

making sense of heritage

1 & 3 The Friary, Lichfield Staffordshire

Archaeological Evaluation Report



Ref: 104770.01 June 2014











1 & 3 The Friary, Lichfield, Staffordshire

Archaeological Evaluation

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Archaeological Evaluation

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Archaeological Evaluation

Summary

Wessex Archaeology were commissioned by CgMs Consulting to undertake the excavation of a single archaeological evaluation trench at 1 & 3 The Friary, Lichfield, Staffordshire. The development is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 31157 20928 and is hereafter referred to as 'the Site'. The evaluation took place on the 10th and 11th June 2014 and the Site is currently in use as a library and records office.

The trench was targeted over an anomaly identified by ground penetrating radar (gpr) and interpreted as a possible structure (Stratascan 2014). The proposed development Site is a carpark located within Fransican land. Approximately 100m northwest of the Site, within Friars Alley, part of a sandstone wall has been revealed, which is contemporary with the friary precinct. Approximately 100m north of the Site, at the rear of 1 Bird Street, archaeological works undertaken in the 1990s located part of the Friary cemetery. Nine burials and evidence of at least five other individuals were recovered during a watching brief and a grave dating to the 13th to early 14th century was found during an evaluation.

A single course of a medieval sandstone wall was revealed, close to the northeastern edge of the anomaly and dated to the medieval period and is presumably associated with the Friary complex. The rest of the anomaly appeared to have been caused by a band of natural geology. A small discrepancy between the locations of the wall and the GPR anomaly appears to be due to a slight inaccuracy in the GPR data.

The project archive is currently held at Wessex Archaeology's Sheffield office and will be deposited with the Potteries Museum and Art Gallery in due course under accession number **2014.LH.30**.



1 & 3 The Friary, Lichfield, Staffordshire

Archaeological Evaluation

Acknowledgements

The project was commissioned by CgMs Consulting and Wessex Archaeology is grateful to Cathy Patrick in this regard. The Site was monitored for Staffordshire County Council by Steve Dean.

The fieldwork was carried out by Sam Fairhead with assistance from Phil Roberts and Hannah Holbrook. The report was compiled by Sam Fairhead with illustrations by Karen Nichols. Finds analysis was undertaken by Lorraine Mepham.

The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Chris Swales.



1 & 3 The Friary, Lichfield, Staffordshire

Archaeological Evaluation

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology were commissioned by CgMs Consulting to undertake the excavation of a single archaeological evaluation trench at 1 & 3 The Friary, Lichfield, Staffordshire, currently in use as a library and records office. The development is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 31157 20928 and is hereafter referred to as 'the Site' (Figure 1).
- 1.1.2 A Desk-Based Assessment (DBA) was produced for the Site (ARUP 2014) and a scheme of Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) Survey was undertaken (Stratascan 2014). The survey identified an anomaly interpreted as a possible structure, and the evaluation comprised the excavation of a trench targeted over this anomaly.
- 1.1.3 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was prepared by Wessex Archaeology (2014) and approved by CgMs and Staffordshire County Council (SCC).

1.2 The Site

- 1.2.1 The Site was irregular in shape, covering approximately 0.5 hectares and measuring approximately 70m wide by between 80m and 160m long. The southern part encompassed a linear strip 10m wide and approximately 80m long. The Site was bound to the north by The Friary Road, to the east by South Staffordshire College and Lichfield Library, to the south by a car park and to the west by a low speed access road.
- 1.2.2 The topography of the Site was relatively flat with some slightly raised areas. The solid geology of the Site comprised pebbly sandstone of the Bromsgrove Formation with either no superficial deposits or only a thin drift deposit.
- 1.2.3 The evaluation trench was located in an area of car parking immediately to the rear of the Lichfield Library building.

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The following is summarised from the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2014).

2.2 Prehistoric and Roman

2.2.1 An assemblage including Neolithic flints and pottery was recovered from archaeological deposits to the north of the Site, probably representing a cooking area.

1



2.2.2 East of the proposed development Site is the Roman Road Ryknild Street. A number of Romano-British finds, mostly copper alloy objects but also including pottery, and a coin of the 3rd to 1st century BC, have been recorded immediately east of the southern linear strip. Tile was also discovered in a 'V'-shaped ditch at the rear of 15 Sandford Street.

