

PWOS/02



76–84 ST OWENS STREET, HEREFORD

Archaeological Watching Brief

commissioned by Perfection Homes Limited

131274/f

February 2014

76–84 ST OWENS STREET, HEREFORD

Archaeological Watching Brief

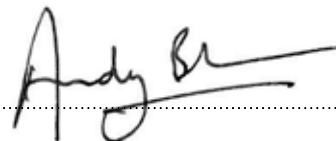
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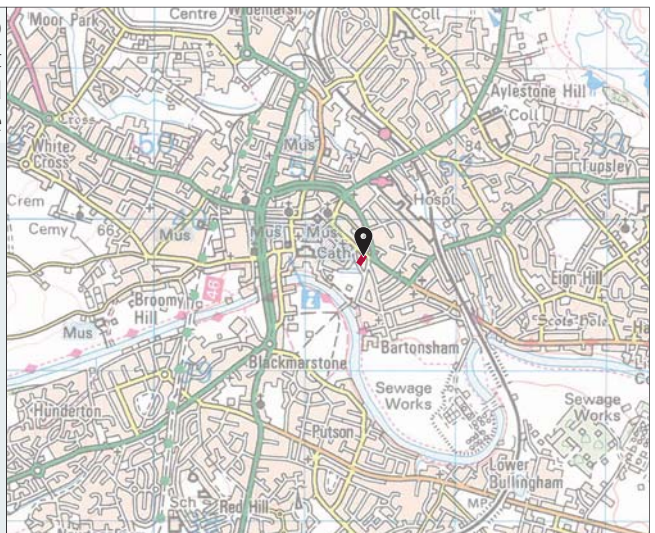
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land adjacent to
St Owen Street
Hereford
Herefordshire



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scale 1:500 @ A4



0 25m

Illus 1

Site location

76–84 ST OWENS STREET, HEREFORD

Archaeological Watching Brief

Headland Archaeology undertook an archaeological watching brief at 76–84 St Owens Street, Hereford as part of a condition of the planning permission granted for the construction of houses on the site. Although the site lies in Hereford's Area of Archaeological Importance, no features or finds were recovered pre-dating the 19th century.

1 INTRODUCTION

A watching brief was undertaken by Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd at 76–84 St Owens Street Hereford during the excavation of foundation trenches for residential properties; planning reference 131274/f. The development area lies within the Hereford Area of Archaeological Importance and as such was subjected to an evaluation in 2010 by Headland Archaeology (Doyle 2010) ahead of submission of the planning application to develop the site, the results of which are summarised below. Subsequently Herefordshire Council's archaeological advisor requested that all ground disturbing work associated with the development be monitored by an archaeologist in accordance with a brief (ref b131274s2) outlining the requirements for the archaeological watching brief to be undertaken during the works.

1.1 Site description

The site is located to the east side of the medieval city of Hereford, along one of the main approach roads to the city. The centre of the site was occupied by 19th century buildings (a printing works), with an open yard to the St Owens Street frontage and gardens to the rear. The buildings, yards and gardens were demolished in November 2013 prior to this watching brief. The ground level slopes slightly to the north-east (towards the road). The underlying geology is Old fluvio-glacial gravels overlying Old red Sandstone.

1.2 Background

1.2.1 History

Historically St Owen's Street has been a main route into the medieval city of Hereford, via St Owen's Gate for centuries. Speede's 1610 map of Hereford, although somewhat stylised, shows very few properties along the street frontage outside of the city walls. Taylor's 1757 map of Hereford shows the development of suburbs along this route, with the land divided into small tenement plots running back from the street. The street by the proposed development site was wider than at present and was re-aligned by 1885 (**Illus 2**), forming the existing street layout. The buildings which stood on the area of the site development were set back from this new road and respected the old street frontage.

1.2.2 Archaeology

An evaluation was undertaken in 2010 by Headland Archaeology (Doyle 2010). No previous works had been undertaken on the site. This work revealed the presence of a fragmentary cobbled surface adjacent to the existing modern road, which may have been medieval in date. However there was significant later disturbance in this area from 19th/20th century pit digging.



