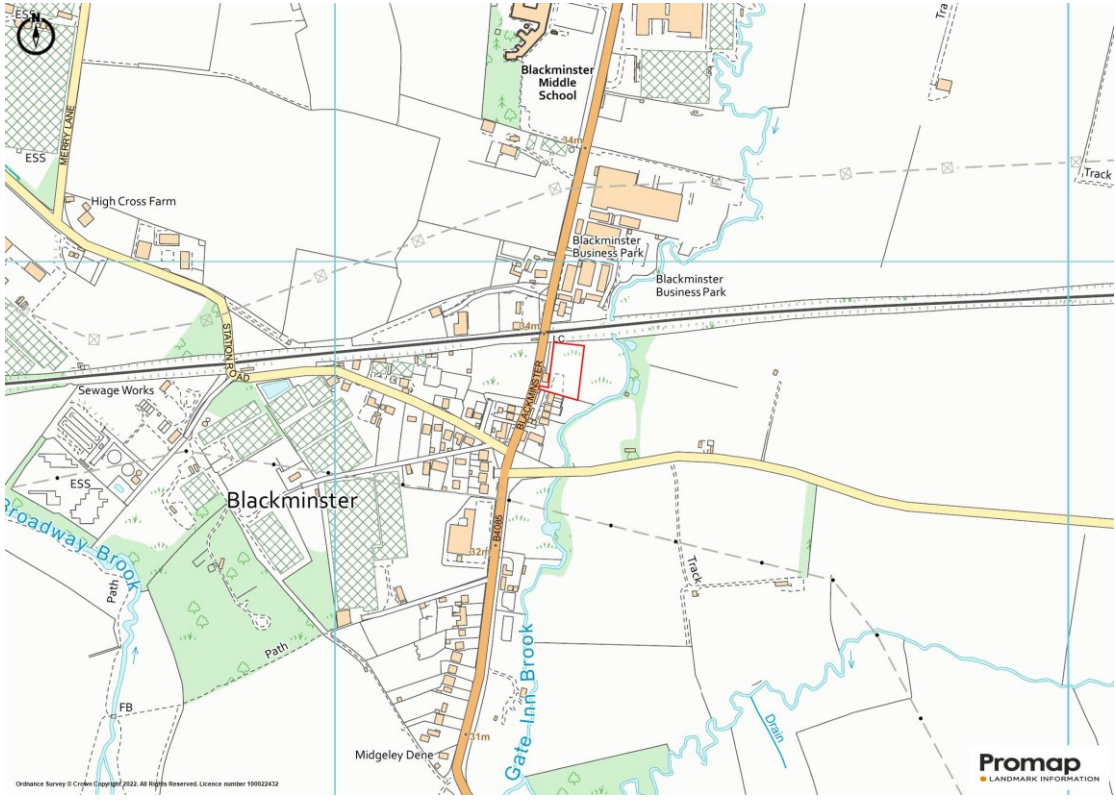


Fig. 2; Area of study outlined in red.

INTRODUCTION

Location and scope of works

This document details the results of an archaeological evaluation during 31st January and 1st February 2022 at land to the rear of Ivanhoe, Blackminster, Badsey, Worcestershire, WR11 7YT at the request of the landowner. A planning application (Planning ref. 21/01720/TDC5) has been granted by Wychavon District Council for the development of the site comprising the construction of eight dwellings.

The proposed development area (PDA) may affect heritage assets of known archaeological significance. The PDA is within Blackminster, the place name suggests both Roman and Anglo-Saxon archaeological potential. The archaeological record within Blackminster notes both Anglo-Saxon burial and small finds dating to the Romano-British period. Aerial images suggest that there may be an anomaly within the PDA, an oval feature which may be evidence of an enclosure. LiDAR data to the west shows a similar feature. It is noted that a medieval deer park pale passes through Blackminster, it is possible that a compartmentalised deer park would require small stock enclosures, such features have been recorded in other deer parks in the region. Given the scale of the development, and the anticipated archaeological potential, the likely impact on the historic environment caused by this development may be offset by the implementation of a conditional programme of archaeological works. This will comprise an initial programme of trial trenching to determine the presence or absence, extent, date, character, condition and significance of any remains and the likely impact of the development upon them. If archaeological remains are identified that would be damaged or destroyed by the development and they cannot be preserved in-situ then the evaluation would be followed by a defined programme of archaeological excavation and/ or a watching brief to record the remains prior to their loss.