2.3 Medieval

- 2.3.1 Alongside the Romano-British finds found immediately east of the southern linear strip were fragments of early medieval pottery. Early medieval pottery was also found during excavations at The Swan Hotel, Bird Street.
- 2.3.2 The proposed development Site is located within Fransican land. Approximately 100m northwest of the Site, within Friars Alley, part of a sandstone wall has been revealed, which is contemporary with the friary precinct. Approximately 100m northwest of the Site, at the rear of 1 Bird Street, archaeological works undertaken in the 1990s located part of the friary cemetery. Nine burials and evidence of at least five other individuals were recovered during a watching brief and a grave dating to the 13th to early 14th century was found during an evaluation.
- 2.3.3 The town of Lichfield was established in the mid-12th century by Bishop Clinton, who also enclosed the town with earthwork defences. The postulated course of the Lichfield Borough Boundary Bank segments the friary land, 72m west of the proposed development Site. The site of Lichfield Castle is thought to have been 234m east of the proposed development Site, directly south of Bore Street, although this is yet to be confirmed.
- 2.3.4 North of the proposed development Site are three large pools, Minster Pool, Stowe Pool and Upper Pool that delineate the area between the friary and the early 13th century Cathedral Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary and St Chad. The cathedral area also includes the site of the Lichfield Cathedral Close, of which some elements are extant and are scheduled monuments and/or listed structures.
- 2.3.5 Several medieval buildings were located nearby. These include The Hospital of St John Without the Barrs and chapel, which now has a 15th century master's house built upon it; New College, a college for the Chantry Priests of the Cathedral; Harshorn Inn, a coaching inn; and the Bishop's Mill, which was a water mill located on Dam Street.
- 2.3.6 Small-scale industry such as iron and leather manufacture is recorded in the area of the Arts Centre and a possible iron works at Sandford Street. Occupation activity, such as pits, cess pits, an oven and a cistern, has been recorded at the Civic Hall, Swan Hotel, Sandford Street and Vicar's Close. Archaeological activity has revealed a number of medieval finds, including a copper and gold buckle, copper artefacts, and numerous pottery fragments.
- 2.3.7 Excavations in 2006 found the boundary wall of Friar's Alley had been built upon an earlier medieval sandstone foundation.

2.4 Post-medieval

2.4.1 In the early 17th century, the proposed development Site is shown set within a post-medieval landscape of open fields with remnants of the friary still clearly visible to the north; the proposed development Site is shown as open space. Until the late 19th century, there is little development in the area and it is only in the mid-late 20th century that development takes place on the proposed development Site itself. This development comprised ancillary structures associated with the Friary School, including a swimming pool (located to the rear of the current library building, immediately southeast of the



- trench), and was located in the central part of the Site. The north-western corner of the Site, however, remained as open space, as it does to the present day
- 2.4.2 A small single-storey building is present in the western part of the proposed development Site dating to the 20th century.

2.5 Previous investigations in the area

- 2.5.1 There have been no previous below ground archaeological investigations within the proposed development Site; however there has been a large amount of activity in the locality. Since 1934, 36 archaeological investigations have been undertaken within 200m of the proposed development Site. These comprise a historic character assessment, five desk-based assessments, four building surveys, three geological surveys, seven watching briefs, one project proposal, six evaluations, one environmental (dendrochronological) sampling and eight excavations.
- 2.5.2 A desk-based assessment was produced for the site (ARUP 2014) and GPR survey has been undertaken (Stratascan 2014).

2.6 Designations

- 2.6.1 Part of the site of the medieval friary is protected as a scheduled monument and forms an open space within the townscape. The Site lies outside the scheduled monument but does lie within the grounds of the former monastery.
- 2.6.2 The proposed development Site is located within the Lichfield Conservation Area, specifically in Character Area 4: Friary & Festival Gardens, Cultural Space.
- 2.6.3 The Staffordshire Extensive Urban Survey Project has identified 33 Historic Urban Character Areas (HUCAs) within Lichfield. The proposed development Site is located within HUCA 3: Lichfield historic core, which is considered to be of particular importance due to its location within the mid-12th century planned town.
- 2.6.4 A number of listed buildings exist nearby.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Aims and objectives

- 3.1.1 The general aims of the project were:
 - to identify any archaeological remains present;
 - to accurately record the location and stratigraphy of areas excavated;
 - to record all archaeological remains disturbed by the groundworks;
 - to determine the extent, condition, character, importance and date of any archaeological deposits encountered;
 - to provide information that will enable the archaeological remains to be placed within their local, regional and national contexts;
 - to integrate the results into the wider cultural and environmental context and with specific research aims;



- to recover artefacts disturbed by the works, and
- to produce an accurate and comprehensive record and report of any archaeological deposits disturbed by the works.
- 3.1.2 The specific aim of the project was to target a potential structure identified in the GPR survey (Stratascan 2014) and determine the extent, condition, date and nature of any structure discovered.

