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HOLLY VILLA, WELLAND ROAD, HANLEY SWAN, WORCESTERSHIRE

Archaeological Evaluation

Kath Crooks
BA

PROJECT SUMMARY SHEET

<i>Client</i>	MR D. BALL
<i>National Grid Reference</i>	SO 81249 42772
<i>Address</i>	HOLLYVILLA WELLAND ROAD HANLEY SWAN WORCESTERSHIRE
<i>Parish</i>	HANLEY CASTLE
<i>Council</i>	MALVERN HILLS DISTRICT COUNCIL
<i>Planning Ref. No.</i>	MH/09/1042/OUT
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<i>Project Manager</i>	MIKE KIMBER
<i>Text</i>	KATH CROOKS
<i>Illustrations</i>	THOMAS SMALL
<i>Typesetting</i>	ANNA SZTROMWASSER
<i>Fieldwork</i>	KATH CROOKS JOSEF DORAN
<i>Schedule</i>	
<i>Fieldwork</i>	AUGUST 2010
<i>Report</i>	SEPTEMBER 2010

Signed off by:

Mike Kimber MA(Hons) AIFA, Project Manager

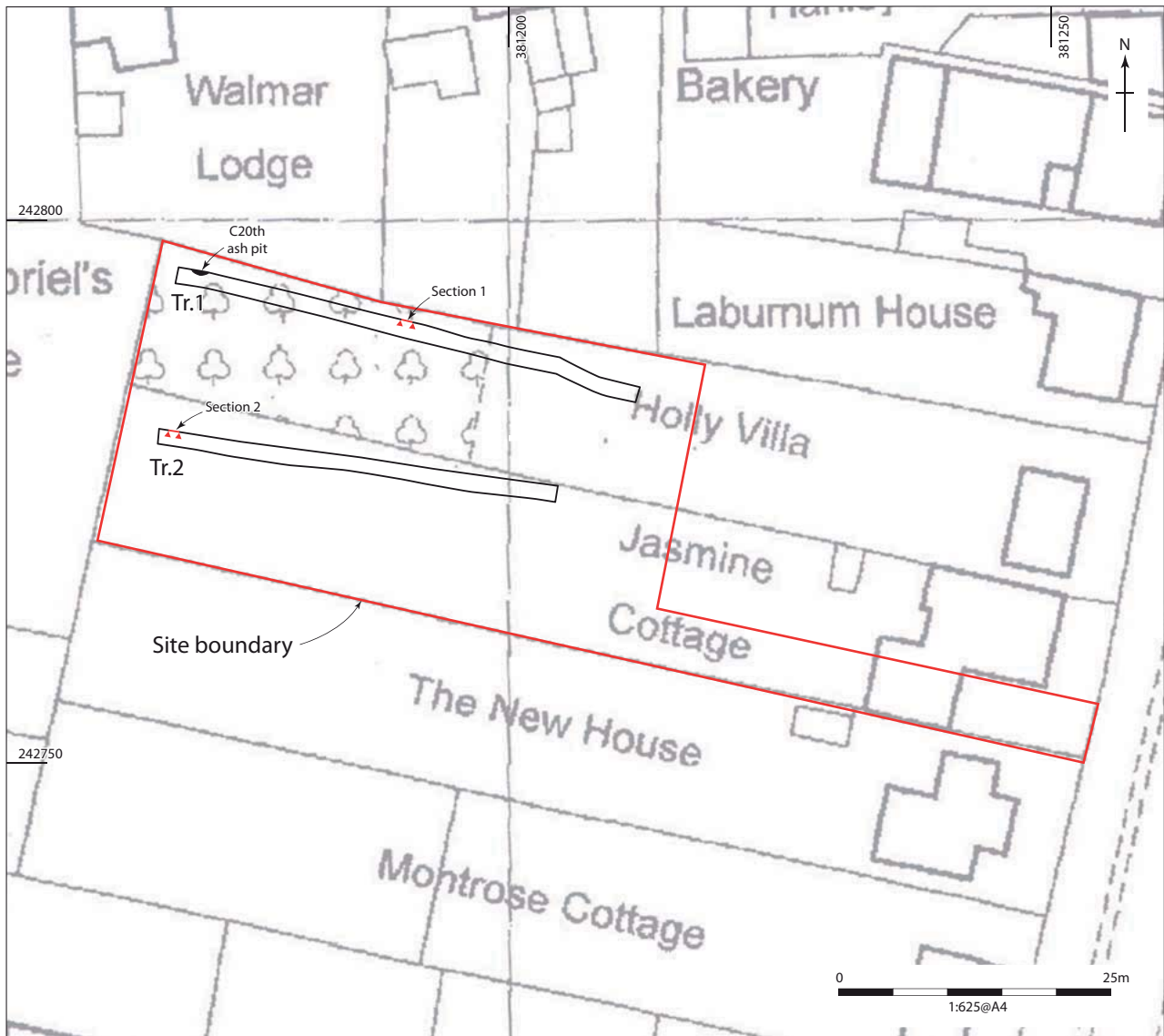
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Illus 1
Site location

HOLLY VILLA, WELLAND ROAD, HANLEY SWAN, WORCESTERSHIRE

Archaeological Evaluation

by Kath Crooks

Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd conducted an evaluation excavation at the rear of Holly Villa and Jasmine Cottage, Hanley Swan, Worcestershire. The evaluation consisted of two trenches, the first of which measured 44.8m and the second 40m in length. Both trenches were excavated to natural deposits. No archaeological features or deposits were seen in either trench. There were no finds.

