

Project Code: WSHA10
Planning Application Ref No: DMCE/093314/F
Date of report: April 2010
Client: Bluebell Properties Ltd



LAND TO REAR OF 86/94 WIDEMARSH STREET, HEREFORD

Archaeological Evaluation

David Doyle
BSc



HEADLAND
ARCHAEOLOGY Ltd

PROJECT SUMMARY SHEET

<i>Client</i>	BLUEBELL PROPERTIES LTD
<i>National Grid Reference</i>	351054 240363
<i>Address</i>	86/94 WIDEMARSH STREET, HEREFORD
<i>Parish</i>	HEREFORDSHIRE
<i>Council</i>	HEREFORDSHIRE
<i>Planning Application Ref No</i>	DMCE/093314/F
<i>SMR No</i>	51594
<i>Accession No</i>	HFDMG 1086
<i>Project Manager</i>	MIKE KIMBER
<i>Text</i>	DAVID DOYLE, ARCHAEOLOGIST
<i>Illustrations</i>	THOMAS SMALL, ILLUSTRATOR
<i>Typesetting</i>	CAROLINE NORRMAN, ILLUSTRATOR
<i>Fieldwork</i>	ANDY BOUCHER, ARCHAEOLOGIST TEEGAN DALY, ARCHAEOLOGIST MIKE KIMBER, ARCHAEOLOGIST
<i>Specialists</i>	JULIE LOCHRIE, FINDS SPECIALIST
<i>Schedule</i>	
<i>Fieldwork</i>	3 RD MARCH 2010
<i>Report</i>	8 TH APRIL 2010

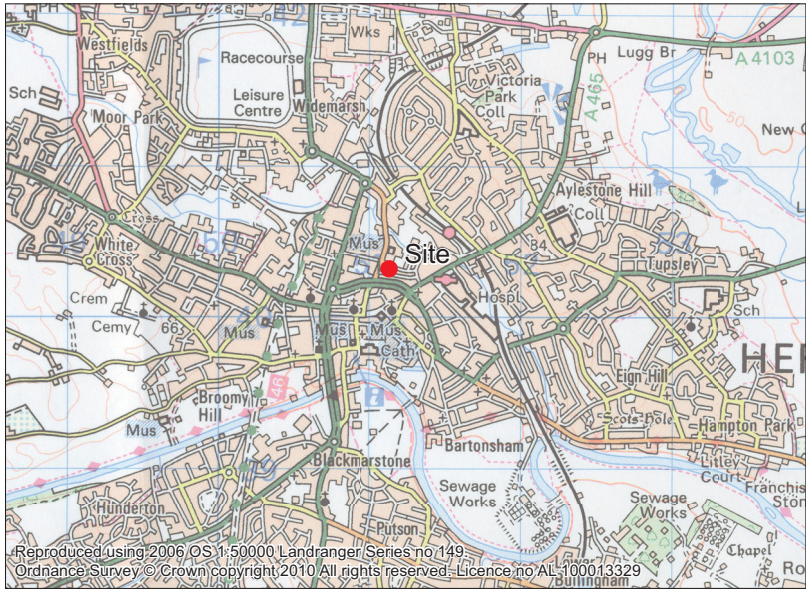
Signed off by:

Mike Kimber MA(Hons) AIfA, Project Manager

Date:.....

CONTENTS

1.	INTRODUCTION	1
2.	SITE DESCRIPTION	1
3.	BACKGROUND	1
4.	OBJECTIVES	1
5.	METHOD	1
6.	RESULTS	2
7.	DISCUSSION	2
8.	REFERENCES	2
APPENDICES		3
	Appendix 1 – Site Registers	3
	Appendix 2 – Finds Assessment	4



Illus 1
Site location

LAND TO REAR OF 86/94 WIDEMARSH STREET, HEREFORD

Archaeological Evaluation

by David Doyle

Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd conducted an evaluation on land to the rear of 86-94 Widemarsh Street, Hereford. The work was commissioned by Bluebell Properties Ltd and was undertaken in order to provide supporting information to a planning application submitted to Herefordshire Council to develop the site (DMCE/093314/F).

A total of two trenches were excavated and they showed little evidence of significant activity within the development area prior to the excavation of a very large pit in the 19th century.

1. INTRODUCTION

An archaeological evaluation was carried out on the Land to the rear of 86/94 Widemarsh Street, Hereford, on 3rd March 2010 (Illus. 1). The proposed development had the potential to affect remains of archaeological significance as the site lies within the Hereford Area of Archaeological Importance (Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act). In line with Planning Policy Guidelines Note 16, section 21-22, the Planning Authority was advised that a program of archaeological works would be required taking the form of an archaeological evaluation.

