

SCWW11



LAND OFF SELSDON CLOSE, WYTHALL, WORCESTERSHIRE

Archaeological Evaluation

for Taylor Wimpey UK Ltd

B/10/0920

September 2011

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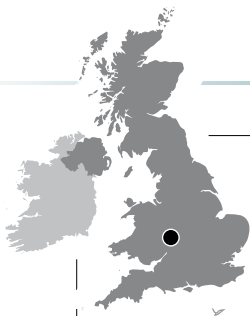
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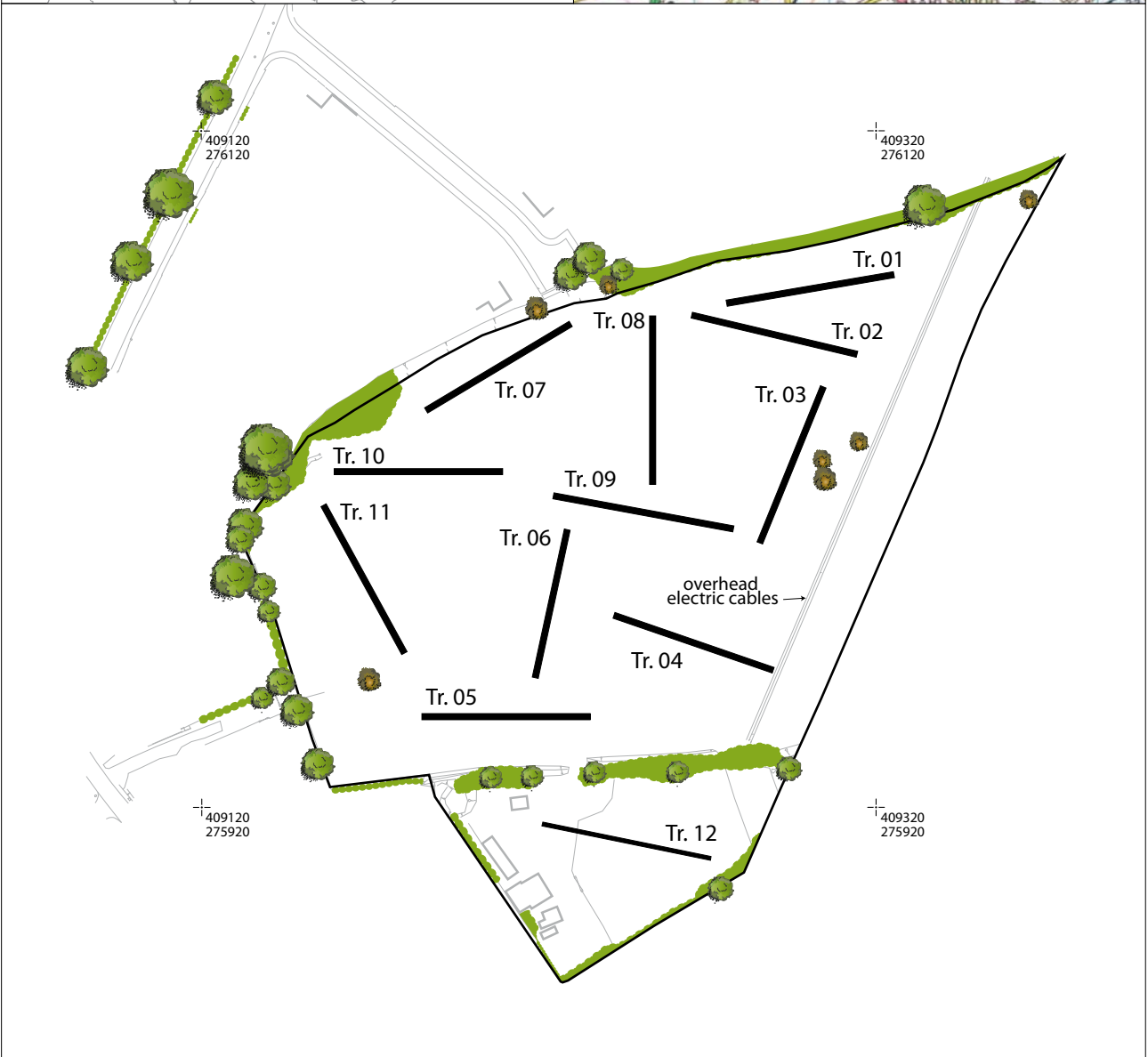
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Land off Selsdon Close
Wythall
Bromsgrove
Worcestershire



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Scale 1:2,000 @ A4



Illus 1
Site location

LAND OFF SELSDON CLOSE, WYTHALL, WORCESTERSHIRE

Archaeological Evaluation

Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd undertook a programme of archaeological evaluation on a green-field site on land adjacent to Selsdon Close, Wythall, near to Bromsgrove on the outskirts of Worcestershire. This formed part of a programme of archaeological fieldwork in connection with planning permission (ref. no. B/10/0920).

