

BRSW12



LAND ADJACENT TO BIRMINGHAM ROAD, STRATFORD UPON AVON

Archaeological Evaluation

for William Davis Ltd

December 2012

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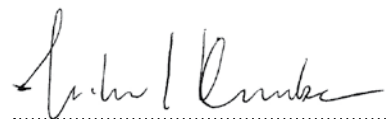
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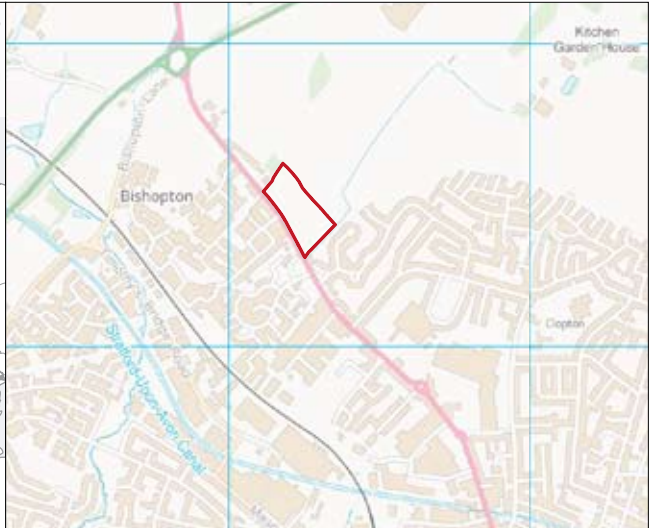
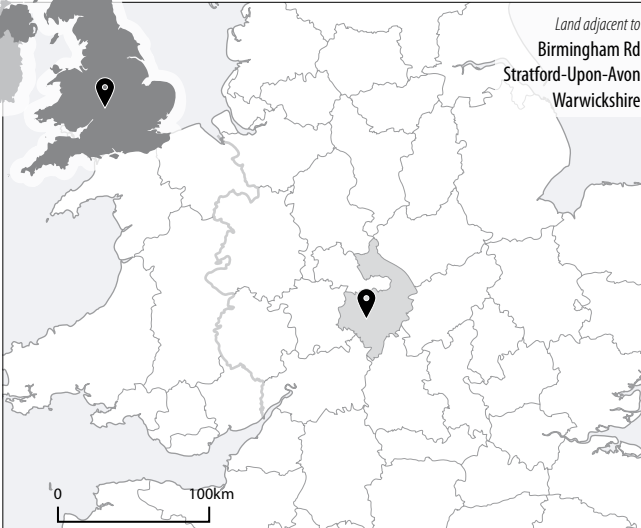


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Key

- proposed development area
- trial trenches
- field drains
- iron pipe
- 20th century feature

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Illus 1

Site location

LAND ADJACENT TO BIRMINGHAM ROAD, STRATFORD UPON AVON

Archaeological Evaluation

Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd. excavated twelve evaluation trenches on a plot of land adjacent to Birmingham Road, Stratford-Upon-Avon, Warwickshire. The trenches were excavated as part of a pre-determination archaeological evaluation in respect of a proposed planning application for residential development within the site. A 20th century rubbish dump was revealed along with modern features relating to land drainage. No remains of archaeological significance were identified.

1. INTRODUCTION

Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd was commissioned by CgMs (acting on behalf of William Davis Ltd.) to undertake an archaeological evaluation on a site adjacent to Birmingham Road, Stratford-Upon-Avon, Warwickshire. The client is proposing to submit a planning application for the residential development of the site.

A geophysical survey was conducted on the site in September 2012 and identified a number of features which were believed to pre-date the ridge and furrow that was also present within the site.

The Planning Archaeologist for Warwickshire County Council had requested that a programme of archaeological trial trenching was undertaken on the site in order to assess the features identified by the geophysical survey and allow an informed recommendation on the planning application.

A Written Scheme of Investigation for the project was prepared by CgMs (Gajos 2012) and approved by the Planning Archaeologist for Warwickshire County Council.

2. LOCATION AND GEOLOGY

The proposed development area is 2.9 hectares in size and located towards the northern edge of Stratford-Upon-Avon (site centre SP 19225 56473). The site is currently under pasture. The north-western and south-eastern boundaries of the site are defined by

rear gardens of existing houses. A hedge line divides the north-eastern boundary of the site from further open fields, whilst the southeast boundary is constrained by Birmingham Road (illus 1). The site lies at approximately 49.70m OD in the south, rising up to 50.90m OD towards the northern boundary.

