

HTHH/02



14–15 HIGH TOWN, HEREFORD

Archaeological Ground monitoring

commissioned by Jamieson Associates Architects

P141379/F

April 2015

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project team

PROJECT MANAGER Andy Boucher
AUTHOR Simon Mayes
FIELDWORK Robert Blackburn, Luke Craddock-Bennett,
Simon Mayes, Annie Partridge
GRAPHICS Caroline Norrman
APPROVED BY Andy Boucher – Project Manager



Handwritten signature of Andy Boucher, Project Manager, written over a horizontal dotted line.

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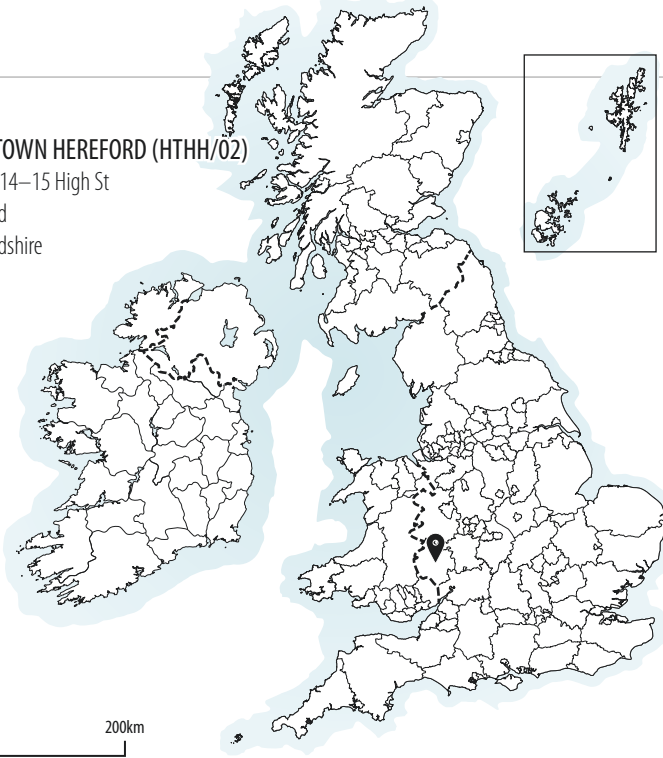
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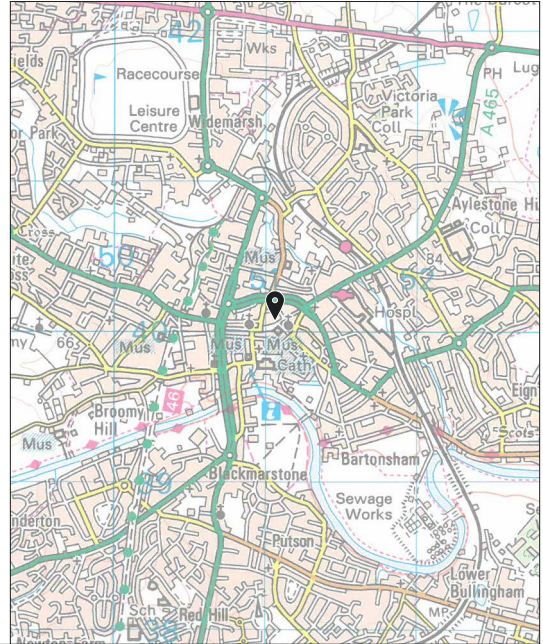
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HIGH TOWN HERFORD (HTHH/02)

land at 14-15 High St
Hereford
Herefordshire



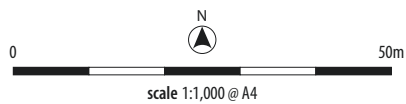
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KEY

- development boundary
- extension (Illus 2)



MIDLANDS & WEST

Unit 1, Premier Business Park
Faraday Road
Hereford HR4 9NZ
01432 364 901
www.headlandarchaeology.com

ILLUS 1

Site location

14–15 HIGH TOWN, HEREFORD

Archaeological Ground monitoring

Headland Archaeology was commissioned by Jamieson Associates Architects to undertake a programme of Archaeological ground monitoring during alterations to 14–15 High Town, Hereford. During the groundworks a rubble-filled cellar believed to date to the post-medieval period was identified. The internal area of the cellar was not excavated and the complete footprint of the cellar was not fully defined as the wall lines extended beyond the site boundary. No other features of archaeological significance were observed.

