

**Programme of
archaeological work at 8
Vine Street Evesham**

Planning reference W/03/1559

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1. Project Background

1.1 Location of the Site

8 Vine Street lies within the historic core of Evesham in an area identified as retaining the outlines of medieval tenement plots (NGR SP 0362 4377; Fig 1).

1.2 Background to the project

A planning application (W/03/1559) was submitted by Bricks N Mortar Ltd and approved by Wychavon District Council for an extension to a church meeting room at the rear of 8 Vine Street. The proposed development may affect an archaeological site registered on the Worcestershire Historic Environment Record (WSM 20772) as a site of archaeological interest. In line with guidance given in Planning Policy Guidance Note 16, section 30, the Planning Authority had advised that a programme of archaeological work would be required.

1.3 Aims and objectives

The aims and objectives of the project were therefore:

to review the documentary evidence for the site

to observe and record deposits revealed by excavation of a trench *c* 5.0m long by 1.0m wide

From this information to produce a report commenting upon:

the nature of the deposits identified

the likely impact upon the site of archaeological interest and, by extension, the impact of similar developments on sites in the vicinity

1.4 Personnel

Martin Cook (BA MIFA) will undertake the project. Martin, as well as having a first degree in Archaeology and being a field archaeologist of some twenty-five years experience, is a Member of the Institute of Field Archaeologists. He also has a Certificate in Practical Archaeology, a component of which was geomorphology, and qualifications in Building Construction (ONC) and Civil Engineering (HNC). Subjects of the final examination in the latter subject included soil mechanics and engineering hydraulics and hydrology.

2. Description and analysis

2.1 Outline of previous archaeological work on the site

Worcestershire Historic Environment Record

No previous archaeological work has been undertaken on the site. However, in the immediate vicinity of the site archaeological work has identified sites such as 67-71 Bewdley Street with deposits dating from the early to the end of the medieval period (WSM 813), The Falcon Hotel Vine Street (WSM 1023) and 3 High Street (WSM 3541), which date from the early to late 18th century, 7 Vine Street (WSM 3451) and 9 Vine Street (WSM 3453), which include buildings of the early to late 19th century. Nearby, to the south, are the remains of Evesham Abbey including Abbot Reginald's Gateway (SAM 046) and the probable site of a charnel chapel (WSM 3383). At 13 Vine Street (Whitworth, Jones and Pearson 2001) an archaeological evaluation identified remains dating from the Roman through to the post-medieval periods (WSM 30354).

Historic mapping

Three historic maps (Ordnance Survey maps of 1904, 1923 and 1938) were available in the Worcestershire County Record Office covering the area of the site. Extracts from these are reproduced as Figure 2. These show that the rear of the tenement plot (the location of the site) remained fairly open from the early 20th century up to at least the outbreak of the Second World War. The frontage of the plot was covered in buildings throughout this period. Little change can therefore be identified from the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1886, which cannot be reproduced for reasons of copyright.

Other documentary information

Evesham was laid out as a planned town focussed on a large funnel-shaped market place (High Street) running northwards from the abbey precinct, probably in the late 11th or early 12th centuries (Dalwood H, *et al* 1996). The abbey continued to dominate its original estates and the town throughout the medieval period although by the late 15th century the town was becoming more independent. The town grew in prosperity throughout the 13th to 16th centuries. The town was also prosperous after the dissolution and Leland described it as 'reasonably large with quite good timber buildings [with] a fine large market place and several attractive streets'.

All recorded excavations in Evesham have produced evidence of medieval occupation. Vine street, along with Market Square and High Street defines one of Evesham's medieval market places (WSM 20768). This is the funnel-shaped market place referred to above which, with Vine street, was probably laid out in the late 11th to early 12th centuries when Evesham developed as a town. The market place seems to have been called Magnus Vicus (1202) or le Longstrete (1415) and its form is typically large and complex.

An extensive series of tenement plots can be deduced from the 1st edition Ordnance Survey maps (1886-7). These show regular plot boundaries aligned on the main streets and regular

back lanes and rear boundaries. Archaeological investigations have demonstrated medieval occupation in WSM 20772 (including what is now known as 8 Vine Street). The tenement plots in this area, including 8 Vine Street, is aligned on the early market place of Merstow Green (WSM 20739) and may be the earliest occupied area in the town.

2.2 Description and interpretation of the recorded deposits

Full descriptions of deposits are given in Appendix 2, only salient deposits being referred to below. Similarly, a full finds analysis is given in Appendix 1.