The underlying geology is comprised of Mercian Mudstone, a sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 206 to 204 million years ago. No drift deposits are recorded (British Geological Survey 2012).

3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The archaeological background to the site is limited, no formal archaeological desk based assessment of the site has been undertaken, and due to the lack of archaeological investigation in the local vicinity, the County Council Planning Archaeologist requested that a geophysical survey of the site be undertaken.

The geophysical survey, conducted in September 2012, identified a number of linear anomalies of possible archaeological origin that seem to predate the ridge and furrow present on the site (Roseveare 2012).

4. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the extent, nature and importance of any heritage assets within the proposed development area.



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Illus 2

Trench 8, showing land drain

Illus 3

Trench 1, showing changes in geology

Specifically the evaluation aimed to:

- assess the vulnerability/sensitivity of any exposed remains;
- provide sufficient information on the archaeological potential of the site to enable that archaeological implications of the proposed development to be assessed;
- assess the impact of previous land use on the site;
- inform the formulation of a strategy to avoid or mitigate impacts of the proposed development on surviving archaeological remains;
- produce a site archive for deposition with Warwickshire museum service and to provide information for accession to the Warwickshire HER.

5. METHOD

The fieldwork was conducted in accordance with the following documents:

- A Specification for an Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation, Birmingham Road, Stratford-Upon-Avon, Warwickshire (Paul Gajos, CgMs, 2012)
- Code of Conduct (Institute of Field Archaeologists, 2000)
- Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations (Institute of Field Archaeologists, 2001)

Eleven trenches measuring 50m by 1.8m and one trench measuring 25m by 1.8m were excavated within the development area. The trenches were positioned to target anomalies identified by the geophysical survey.

An additional trench measuring 15m in length was excavated at a right angle to Trench 5 in a further attempt to identify a linear feature identified by the geophysical survey.

Trenches were excavated under archaeological supervision, with topsoil being removed by machine and excavation terminating at the uppermost significant archaeological horizon or when geological deposits were encountered.

The stratigraphic sequence was recorded in full in each of the trenches, even where no archaeological deposits were identified.

All recording followed standard archaeological guidelines as set out by the Institute for Archaeologists

2

3



Illus 4

Trench 3, showing changes in geology

Illus 5

Trench 12, W-facing section

Illus 6

Trench 6, showing modern bottle dump

(IfA). The recorded contexts were assigned unique numbers and recording was undertaken on Headland Archaeology pro forma trench and context record sheets. Digital photographic images and black and white photographs were taken of all trenches with a graduated metric scale clearly visible. Digital surveying was undertaken using a Trimble differential GPS system.

6. RESULTS

A full trench and context register is included in Appendix 1.

The stratigraphy within the site consisted of a dark brown silty topsoil *eg* [101] over a layer of orange brown silty clay subsoil with charcoal fleck inclusions *eg* [102].

This sequence subsequently overlay geological deposits comprising variations of red clays with blue and grey lenses *eg* [504/505] and areas of mixed and poorly sorted gravels, generally in a red brown, sandy matrix *eg* [103/104].

The archaeological deposits encountered within the evaluation trenches consisted of modern features associated with land drainage (Illus 2) and evidence for modern tipping.

6.1 Trenches containing geological deposits (gravel)

6.1.1 Trenches 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, 11

The natural geology of these trenches consisted of mixed and poorly sorted, rounded gravel, in a red brown, sandy matrix. Generally, natural gravels occurred at a depth of 0.40m–0.60m and excavation ceased at this level.

Within Trenches 1 and 3 a series of degraded blue and grey clay lenses was observed





within the natural gravels (Illus 3 and 4). An *in situ* 2 ½ inch iron pipe was also identified at the southern end of Trench 1, the alignment and position of which, is indicated on the geophysical survey as an area of high magnetic potential.

6.2 Trenches containing geological deposits (clay)

6.2.1 Trenches 5, 7, 10, 12

The natural geology of these trenches consisted of hard packed red clays with blue and grey lenses, containing small patches of semi-rounded gravel.

