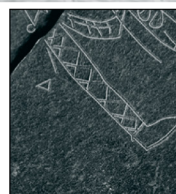
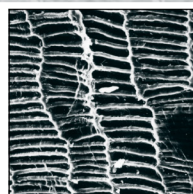
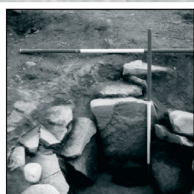
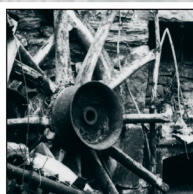
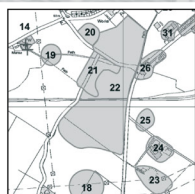


OWBW18



# THE OLD PIKE HOUSE, ECKINGTON, WORCESTERSHIRE

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

PLANNING REF. W/15/00812  
WSM NO. 70247

commissioned by Mr Stuart Bradbury

December 2018



# THE OLD PIKE HOUSE, ECKINGTON, WORCESTERSHIRE

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

PLANNING REF. W/15/00812  
EHE NO. 70247

commissioned by Mr Stuart Bradbury

December 2018

© 2018 by Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd  
Contains OS open data © Crown copyright and database right (2018).

This report adheres to the quality standard of ISO 9001:2015

### PROJECT INFO:

HA Project Code **OWBW18** / HAS No. **1325** / NGR **SO 92135**  
**41730** / Parish **Eckington** / Local Authority **Wychavon District Council** / OASIS Ref.  
**headland3-337177** / Archive Repository **Worcestershire Museums Service**

### PROJECT TEAM:

Project Manager **Luke Craddock-Bennett** / Author **Steve Thomson** / Fieldwork **Harriet Bryant-Buck,**  
**Steve Thomson** / Graphics **Caroline Norrman, Eleanor Winter**

Approved by **Luke Craddock-Bennett**



Headland Archaeology Midlands & West  
Unit 1 | Clearview Court | Twyford Rd | Hereford HR2 6JR  
t 01432 364 901  
e midlandsandwest@headlandarchaeology.com  
w www.headlandarchaeology.com





## PROJECT SUMMARY

An Archaeological Watching Brief was undertaken by Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd during groundworks associated with the construction of a new dwelling and garage on Land at the Old Pike House, Eckington, Worcestershire. The watching brief identified a ditch dating to the Romano-British period and two further, undated possible ditches. Remains of an undated probable 'fire pit' were also recorded. The remains confirmed previous evaluation results and excavation to the south of the site which evidenced Romano-British occupation in the area.

# CONTENTS

<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
	1.1 PLANNING BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES	1
	1.2 SITE LOCATION, DESCRIPTION AND SETTING	1
	1.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND	1
<b>2</b>	<b>AIMS AND OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>METHOD</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>RESULTS</b>	<b>4</b>
	4.1 GENERAL STRATIGRAPHY	4
	4.2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL FEATURES	4
<b>5</b>	<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>CONCLUSION</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>REFERENCES</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>APPENDICES</b>	<b>6</b>
	APPENDIX 1 CONTEXT SUMMARY	6

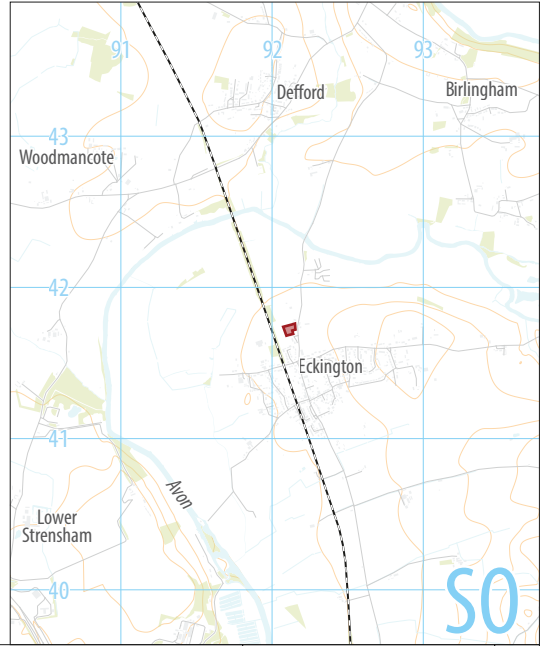
# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