Illus 2
Site plan

Illus 3*SW facing shot of coal store [2021]*

In the rear of the properties, further 19th century pits were located, probably cess pits or otherwise connected with waste disposal. Some residual later medieval or early post-medieval pottery was recovered; also a fragment of lugged stone mortar, possibly from a religious site, was found within the large 19th century pit to the front of the development area.

The finds assemblage recovered during the evaluation established human activity from the 13th century AD to the modern period within the development area. It was concluded that the entire depth of the soil profile to the rear of the properties had been comprehensively reworked by horticultural activity occurring comparatively recently, as 19th century finds were recovered from all identified soil horizons.

2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the watching brief were as follows:

- To ensure the excavation and recording of any archaeological remains that would be disturbed by the development;
- To produce and deposit a satisfactory archive and disseminate the results of the work via grey literature reporting and publication as appropriate.

3 METHOD

The main contractor mechanically excavated deposits as necessary for the foundations of the residential properties following the plans supplied by the architect. The works were monitored by an archaeologist at all times. Excavation ceased when archaeologically significant deposits were revealed, and the site archaeologist was afforded sufficient time to record and excavate the archaeological resource.

All recording followed IfA Standards and Guidance. All contexts and small finds were given unique numbers and undertaken on pro forma record cards. 35mm colour transparencies and black-and-white prints were taken with a graduated metric scale clearly visible. Digital photographs on a 7.2mp camera were taken for illustrative purposes only.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Area 1

No significant archaeological features were identified in this area. A list of all contexts may be found in Appendix 1. The whole of this area was covered with [2000] an imported dark grey brown sand

clay topsoil which was between 0.30m and 0.40m in depth. This overlay [2001] and pink/grey brown sand/clay with gravel inclusions, and represents the original topsoil and subsoil. Finds in [2000] were a mix of modern and post medieval building material and ceramics whilst in [2001] they were predominantly post medieval in date and included pottery (including blue and white china and Staffordshire slip ware), iron, animal bone (including the complete skeleton of a foal), ceramic building material (CBM), and charcoal. The excavations did not go beyond 0.80m in depth and did not encounter the natural geology at any time.

The foundations excavated for the three houses revealed a number of post medieval rubbish pits. Pit [2002] was 0.60m in length and 0.50m in depth. It was not bottomed. The fill [2003] was mostly made up of pottery, ceramic building material, glass, metal, and roof slate. Pit [2004] was wider at 0.90m but shallower being only 0.30m deep and was filled by [2005] which had a similar make up to [2003] in that it was very loose and predominantly made up of ceramic material, but it lacked the pottery and glass that [2003] presented. Pit [2006] was smaller still at 0.30m wide and 0.30m deep and its fill [2007] was very similar to [2003] being made up of pottery from the post medieval period. The final pit found in this area was [2012] which was 0.30m wide and 0.30m deep and filled by [2013]. This pit was slightly different to the rest in that the fill had more soil within it, a dark grey brown sand/clay very similar to [2000]. Finds observed in this pit included coal, charcoal, CBM and pottery, including half a side plate from a willow pattern set.

A linear feature [2010] was observed cutting the upper layer of [2001] by 0.10m and was seen to run southwest-northeast across the foundations. The fill [2011] was made up a dark black/brown sand clay with orange sand mixed in, and is thought to represent the boundary fence dividing the back of the properties that once occupied this site.

Another linear feature [2014] was observed running east-west across the centre of the foundations, but not in the trenches excavated at the extremities. This was filled by [2015] a mixture of dark blue black sandy material with an orange sand band sat towards the base.



Illus 4

SSW facing shot of well [2016]

A coal store [2021] was discovered in the north-west part of the foundation trench and was lined with brick and stone walls [2022] and had been back filled with demolition rubble [2023] from when the building was demolished in 2013 (Illus 3). It was approximately 5m by 3m in plan and 2m deep. Exact measurements could not be taken due to the unstable nature of the ground surrounding the store. It is possible that this cellar is part of the original domestic dwelling constructed here in the early 1800s.

4.3 Area 3

Area 3 was severely disturbed by a ceramic post-medieval drainage pipe which sloped downwards to the north-east and had been cut through the natural. No other archaeological

features were observed.

Finds from this feature were similar to the pits excavated in the area being post medieval, if not modern, in date. It is unclear whether this feature cuts the topsoil, but it had certainly been cut through [2001].

