



making sense of heritage

Land off Newland Lane Droitwich, Worcestershire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report



Fieldwork Ref. No. WSM 47472
Ref: 88640.02
May 2013



**Land off Newland Lane
Droitwich, Worcestershire**

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Fieldwork Ref. No. WSM 47472

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Land off Newland Lane Droitwich, Worcestershire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

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Land off Newland Lane Droitwich, Worcestershire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

Summary

Wessex Archaeology were appointed by Bellway Homes Ltd (West Midlands) to carry out an archaeological watching brief during the residential development of land off Newland Lane, Droitwich, Worcestershire (planning ref. W/12/01724/PN). Following the production of a desk-based assessment for the site (Gajos and Flitcroft 2012), the Worcestershire Historic Environment Planning Officer recommended that a targeted watching brief was undertaken during groundwork associated with the development.

The watching brief aims were to monitor the ground works associated with the development, to establish whether archaeological features existed within the site boundary, and in particular the work was designed to record any features at the junction of three local parish boundaries within the site.

The watching brief revealed no archaeological features of significant antiquity. The site had been landscaped in advance of the construction of the residential care home located to the west; two brick paths and two walls located at the northwest corner of the site were associated with this development.

The location of the parish boundaries was found to on land subsequently terraced to the west and sloping down to the east. A pond was located at the base of the slope at the junction of the boundaries. No evidence of any earlier monuments was revealed.

The archive is currently held at the offices of Wessex Archaeology in Sheffield, under the project code 88640. The archive will be deposited with an appropriate museum under a Worcestershire HER number in due course. An OASIS form will be submitted at the time of deposition.



Land off Newland Lane Droitwich, Worcestershire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology were appointed by Bellway Homes Ltd (West Midlands) to carry out an archaeological watching brief during the residential development of land off Newland Lane, Droitwich, Worcestershire (planning ref. W/12/01724/PN), hereafter 'the Site'.
- 1.1.2 Following the production of a desk-based assessment (DBA) for the Site (Gajos and Flitcroft 2012), the Worcestershire Historic Environment Planning Officer recommended that a targeted watching brief was undertaken during groundwork associated with the development.
- 1.1.3 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI; Gajos 2012) outlining how the aims of the work would be met was approved by the Historic Environment Planning Officer prior to the commencement of the project.

1.2 The Site

- 1.2.1 The Site is located on the southeast edge of Droitwich. It is situated on the boundary of the modern civil parishes of Droitwich Spa and Salwarpe, The Site comprises 2.4ha of land around Newland Hurst, centred at National Grid Reference 39074 26110 (**Figure 1**). The Site is bounded to the south by Newland Lane, and to the east by Tagwell Road. Modern residential development lies north of the Site and open farmland lies to the west.
- 1.2.2 The Site lies on a northeast-facing slope, with ground levels falling gently from 75m OD to 70m OD. Within the Site boundaries the slope is not particularly noticeable. The solid geology of the Site is identified on the British Geological Survey 1:50,000 scale mapping as Mudstone of the Mercia Mudstone Group (mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html). Soils within the Site are identified as fine loamy and silty soils of the Whimple 3 Association (SSEW 1983, Map 3).

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 A full archaeological background to the Site is presented in the DBA (Gajos and Flitcroft 2012). The following presents a brief summary of the findings.
- 2.1.2 There are no designated heritage assets within the Site.
- 2.1.3 There is one non-designated heritage asset currently identified within the study area: the 19th century historic farmstead site of Newland Hurst. The former farm house building



survives, but other courtyard buildings were demolished and replaced in the 1980s when the farm was converted to a residential care home. The surviving farmstead buildings and any associated archaeological remains will not be affected by the proposed development.

- 2.1.4 The Site lies adjacent to a historic crossroads and also contains the meeting point of three parish boundaries. Such meeting points could often be a focal point for activity in antiquity and, in some cases, have been shown to have been focused on earlier monuments.
- 2.1.5 There are no records of archaeological finds or features predating the medieval period from within 1km of the Site.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Aims and objectives

3.1.1 The general aims of the project were:

- To determine the presence or otherwise of buried remains of archaeological interest within the development area;
- To preserve by record any significant archaeological remains within the development area and to attempt a reconstruction of the history and use of the Site.

3.1.2 The more specific research objectives were:

- To examine the area surrounding the meeting point of the three parish boundaries to look for any indication that markers or other past activity, for which the meeting point has been a focus or which provided a focus for the meeting point.