1 INTRODUCTION

Headland Archaeology was commissioned by Jamieson Associates Architects to undertake a programme of archaeological ground monitoring at 14-15 High Town, Hereford (**Illus 1**). Planning permission (P141379/F) had been granted to construct a single storey extension to the rear of the property.

Due to the location of the site within an archaeologically sensitive area, the archaeological advisor to Herefordshire Council requested that all ground disturbing work associated with the development was monitored by an archaeologist.

Archaeological monitoring was undertaken between 22nd September 2014 and 10th of October 2014. All work was undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation agreed with the archaeological advisor to the planning authority (Craddock-Bennett 2014a).

1.1 SITE LOCATION

The properties proposed for development are adjacent buildings located on the north side of High Town, within the central shopping district of Hereford (NGR 351047, 240063).

The properties share an 18th century southern elevation fronting onto High Town with later 19th and 20th century windows and 20th century shop fronts. Earlier 17th century gables are present to the rear of the property.

The rear of the properties back onto a small parking area containing an external metal staircase and a 20th century storage building (the

site of the proposed extension). A delivery and service area for the Maylord Orchards shopping centre extends beyond the rear of the properties.

1.2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The site is located within the Hereford Area of Archaeological Importance (AAI) as determined by the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979).

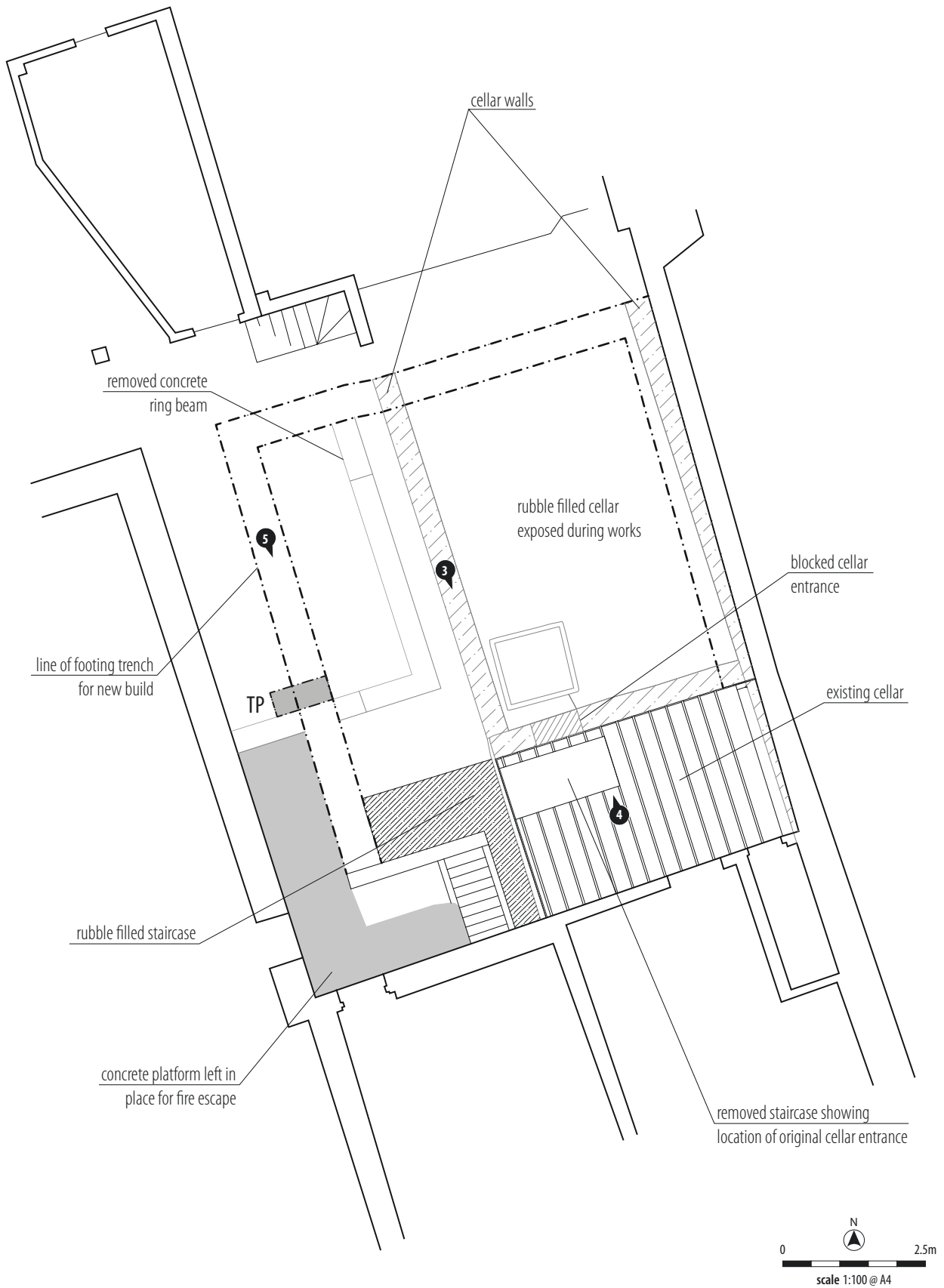
A desk-based study was undertaken by Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd (Craddock-Bennett 2014b) which drew together readily available and relevant documentation relating to the history of the 15/15 High Town, Hereford, the results of which have been summarised below;