<b>ILLUS 1</b> SITE LOCATION	VIII
<b>ILLUS 2</b> SITE PLAN	2
<b>ILLUS 3</b> STRATIGRAPHIC SEQUENCE, HOUSE FOUNDATIONS, LOOKING SOUTH	3
<b>ILLUS 4</b> PLAN VIEW OF DITCH [1010]	3
<b>ILLUS 5</b> NORTH FACING SECTION, OBLIQUE, SHOWING EASTERN SIDE OF PROBABLE DITCH [1012]	3
<b>ILLUS 6</b> WEST FACING VIEW OF PROBABLE DITCH [1008]	3
<b>ILLUS 7</b> VIEW OF POSSIBLE 'FIRE PIT', LOOKING SOUTH	4
<b>ILLUS 8</b> VIEW OF COMPLETED GARAGE FOUNDATIONS LOOKING EAST	4
<b>ILLUS 9</b> GENERAL VIEW OF COMPLETED HOUSE FOUNDATIONS, LOOKING NORTH-EAST	4

Old Pike House  
Eckington  
Worcestershire



0 200km  
1:12,500,000 @ A4



0 15m  
1:750 @ A4

- development boundary
- trench location
- evaluation trench location



Headland Archaeology Midlands & West  
Unit 1 | Clearview Court | Twyford Rd | Hereford HR2 6JR  
t 01432 364 901  
e midlandsandwest@headlandarchaeology.com  
w www.headlandarchaeology.com

ILLUS 1 Site location



# THE OLD PIKE HOUSE, ECKINGTON, WORCESTERSHIRE

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

### 1 INTRODUCTION

Headland Archaeology was commissioned by Mr Stuart Bradbury, to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the construction of a new dwelling and garage. This report presents the results of that work.

#### 1.1 PLANNING BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

Planning approval (W/15/00812) was granted by Wychavon District Council for the erection of a dwelling and garage, subject inter alia to Condition 7, which requires the submission of a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) defining a programme of archaeological works on the site.

Advice given during the determination of the application was to the effect that an appropriate programme of work would be an archaeological watching brief on construction groundworks.

A WSI was produced by Headland Archaeology (Craddock-Bennett 2018) and approved by the archaeological advisor to the planning authority. The document was designed to comply with Standards for Archaeological Projects in Worcestershire and the standard County brief for archaeological watching briefs.

#### 1.2 SITE LOCATION, DESCRIPTION AND SETTING

The proposed development site is located at NGR SO 92135 41730 (site centre) and covers an area of 1,470m<sup>2</sup>. It is located at the north end of Eckington and is currently a residential garden. The site lies at approximately 26m above ordnance datum.

Underlying bedrock is represented by the Charmouth Mudstone formation, laid down in shallow seas 183 to 199 million years ago. Overlying superficial deposits comprise New Inn member sand and gravels, fluvial in origin, representing the channels and floodplains or a riverine environment (NERC 2018).