Twelve evaluation trenches were excavated across the site. Although it was thought that earthworks (undated) may have existed to the north of the site, and Lea Green Farm complex (WHER 1790) is recorded from the medieval period, no features of archaeological interest predating the 18th century were present. The evidence from the evaluation suggests that the site has only ever been in agricultural use. The only indication of earlier archaeological activity found in the topsoil on the site was a single abraded sherd of Malvern chase pottery that dated to the 16th or 17th century.

1. INTRODUCTION

Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd undertook a programme of archaeological evaluation at Selsdon Close, Wythall, near Bromsgrove. A planning application had been submitted to Bromsgrove District Council (application ref. no.: B/10/0920) by Taylor Wimpey UK Ltd via their agent Barton Willmore. The development for the application site comprises up to 76 dwellings and associated works. Due to the presence of subtle earthworks close to the north boundary of the site, a condition was placed on the planning consent. In line with Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (Policy HE6-HE12) further information on the nature, extent and significance of the heritage asset (or potential asset), was required prior to the submission of a reserved matters application in mitigation of the effects of the proposal on the historic environment.

The study site is bounded to the north side by a watercourse that flows towards the River Cole, beyond which is residential development along Selsdon Close and open fields to the north-east. To the west and south the site is bounded by residential development along Lea Green Lane and the eastern boundary is formed by a railway line. The site is relatively flat but slopes gently towards the north-east corner, lying between 150m (to the south-west) and 140m (to the north-east) above Ordnance Datum (Illus 1).

The geology of the site consists of silt or clay alluvial deposits, overlying gravel and cobble glacial till (locally

known as 'hoggin'). The solid geology is recorded as Triassic mudstone (British Geological Survey 4th Edition, 1997). Ground cover in the area consisted of an overgrown pasture with disused stable buildings towards the south-west of the site.

The brief for the work was issued by Worcestershire County Council (2010). In response a Written Scheme of Investigation was submitted to the planning authority on behalf of the client by The Environmental Dimension Partnership (2011) and formed the basis for the evaluation.

2. OBJECTIVES

The primary objectives of the project were:

- to determine the presence or absence of significant archaeological remains that would be impacted on by the proposed works,
- where possible to establish the date, nature and level of preservation of any archaeological remains within the site,
- to produce and deposit a satisfactory archive and disseminate the results of the work via grey-literature reporting and publication as appropriate.



3. METHODOLOGY

The total area of the site available for investigation was approximately 26440m². The agreed strategy was to excavate a 4% sample (1057m²) of that area (a 15m² contingency was allowed over and above this to answer issues that could not be resolved in the initial trenches).

3.1 Trenches

Twelve archaeological trial trenches were excavated in pre-agreed locations, with the exceptions of Trench 01, 02, 06, 09 and 12 for the reasons mentioned below. All the trenches measured 50m by 1.8m, except for Trench 06 and 09 which measured 45m and 55m in length respectively. The layout of the trenches was designed to ensure good spatial coverage, and this was not affected by the fact that the original trench layout had to be slightly amended to meet the requirements of the on site ecologist. Before the excavation of each trench the ecologist investigated the area affected both visually, and using a rake to remove the excess cut vegetation.

2 Trenches were excavated using a mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless ditching bucket, under constant archaeological supervision. Topsoil and modern overburden was removed and excavation ceased at either undisturbed geological deposits or when archaeological features/deposits were identified. These were then further investigated by hand excavation. Each trench was cleaned by hand where necessary to assist the identification and interpretation of exposed archaeological features. The nature of archaeological features was assessed by limited sample excavation, sufficient to establish their character and date.

A general photographic record was maintained during the course of the fieldwork and included general shots of the site and of individual features within trenches. Samples were not taken as there were no features present that required this.