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

The site is located on the east side of Widemarsh Street, to the north of the defended medieval city. The site is currently a back plot or yard. The underlying geology is Old fluvio-glacial gravels overlying Old Red Sandstone.

3. BACKGROUND

Speede's schematic 1610 map of Hereford shows little indication of any activity in the area south of Blackfriars Priory where the site lies. Map progression indicates that this area was a meadow or under cultivation throughout the following centuries. The 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of the area (1886) also shows that the development area was open ground. At a later date the development area was subdivided into back gardens for tenements built along the south side of Coningsby Street.

No previous work has been carried out on the site. The most significant known archaeology in the vicinity of the site is the precinct of Blackfriars, a Scheduled Ancient Monument to the north of the site (Shoesmith 1994).

The presence of the monastic site may have influenced land use in its surrounds. Coningsby Street is regarded as the limit of the southern boundary of the Friary precinct (Rouse 2004). Excavations on the corner of Coningsby Street and Canal Road show that there was a high level of modern disturbance and no definitive friary levels were encountered. These excavations also encountered pits related to the disposal of glass and stoneware dating to the 19th century. (Thomas 1990).

4. OBJECTIVES

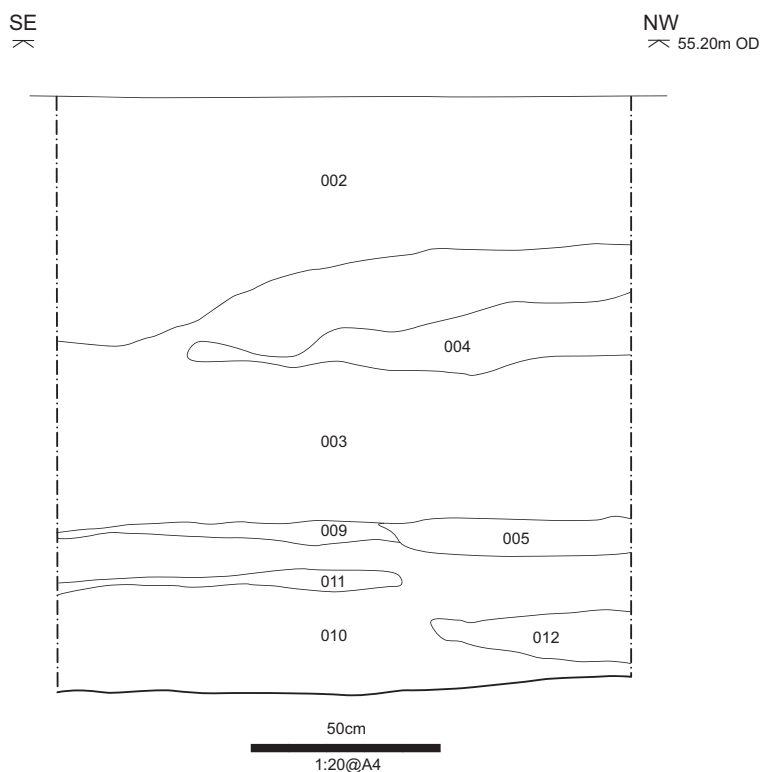
The objectives of the evaluation were to determine whether any remains of archaeological significance were present within the proposed development area, and assess their date, condition and significance. This was in order to allow an informed decision to be taken by the planning authority on the application and its potential to impact any buried archaeological remains.

5. METHOD

All trenches were excavated using a mechanical excavator with a toothless bucket under archaeological supervision.

Trench 1 measured 2 x 2.5m in plan and was located in the east of the site. A deep sequence of man-made deposits was encountered. The trench was excavated to the limit of safe excavation (2m with stepping) without reaching the base of these deposits. Trench 2 measured 2.2m x 2.5m in plan and was located in the west of the site. This trench was excavated to natural gravels at a depth of 1.1m.

All recording followed standard archaeological guidelines as set out by the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA). All contexts were given unique numbers. No small



Illus 2
Trench 1 showing sequence of deposits

finds or environmental samples were taken as no significant archaeological deposits were encountered. All recording was undertaken on pro forma record cards that conform to accepted archaeological norms. Archaeological features were recorded in plan at a scale 1:20. Trench plans were produced at 1:100, while representative trench sections were produced at 1:10 or 1:20. Photographs of archaeological features and deposits were taken using 35mm monochrome and colour slide film, registers were kept for a context records, photographs and drawings. Trench positions were tied into the OS grid using a Trimble GPS unit with sub-centimetre accuracy.