#### 1.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

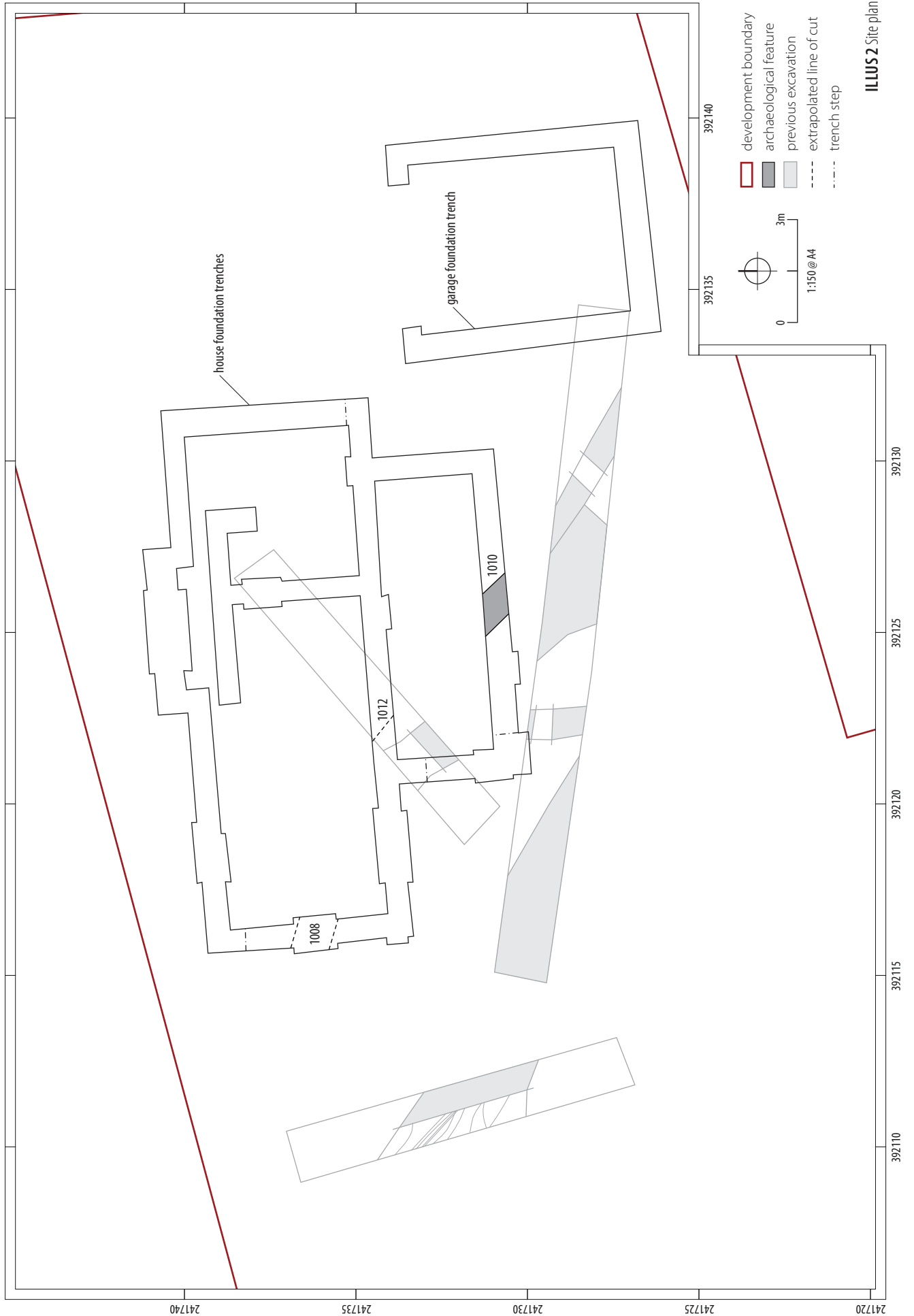
Land immediately to the south of the development area was subject to an archaeological excavation by Birmingham Archaeology in 2007 (Colls & Mann 2007). The excavations uncovered a sequence of human occupation from the Neolithic to the Romano-British period, most notably a series of rectilinear enclosures apparently arranged on a linear south-west to north-east alignment. Projecting the line of these enclosures, it seems likely that they would extend near to, if not in to, the current development area.