The recording was in accordance with I/A standards and the Headland Archaeology site recording manual. All contexts were given unique numbers. Colour slide, black and white and digital photographs were taken. An overall site plan was recorded and related to the National Grid. Trench record sheets were completed and recorded digitally, or by hand at 1:100 where features were present. Sample sections were hand-drawn at a scale of 1:10. All recording was undertaken on pro forma record cards.

3.2 Artefacts

Although the presence of modern artefacts (18th–20th century) was noted in modern rubbish dumps and in the topsoil, none of these artefacts were recovered from

the site. A single abraded sherd of Malvern chase pottery dated to the 16th–17th centuries was recovered from topsoil in Trench 02 and was retained.

4. RESULTS

Illus 2 and Illus 3–6, also see Appendix 1 for full descriptions.

4.1 General soil layers on the site

The undisturbed geological horizon [1002] over the whole site (locally known as ‘hoggin’) comprised light yellowish brown sandy clay with abundant, poorly sorted, sub-rounded sandstone pebbles averaging between 10mm–60mm, frequent cobbles and occasional manganese inclusions. The deposit was identified at a depth of between 0.45–0.55m in the west, east and south, increasing to 0.8m along the north side of the site where, in Trench 07 and the north end of Trench 08, grey alluvial clay deposits [1007] from the adjacent brook were present, averaging 0.4–0.48m deep. Above the ‘hoggin’ and/or grey alluvium over the whole site lay a deposit of mid reddish-grey sandy clay [1001] averaging between 0.1–0.4m deep. This deposit was overlain by mid brown sandy loam [1000], which ranged from around 0.13m –0.33m deep across the site. It was deepest along the western and southern areas of the site.

4.2 Trenches

In Trench 03, 06 and 09 at the interface of deposits [1000] and [1001] features were identified that were probably natural gullies or depressions ([1003], [1005], [1008] and [1014]). Although the features were generally linear, their profiles appeared random and shapeless, and possibly of natural origin.

Features [1003] and [1005], located in Trench 03 and 06 respectively, were both aligned roughly east to west. The fill [1006] of feature [1005] was very similar to the grey alluvium [1007] observed close to the brook at the north edge of the site, in Trench 12, suggesting that it was possibly a former watercourse. This is enhanced by the lack of finds within the fill.

The fill [1004] of [1003] was indistinguishable from the topsoil [1000]. Features [1008] and [1014] both lay within Trench 09, with [1008] aligned roughly north to south and [1014] aligned north-east to south-west. The fills, [1009] and [1015] respectively, were again indistinguishable from the topsoil [1000].

All of the above potential features were part excavated to identify their nature and to find dating evidence, a few very small fragments of brick or tile were present in



- Key**
- modern rubbish dump (post 1936)
 - possible gully (18th century)
 - modern brick/stone rubble
 - modern land drain
 - modern stone 'surface'



Illus 2
The site and locations of trenches 1-12



Illus 3
Possible gully feature [1003], Trench 03



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Illus 4
Possible gully feature below modern rubbish
dump, Trench 06



Illus 5
Possible gully feature [1008], Trench 09

Illus 6
Possible gully feature [1014], Trench 09





each feature and a single small fragment of Staffordshire slipware pottery that dated from the 18th century came from feature [1008].

Modern land drains cutting into deposit [1002] were located and recorded on a north-east to south-west alignment at either end of Trench 12. A tree throw was also present towards the west end of the trench.

Three modern rubbish pits were identified in Trench 04, 06 and 11. These were cut from close to the present ground surface and contained many glass bottles and jars, metal objects, light bulbs, white/transfer ware pottery and other assorted modern rubbish. A plate was identified with a George VI monogram, which implies the deposition of objects in these dumps post dated 1936.

A considerable amount of brick rubble was present in the topsoil [1000] of Trench 05, which increased in density towards the western end of the trench. The brick, which appeared to be Georgian or Victorian, is likely to have come from the farmhouse or associated buildings of Lea Green Farm (WHER 1790). Similar brick rubble was found towards the eastern end of Trench 07, though in much smaller quantities.

6 The only other feature present on the site was a modern stone surface or possible path, made up of crushed concrete, sub angular sandstone and mudstone. The surface/track was located close to the present ground surface, in the western end of the Trench 10. It measured approximately 10.5m in width.

No other features were present within the site study area.

5. DISCUSSION

The trenching undertaken at the site did not reveal any features predating the 18th century. There was no evidence for cultivation, or pre-modern settlement.