A soak away trench was excavated at the back of the property 6.5m in length and no more that 0.80m in depth. To the north east end an area of hardcore [2008] was observed 0.30m deep stretching 3.10m from the edge of the trench. Although the area was not uncovered in it's entirety it is assumed the hardcore continues to the back boundary wall of the property and possibly represents a hard standing for a shed or greenhouse. The other half of the trench is taken up with a large area of modern rubbish, including a bolted metal frame c 1.00m in width, which appears to cover [2001].

4.2 Area 2

Area 2 was to the front of the property and the excavations were within the footprint of the previous buildings on this site. The natural geology was picked up in this area generally at a depth of around 0.40m but in places it looked like the natural had been truncated, especially inside the old building. Many electricity and drainage pipes were observed running across the area and the construction and demolition of the previous structure had disturbed the upper level of natural quite a bit. One linear feature [2019] was seen to run east-west in the south-west corner of the site but was not picked up anywhere else in this area. The fill [2020] was a mid grey brown sand clay with occasional inclusions of animal bone, CBM and charcoal.

A well [2016] was uncovered in the south-east corner of the foundations lined with stones [2017] and then back filled with demolition rubble from an earlier phase of construction [2018] (Illus 2). It was 1.40m wide and excavated to a depth of 1.80m. The foundations of the previous building had truncated it on its northern edge and slabs had been placed on top. It is possible that this well served the original properties which existed on this site built in the early 19th century.

5 DISCUSSION

No features pre-dating the 19th century were observed in this investigation. The ground had been heavily disturbed with imported topsoil added to the rear and truncation of the natural occurred where the buildings stood near the road. All of the areas displayed evidence of severe disturbance with many cables, pipes and drains being cut into the natural and some extending below the level of the excavation.

6 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Doyle, D 2010 *76-84 St Owens Street, Hereford: Archaeological Evaluation*. Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd, Hereford. Unpublished client report.

7 APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Site registers

Appendix 1.1 Context register

Context	Description
2000	Topsoil. Dark grey brown sand clay with post medieval and modern finds within. Imported topsoil. Max. D: 0.40m.
2001	Subsoil. Pink/grey brown sand clay with gravel inclusions. Frequent finds of animal bone, post-medieval CBM, carbon pottery and metal. Over 0.40m in depth, not fully excavated.
2002	Cut of circular post-medieval disposal pit. Vertical sides but base not exposed. L: 0.60m D: 0.50m. Filled by [2003].
2003	Fill of pit [2002]. Dark grey brown sand clay. Abundant post-medieval pottery, glass, CBM and metal fragments. L: 0.60m D: 0.50m.
2004	Cut of pit filled by [2005]. Gently sloping sides with a flat undulating base. L: 0.90m D: 0.30m. Post-medieval.
2005	Fill of pit [2004]. Dark grey brown sand clay. Abundant CBM and pottery. L: 0.90m D: 0.30m.
2006	Cut of pit [2007], filled by [2006]. Gently sloping sides with a rounded base. L: 0.30m D: 0.15m. Post medieval.
2007	Fill of cut [2006]. Dark grey brown sand clay. Abundant CBM and pottery. L: 0.30m D: 0.15m. Post medieval.
2008	Cut for hard standing, filled by [2009]. Linear in plan with steep sides and a flat base. L: 3.10m D: 0.35m. Modern.
2009	Fill of [2008]. Black sand clay topped with a layer of brick and cement. L: 3.10m D: 0.35m. Modern.
2010	Cut of boundary between properties, filled by [2011]. Linear in plan with gentle sides and a flat base. L: over 8.80m D: 0.30m. Modern.
2011	Fill of [2010]. A mixture of orange sand and gravel, and black sand clay. L: over 8.80m D: 0.30m. Modern.
2012	Cut for pit, filled by [2013]. Vertical sides, base not excavated. L: 0.30m D: 0.30m. Post-medieval.
2013	Fill for cut [2012]. Black sand clay with abundant carbon, coal, CBM and pottery (including half a willow pattern plate). L: 0.30m D: 0.30m. Post-medieval.
2014	Cut for linear running east-west through centre of foundations. Gently sloping sides, base not observed L: over 4.50m W: 1.10m D: over 0.50m. Post-medieval. Filled by [2015].
2015	Fill of cut [2014]. Mid grey brown sand clay and orange sand/gravel. Abundant post medieval pottery, carbon, slate roof tile and metal. L: over 4.50m W: 1.10m D: over 0.50m. Pos-medieval.
2016	Cut of well. Filled by [2017] and [2018]. Truncated by building so only southern half survives. Circular in plan with vertical sides, base not reached. L: 1.40 W: 0.70 (surviving) D: 1.80 (excavated depth).
2017	Fill of well [2016]. Stone lining. Local pink/red sandstone. Approximately 0.20m thick.

