

CPAT Report No. 1677

# Residential Development at Corfton, Shropshire

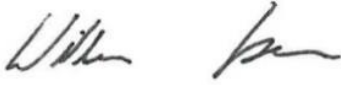


Archaeological Watching Brief



YMDDIRIEDOLAETH ARCHAEOLEGOL CLWYD-POWYS

CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

Client name: Lana and Graham Oliver  
 CPAT Project No: 2297  
 Project Name: Residential Development at Corfton, Shropshire  
 Grid Reference: SO 4967 8499  
 County/LPA: Shropshire  
 Planning Application: 16/03699/FUL  
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 Confidential: N/A

Prepared by:	Checked by:	Approved by:
		
Will Logan Project Archaeologist	Nigel Jones Principal Archaeologist	Nigel Jones Principal Archaeologist
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Cover photograph: The completed foundation trenching for the development, viewed from the north-east Photo CPAT 4669-016.



YMDDIRIEDOLAETH ARCHAEOLEGOL CLWYD-POWYS  
 CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

41 Broad Street, Welshpool, Powys, SY21 7RR, United Kingdom

+44 (0) 1938 553 670

[trust@cpat.org.uk](mailto:trust@cpat.org.uk)

[www.cpat.org.uk](http://www.cpat.org.uk)

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## **Summary**

In November 2018 and July 2019, the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust carried out a watching brief during the construction of a new detached dwelling at Corfton, Shropshire.

Although the development was located within what was considered to be the medieval core of the village the groundworks revealed no archaeologically significant features or deposits within the site, which appeared to have been historically in cultivation or in use as an orchard.

## 1 Introduction

- 1.1. In May 2018 The Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (CPAT) was invited by Mr K Forbes to undertake a watching brief during the construction of a new detached dwelling to the south of the B4368 in Corfton, Shropshire (Fig. 1; SO 4967 8499).
- 1.2. Planning permission (application 16/03699/FUL) was granted in August 2016 with the inclusion of the following condition relating to the historic environment:
  8. No development approved by this permission shall commence until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (WSI). This written scheme shall be approved in writing by the Planning Authority prior to the commencement of works.

Reason: The site is known to hold archaeological interest.



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Fig. 1 Location of the development site (circled in red)