3.2 Fieldwork methodology

- 3.2.1 The evaluation comprised the excavation of one trench measuring 12m by 2m (**Figure 1**), targeted on possible structural remains identified by GPR survey (Stratascan 2014).
- 3.2.2 The location of the trench was scanned using a CAT to check for uncharted services and existing utility plans were consulted prior to excavation.
- 3.2.3 Overburden was removed using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, working under the continuous direct supervision of a suitably experienced archaeologist. The trench was shortened slightly to avoid live services and widened slightly to allow for stepping.
- 3.2.4 Following the completion of all hand excavation and recording, the excavated trench was backfilled and compacted with the excavated material and new hardcore.

3.3 Monitoring

3.3.1 The Site was monitored for CgMs by Cathy Patrick and for SCC by Steve Dean.

3.4 Recording

- 3.4.1 All archaeological deposits and structures were recorded using Wessex Archaeology's *proforma* recording system.
- 3.4.2 Drawings were made on permanent drafting film at 1:10 and 1:20 and co-ordinated on to the overall Site plan. A full photographic record was maintained consisting of 35mm monochrome prints and digital images.

3.5 Specialist strategies

Artefact

- 3.5.1 All finds were treated in accordance with relevant industry guidance (UKIC 2001; MGC 1991; English Heritage 2005, 2006), and the requirements of SCC.
- 3.5.2 All artefacts from excavated contexts were retained (except unstratified modern material) and taken to Wessex Archaeology offices in Sheffield for further work.
- 3.5.3 All artefacts were recorded by context, with summary listing of artefacts by category to provide simple quantification. Artefacts were analysed and reported by specialists.

4



4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 A single trench was excavated, targeted over the anomaly identified by the GPR survey (Stratascan 2014) (**Figure 1**).

4.2 Summary

- 4.2.1 Immediately below the existing hardcore of the car park surface were layers of modern made ground existing to a depth of 0.56m below ground level (bgl). Below this was a layer of dark greyish-black silty sand, **1008**, which likely represents a buried topsoil. This was in turn overlying a dark reddish-brown silty sand, **1004**, which appeared to be the original subsoil. **1008** was present from 0.56-1m bgl and **1004** from 1-1.4m bgl.
- 4.2.2 Below **1004** was a mid yellowish-brown sandy clay with occasional charcoal flecking (**1005**) which directly overlay the natural geological deposits, **1006**. The natural was a light yellowish-pink sandy clay, encountered at 2.3m bgl.

4.3 Medieval

- 4.3.1 A section of sandstone wall was revealed towards the northeastern end of the trench, on a northwest-southeast allignment. The wall, **1007**, consisted of a single course of irregular sandstone slabs (**Plate 2**) and would originally have been two skins thick (the southwestern skin only partially survived within the trench). The slabs varied in size from 0.5x0.28m to 0.1x0.1m and were all approximately 0.1m thick. The wall itself was 0.34m wide and was encountered at 1m bgl (**Plate 1**, **Figure 2**).
- 4.3.2 The wall was bedded on the original subsoil **1004** (**Plate 2**), and overlain by **1008**. Both of these deposits produced medieval pottery.

5 ARTEFACTUAL EVIDENCE

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 The evaluation produced a very small quantity of finds, consisting of animal bone and pottery, and deriving from three contexts (1004, 1005 and 1008); quantities are given in Table 1.

5.2 Background and summary quantification

- 5.2.1 The pottery is all of medieval date, and sherds are all in the same white sandy ware; they include a jug handle with a small green glaze spot from **1004**, and have a probable 13th century date.
- 5.2.2 The animal bone includes three horse teeth from **1008**; and fragments from an abraded long bone of large mammal size.

Table 1: All finds by context (number / weight in grammes)

Context	Animal Bone	Pottery
1004	2/20	2/112
1005	3/190	
1008		3/42
TOTAL	5/210	5/154



6 DISCUSSION

6.1 Summary

6.1.1 The evaluation revealed a section of sandstone wall 1m below the existing car park surface and close to the northeastern end of the GPR anomaly (**Figure 1**). Pottery was recovered from the deposits immediately above and below the wall. No other associated features were revealed.