A trench approximately 5.0m long and 1.0m wide was excavated by mini-digger in the position shown in Figure 3. This reached over 2.0m in depth. The section was simple (Fig 3) and comprised a layer (context 009) dating from the late medieval period (late 15th to 16th centuries), a probable feature, possibly a pit (context 005), dating to between 1760 and 1780 and a layer (context 002) dating from the late 18th to 19th centuries.

3. Conclusions

3.1 Outline interpretation of identified archaeological deposits

The depth of archaeological deposits in the excavated trench (in excess of two metres) indicate an extended use of this part of Evesham. The pattern of these deposits relates quite closely to what might be expected from the historic map evidence. That is to say, deposits towards the frontage of the tenement plot are generally younger than those towards the rear, presumably reflecting greater activity by way of building and re-building in this area. It may be anticipated that relatively undisturbed deposits of early to later medieval date will be encountered in investigations which take in the rear half to two-thirds of any particular plot.

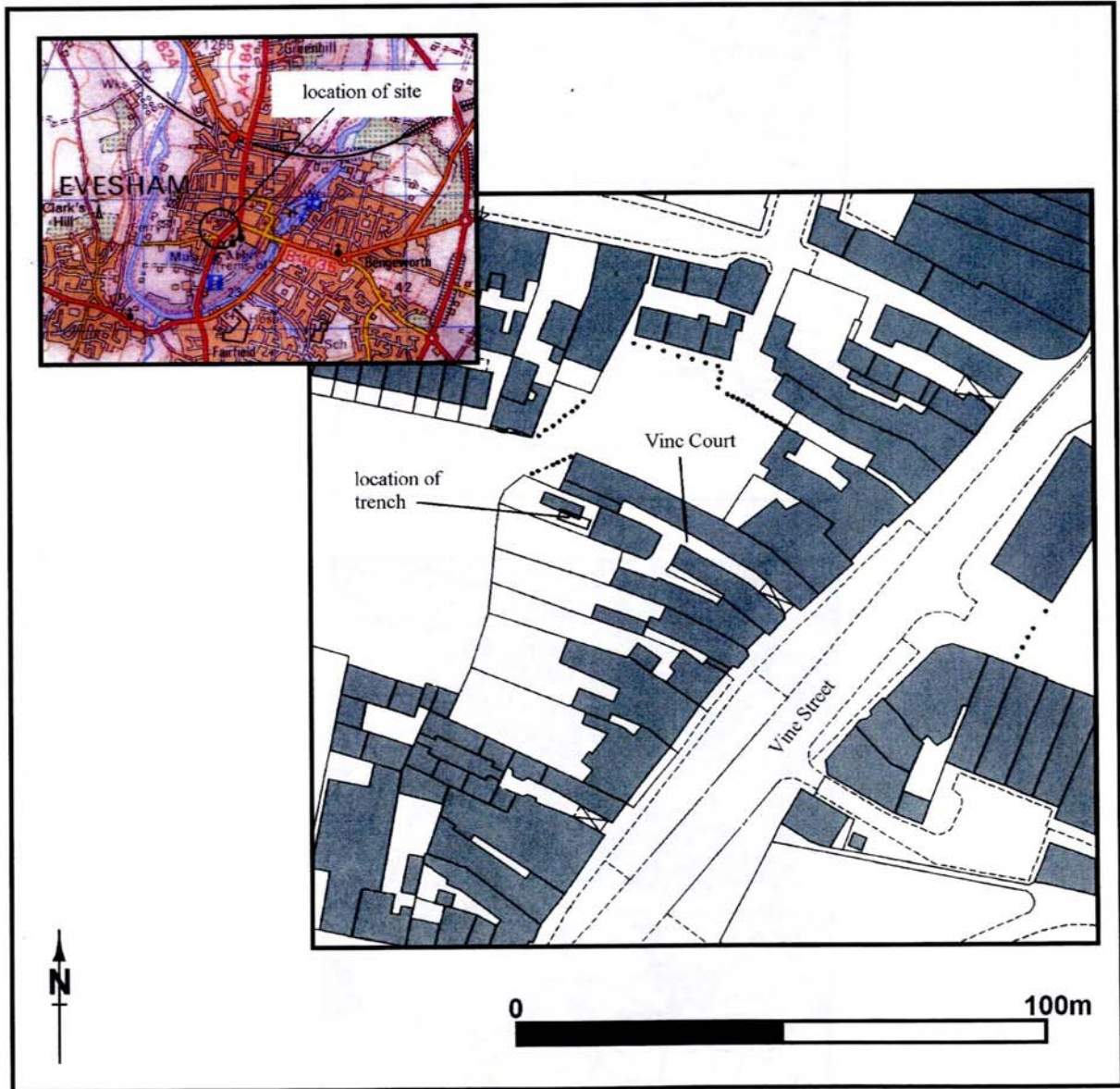
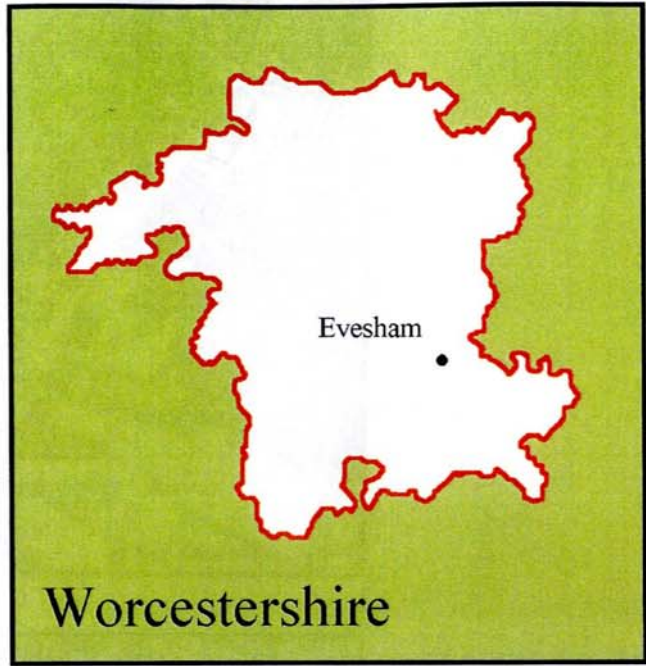
4. Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank Bricks and Mortar Ltd, their agent Mr Neil Healey and Mike Glyde of Worcestershire County Council Planning Advisory Section for their assistance in the completion of this project.

