

**Archaeological Field Evaluation**

On behalf of

**Simon Angell Architectural  
Consultant**

in respect of

Land to the North of No. 81a  
Corve Street  
Ludlow  
Shropshire SY8 1DX

February 2016



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*Cover: View east of cobbled surface (103)*

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## 1 Executive Summary

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*Border Archaeology Ltd (BAL) was instructed by Simon Angell Architectural Consultant on behalf of Mr D. Davies to carry out a programme of Archaeological Field Evaluation (AFE) of land to the north of No. 81a Corve Street Ludlow Shropshire SY8 1DX (fig. 1) in connection with the conversion of an outbuilding to residential use, together with provision for parking space for two vehicles. An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment (ADBA) of the site was carried out by BAL in 2015 (BAL 2015).*

*No. 81 Corve Street comprises a late 18<sup>th</sup> -century, three-storey property in painted brick with a Welsh slate roof and a large 19<sup>th</sup> -century outbuilding to the north.*

*A single trench measuring 5m × 2m was excavated (fig. 2). The only features present were a sequence of ditches, aligned north/south, all of which were thought to be of post-medieval (i.e. post 16<sup>th</sup> century) date. A probable later post-medieval (18<sup>th</sup> -19<sup>th</sup> century) cobbled surface revealed at the west end of the trench (street frontage) did not extend eastwards beyond the line of the boundary. There was no evidence for its continuation, such as displaced cobbles or bedding material, suggesting it was contemporary with, or post-dated, the boundary. A layer containing a considerable quantity of coal dust overlay, and was probably associated with, the use of this surface.*

*No evidence was uncovered for the late medieval or post-medieval burgage plots known to have occupied Corve Street, although a fragment of medieval roof tile and a single sherd of late medieval pottery confirmed medieval occupation in the vicinity of the site.*

## 2 Introduction

Border Archaeology Ltd (BAL) was instructed by Simon Angell Architectural Consultant on behalf of Mr D Davies to carry out a programme of Archaeological Evaluation (AFE) of land to the N of No. 81a Corve Street Ludlow Shropshire SY8 1DX in connection with the conversion of a former workshop to residential use, to include a small front garden and off-road parking for two vehicles (Planning ref. 15/01259/FUL). The work followed on from an Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment (ADBA) of the site previously carried out in 2015 (BAL 2015).

No. 81 Corve Street comprises a late 18<sup>th</sup> -century property of three-storeys constructed from painted brick and roofed with Welsh slate; a large 19<sup>th</sup> -century outbuilding is situated to the N. The site itself also lies to the N of No. 81, at a height of some 85m AOD, within a block of land situated between Lower Corve Street and St Mary's Lane, on the N side of Ludlow. At the time of the evaluation, the site comprised a lawn with garden walls and terracing to the E.



Fig. 1 Site location

### 2.1 Soils & Geology

The site occupies an area of Ludlow that is recorded as unsurveyed by the Soil Survey of England and Wales due to its urbanised character (SSEW 1983). However, the northern margin of the town is characterised by typical brown

alluvial soils of the LUGWARDINE series (561d) and TEME series (561b), with an area of typical argillic brown earths of the BROMYARD series (571b) extending N and NW. The LUGWARDINE soils are deep stoneless and permeable with a reddish fine silty composition overlying reddish river alluvium. The TEME series soils are of a deep stoneless permeable silty composition and overlie river alluvium whilst the BROMYARD series are well-drained reddish fine silty soils overlying Devonian reddish silty shale, siltstone and sandstone (SSEW 1983).

### 3 Historical and Archaeological Background

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Detailed historical and archaeological information concerning the site is presented in the ADBA (BAL 2015).

### 4 Methodology

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The work was carried out within the context of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012, paras 129 & 135) and *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: The MoRPHE Project Managers' Guide* (Lee 2015) and was in accordance with practices set out in *Standards and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (ClfA 2014) and *Standard and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (ClfA 2014). Border Archaeology adheres to the *ClfA Code of conduct* (2014).

The evaluation sought to clarify the nature and extent of existing disturbance and intrusion and assess the degree of archaeological survival of buried deposits. Investigation was sufficient to define any identified archaeological deposits, features and structures in terms of their character, extent, quality and preservation, and enabled an assessment of their worth in a local, regional, national or international context, as appropriate.

The site covers an area of approximately 150 sq. m. The AFE was carried out in accordance with the specific requirement of Charlotte Orchard Archaeological Advisor Shropshire Council to open a single trench of 5m x 2m within the existing garden in order to investigate the proposed new parking area and garden landscaping (pers. comm. January 6<sup>th</sup> 2016) (*figs. 2 & 3*).