The depth at which geological deposits were encountered remained relatively consistent across the site (0.40–0.60m) (illus 5), a small sondage excavated in Trench 5 to investigate the geological deposits indicated that the red clays continued to a depth of 2.0m below the ground level. Excavation ceased at this depth for safety reasons.

Four sherds of local slipware were found within the topsoil of Trench 12. The sherds relate to a single piecrust rimmed dish dating to the 18th or 19th centuries.

6.3 Trenches containing modern features

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6.3.1 Trench 6

A modern feature [605], cut from the level of topsoil, contained a large number of moulded glass bottles (Illus 6) with metal screw caps, milk bottles and a white ceramic salmon paste jar, which when opened contained Cadbury's Bonus Bar chocolate wrappers, priced at 6d. The chocolate bars were available in the 1960s.

7. CONCLUSION

The archaeological evaluation has established that only deposits from relatively modern periods are present within the development area. The features identified indicate that the land

use has remained constant over time, the later features, such as the land drains, generally follow the line of the ridge and furrow which was observable as topographic features within the landscape. The excavation of the evaluation trenches indicates that no historically significant archaeological deposits occur within the confines of the area investigated.

The identification of the relatively modern features suggests that the historical use of the area as agricultural land has remained relatively consistent, the ridge and furrow representing the first phase of archaeologically visible activity within the area of the proposed development. Although the date of the ridge and furrow topography is unknown, a date in the medieval or early post-medieval period would be consistent with the agricultural practice.

The evaluation succeeded in showing that the anomalies identified by geophysical survey did not relate to archaeological features. The changes in the local geology within the confines of the site indicate a varied distribution of unconsolidated material suggestive of a more recent origin than the recorded solid geology. The type of material observed within the evaluation trenches relates to drift geology, both glacial and fluvio-glacial deposits.

The discrepancy between the excavation results and the geophysical results could be due to the variations in the local geological drift deposits encountered during the evaluation.

8. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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- Roseveare, M.J 2012 *Birmingham Road, Stratford-Upon-Avon, Warwickshire. Geophysical Survey Report*, Archaeophisica Ltd BRS121.

9. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Trench and context register

Trench	Context	Description	Dimensions	Deposit depth
1	101	Mouldable Dark brown ,silty loam, 2% small pebble (1-3mm) inclusions	2.00 x50m, 50.85-50.90m	0.15m
	102	Mouldable Orange brown silty clay loam, inclusions, 2% rounded pebble and charcoal flecks.	OD ground level	0.10m
	103	Orange brown silty clay loam, inclusion, 50% small to medium rounded gravels		0.10m
	104	Mixed lenses of red and yellow sandy deposits, inclusion, 80% small to medium poorly sorted gravels(5-10cm		Excavation ceased at this level

Summary of excavation

The evaluation trench was excavated by machine to the top of the clays, no features of archaeological significance were observed.

Trench	Context	Description	Dimensions	Deposit depth
2	201	Mouldable Dark brown ,silty loam, 2% small pebble (1-3mm) inclusions	2.00 x25m, 50.77-50.80m	0.15m
	202	Mouldable Orange brown silty clay loam, inclusions, 2% rounded pebble and charcoal flecks.	OD ground level	0.10m
	203	Orange brown silty clay loam, inclusion, 50% small to medium rounded gravels		0.10m
	204	Mixed lenses of red and yellow sandy deposits, inclusion, 80% small to medium poorly sorted gravels(5-10cm		Excavation ceased at this level

Summary of excavation

The evaluation trench was excavated by machine to the top of the clays, no features of archaeological significance were observed.

Trench	Context	Description	Dimensions	Deposit depth
3	301	Mouldable Dark brown ,silty loam, 2% small pebble (1-3mm) inclusions	2.00 x50m, 49.90-50.25m	0.15m
	302	Mouldable Orange brown silty clay loam, inclusions, 2% rounded pebble and charcoal flecks.	OD ground level	0.10m
	303	Orange brown silty clay loam, inclusion, 50% small to medium rounded gravels		0.10m
	304	Mixed lenses of red and yellow sandy deposits, inclusion, 80% small to medium poorly sorted gravels(5-10cm		Excavation ceased at this level

Summary of excavation

The evaluation trench was excavated by machine to the top of the clays, no features of archaeological significance were observed.