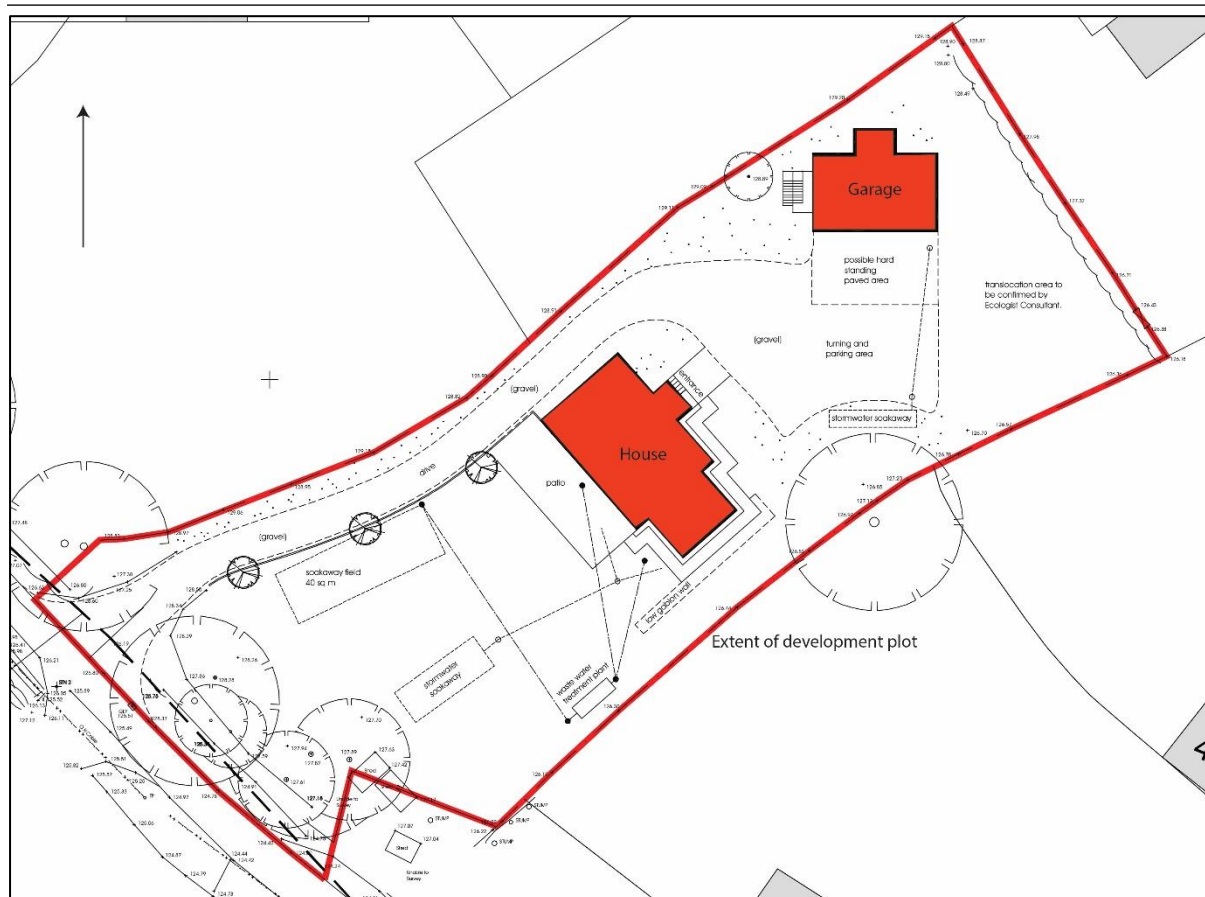


Fig. 2 Plan showing the layout of the development plot

## 2 Historical Background

- 2.1. The development site lies within the historic core of Corfton, approximately 180m to the north-west of The Mount, a motte and bailey castle.
- 2.2. Corfton was recorded as a manor in 1086 and formed part of the Hundred of Culvestan, which extended over a large area between Cardington to the north of Church Stretton and Ashford Carbonell in the south of Ludlow. It was then under the lordship of Herbert of Furches whose liege lord was Roger of Lacy, a Marcher Lord. Subsequently, during the reign of Henry I, Corfton and most of the other manors in Culvestan were incorporated into the Hundred of Munslow
- 2.3. 19<sup>th</sup>-century mapping records Corfton as a small dispersed settlement centred on the Sun Inn, which survives as a public house to the present. The development is located in Lower Corfton which is located to the south-east of the road (the modern B4368) running north-east up the Corvedale. The Corvedale is named for the River Corve, which runs between Bourton to the south of Much Wenlock to a confluence with the River Teme in Ludlow.
- 2.4. The transcription of the 1846 Tithe Award map for Diddlebury Parish (Corfton and Sparchford) and historic editions of the Ordnance Survey mapping indicate that this area remained undeveloped throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### 3 Archaeological Watching Brief

- 3.1. The initial methodology comprised an overall area reduction for the footprint of the house, which it was hoped would expose the subsoil and allow all archaeological work to be carried out prior to the excavation of the foundation trenches. However, during groundworks carried out on 26 November 2018 this was found to be impractical owing to the depth of the deposition (c 0.8m) overlying the subsoil, especially at the south-east extent of the building plot. Following a discussion with Shropshire Council the methodology was changed to a watching brief during the excavation of the foundation trenching.



Fig. 3 Area reduction for the house plot viewed from the south-west in November 2018  
Photo CPAT 4585-002

- 3.2. The revised programme of groundworks was carried out on the 15 and 16 of July 2019. The two main areas where groundworks were carried out comprised the trench complex for the house and a general reduction for the footprint of the garage. A shallower network of drainage runs, a series of soakaways and a waste water treatment plant were also excavated during the groundworks phase of the development.