Geology and topography

Blackminster is a hamlet situated within the parish of Badsey. The development site lies behind Ivanhoe a property which itself fronts the current B4085, the

railway marks the northern boundary of the site and to the east, beyond the adjacent field is the Gate Inn brook which flows southwards as a tributary of the Broadway Brook. The southern boundary of the site abuts a recent residential development. The site comprises a roughly rectangular area of approx. 3,000m² situated at approximately 32m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD). The underlying geology comprises clay, mainly Lower and Middle Lias (BGS, 1993).

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Worcestershire Historic Environment Record (HER) was consulted with a 500m radial search area centred on the site. The search area is situated within a low-lying river terrace of mixed sands and gravels with lime-rich loamy and clayey soils. The field pattern is one of field amalgamation and piecemeal enclosure with small areas of industry. The dominant character of is market gardening and there are numerous associated glasshouses and nurseries throughout this area. Within this landscape, the settlement pattern is nucleated. 12 Archaeological activities and 47 HER Monuments were recorded within the search area.

An Anglo-Saxon burial ([wsm26807](#)) was recorded west of the search area in 1852 and a single saucer brooch being made in 1986 so there was potential for an Anglo-Saxon cemetery and associated deposits to survive within the area although these may have been disturbed during the construction of the railway. Numerous finds were recorded during the 'Unlocking the Past' project which potentially date to the prehistoric and Roman periods. There is a possible Roman site beyond the search area to the south indicated by finds including pottery and metalwork. Placenames recorded within the search area and to the north-west which contain the word 'black' and may be indicative of a possible site of Roman occupation.

There are 12 unlisted, historic buildings. The structures currently recorded, C19 and C20, include dwellings, farm buildings and buildings previously forming a canning factory. The early C20 former Cadbury fruit packing factory ([wsm45218](#)) together with associated buildings ([wsm45219](#)) have been converted to commercial use. The Oxford, Worcester and Wolverhampton railway ([wsm31664](#)) also passes through area. The Historic Farmsteads of Worcestershire project recorded 3 farmsteads and 3 out-farms, all C19.

There are monument records for the site of several farm buildings, now demolished, and quarry and lime kiln sites. More recent records include the site of

canning factory buildings now demolished, the site of a sewage works and the Littleton and Badsey railway station closed in 1966.

2 Portable Antiquity Scheme find records are currently identified within the search area, both detailing the discovery of Medieval silver coins. Archaeological investigations have also recovered several artefacts, principally pottery and other household items belonging to the Iron Age or Romano-British periods.

There has been very little archaeological investigation within the search area, with more than half of the recorded works being listed as either desk-based assessments or unstratified finds recovery. Five interventions are recorded, all of which are watching briefs. In the wider landscape there is strong potential for the Survival of prehistoric and Roman settlement.

EXCAVATION METHODOLOGY

Aims of the work

The objectives of the evaluation were 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 in order that an informed decision on their importance in a local, regional and national context can be made. This information would clarify whether any remains should be considered for preservation *in situ* or form the basis of a mitigation strategy.

In particular, the aims of the investigation will include:

- i) establishing the date, nature and extent of activity or occupation on the development site.
- ii) recovering artefacts to assist in the development of type series within the region.
- iii) recovering palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions.

Sample size and scope of fieldwork

The evaluation comprised two trenches each located within the main areas of impact of the proposed development. Trench 1 was 60m long and trench 2 was 20m long. Both trenches were excavated to a width of 1.50m.

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, 2020). All deposits were excavated removing the overburden under close archaeological supervision and investigated for archaeological features. Plans and sample sections of the trenches were made and recorded during excavation.

RESULTS: GENERAL

Soil and ground conditions

Conditions were generally wet during the excavation with the soil layers showing some moisture retention. Excavation was relatively smooth throughout the trench being made through alternate layers of redeposited soil and clay, leaving a clean and visible surface within the natural substrate, a stiff clay.

Reliability of field investigation

There was evidence of previous truncation of the underlying deposits in both trenches although this was particularly evident in trench 2. This truncation was associated with the development of the site for industrial purposes following construction of the railway in the mid C19.

Distribution of archaeological deposits

No archaeological deposits were revealed during the investigation, activity within the site is associated with industrial development during the C20.