Trench	Context	Description	Dimensions	Deposit depth
4	401	Mouldable Dark brown ,silty loam, 2% small pebble (1–3mm) inclusions	2.00 x50m, 47.30–47.20m	0.25m
	402	Mouldable Orange brown silty clay loam, inclusions, 2% rounded pebble and charcoal flecks.	OD ground level	0.20m
	403	Orange brown silty clay loam, inclusion, 50% small to medium rounded gravels		0.20m
	404	Red brown sandy deposit, inclusion, 80% small to medium poorly sorted gravels(5–10cm		Excavation ceased at this level

Summary of excavation

The evaluation trench was excavated by machine to the top of the clays, no features of archaeological significance were observed.

Trench	Context	Description	Dimensions	Deposit depth
5	501	Mouldable Dark brown ,silty loam, 5% small flat pebble (1–3cm) inclusions	2.00 x50m, 49.70–49.16m	0.20m
	502	Mouldable Orange brown silty clay loam, inclusions, 2% rounded pebble and charcoal flecks.	OD ground level	0.20m
	503	Red brown hard clay loam, stony/pebbles		0.20m
	504	Dry decomposing blue grey clay lenses, very crumbly		0.30
	505	Red brown clay loam, gravel inclusions		Sondage excavated to 2.00m

Summary of excavation

The evaluation trench was excavated by machine to the top of the clays, trench 5 contained lenses of blue grey clay within the makeup, a sondage was cut through the red clays, to 2.00m in depth, no change in the clays was observed at this depth. No features of archaeological significance were observed.

Trench	Context	Description	Dimensions	Deposit depth
6	601	Mouldable Dark brown ,silty loam, 2% small pebble (1–3mm) inclusions	2.00 x50m, 48.50–48.46m	0.20m
	602	Mouldable Orange brown silty clay loam, inclusions, 2% rounded pebble and charcoal flecks.	OD ground level	0.20m
	603	Orange brown silty clay loam, inclusion, 50% small to medium rounded gravels		0.20m
	604	Red brown sandy deposit, inclusion, 80% small to medium poorly sorted gravels(5–10cm)		Excavation ceased at this level
	605	Bottle tip/ rubbish dump cut from 601, dated 1960's		Unexcavated, as datable material was located in uppermost fill.

Summary of excavation

The evaluation trench was excavated by machine to the top of the clays, no features of archaeological significance were observed, however a bottle tip/dump was located, cut from the topsoil the feature was dated.

Trench	Context	Description	Dimensions	Deposit depth
7	701	Mouldable Dark brown ,silty loam, 2% small pebble (1–3mm) inclusions	2.00 x50m, 48.60–47.90m	0.20m
	702	Mouldable Orange brown silty clay loam, inclusions, 2% rounded pebble and charcoal flecks.	OD ground level	0.20m
	703	Orange brown silty clay loam, inclusion, 50% small to medium rounded gravels		0.20m
	704	Red brown sandy deposit, inclusion, 80% small to medium poorly sorted gravels(5–10cm)		Excavation ceased at this level

Summary of excavation

The evaluation trench was excavated by machine to the top of the clays, no features of archaeological significance were observed.

Trench	Context	Description	Dimensions	Deposit depth
8	801	Mouldable Dark brown ,silty loam, 2% small pebble (1–3mm) inclusions	2.00 x50m, 48.30–47.90m	0.20m
	802	Mouldable Orange brown silty clay loam, inclusions, 2% rounded pebble and charcoal flecks.	OD ground level	0.20m
	803	Orange brown silty clay loam, inclusion, 50% small to medium rounded gravels		0.20m
	804	Red brown sandy deposit, inclusion, 80% small to medium poorly sorted gravels(5–10cm)		Excavation ceased at this level

Summary of excavation

The evaluation trench was excavated by machine to the top of the clays, no features of archaeological significance were observed.

Trench	Context	Description	Dimensions	Deposit depth
9	901	Mouldable Dark brown ,silty loam, 2% small pebble (1–3mm) inclusions	2.00 x50m, 47.50–47.90m	0.20m
	902	Mouldable Orange brown silty clay loam, inclusions, 2% rounded pebble and charcoal flecks.	OD ground level	0.20m
	903	Orange brown silty clay loam, inclusion, 50% small to medium rounded gravels		0.20m
	904	Red brown sandy deposit, inclusion, 80% small to medium poorly sorted gravels(5–10cm)		Excavation ceased at this level

Summary of excavation

The evaluation trench was excavated by machine to the top of the clays, no features of archaeological significance were observed.