Fig. 4 Trenching for the house plot viewed from the south-east Photo CPAT 4669-015

- 3.3. Five contexts were recorded in during the watching brief on the house plot. These comprised a friable grey silt topsoil (001) extending site wide to a thickness of 0.25m. Underlying the topsoil was a soft dark brown clayey silt deposition (002) 0.37m thick at the north-west end of the plot but 1m thick at the south-east extent. Pottery recovered from deposit (202) was 18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> century in date and comprised sherds of Staffordshire earthenware and black glazed stoneware pottery.



Fig. 5 South-west facing section within house plot Photo CPAT 4669-006



- 3.4. Underlying deposit (002) a compact yellow silt subsoil deposit (003) was revealed. At the north-east extent of the plot outcroppings of yellow weathered stone (005) were encountered underlying the subsoil. The deposition in the south-eastern extent of the house plot comprised material (004) overlying the subsoil, which had been redeposited following the abandoned area reduction carried out in November 2018.



Fig. 6 View from the north-west of the house plot showing weathered stone deposit (005) Photo CPAT 4669-014



Fig. 7 The area reduction for the garage viewed from the south Photo CPAT 4669-019

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- 3.5. The excavations for the drainage runs were 0.5m in depth and did not extend to the level of the subsoil (003). The three soakaways and water treatment pits extended to approximately 2m in depth. The composition and extent of deposits encountered during this phase of the groundworks was similar to that of those revealed during the excavation of the house plot.
- 3.6. The groundworks for the garage plot comprised an area reduction of the footprint for the development. Topsoil deposition (001) was 0.15m in thickness over 0.28m of a continuation of deposit (002) which was 0.35m in thickness, overlying the subsoil (003) which was not excavated into).

## 4 Conclusions

- 4.1. The groundworks phase of this development revealed no evidence of archaeological occupation of the site. The only artefactual evidence comprised two sherds of pottery of late post-medieval date, which were not retained, recovered from a thick undifferentiated deposit (002) which appeared to be poorly stratified agricultural or possibly orchard soil. This agrees with the depiction of the site in 19<sup>th</sup> century cartographic sources.

## 5 Archive deposition Statement

- 5.1. The project archive has been prepared according to the CPAT Archive Policy and in line with the CfA *Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives guidance* (2014). The archive will be deposited with the Historic Environment Record, Shropshire Council.

### Archive summary

2 watching brief visit forms

6 digital photographs, CPAT film no 4585

19 digital photographs, CPAT film no 4669

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## Appendix 2: CPAT WSI 1860

### 1 Introduction

- 1.1. The Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (CPAT) have been invited by Mr K Forbes to prepare a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for undertaking a watching brief during the construction of a new detached dwelling to the south of the B4368 in Corfton, Shropshire (SO 4967 8499; planning application 16/03699/FUL).
- 1.2. Planning permission was granted in August 2016 with the inclusion of the following condition relating to the historic environment:

8. No development approved by this permission shall commence until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (WSI). This written scheme shall be approved in writing by the Planning Authority prior to the commencement of works.

Reason: The site is known to hold archaeological interest.

### 2 Historical Background

- 2.1. The proposed development site lies within the historic core of Corfton, c180m from the boundary of a Scheduled Monument, The Mount motte and bailey castle (National Ref. 1012856), and within the vicinity of a number of listed buildings. The proposed development site also lies close to several known archaeological sites including probable earthwork remains of ridge and furrow (Shropshire Historic Environment Record [HER] No 20934), Hale Barn ring ditch (HER 02051) and Greensforge (Staffs) to central Wales Roman road (HER 04076).
- 2.2. The transcription of the 1846 Tithe Award map for Diddlebury Parish (Corfton and Sparchford) and historic editions of the Ordnance Survey map indicate that this area remained undeveloped throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century. As such, there is a possibility that archaeological remains relating to the earlier history of the village may be present. As a consequence, the proposed development site is deemed to have some archaeological potential.