Prehistory

There are no known heritage assets dating to this period within the development area or wider study area. Although a prime location for settlement, situated on a well-drained river terrace, almost no evidence for prehistoric settlement has been discovered within the city of Hereford.

Romano-British

There are no known heritage assets dating to this period within the development area or wider study area. Although material of Roman date has been found in the city, there is no evidence for Roman



ILLUS 2
Observations made during groundworks

occupation. Roman material found within the city is believed to have been brought from the Roman settlement of Magnis, four miles to the north-west of Hereford.

Anglo-Saxon

No heritage assets dating to this period have been identified within the development area or the wider study area.

Hereford was a Saxon town of some importance, however the defended area was located to the south of High Town. The line of the northern defensive ditch of the Saxon town is located beneath the buildings forming the southern side of High Town. East Street, to the south of these buildings, lies on the tail of the defensive rampart.

The use of land immediately outside the defended area is not fully understood. There is the potential for some form of occupation or industry to have taken place within the proposed development area, but the focus of activity dating to this period would have been within the defended area to the south.

Medieval

The proposed development site is located within an area of Hereford that was subject to rapid development during the early medieval period.

Immediately after the Norman Conquest, the King made his close friend William FitzOsbern Earl of Hereford and gave him supreme powers in the border area. Hereford was the centre of FitzOsbern's realm and he was determined to ensure that it was developed in a way that reflected its importance.

The land just outside the town and to the north of the Saxon defences (the current High Town area) belonged to Bishop Walter before the Conquest. The Domesday survey records that Earl William gave the bishop the manor of Eaton Bishop and land at Lydney in Gloucestershire in exchange for 'land in which the market is now' – presumably the new market place in Hereford.

Although FitzOsbern was only in the city for a short time, he initiated changes which are still a predominant part of the topography of the city. He built a vast new market place immediately outside and to the north of the Saxon city defences and surrounded it with burgage plots for the French settlers he had attracted to the town by tax advantages.

The new market place included not only the present High Town, but also the triangle of land between St. Peter's Street, Union Street and Commercial Street.

The open market place and temporary stalls eventually became more permanent structures. The main triangle of the market place is now filled with buildings, as was the High Town area until the end of the 18th century. Taylor's map of 1757 shows the position of the Town Hall, The Tolsey and Cooken Row which stood directly opposite 14 and 15 High Town until it was demolished (prior to 1837).