5. Bibliography

Dalwood H, et al 1996 *Archaeological assessment of Evesham and Bengeworth, Hereford and Worcester*, Hereford and Worcester County Council, County Archaeological Service internal report 315

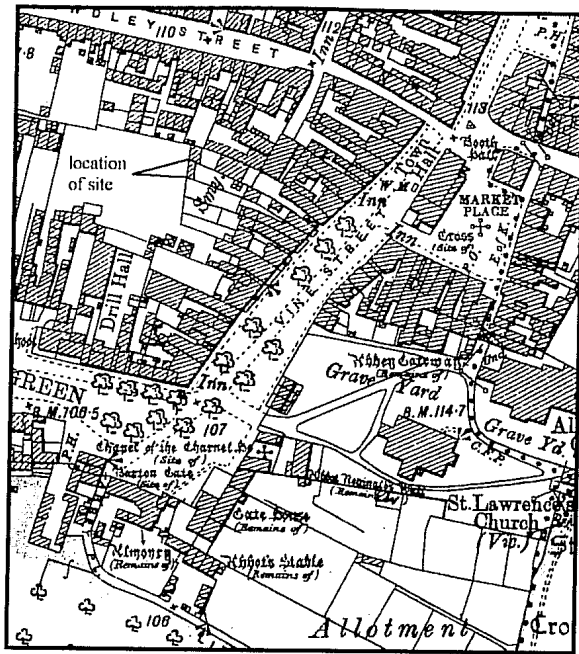
Whitworth, A, Jones, L and Pearson, E, 2001 *Evaluation at 13 Vine Street, Evesham, Worcestershire*, Worcestershire County Council Archaeological Service, internal report, **888**



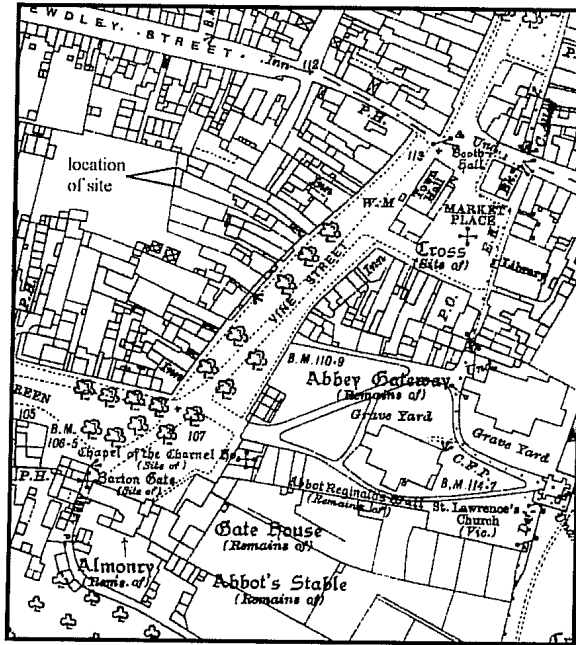
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Fig 1: Location of site