Context	Description
2018	Fill of well [2016]. Dark grey brown silt clay with abundant brick (whole), roof tile, and china/modern pottery contained within. Also frequent local sandstone presumed to be from the lining [2017]. L: 1.00m W: 0.70m D: 1.80m (excavated). Post-medieval back-fill.
2019	Cut for linear running east-west, filled by [2020]. Truncated by the recent demolition of the house. Does not appear anywhere else in area 2. W: 0.80m D: 0.80m
2020	Fill for linear [2019]. Mid grey brown sand clay with occasional small and tiny stones. Occasional small pieces of CBM, animal bone and charcoal. Presumed post-medieval date.
2021	Cut for coal store. Only base exposed. L: c 5m W: c 3m D: c 2m (measurements approximate due to unstable nature of surrounding ground).
2022	Brick and stone wall inside coal store [2021]. Walls made from bricks and local sandstone blocks. Walls still extant on north-east, north-west and parts on the south-east side. Stairs and doors removed. Dimensions: c 5x3m and 2m deep (measurements approximate due to unstable nature of surrounding ground).
2023	Fill of [2021]. Rubble fill of coal store created when the building above was demolished in November 2013. Made up of whole bricks (possibly from a chimney), wooden beams and planks, sinks, and tile.
2024	Natural. Red/pink sand and gravels. Very loose and dry.

Appendix 1.2 Photographic register

Photo	Colour	B/W	Digital	Direction	Description
			facing		
001	38	36	001	/	Id shot – black and white:873, Colour:880
002	37	35	002	NW	Pit [2002] section
003	36	34	003	NE	General shot of trench
004	35	33	004	SW	Pit [2004] section
005	34	32	005	SW	Pit [2006] section
006	33	31	006	E	Hard standing area [2008]
007	32	30	007	W	Hard standing area [2008]
008	/	/	008	/	Finds from [2008]
009	/	/	009	/	Finds from [2008]
010	31	29	010	NE	Boundary [2010] section
011	30	28	011	SW	Pit [2012] section
012	29	27	012	NW	Linear [2014] section
013	28	26	013	NE	Horses head in [2001]
014	/	/	014	NE	Horses head in [2001]
015	/	/	015	/	Finds from [2014]
016	27	25	016	NE	Horses skeleton in [2001]
017	/	/	017	NE	Horses skeleton in [2001]
018	26	24	018	NW	Linear [2014] section
019	25	23	019	SW	Well [2016]

Photo	Colour	B/W	Digital	Direction facing	Description
020	/	/	020	SW	Well [2016]
021	/	/	021	SW	Well [2016]
022	/	/	022	SW	Well [2016]
023	/	/	023	NE	Well [2016]
024	/	/	024	NE	Mid-excavation of [2021]
025	/	/	025	SW	Mid-excavation of [2021]
026	/	/	026	NE	Mid-excavation of [2021]
027	/	/	027	NW	Mid-excavation of [2021]
028	23	21	028	W	Mid-excavation of [2021]
029	/	/	029	SW	General shot of trench
030	22	20	030	NW	Linear [2019]
031	21	19	031	SW	Well re-take
032	20	18	032	NW	Sample section
033	/	/	033	NW	General shot of ceramic pipe
034	/	/	034	SE	Sample section
035	/	/	035	S	General shot of S end of site
036	/	/	036	SE	General shot of N end of site
037	19	17	037	NW	Section Area 3

Appendix 1.3 Drawing register

Drawing	Scale	Plan/Section	Description
1	1:100	Plan	Plan of area copied from architects plan

Appendix 1.4 Small finds register

Small Find	Context	Description
1	2001	CU pin



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