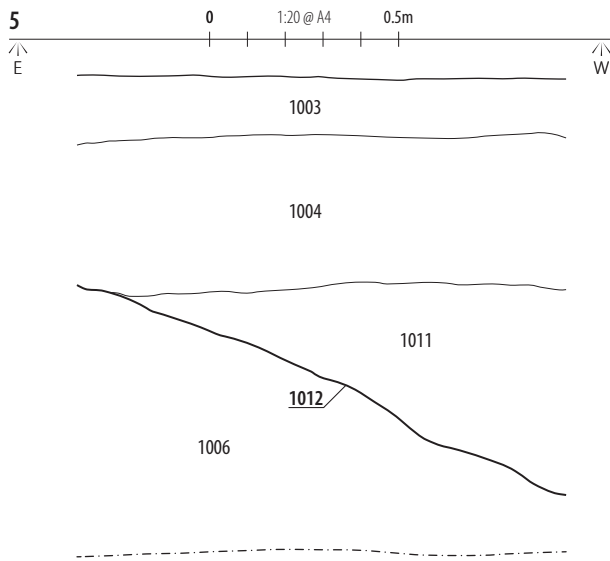
In March 2015 Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd conducted an archaeological evaluation at the Old Pike House, Eckington as part of a programme of work carried out as part of a condition placed on outline planning consent for the development of the site (Blackburn 2015). Trial trenching revealed clear archaeological evidence for settlement activity dating to the Roman period, comprising four linear features including a large ditch that contained significant amounts of pottery dated to the mid-1st – 4th centuries ad.

### 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 construction works; and





**ILLUS 3** Stratigraphic sequence, house foundations, looking south **ILLUS 4** Plan view of ditch [1010] **ILLUS 5** North facing section, oblique, showing eastern side of probable ditch [1012] **ILLUS 6** West facing view of probable ditch [1008]

- › to produce and deposit a satisfactory archive and disseminate the results of the work via grey-literature reporting and publication as appropriate.

The regional research context is provided The Archaeology of the West Midlands: A Framework for Research. Any evidence retrieved during the works is analysed in light of the objectives contained in this framework.

Research objectives will be reviewed in the light of the results of the excavation prior to analysis and the project design updated.

The resulting archive (finds and records) have been organised and will be deposited with Worcestershire Museums to facilitate access for future research and interpretation for public benefit.

### 3 METHOD

The fieldwork was conducted in accordance with the above mentioned WSI and method statement and in accordance with the following documents:

- › Code of Conduct (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2014a)
- › Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2014b)

Groundwork excavations were undertaken using tracked, 360°, 9 and 13.5tonne mechanical excavators fitted with 0.75m wide bladed buckets to formation level depths between 1.10 and 2.15m below ground level (BGL) as required by the foundation design. For safety reasons, excavations over 1.20m in depth were not entered to investigate the sections of the foundation trenches fully, with limited visibility afforded of potential remains.

Foundation trenches for the garage were excavated on the 9th May 2018, with the dwelling foundation trench excavations completed on the 5th and 6th December 2018 (Illus 8 and 9).

Exposed archaeological remains were recorded on Headland Archaeology pro forma record sheets with identified features and deposits (contexts) assigned a unique number. An overall plan of the foundations and identified remains was produced at 1:50 giving locations of recorded remains. Section drawings were reproduced at a scale of 1:10. A black and white film photographic record was compiled with a graduated metric scale visible, supplemented by colour digital photographs.

All recording followed standard archaeological guidelines as set out by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA).



**ILLUS 7** View of possible 'fire pit', looking south **ILLUS 8** View of completed garage foundations looking east **ILLUS 9** General view of completed house foundations, looking north-east

## 4 RESULTS

Results are presented below with a preceding description of the general stratigraphy identified on the site. A summary of all recorded contexts is given as Appendix 1.

### 4.1 GENERAL STRATIGRAPHY

The earliest deposit encountered comprised generally reddish-brown and yellow-brown clayey sands ((1002) and (1006)) which represented fluvial geological deposits. These were encountered approximately 0.80 to 0.90m below ground level and observed to be greater than 1.00m in depth, extending below the limit of excavation. Overlying this, a greyish brown to mid-brown slightly clayey, sandy silt subsoil was recorded up to 0.60m thick ((1001) and

(1004)). Ceramic building material fragments were observed within the subsoil but not retained.