The fieldwork has succeeded in establishing that there are no significant archaeological remains within the site.

6. ARCHIVE

The archive is currently located at Headland Archaeology's premises (Unit 1, Premier Business Park, Faraday Road, Westfield Trading Estate, Hereford, HR4 9NZ) and will be deposited with Worcestershire Museums within six months of report acceptance.

7. REFERENCES

- Worcestershire, C C, 2011, *Requirements for a programme of archaeological work at land at Selsdon Close Wythall*.
- Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd, 2011, *Programme of Archaeological Evaluation at Selsdon Close, Wythall, Worcestershire*, Project Design.
- The Environmental Dimension Partnership (EDP), 2010, *Land at Selsdon Close, Wythall, Worcestershire, Archaeological Desk Based Assessment*.

8. APPENDICES

8.1 Appendix 1 – Site registers

Trench register

Trench no.	Description	Length (m)	Depth (m)
01	North-east of main site area, excavated over ground falling to the north-east. No archaeological features, finds from topsoil dated to 18th–20th century.	50	0.49
02	North-east of main site area, excavated over ground falling to the north-east. No archaeological features, a single sherd of Malvern chase pottery in topsoil, 16th–17th century, other finds from topsoil dated to 18th–20th century.	50	0.45
03	East of main site area, excavated across ground gently sloping to the north-east. Contained a possible gully feature with brick/tile only in the fill, probably a natural feature. No other archaeological features, finds from topsoil dated to 18th–20th century.	50	0.36
04	South-east of the main site area, excavated across flat ground. Contained a 20th century rubbish dump. No archaeological features, finds from topsoil and dump dated to 18th–20th century.	50	0.36
05	South of the main site area, excavated across flat ground. Contained brick rubble 19th or 20th century. No archaeological features, finds from topsoil dated to 18th–20th century.	50	0.35
06	Near the middle, south of middle of the main site area, excavated across flat ground. Contained a 20th century rubbish dump overlying a possible gully feature, probably a natural feature. No archaeological features, finds from topsoil dated to 18th–20th century.	45	0.36
07	Near to the northern boundary of the main site area, excavated across flat ground. Contained brick rubble 19th or 20th century overlying grey clay alluvium. No archaeological features, finds from topsoil dated to 18th–20th century.	50	0.66
08	Near the middle of the main site area towards the north boundary, excavated across ground gently sloping to the north and east. Contained grey clay alluvium at north. No archaeological features, finds from topsoil dated to 18th–20th century.	50	0.5
09	Near the middle of the main site area, just to the east of centre, excavated across flat ground. Contained two possible gully features with brick/tile only in the fill of [1014], also containing 18th century pottery in [1008], probably natural features. No other archaeological features, finds from topsoil dated to 18th–20th century.	55	0.37
10	North-west of the main site area, excavated across flat ground. Contained a 20th century stone/concrete surface or track circa 10.5m wide. No archaeological features, finds from topsoil dated to 18th–20th century.	50	0.52
11	Towards the west of the main site area, excavated across flat ground. Contained a 20th century rubbish dump. No archaeological features, finds from topsoil dated to 18th–20th century.	50	0.46
12	Extreme south of the site, excavated across flat ground near to disused stable buildings. Contained two modern land drains and a tree throw near west end. No archaeological features, finds from topsoil dated to 18th–20th century.	50	0.56

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Context register

Context no.	Area	Within trench	Type of context
1000	Whole site	All trenches	Topsoil-mid brown sandy loam
1001	Whole site	All trenches	Sub soil-mid reddish/grey sandy clay, infrequent sub rounded sandstone 10mm–20mm
1002	Whole site	All trenches	Light yellow/orangey brown sandy clay with frequent sub rounded pebbles/cobbles and occasional manganese inclusions
1003	Trench 03	Trench 03	Cut of possible gully (natural feature)
1004	Trench 03	Trench 03	Fill of possible gully (natural feature) [1003]