Trench	Context	Description	Dimensions	Deposit depth
10	1001	Mouldable Dark brown ,silty loam, 2% small pebble (1–3mm) inclusions	2.00 x50m, 47.73–47.29m OD ground level	0.20m
	1002	Mouldable Orange brown silty clay loam, inclusions, 2% rounded pebble and charcoal flecks.		0.20m
	1003	Orange brown silty clay loam, inclusion, 50% small to medium rounded gravels		0.20m
	1004	Red brown clay loam, inclusion, 50% small to medium poorly sorted gravels(5–10cm		Excavation ceased at this level

Summary of excavation

The evaluation trench was excavated by machine to the top of the clays, no features of archaeological significance were observed.

Trench	Context	Description	Dimensions	Deposit depth
11	1101	Mouldable Dark brown ,silty loam, 2% small pebble (1–3mm) inclusions	2.00 x50m, 47.65–47.75m OD ground level	0.20m
	1102	Mouldable Orange brown silty clay loam, inclusions, 2% rounded pebble and charcoal flecks.		0.20m
	1103	Orange brown silty clay loam, inclusion, 50% small to medium rounded gravels		0.20m
	1104	Wet clay loam red with green/yellow patches, inclusion, 50% small to medium poorly sorted gravels(5–10cm		Excavation ceased at this level

Summary of excavation

The evaluation trench was excavated by machine to the top of the gravels, no features of archaeological significance were observed.

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Trench	Context	Description	Dimensions	Deposit depth
12	1201	Mouldable Dark brown, silty loam, 2% small pebble (1–3mm) inclusions. Blue and white transfer print pottery and 4 sherds of 18th/19th century slipware.	1.80 x50m, 47.77–47.48mOD ground level	0.25m
	1202	Mouldable Orange brown silty clay loam, inclusions, 10% rounded pebble and charcoal flecks.		0.20m
	1203	Orange brown clay loam, inclusion, 30% small to medium rounded gravels.		0.20m
	1204	Red brown clay loam, inclusion, 50% small to medium poorly sorted gravels(5–10cm)		Excavation ceased at this level

Summary of excavation

The evaluation trench was excavated by machine to the top of the clays, no features of archaeological significance were observed, fragments of 18th/19th C ,pie crusted, slip ware were noted within the topsoil.

Appendix 2 Photographic register

Photo	B/W	Digital	Direction	Description
1	Y	Y	E	Trench 12 during excavation
2	Y	Y	N	Trench 12 section
3	Y	Y	N	Trench 11, after excavation
4	Y	S	S	Trench 11, section
5	Y	Y	N	Trench 8, after excavation
6	Y	Y	S	Trench 8, section
7	Y	Y	N	Trench 6, section
8	Y	Y	N	Trench 6, Bottle dump
9	–	Y	N	Trench 6, Bottle dump
10	–	Y	N	Detail of chocolate bar wrapper
11	Y	Y	E	Trench 6, after excavation
12	Y	Y	N	Trench 7, after excavation
13	Y	Y	N	Trench 7, section
14	Y	Y	N	Trench 7, section
15	Y	Y	N	Trench 10, after excavation
16	Y	Y	N	Trench 10, section
17	Y	Y	N	Trench 10, after excavation
18	Y	Y	N	Trench 5, after excavation
19	Y	Y	N	Trench 5, section showing clay deposits
20	Y	Y	N	Trench 4, after excavation
21	Y	Y	S	Trench 4, section
22	–	Y	–	Gravels in trench 3
23	Y	Y	N	Trench 3, section
24	Y	Y	E	Trench 3, after excavation
25	–	Y	–	Changes in gravels
26	–	Y	–	Changes in gravels
27	–	Y	–	Changes in gravels
28	–	Y	–	Changes in gravels
29	–	Y	–	Changes in gravels
30	–	Y	–	Changes in gravels
31	Y	Y	N	Trench 1, after excavation
32	Y	Y	N	Trench 1, section
33	–	Y	W	Iron pipe in Trench 1
34	Y	Y	E	Trench 2, after excavation
35	Y	Y	E	Trench 2, section
36	Y	Y	E	Trench 9, after excavation
37	Y	Y	N	Trench 9, section



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