Presentation of results

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

RESULTS: DESCRIPTIONS

Trenches 1 & 2

The natural substrate (102 & 203) comprised a light yellowish-brown clay mottled with greyish-white clay. The surface of this deposit was at a level height of about 33m AOD in both trenches 1 and 2. No archaeological features or deposits were observed cut into or overlying the clay in either of the trenches. Significant truncation of this deposit associated with the construction of factory buildings that formerly occupied the site, was recorded throughout most of the southern half of trench 1. A foundation trench [103] associated with the construction of the former building was identified at the south end of the trench and again towards the north end indicating a building with a length of about 23m. Concrete foundations (104) linked to this building remained in situ and were overlain by a layer of brick and concrete rubble (105) interpreted as the remains of the debris that was levelled following demolition of the former factory building.

At the north end of the trench, beyond the remains of the former building the natural clay was overlain by a 0.45m thick layer of compacted grey crushed stone (106). This was in turn sealed by the existing topsoil (100) to a depth of about 0.20m.

Previous truncation of the underlying deposits also appears to have occurred in trench 2. The natural clay was sealed directly throughout the length of the trench to a depth varying between 0.05m-0.35m by a redeposited layer comprising a mixture of topsoil and natural clay (202). This was overlain by a 0.40m thick modern deposit of compacted grey crushed stone (201) which was in turn sealed by the existing topsoil (200) which was about 0.25m thick.

FINDS

No finds of any significance were recovered from the excavations.

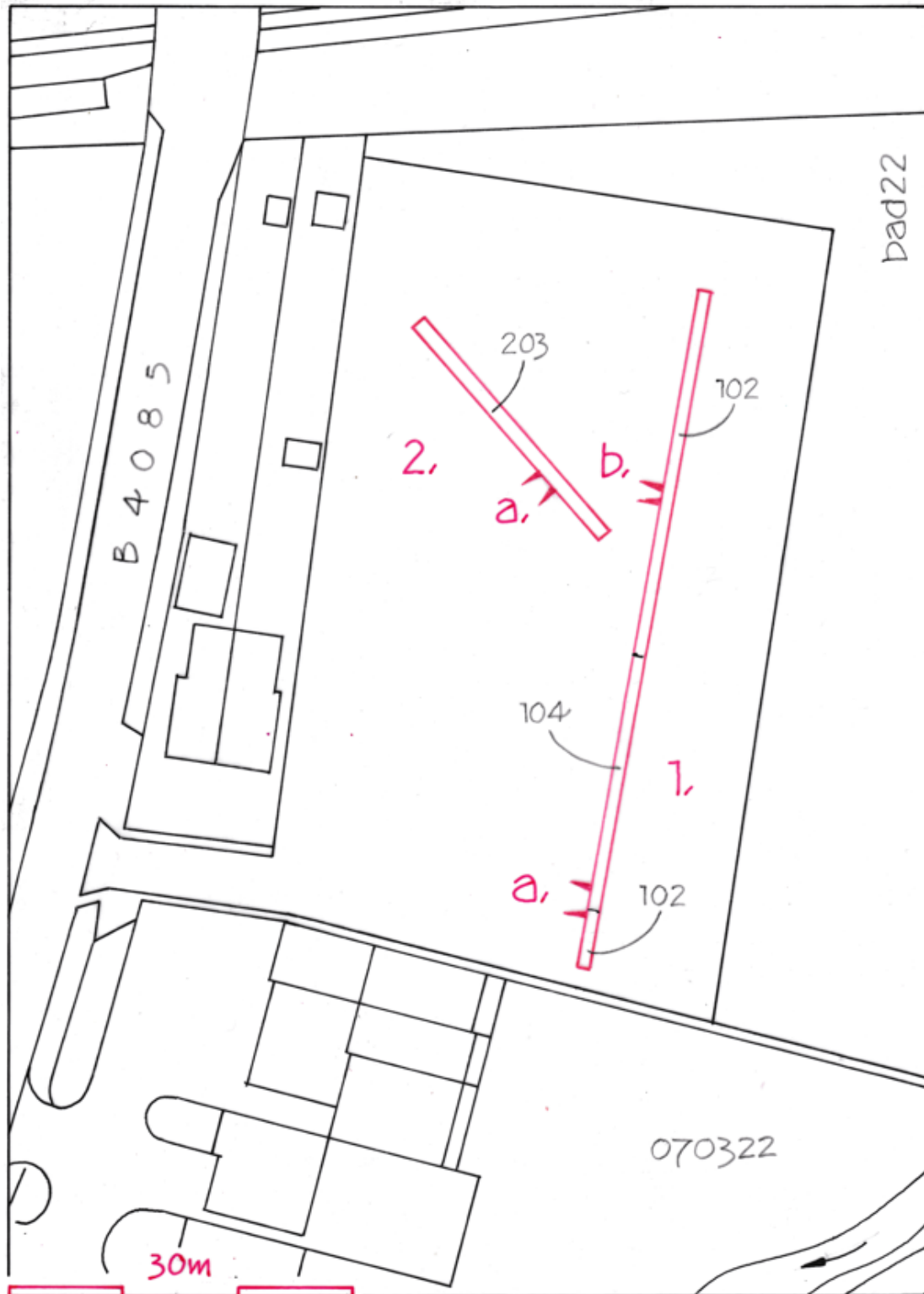
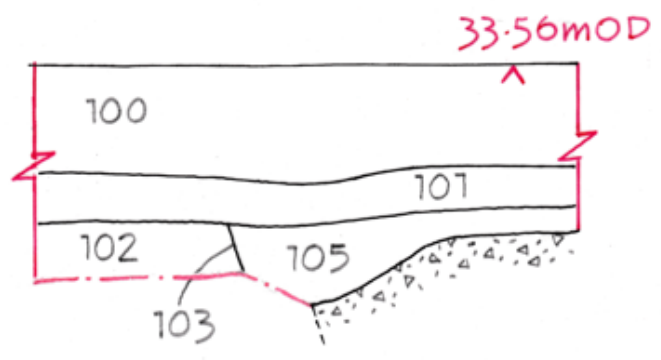