A machine equipped with toothless bucket was used; all machining was carried out under the direct supervision of a suitably qualified and experienced archaeologist and was halted when archaeological deposits were encountered. Archaeological deposits were cleaned by hand; excavation subsequently continued to natural.

#### 4.1 Recording

Full written, graphic and photographic records were made in accordance with BAL's *Archaeological Field Recording Manual* (2014). The written record comprised standard context sheets detailing each stratigraphic unit.

The drawn record was produced on gridded, dimensionally stable polyester film. Plans of each area excavated showed the extent of the area (tied into the Ordnance Survey National Grid and located on a 1:2500 plan), the extent of all stratigraphic units and appropriate detail within stratigraphic units.

A temporary benchmark (TBM) was established on site and plans and sections contained grid and level information relative to OS data. All drawings were numbered and listed in a drawing register, the drawing numbers being cross-referenced to written site records.

A high-resolution digital photographic record of all stratigraphic units was made comprising photographs of archaeological and structural features and appropriate groups of features and structures. An appropriate scale was included in each photograph and all photographic records were indexed and cross-referenced to written site records. Details concerning subject and direction of view were maintained in a photographic register, indexed by frame number.

## 5 Results

Item	Context No.	Matrix Phase	Type	Interpretation	Discussion	Finds					Comments
						Small Find	Pot	Bone	Misc.	Sample No.	
1	101		Deposit	Garden soil.	Compact black/brown silty clay; rooting & occasional CBM & modern pottery; 0.30m thick trench wide. Above (102).	-	-	-	-	-	Modern finds not retained
2	102		Deposit	Industrial dump associated with (103).	Moderately compact black silty clay; frequent fragments of coal & coal dust; 0.10m thick at W end of trench, >1.20m (E/W) x >2.0m (N/S). Above (103), cut by [105]. Not present at E end of trench.	-	-	-	-	-	
3	103		Deposit	Surface.	Brick & stone cobbling; size of materials (average): 170 x 60 x 50mm; extended >1.10m (E/W) x >2m (N/S). Below (102), above (104).	-	-	-	-	-	
4	104		Deposit	Bedding layer for cobbles (103) and did not extend beyond its limit.	Firm pink & white gravel & mortar; moderate black flecks, occasional CBM. Extended >1.10m (E/W) x >2.0m (N/S) x 0.14m. Below (103), above (111).	-	-	-	-	-	
5	105		Cut	Cut for boundary feature. Latest in sequence of boundary features on same alignment.	Linear (probable); alignment (probable) N/S; break of slope top unclear, sides steeply sloping, base pointed (although form not certain as defined by packing stones in fill); c.0.30m wide & 0.30m deep. Cut (102), filled by (106).	-	-	-	-	-	Seen in section only
6	106		Fill	Fill of boundary feature; feature may be posthole for fence on same alignment as not seen in plan.	Loose greyish-brown silty clay; mortar & black flecks surrounding stone packing. Fill of [105], below (101).	-	-	-	-	-	



Item	Context No.	Matrix Phase	Type	Interpretation	Discussion	Finds					Comments
						Small Find	Pot	Bone	Misc.	Sample No.	
7	107		Cut	Cut for boundary ditch.	Linear; aligned N/S; sides steeply sloping, tapering to pointed base; >2.0m × 0.80m × 0.60m.	-	-	-	-	-	Second in sequence of boundary features on same alignment.
8	108		Fill	Single fill of boundary feature [107].	Fairly soft dark greyish-brown silty clay; very frequent large black & white flecks. Cut by [105].	-	-	-	-	-	Indistinguishable from deposit (111) to W
9	109		Cut	Cut for substantial boundary ditch.	Linear; aligned N/S; sides near-vertical, base flat base; >2.0m × 0.80m × 1.40m. Cut (113), filled by (110).	-	-	-	-	-	
10	110		Fill	Fill of boundary feature [109].	Soft (wet) mid brown silty clay; frequent mortar flecks & stone. Fill of [109], cut by [107].	-	✓	-	-	-	
11	111		Deposit	Layer at W end of trench.	Fairly soft dark greyish-brown silty clay; very frequent large black & white flecks.	-	-	-	-	-	Could not be distinguished from (108) and it is possible that the same material as formed (111) also filled [107].
12	112		Deposit	Garden soil to E of [109] etc., possibly deposited during landscaping / levelling. Similar to and probably the equivalent of (114) to the W.	Compact mid brown silty clay; occasional to moderate mortar & charcoal flecks; >2m (N/S) × >2.5m (E/W) × 0.60. Above (113).	-	-	-	-	-	
13	113		Deposit	Natural	Firm/hard reddish-/yellowish-brown clay gravel; fairly clean; in base trench wide.	-	-	-	-	-	