3.2 Fieldwork methodology

3.2.1 A full description of the methodologies employed during the watching brief was outlined in the WSI (Gajos 2012).

3.2.2 All work undertaken was in line with current industry best practice as set out by English Heritage (1991), the Association of County Archaeological Officers (1994), IfA (2004 and 2009) and Worcestershire County Council (2012).

3.2.3 The watching brief was intended to record all features of archaeological interest discovered during below ground works associated with the development.

3.2.4 The watching brief comprised the monitoring of ground works by a suitably qualified and experienced archaeologist. The watching brief involved monitoring of initial Site clearance and soil stripping works, and the monitoring of the excavation of foundation trenches.

3.2.5 Following discussions between CgMs Consulting Ltd and Mike Glyde (WCC), once the area of the three county boundaries had been monitored and no significant archaeological remains had been revealed, it was deemed that no further work was necessary. The area of the monitored Site works is shown in **Figure 2**.



4 WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS

4.1 Stratigraphic results

4.1.1 The underlying natural geology was a reddish sandy clay (**105**) containing infrequent lenses of thin mud stone. The natural geology was overlain by a redeposited layer of pinkish yellow clay (**104**), which represented a landscaping episode. The deposits were overlain by a dark greyish brown sandy topsoil (**101**).

4.2 Brick garden paths

4.2.1 Two modern brick paths (**102** and **103**; **Plate 1**) were revealed in the northeastern corner of the Site (**Figure 2**). Path **102** measured 8m in length, extending from the northern limit of the Site to the south where it abutted the northern edge of a brick wall (**103**). Wall **103** measured 10m in length and extended from a second brick wall (**102**) to the east, where it clearly terminated.

4.3 Parish boundary area

4.3.1 A sloping terrace (**Plate 2**) was aligned northwest to southeast at the western side of a pond located at the junction of the three boundaries (**Figure 2**). No archaeological features were noted in the area or within the foundation trench (**Plate 3**) excavated to the north of the pond area (**Figure 2**).

5 ARTEFACTUAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

5.1 General

5.1.1 No artefacts were recovered from the monitoring of the ground works and no deposits suitable for environmental sampling were encountered.

6 DISCUSSION

6.1 Summary

6.1.1 No significant archaeological features were observed during the watching brief. Evidence for landscaping was revealed, and two modern brick paths and walls were recorded in the northwestern corner of the Site. The landscaping and paths were most likely associated with the residential care home situated to the west of the Site, and the walls part of an associated building.

6.1.2 The location of the junction of the three parish boundaries was marked by a shallow pond. The area to the west of the pond sloped upwards to form a terraced area and the pond may have formed through water draining to the lower area.

6.2 Conclusions

6.2.1 The lack of any significant features sheds no light on whether the three parish boundaries were located at a significant historical junction. Any archaeological features may have been removed during the landscaping of the Site, but the lack of residual finds suggests that the Site was not significant in antiquity.



7 ARCHIVE AND COPYRIGHT

7.1 Archive

7.1.1 The project archive has been compiled into a stable, fully cross-referenced and indexed archive in accordance with Appendix 6 of Management of Archaeological Projects (2nd Edition, English Heritage 1991), and Archaeological archives – a guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation (Brown 2007). The archive is currently held at the offices of Wessex Archaeology in Sheffield, under the project code 88640. The archive will be deposited with an appropriate museum under a Worcestershire HER number in due course. An OASIS form will be submitted at the time of deposition.

7.2 Copyright

7.2.1 This report, and the archive generally, may contain material that is non-Wessex Archaeology copyright (e.g. Ordnance Survey, British Geological Survey, Crown Copyright), or the intellectual property of third parties, which we are able to provide for limited reproduction under the terms of our own copyright licences, but for which copyright itself is non-transferrable by Wessex Archaeology. Users remain bound by the conditions of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with regard to multiple copying and electronic dissemination of the report.




8 REFERENCES

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- Brown, D. 2007. Archaeological archives – a guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation.
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- English Heritage, 1991. *Management of Archaeological Projects*.
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Site boundary
 Watching brief area
 Area of groundworks monitored
 Parish boundary




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Site location

Figure 1



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Site plan

Figure 2



Plate 1: Walls **102** and **103** facing WSW



Plate 2: Sloping terrace in the parish boundary



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Plate 3: Machine slot to the north of the pond facing West

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