1. INTRODUCTION

An archaeological evaluation was carried out by Headland Archaeology (UK) on a site at the rear of Holly Villa and Jasmine Cottage, Hanley Swan (Illus 1). Hanley Swan lies between Malvern Wells and Upton on Severn, some 15km south of Worcester.

The site, formerly garden, is being developed for housing. It lies at a height of approximately 33m OD. Outline planning permission (MH/09/1042/OUT) had been granted by Malvern Hills District Council subject to the condition that:

'No development shall take place within the application site until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programmed of archaeological work in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.'

The project was conducted in accordance with a Brief issued by Worcestershire Historic Environment and Archaeology Service and a Written Scheme of Investigation agreed with the Historic Environment Planning Officer. Fieldwork was carried out on 26 August 2010.

Hanley Swan lies on the relatively flat plain between the River Severn to the east and the Malvern Hills to the west. The underlying geology of the area is Mercian Mudstone (Keuper Marl) below Pleistocene fan gravels. The clay deposits beneath the soil horizons are highly suitable for the production of ceramics. In addition, timber for firing kilns would have been available in the woodland of Malvern Chase.

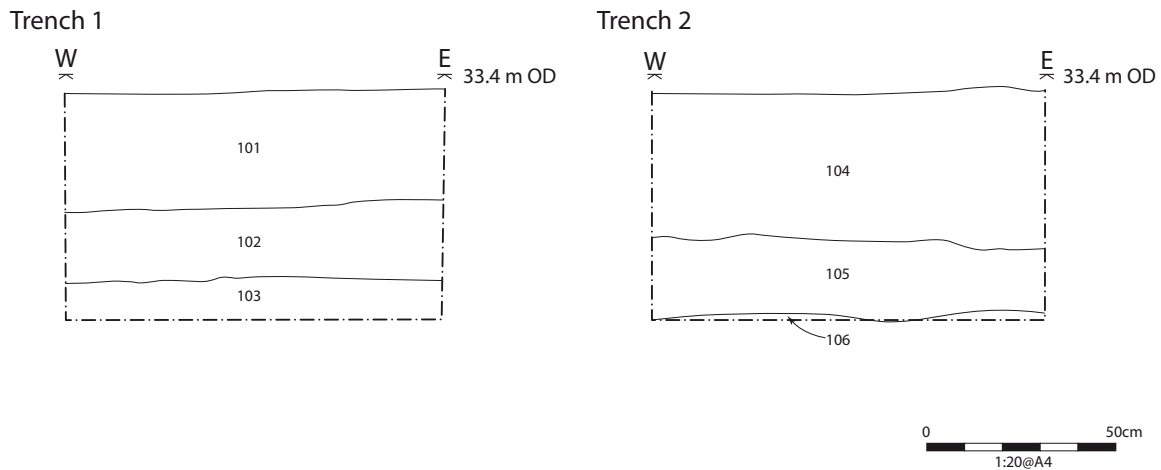
During the medieval period the area around Hanley Castle was known as Potters' Hanley for its pottery industry. The medieval industry was established by the 12th century. In the late 13th and 14th centuries Malvernian pottery was

distributed through the valleys of the Severn and the Wye. Following the Black Death, in 1349 the Hanley manor rolls stated that all the potters were dead (Toomey 1997), but the industry had been re-established by 1416 when an estate dower roll mentions rent for clay (Twomey 1997). In the 15th century, although the products had a wide distribution in the Severn Valley in Hereford and the Wye Valley this was on a fairly small scale. During the 16th and the beginning of the 17th centuries distribution extended south of Bristol and along the south Wales coast (<http://worcestershireceramics.org>). In 1573 the Lord of the Manor complained that the Chase was being spoilt by excessive tree felling to fire kilns for the production of pottery and tile (Mercian Archaeology 2007). However, the industry declined in the 17th century, possibly as a result of the enclosure of Malvern Chase in the 1630s which would have reduced the supply of fuel.

So far firm evidence for production lies closer to Hanley Castle, some 2km to the east. Prior to fieldwork beginning, an HER search of covering a 300m buffer from the site boundary was conducted. A number of archaeological observations have been made in the vicinity of the site. Medieval pottery was found during the construction of St Gabriels Church some 500m away (WSM07037) while, closer to the site, a scatter of 15th to 16th century pottery was found at Winnington Gardens, Hanley Swan (WSM11631).

No evidence for pottery production has been found within 300m. The nearest feature possibly associated with the industry was a pit, identified with 18th century cultivation traces, which could have resulted from clay extraction (WSM21598).

A search of the Worcestershire Records Office and of relevant historic maps suggested that the development area had been previously used as an allotment garden, and that sand quarrying took place immediately to its north.