6.2 Conclusions

- 6.2.1 The pottery recovered dates the deposits above and below the wall to the 13th century, indicating that the wall itself was constructed and demolished within this period. As the Site is on Franciscan land it seems likely that this wall (**1007**) is related to the Friary and associated with the wall and graves discovered by earlier investigations within the Site area (see above).
- 6.2.2 A small discrepancy between the locations of the wall and the GPR anomaly appears to be due to a slight inaccuracy in the GPR data.

7 STORAGE AND CURATION

7.1 Museum

7.1.1 It is recommended that the project archive resulting from the excavation be deposited with The Potteries Museum and Art Gallery. The Museum has agreed in principle to accept the project archive on completion of the project, under accession code 2014.LH.30. Deposition of any finds with the Museum will only be carried out with the full agreement of the landowner.

7.2 Archive

- 7.2.1 The complete site archive, which will include paper records, photographic records, graphics, artefacts, ecofacts and digital data, will be prepared following the standard conditions for the acceptance of excavated archaeological material by The Potteries Museum and Art Gallery, and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; IfA 2009; Brown 2011; ADS 2013).
- 7.2.2 All archive elements will be marked with the site/accession code, and a full index will be prepared.

7.3 Discard policy

7.3.1 Wessex Archaeology follows the guidelines set out in Selection, Retention and Dispersal (SMA 1993), which allows for the discard of selected artefact and ecofact categories which are not considered to warrant any future analysis. Any discard of artefacts will be fully documented in the project archive.

7.4 Security copy

7.4.1 In line with current best practice (e.g. Brown 2011), on completion of the project a security copy of the written records will be prepared, in the form of a digital PDF/A file. PDF/A is an



ISO-standardised version of the Portable Document Format (PDF) designed for the digital preservation of electronic documents through omission of features ill-suited to long-term archiving.

8 REFERENCES

8.1 Bibliography

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9 APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench 1				
Context	Description			
1001	Car park surface, compacted white hardcore			
1002	Made ground, grey hardcore			
1003	Made ground, red brick and stone rubble, tarmac fragments			
1004	Buried soil, dark reddish-brown silty sand, moderate fine gravel inclusions, charcoal flecking	1-1.4		
1005	Mid yellowis-brown silty sand, occasional charcoal flecking. Possibly a buried soil	1.4-2.35		
1006	Natural, Light pinkish-yellow sandy clay			
1007	Wall, southeast-northwest alligned single course of irregular sandstone slabs			
1008	Buried topsoil, dark greyish-black silty sand, rare fine gravel inclusions	0.56-1		



10 APPENDIX 2: OASIS

OASIS ID: wessexar1-182511

Project details

Project name 1 and 3 The Friary, Lichfield, Staffordshire

Short description of the project Evaluation trench targeted over GPR anomaly

Project dates Start: 10-06-2014 End: 11-06-2014

Previous/future work Yes / Not known

Any associated project reference codes 104770 - Sitecode

Type of project Field evaluation
Site status Conservation area
Current Land use Other 15 - Other

Monument type WALL Medieval

Significant Finds POTTERY Medieval Methods & techniques "Targeted Trenches"

Prompt Planning condition

Position in the planning process Not known / Not recorded

Project location

CountryEngland

Site location STAFFORDSHIRE LICHFIELD LICHFIELD 1 and 3 The Friary, Lichfield, Staffordshire

Postcode WS13 6QG Study area 0.50 Hectares

Site coordinates SK 11598 09292 52.6808553142 -1.82842597223 52 40 51 N 001 49 42 W Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 2.35m Max: 2.35m

Project creators

Name of Organisation Wessex Archaeology Project brief originator CgMs Consulting Ltd.

Project design originator Wessex Archaeology

Project director/manager Chris Swales

Project supervisor Sam Fairhead

Type of sponsor/funding body CgMs Consulting Ltd.