### 3 Methodology

- 3.1. The watching brief will be conducted according to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' (CIfA) *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (2014). The watching brief will be undertaken to monitor groundworks associated with the construction of the new detached recreational building. The excavation of any archaeological features or deposits will be undertaken by hand using the conventional techniques for archaeological excavation:
  - The presence or absence of archaeological features encountered during the ground works will be noted.
  - Where features of archaeological interest are identified during the ground works they will be systematically investigated by hand with sufficient work being

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undertaken to determine their date, character and function, using the conventional techniques for archaeological excavation and in accordance with CIfA Standard and Guidance.

- All features will be located as accurately as possible on an overall plan of the development at an appropriate scale, showing boundaries depicted on Ordnance Survey mapping.
- Contexts will be recorded on individual record forms, using a continuous numbering system, and be drawn and photographed as appropriate.
- Plans will be drawn on permatrace to a scale of 1:10, 1:20 or 1:50, as appropriate.
- All photography will be taken using a digital SLR camera with a minimum resolution of 8 mega pixels, including a metric scale in each view, with views logged in a photographic register.
- In the event of human burials being discovered the Ministry of Justice will be informed. The remains will initially be left *in situ*, and if removal is required, a MoJ licences will be applied for under the Burial Act 1857.
- In the event of finding any artefacts covered by the provisions of the Treasures Act 1996, the appropriate procedures under this legislation will be followed.

3.2. All artefacts and environmental samples will be treated in a manner appropriate to their composition and a sampling strategy will be developed as appropriate:

- All stratified finds will be collected by context, or where appropriate, individually recorded in three dimensions. Unstratified finds will only be collected where they contribute significantly to the project objectives or are of particular intrinsic interest.
- All finds and samples will be collected, processed, sorted, quantified, recorded, labelled, packed, stored, marked, assessed, analysed and conserved in a manner appropriate to their composition and in line with appropriate guidance.
- arrangements to assess and study any artefacts, assemblages and environment samples.
- Any artefacts recovered during the evaluation will be deposited with an appropriate museum, subject to the permission of the owner.

3.3. Following the on-site work an illustrated report will be prepared containing conventional sections to include:

- Non-technical summary
- Introduction
- Site location
- Topography and Geology
- Archaeological Background
- Watching brief
- Conclusions
- References
- Appropriate appendices on archives and finds

- 3.4. In addition to copies submitted to the client, a copy of the report will be provided to the Historic Environment Team, Shropshire Council, and one further copy to the Shropshire Historic Environment Record.
- 3.5. The site archive will be ordered, catalogued, labelled and conserved and stored according to the UKIC Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage and the Cifa *Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives* (2014). The project archive will be presented to an appropriate Museum or recipient body within 12 months.
- 3.6. The Shropshire HER participates in the OASIS scheme, a form for which will be completed at each reporting stage.

## 4 Resources and Programming

- 4.1. The watching brief will be undertaken by a skilled archaeologist under the overall supervision of Nigel Jones, a senior member of CPAT's staff who is also a member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (Cifa). CPAT is also a Cifa Registered Organisation (RAO No 6) and as such agrees to abide by their *Code of Conduct* (2014) and the *Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology* (2014).
- 4.2. All report preparation will be completed by or with the assistance of the same field archaeologist(s) who conducted the site work. Copies of the report will be deposited with the client and the regional Historic Environment Record within one month of the completion of on-site works. If appropriate, a short report will be published in *The Shropshire Transactions*.
- 4.3. The client should be aware that in the event that significant archaeological remains are revealed there may be a requirement for more detailed excavation and specialist services. Any further work over and above the original watching brief and report would be the subject of a separate WSI and costing.
- 4.4. Requirements relating to Health and Safety regulations will be adhered to by CPAT and its staff.
- 4.5. CPAT is covered by appropriate Public and Employer's Liability insurance, as well as Professional Indemnity insurance.

N W Jones

2 May 2018