6. RESULTS

Two evaluation trenches were excavated in the location of the proposed building footprints.

Trench 1 measure 2 x 2.5m and was excavated to a depth of 1.6m. It exposed a sequence of deposits (Contexts 003, 004, 005, 009, 010, 011 & 012). These comprised brick, mortar and slate rubble interleaved with a redeposited topsoil that contained fragments of 19th century pottery (Illus.2). They appear to represent demolition material backfilled into a very large pit, however the edges of this feature were not located as they were outside the limits of the evaluation trench, therefore its full extent is not known. The base of the demolition deposits was not reached as the trench was excavated to the safe limit of reach of the mini-excavator.

Trench 2 measured 2.2 x 2.5m and was excavated to a depth of 1.1m, where natural deposits were encountered.

The sequence comprised heavily disturbed topsoil 0.45m thick, containing many modern and 19th century finds, and lenses of demolition rubble. Underlying this was a light greyish brown subsoil deposit with abundant evidence of root activity but containing no artefacts and showing no indications of modern disturbance. The natural gravel was clean and no cut features were observed in it.

7. DISCUSSION

The presence of an intact B-horizon with little anthropogenic material in Trench 2 indicates little evidence of significant activity within the development area prior to the excavation of the very large pit that contained the demolition deposits observed in Trench 1. This pit is almost certainly 19th century or later in date and may be related to the industrial waste disposal pits that were revealed during a previous excavation on the corner of Coningsby Street and Canal Road (Thomas 1990). Subsequent activity in the area relating to habitation of the tenements has caused the later modern disturbance of the topsoil.

8. REFERENCES

- Rouse, D 2004 *The Blackfriars Friary, Archaeological watching brief on a Scheduled Ancient Monument*. HAS 623.
- Shoosmith, R 1994 *Blackfriars Precinct, A desk based Archaeological Survey of the Blackfriars Area of Hereford*. HAS 207.
- Thomas, D 1990 *Blackfriars Hereford, Evaluation Excavations*. HAS 85.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Site Registers

1.1 – Trench register

Trench No.	Orientation	Description	Length	Topsoil depth
1	NE-SW	Mixed deposits and the possible back fill of a large 19 th century pit.	2.5m	0.65m
2	NE-SW	Heavily disturbed topsoil and lenses of demolition rubble. Clean natural gravel.	2.5m	0.46m

1.2 – Context register

Context No.	Trench	Description
001	1	Ceramics.
002	1	Dark grey silty topsoil, frequent black flecks.
003	1	Mid brown loose silt, greyish black flecks, stone inclusions.
004	1	Light orange brown subsoil. Loose. Contained red brick.
005	1	Gravel backfill.
006	2	Very dark brown rooty topsoil.
007	2	Light greyish brown subsoil.
008	2	Natural gravels.
009	2	Same as (004). Light orange brown subsoil. Loose. Contained red brick.
010	2	Same as (003). Mid brown loose silt, greyish black flecks, stone inclusions.
011	2	Same as (004). Light orange brown subsoil. Loose. Contained red brick.
012	2	Same as (005). Gravel backfill.

1.3 – Drawing register

Drawing No.	Section	Plan	Description
1	1:20	–	N facing Trench 1.
2	1:10	–	S facing Trench 2.

1.4 – Photographic register

Photo No.	Colour print	Colour Slide	Direction	Description
1	1/1	2/1	S	Trench 1 section.
2	1/2	2/2	S	Trench 1 section.
3	1/3	2/3	S	Trench 1 section.
4	1/4	2/4	N	Trench 2 section.
5	1/5	2/5	N	Trench 2 after removal of sloping-clear natural.

Appendix 2 – Finds Assessment

Julie Lochrie

The finds include six sherds of modern pottery and a clay pipe stem. The pottery dates to the late 18th/early 19th century while the pipe stem is slightly earlier, dating to the 17th-18th century. They were retrieved during an evaluation in the gardens of a 19th century tenement building. All finds were discovered in topsoil overlaying a large 19th century pit.

Trench	Context	Material	Qty	Object	Description	Spot Date	Period
1	001	Ceramic	1	Clay pipe	Pipe stem, wide bore	17 th /18 th	PM
1	001	Pottery	6	Modern	Blackware, blue trans printed ware, yellow ware with blue streaks	L.18 th /e.19 th	Mod

Table A2.1
Finds Catalogue