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient Potteries Museum Physical Contents "Animal Bones", "Ceramics"

Digital Archive recipient Potteries Museum and Art Gallery

Digital Media available "Images raster / digital photography", "Survey"

Paper Archive recipient Potteries Museum and Art Gallery

Paper Media available "Context sheet", "Drawing"

Project bibliography 1

Publication typeGrey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title 1 and 3 The Friary, Lichfield, Staffordshire, Archaeological Evaluation

Author(s)/Editor(s) Fairhead, S Other bibliographic details 104770.01

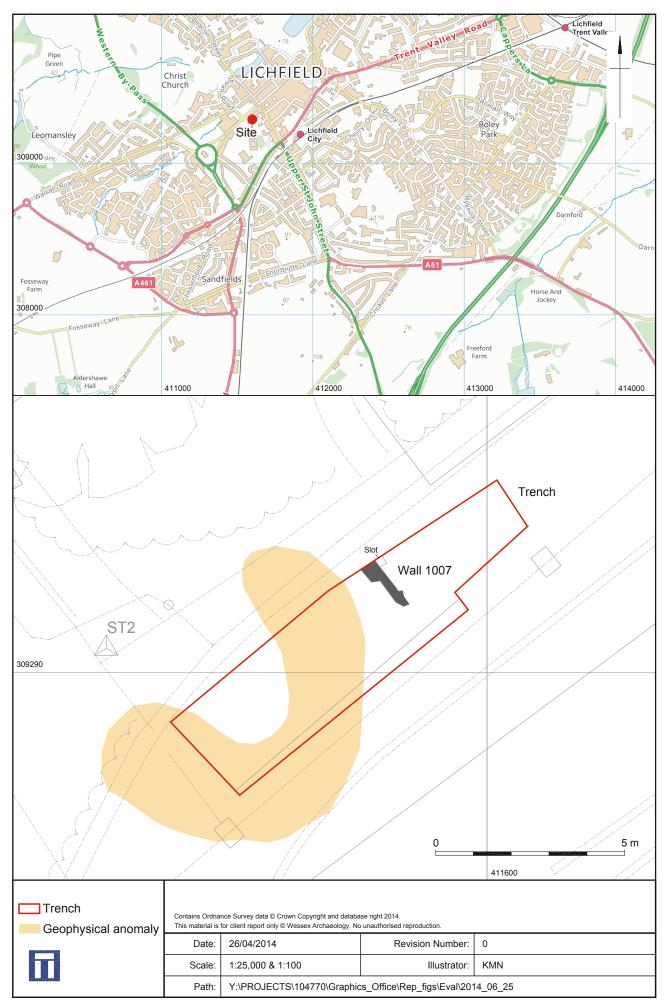
Date 2014

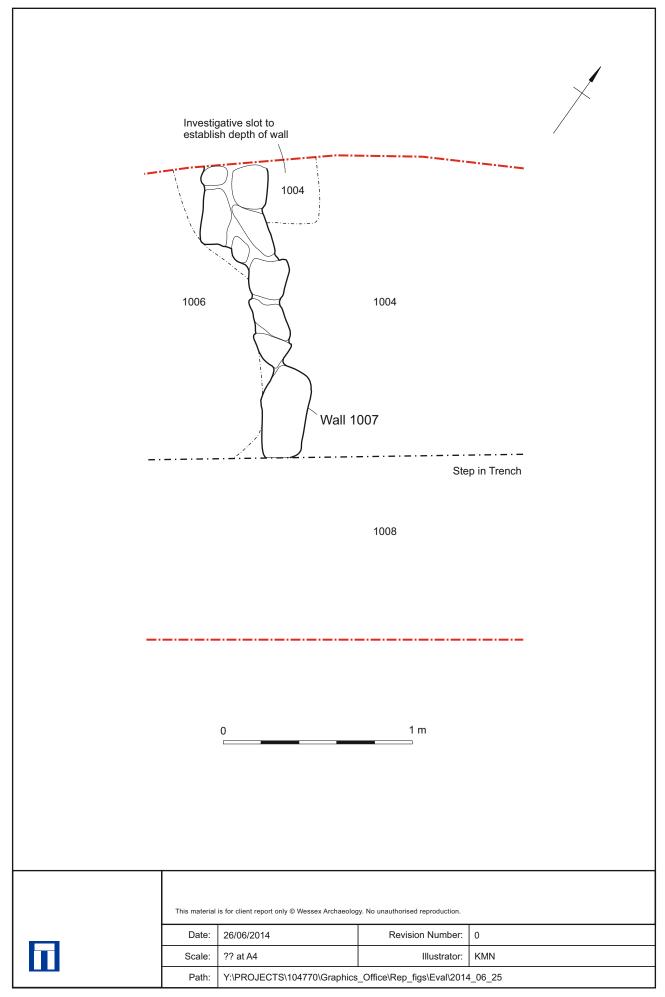
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Plan of wall 1007 Figure 2



Plate 1: Wall 1007 and deposits 1008 and 1004 from southeast



Plate 2: NE facing section of slot showing base of wall 1007 and deposit 1004 below

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