Fig.3; Site plan with trench and section locations.

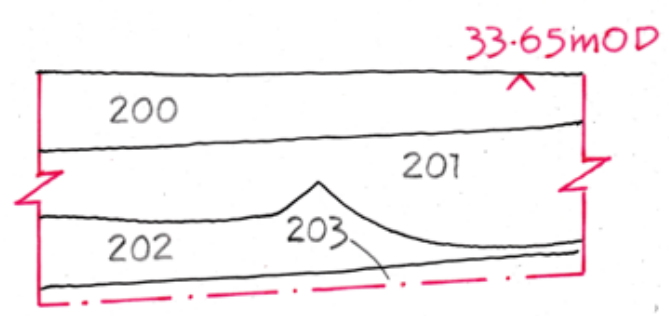
1a,



1b,



2a,



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1m

Fig.4; Trenches 1 & 2, sections.

Environmental data

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

DISCUSSION

The HER has shown that Roman and Anglo-Saxon activity is recorded within 500m of the site. although the trench investigation has shown that there is no evidence to indicate that this activity extends into the site itself. No archaeological deposits were encountered and there was little in the way of residual finds that might suggest early occupation within proximity to the site. Instead, the results indicate little earlier activity and suggest that the land formed part of the agricultural belt surrounding the settlement areas.

Later development of the site occurred in the C19, mainly after the construction of the railway and led to increased development associated with industrialisation either side of the line resulting in significant truncation of the underlying deposits within most of the main areas of impact. This truncation was likely associated with the former use of the site for industrial purposes, the remains of concrete foundations within a large part of the longer trench are associated with the former factory building that occupied the site before its demolition in more recent times. Layers of redeposited clay, soil and rubble show that the ground level was increased during this process.

Summary of results

The investigation revealed little evidence of archaeological deposits surviving within the development site, the results suggest that the area lies outside the focus of earlier occupation recorded in the wider area of the site and instead formed part of the agricultural belt within the local contemporary environment. Historic maps show that the site remained undeveloped until the C19 when

Significance

The results of the evaluation suggest that the site lies outside the focus of earlier occupation recorded in the wider environment and the land probably formed part of the surrounding agricultural belt.

Impact of development

The results of the investigation suggest that the construction of new dwellings is unlikely to impact on archaeological deposits.

Archive Location

The digital archive arising from the work will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) via the online portal OASIS.

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PLATES



Plate 1: Trench 1, view northwest



Plate 2: section 1a



Plate 3: section 1b



Plate 4: trench 2, view northwest



Plate 5: section 2a