1904



1923



1938

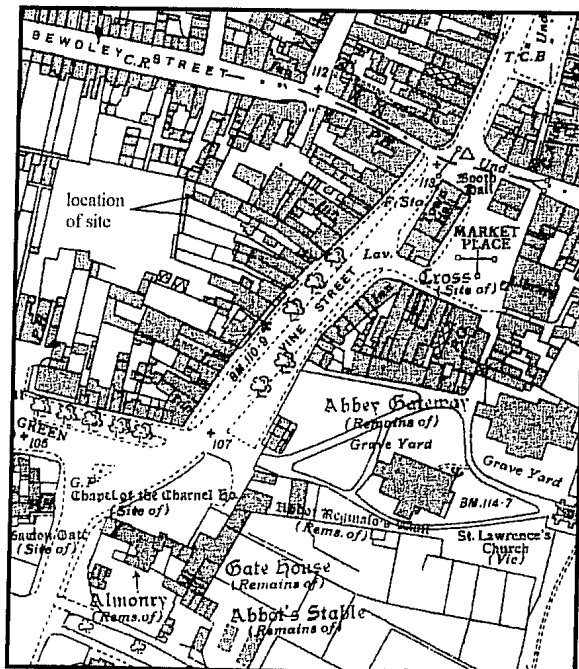


Fig 2: Historic mapping



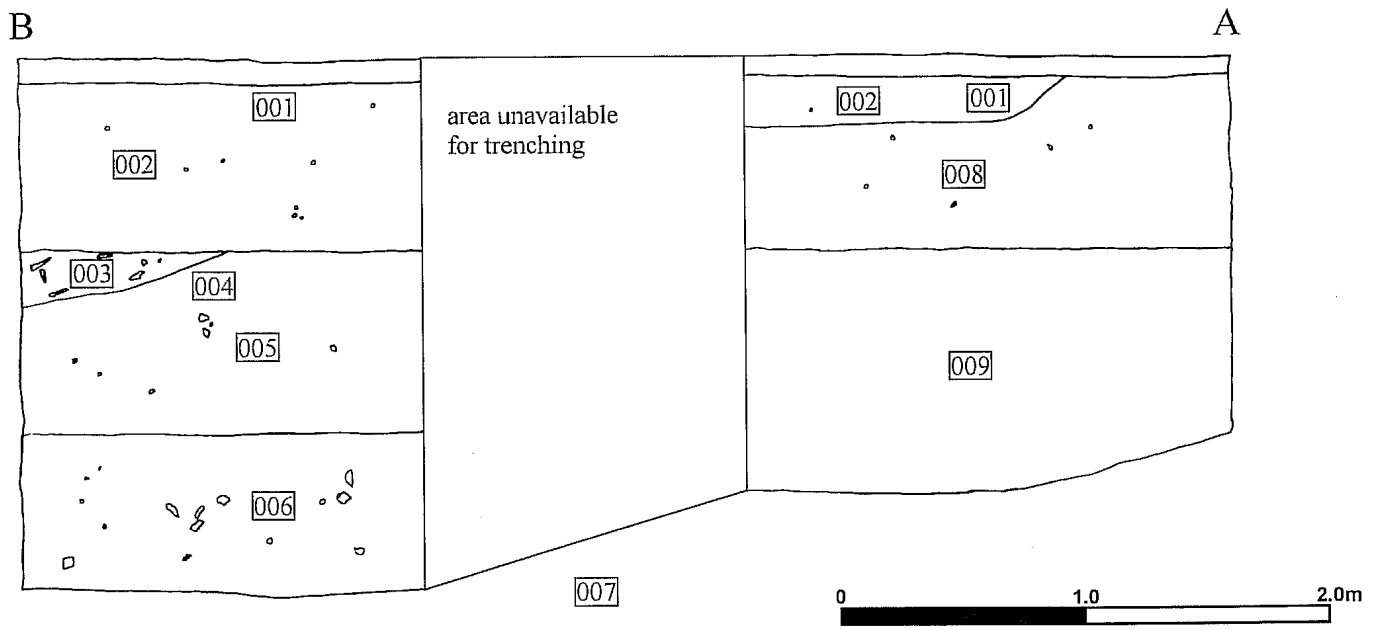
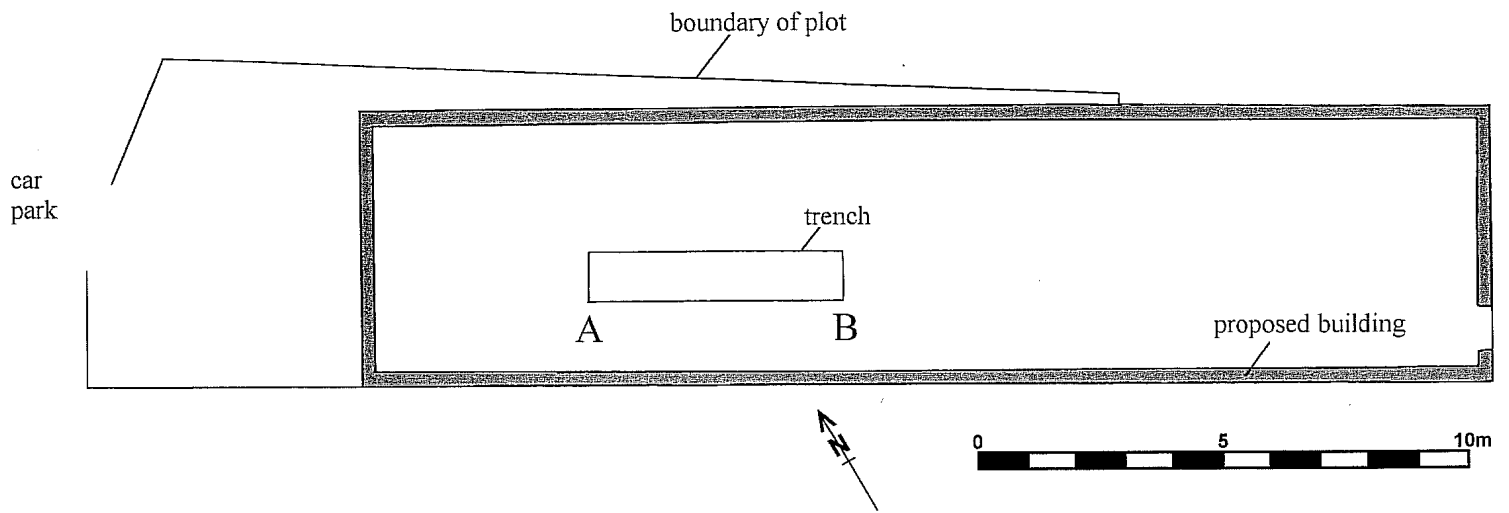