Completing the stratigraphic sequence (Illus 3) was a dark brownish-grey, sandy silt topsoil ((1000) and (1003)) up to 0.35m thick. More recent material, such as glazed ceramic sherds, glass shards and ceramic building material fragments, were observed scattered through the topsoil but not retained.

### 4.2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL FEATURES

Located in the southern dwelling foundation trench (Illus 2) a north-west/south-east oriented ditch [1010] measuring 1.25m wide was recorded in the base of the trench (Illus 4). Two small sherds of

Romano-British pottery (Severn Valley Ware) were recovered from the fill (1009).

The eastern edge of a further possible ditch [1012] (Illus 5) was identified in section at the junction of foundation trenches in the central area of the dwelling foundations. The western edge was not observed. A single fill (1011), suggesting general, gradual sedimentation was identified in section. The section provided an oblique view of the feature suggesting a width of approximately 1 to 1.25m and 0.45m depth. No dateable material was recovered.

In the western foundation trench, a further possible ditch [1008] was recorded. The foundation trench was 2.15m deep at this point and detailed examination of the section was not possible. However, the feature appeared to be present on the opposing section of the trench, suggesting a WNW/ESE orientation and a width of approximately 1.10m and depth of 0.50m. A probable single fill (1007) of the feature was observed with no dateable material recovered.

Both the identified ditch and possible ditches were sealed by the subsoil (1002).

Located in the northern foundation trench a deposit of red and yellow heat affected sand (1005) (Illus 7) measured approximately 0.40m wide east-west and c 0.21m deep. The deposit was bounded on its eastern edge by an upright sandstone with a further, potentially dislodged stone, lying to the west. No specific cut was observed and the deposit appeared to be located towards the base of the subsoil (1002). No definitive interpretation of the deposit could be made due to its limited exposure but it is likely to have been some form of fire or fire pit. No dateable material was recovered.

No archaeological remains were encountered in the garage foundation trenches with only the stratigraphic sequence recorded.

## 5 DISCUSSION

With the exception of ditch [1010], definitive identification and interpretation of the features observed during the watching brief is difficult, due to the depths of the trenches precluding close examination of the sections and exposed remains.

However, probable correlation between ditch [1010] and [1012] would appear to exist, the latter representing a continuation of ditch [1010]. The ditch also corresponds with the alignment of a ditch of Romano-British date identified during evaluation work on the site, lying just south-east of the foundation trenches. The possible ditch [1008] observed in the western foundations could be postulated to be a further continuation, curving slightly westward, or a potentially separate ditch.

The fine-grained sediments making up the fills of the features suggested lower energy, gradual sedimentation, potentially suggesting the features represented ditches associated with agriculture, probably related to and on the periphery of settlement evidence identified during excavation to the south of the site (Colls & Mann 2007).

The limited exposure of the features renders extrapolations and full interpretation speculative. Similarly, the small potential fire pit identified in the northern foundation trench would appear to suggest activity more directly associated with occupation in the vicinity. The lack of dateable material or associated features makes full understanding difficult.

Not all of the features identified during evaluation of the site were observed during the current work; particularly a ditch within the central area of the foundations and two linear features located in the evaluation trench located to the south of the dwelling. This may be due to the limited visibility within the foundation trenches due to the formation depth. The watching brief has confirmed elements of the continuation of features of Romano-British provenance within the investigation area and confirmed the results of previous evaluation. It is highly likely that the undated features identified also relate to a similar period of occupation.

## 6 CONCLUSION

Archaeological investigation during groundworks associated with the construction of a new dwelling and garage at the Old Pike House, Eckington has identified archaeological remains dating to the Romano-British period and undated features, likely to relate to the same phase of activity. The investigation has confirmed continuation of activity, peripheral to settlement evidence of the Romano-British period previously identified to the immediate south of the site.