Illus 2
Sample sections

2. METHOD

Excavation was undertaken using a mechanical excavator with the use of a toothless bucket 1.6m wide. The trenches were positioned to investigate a wide sample of the development area and ran along the length of the plots (Illus 1). All mechanical excavation took place under archaeological supervision. Trenches were excavated to naturally occurring deposits.

All recording followed standard archaeological guidelines as set out by the Institute of Field Archaeologist. Contexts were given unique numbers and recording was undertaken on pro forma record cards that conform to accepted archaeological norms. Trench plans were produced at a scale of 1:50 and 1:100 and sample sections were produced at a scale of 1:20. Photographs were taken throughout using 35mm monochrome and colour slide film while digital photographs were taken on a 7.2mp camera for illustrative purposes. Registers were kept for context records, photographs and drawings.

3. RESULTS

No significant archaeological finds or features were present in either of the trenches (Illus 1). The overburden (contexts [101] in Trench 1 and [104] in Trench 2) consisted of a layer of well cultivated dark garden soil to a depth of approximately 0.3m (Illus 2, 3, 4). A single sherd of 19th or 20th century blue and white transfer printed ware was seen in [101] but was not retained. Beneath the topsoil was a greyish yellow silty clay ([102] and [105]) to a depth of about 0.18m which comprised the subsoil on the site. The natural deposit ([103] and [106]), seen in the base of both trenches, was a yellow brown clay with varying patches of gravel. A single feature was present in Trench 1, an ash pit of 20th century date containing domestic waste such as glass bottles and a door handle. Two other potential features in Trench 1 were investigated but turned out to be

hollows in the natural clay, filled with sterile subsoil identical to context [102].

4. DISCUSSION

No evidence was found on the site for the Malvernian pottery industry known to have existed in the area. No features of medieval or post-medieval date were encountered. Holly Villa and Jasmine Cottage are both of



Illus 3
Trench 1 facing east

later post-medieval date and the sherd of transfer printed ware and the ash pit seem likely to be associated with these properties.

It is clear that any pottery manufacture must have taken place at some distance from the site. No medieval pottery was present, and had a kiln existed in the immediate vicinity it is likely that production debris would have been present. Of some interest was the fact that the natural gravel contained material similar to inclusions found in later Malvernian pottery (Fabric 69). At present it seems likely that the ceramics industry was centred to the east of the site.

5. ARCHIVE

The archive will be deposited at Worcestershire Museum within 1 year of completion of fieldwork.

6. REFERENCES

- Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd, 2010, *Holly Villa, Welland Road, Hanley Swan, Worcestershire. Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Evaluation*. Unpublished client report.
- Mercian Archaeology, 2007, *An Archaeological Watching Brief at Ladywell, Hanley Swan, Worcestershire*. Unpublished client report.
- Toomey, J.P., 1997, *A Medieval Woodland Manor: Hanley Castle, Worcestershire*. Doctoral Thesis, University of Birmingham.
- Worcestershire On-line Ceramic Database [website] <<http://worcestershireceramics.org/>>, Accessed September 2010.



Illus 4
Trench 2 facing east

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Site Register

1.1 Trench Register

Trench	Dimensions (m)	Description	Levels mOD (max & min)	Context
1	1.6 x 48.2	The northernmost trench to be excavated Trench 1 lay at the very northern limit of the plot. The only feature present was a recent (late 19th or 20th century) rubbish pit containing glass bottles and other domestic rubbish. The natural clays and gravels were encountered some 0.6m beneath the existing surface.	Ground surface: c.33 Natural: c.32.4	101 102 103
2	1.6 x 40	The trench lay to the south of Trench 1. Beneath the garden soil and subsoil encountered in the trench natural clays and gravels were encountered about 0.5m beneath the existing surface.	Ground surface: c.33 Natural: c.32.5	104 105 106

1.2 Context register

Context	Trench	Description	Dimensions (m)
101	1	Topsoil – friable dark grey brown garden soil	D: 0.3 (max)
102	1	Yellow brown clay silt. Subsoil in Trench 1	D: 0.2
103	1	Natural yellow brown clay with patches of gravel	–
104	2	Topsoil – friable dark grey brown garden soil	D: 0.3
105	2	Yellow brown clay silt. Subsoil in Trench 1	D: 0.2
106	2	Natural yellow brown clay with patches of gravel	–

1.3 Drawing Register

Drawing	Scale	Plan/Section	Description
1	1:50	Plan	Plan of Trench 1
2	1:20	Section	Sample section Trench 1
3	1:100	Plan	Plan of Trench 2
4	1:20	Section	Sample section Trench 2

1.4 Photographic Register

Photo	B&W	Colour slide	Digital	Direction Facing	Description
1	Y	Y	Y	W	Trench 1, facing west
2	Y	Y	Y	E	Trench 1, facing east
3	Y	Y	Y	N	Trench 1 sample section
4	Y	Y	Y	E	Trench 2, general shot
5	Y	Y	Y	W	Trench 2, general shot
6	Y	Y	Y	N	Trench 2, sample section