Fig 3: Location of the trench and section

Appendix 1: Report on the finds

Artefactual analysis

Aims

The brief required an assessment of the quantity, range and potential of artefactual material from excavation.

The aims of the finds assessment were:

- a) to identify, sort, spot date, and quantify all pottery
- b) to describe the range of pottery present
- c) to preliminarily assess the significance of the pottery

This report covers a single sherd of medieval pottery and two of late post-medieval date.

Method of analysis

All hand-retrieved pottery was examined. It was identified, quantified and dated to period. Pottery fabrics are referenced to the fabric reference series maintained by the Worcestershire County Council Archaeological Service (Hurst and Rees 1992).

Results of analysis and discussion

Three sherds of pottery were retrieved from three contexts on the site, all were diagnostic. The earliest datable piece (context 009) was identified as being of oxidised glazed Malvernian ware (fabric 69) and from the rim of a pipkin/jar form dated between the late 15th and 16th centuries.

The remaining sherds were both of late post-medieval date and consisted a plate rim sherd of creamware (fabric 84; context 005) which dated between 1760 and 1780 and the base of a miscellaneous late stoneware jar (fabric 81.4; context 002) which dated between the late 18th and 19th centuries.

Fabric no.	Fabric name	Total sherds	Weight (g)	Date range
69	Oxidised glazed Malvernian ware	1	40	Late 15th-16th century
84	Creamware	1	21	1760-1780
81.4	Miscellaneous late stoneware	1	10	Late 18th-19th century

Table 1: Quantification of the assemblage

Appendix 2: Description of the contexts

Context number	Description	Interpretation
001	Limestone scalplings	Site temporary access material
002	Very dark brown stoneless loam with abundant charcoal	Layer
003	Abundant broken brick and tile in a limey matrix	Fill of pit 004
004	Cut	Pit
005	Dark brown loam with occasional small rounded stones	Layer
006	Dark brown clayey loam with common broken brick and tile fragments	Layer
007	Sand	Natural subsoil
008	Medium brown silty loam with occasional small rounded stones	Layer
009	Light to mid-brown silty loam with occasional small rounded stones	Layer