## 7 REFERENCES

- Blackburn R 2015 *The Old Pike House, Eckington: Archaeological Watching Brief* [unpublished client document] Headland Archaeology, Ref OPEW
- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) 2014a *Code of Conduct* (Reading) <http://http.www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/CodesofConduct.pdf> accessed November 2018
- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) 2014b *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (Reading) [http://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/CifAS&GWatchingbrief\\_2.pdf](http://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/CifAS&GWatchingbrief_2.pdf) accessed November 2018
- Colls K & Mann P 2007 *Post-excavation report for Land off Pershore Road, Eckington, Worcestershire* [unpublished client document] Birmingham Archaeology
- Craddock-Bennett L 2018 *The Old Pike House, Eckington, Worcestershire. Written Scheme of Investigation for Watching Brief* [unpublished client document] Headland Archaeology
- Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) 2018 *British Geological Survey* <http://www.bgs.ac.uk> accessed November 2018

## 8 APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1 CONTEXT SUMMARY

CONTEXT	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	INTERPRETATION
1000	Garage	Dark greyish brown, sandy silt containing modern debris and sub-rounded pebbles, 0.32m thick	Topsoil
1001	Garage	Mid greyish brown, Sandy silt containing rare charcoal flecks and pebbles, 0.58m thick	Subsoil
1002	Garage	Yellow/orange sandy clay	Geological deposit
1003	Dwelling	Dark brownish grey, sandy silt containing frequent small pebbles, sub-angular gravel, occasional modern cultural debris, 0.25–0.35m thick	Topsoil
1004	Dwelling	Mid brown, slightly clayey silt, containing frequent gravel, occasional charcoal fragments & CBM, 0.60m thick	Subsoil
1005	Dwelling	Red and Yellow, heat affected sand and sandstone, 0.40m wide x 0.21m deep	Possible fire pit remains

CONTEXT	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	INTERPRETATION
1006	Dwelling	Mixed light brown, reddish brown and light yellow slightly clayey sand containing occasional rounded pebbles	Geological deposit
1007	Dwelling	Light to mid brown, sandy silt containing frequent gravel and rounded stones, c 0.50 thick	Low energy fill of possible ditch
1008	Dwelling	Probable linear, broadly E-W oriented, steep sides c 1.10m wide x c0.50m deep	Possible ditch
1009	Dwelling	Mid brownish grey clayey sand containing frequent gravel and occasional charcoal fragments – recorded in plan	Fill of ditch [1010] - gradual sedimentation
1010	Dwelling	Linear cut, recorded in plan, NW-SE orientation, 1.24m wide >0.25m deep	Ditch
1011	Dwelling	Mid brownish grey clayey sand containing occasional gravel and charcoal fragments	Lower energy fill of possible ditch [1012]
1012	Dwelling	Partially exposed probable linear feature, probable NW-SE orientation, >1.25m wide, c 0.45m deep	Possible ditch cut





© 2018 by Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd

**Headland Archaeology South & East**  
Building 68C | Wrest Park | Silsoe | Bedfordshire MK45 4HS  
t 01525 861 578  
e southandeast@headlandarchaeology.com

**Headland Archaeology Midlands & West**  
Unit 1 | Clearview Court | Ivyford Rd | Hereford HR2 6JR  
t 01432 364 901  
e midlandsandwest@headlandarchaeology.com

**Headland Archaeology North**  
Unit 16 | Hillside | Beeston Rd | Leeds LS11 8ND  
t 0113 387 6430  
e north@headlandarchaeology.com

**Headland Archaeology Scotland**  
13 Jane Street | Edinburgh EH6 5HE  
t 0131 467 7705  
e scotland@headlandarchaeology.com

[www.headlandarchaeology.com](http://www.headlandarchaeology.com)