When FitzOsbern laid out the market place and approach roads he also laid out long narrow plots of ground on the north side for the

French settlers. In the central High Town area each plot continued to the north as far as a back lane (Maylord Street). Many of the plots have since been amalgamated, but some (including Nos. 14 and 15) survive along the frontage. Extensive redevelopment to the rear of the proposed development area has removed evidence for the burgage plot associated with Nos. 14 and 15, however maps as recent as 1965 indicate the former plot associated with the properties.

Post-medieval

Evidence from Nos. 14 and 15 High Town, and other properties fronting onto the market place, suggests that repairs, extensions and amalgamations of properties have been a continuous feature of this area of the city throughout the medieval and post-medieval periods.

2 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the archaeological monitoring were:

- 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.

The local and regional research contexts are provided by the archaeological research framework for the Midlands. Any evidence retrieved during the works will be analysed in light of the objectives contained in these frameworks.

The resulting archive will be organised and deposited with Herefordshire Museum Service to facilitate access for the future research and interpretation for public benefit.

3 METHODS

Archaeological monitoring was undertaken during the excavation of all groundworks required as part of the new development.

The formation depth of the raft foundation base was 550mm (below existing ground level) over the central area and 750mm at the perimeter of the new extension.

All recording was conducted in accordance with ClfA standards and guidance. Appropriate sections and plans were drawn for the area that was monitored, and a comprehensive photographic record was maintained comprising black and white film, colour slide film, and digital images.

4 RESULTS

A plan of the observations is included as Illus 2.

During the demolition of the existing building and the removal of the existing ground surface, within the proposed area of the extension, a continuation to the existing cellar beneath 15 High



Town was observed at a depth of c 0.30m below ground level. The cellar, constructed in stone, had been backfilled with a combination of brick and rubble forming a level hard standing upon which the former extension to 14/15 High Town had been built (Illus 3).

The rubble fill of the cellar was not excavated and the complete footprint of the cellar was not fully defined as the wall lines extended to the north beyond the site boundary.

Access to the cellar was once provided through a blocked doorway within the existing cellar of No. 15 High Town. This doorway was observed after the removal of a modern staircase from within the previous extension (Illus 4). An additional brick-built staircase was observed during the groundworks that once provided external access into the existing cellar, this staircase was again backfilled with a combination of brick and rubble (Illus 5) indicating a possible connection with the backfilling of the main cellar.

No other archaeological finds or deposits of any significance were observed during the ground monitoring works. Made-up ground comprising demolition rubble was present throughout the full depth of excavation.

5 DISCUSSION

The monitoring of groundworks associated with the extension has

illustrated that the development site has limited archaeological potential due to the presence of a stone built cellar over the majority of the site.

Although the date of the cellar is unknown, cartographic evidence illustrates the relatively frequent alterations in the form and extent of 14–15 High Town during the post-medieval period and these alterations are reflected by the identification of below ground structures on the site.

Above ground buildings extending over the area where the cellar was identified are present on historic maps dating to between 1757 and 1965. The most likely date for the demolition of these structures and the backfilling of the cellar is c 1985 when the Maylord Orchards redevelopment was undertaken.

6 CONCLUSION

An undated stone-built cellar was identified during the groundworks associated with the construction of a new extension to 14–15 High Town. Although the date of the cellar is unknown, the structure is likely to relate to post-medieval development of the buildings identified on historic mapping. No evidence for archaeological activity pre-dating the construction of the cellar was identified.

ILLUS 3

Exposed cellar wall (beneath scale bar)

ILLUS 4

Bricked up cellar entrance identified following removal of staircase

ILLUS 5

Foundation trench for new extension and rubble filled cellar steps



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NORTH

Headland Archaeology
13 Jane Street
Edinburgh EH6 5HE
T 0131 467 7705
E north@headlandarchaeology.com

SOUTH & EAST

Headland Archaeology
Building 68C, Wrest Park, Silsoe
Bedfordshire MK45 4HS
T 01525 861 578
E southandeast@headlandarchaeology.com

MIDLANDS & WEST

Headland Archaeology
Unit 1, Premier Business Park, Faraday Road
Hereford HR4 9NZ
T 01432 364 901
E midlandsandwest@headlandarchaeology.com

www.headlandarchaeology.com