Context no.	Area	Within trench	Type of context
1005	Trench 06	Trench 06	Cut for possible gully (natural feature)
1006	Trench 06	Trench 06	Fill of possible gully (natural feature) [1005]
1007	Trench 07 & 08	Trench 07 & 08	Grey clay alluvial deposit
1008	Trench 09	Trench 09	Cut for possible gully (natural feature)
1009	Trench 09	Trench 09	Fill for possible gully (natural feature) [1008]
1014	Trench 09	Trench 09	Cut for possible gully (natural feature)
1015	Trench 09	Trench 09	Fill of possible gully (natural feature) [1014]
1016	Trench 10	Trench 10	Track way/surface, concrete and aggregates
1017	Trench 12	Trench 12	Cut for field drain
1018	Trench 12	Trench 12	Fill of field drain [1017]
1019	Trench 12	Trench 12	Cut for field drain
1020	Trench 12	Trench 12	Fill of field drain [1019]
1021	Trench 12	Trench 12	Cut for a pit (tree throw)
1022	Trench 12	Trench 12	Fill of pit (tree throw) [1021]

Photographic register

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Photo no.	Monotone print	Colour slide	Digital	Direction facing	Description
01	1	37	-	-	ID shot
02	-	-	1	E	Trench 01
03	-	-	2	W	Trench 02
04	2	36	3	N	Trench 01, south facing section
05	-	-	4	ESE	Trench 02, general shot
06	-	-	5	WNW	Trench 02, general shot
07	3	35	6	SSW	Trench 02, NNE facing section
08	-	-	7	SSW	Trench 03
09	-	-	8	NNE	Trench 03
10	4	34	9	NNE	Trench 03, possible ditch/gully [1003]
11	5	33	10	WNW	Trench 03, ESE facing section
12	-	-	11	WNW	Trench 04
13	-	-	12	ESE	Trench 04
14	6	32	13	NNE	Trench 04, SSW facing section
15	-	-	14	W	Trench 05
16	-	-	15	E	Trench 05
17	7	31	16	N	Trench 05, south facing section
18	-	-	17	N	Trench 06
19	-	-	18	S	Trench 06
20	8	30	19	W	Trench 06, east facing section
21	9	29	20	N	Trench 06, possible gully/ditch cut [1006]
22	-	-	21	NE	Trench 07

Photo no.	Monotone print	Colour slide	Digital	Direction facing	Description
23	-	-	22	SW	Trench 07
24	10	28	23	NW	Trench 07, SE facing section
25	-	-	24	S	Trench 08
26	-	-	25	N	Trench 08
27	11	27	26	W	Trench 08, east facing section showing alluvial deposit [1009] terminating
28	-	-	27	E	Trench 09
29	-	-	28	W	Trench 09
30	12	26	29	E	Trench 09, possible gully/ditch [1008]
31	13	25	30	E	Trench 09, possible gully/ditch [1014]
32	14	24	31	N	Trench 09, south facing section
33	-	-	32	WNW	Trench 10
34	-	-	33	ESE	Trench 10
35	15	23	34	NNW	Trench 10, SSE facing section
36	-	-	35	SE	Trench 11
37	-	-	36	NW	Trench 11
38	16	22	37	NE	Trench 11, SW facing section
39	-	-	38	E	Trench 12
40	-	-	39	W	Trench 12
41	-	-	40	E	Trench 12, Field drain [1017]
42	-	-	41	E	Trench 12, Field drain [1019]
43	17	21	42	N	Trench 12, south facing section
44	18	20	43	N	Pit [1021]
45	-	-	44	NE	General post excavation site shots
46	-	-	45	N	General post excavation site shots
47	-	-	46	NW	General post excavation site shots
48	-	-	47	W	General post excavation site shots
49	-	-	48	S	General post excavation site shots
50	-	-	49	E	General post excavation site shots

Drawing register

Drawing no.	Scale	Plan or section	Description
1	1:10	Section	Trench 1, representative section
2	1:10	Section	Trench 2, representative section
3	1:10	Section	Trench 3, representative section
4	1:100	Plan	Trench 3, location of feature [1003]
5	1:10	Section	Trench 4, representative section
6	1:10	Section	Trench 5, representative section
7	1:10	Section	Trench 6, representative section



Drawing no.	Scale	Plan or section	Description
8	1:100	Plan	Trench 6, location of feature [1005]
9	1:10	Section	Trench 7, representative section
10	1:10	Section	Trench 8, representative section
11	1:10	Section	Trench 9, representative section
12	1:100	Plan	Trench 9, feature [1008] and [1014]
13	1:10	Section	Trench 10, representative section
14	1:10	Section	Trench 11, representative section
15	1:10	Section	Trench 12, representative section
16	1:100	Plan	Trench 12, location of land drains



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