Item	Context No.	Matrix Phase	Type	Interpretation	Discussion	Finds					Comments
						Small Find	Pot	Bone	Misc.	Sample No.	
14	114		Deposit	Garden soil to W of [109] etc.	Compact mid brown silt clay; occasional to moderate mortar & charcoal flecks; >2.00m (N/S) × >1.10m (E/W) × 0.40m.	-	-	-	-	-	

## 6 Discussion

Although the site lies within an area occupied by later medieval or post-medieval burgage plots, the only feature seen during the evaluation was the sequence of ditches or boundaries aligned N/S situated close to the street frontage (*Plate 2; figs. 2 & 3*). Examination of early 19<sup>th</sup>-century maps of the site show that this was open ground and may have remained so throughout.

The boundary appears to have undergone a number of renewals, all of which seem to have dated to the post-medieval period. The earliest in the sequence was ditch or foundation cut [109]. It was the most substantial of the sequence at 1.40m deep. The sides were near-vertical and the base flat, the cut being very clearly defined (*Plate 2; fig. 3*). A single small (1.1g) sherd of Staffordshire mottled slipware was recovered from the ditch fill (110), which would suggest a date in the early-to-mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, although no further corroborative dating evidence was recovered from the feature. The profile, with square-cut sides and base, could suggest that it was the foundation trench for a wall, although there was no further confirmatory evidence. No evidence for silting was present and the feature appeared to have been deliberately filled with material (110), similar to that of soil accumulations (112) and (114).

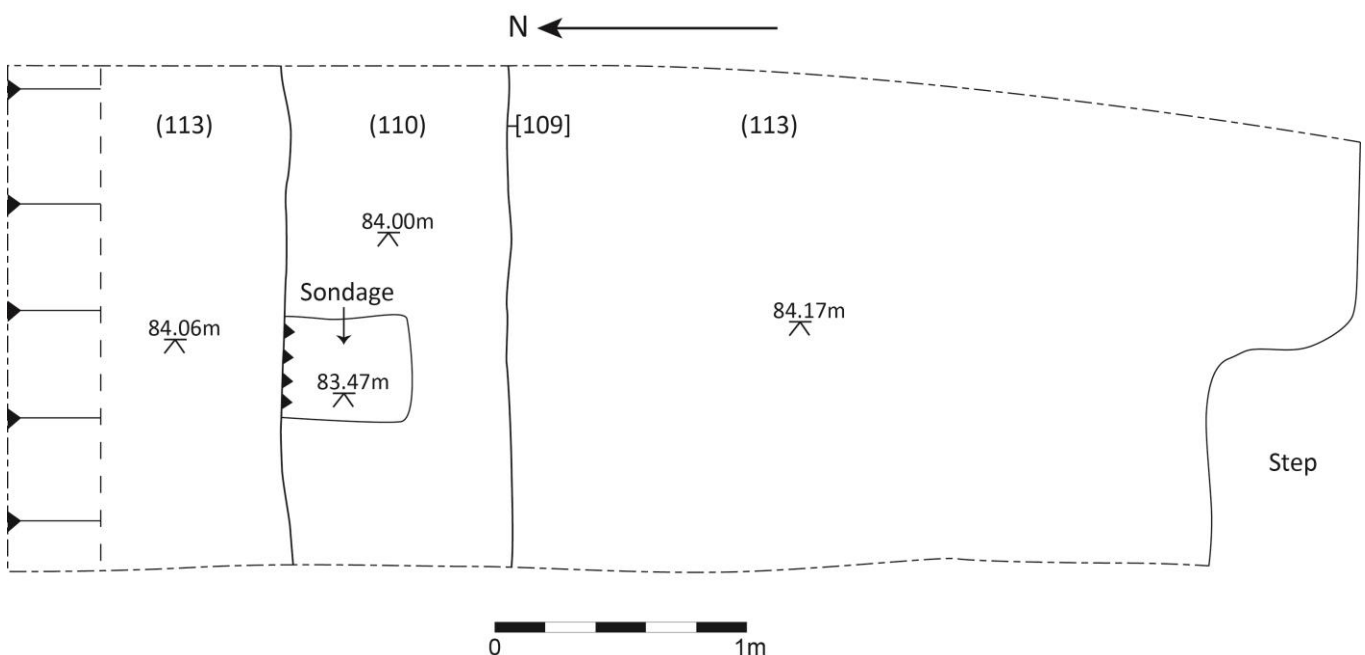


Fig. 2: Plan of evaluation trench

Cutting fill (110) was a less substantial ditch [107] measuring 0.80m wide and 0.60m deep, with fairly steep sides tapering to a pointed base. No dating evidence was recovered from fill (108), which considerably darker than (110), which the feature cut. The latest in the sequence of boundaries [105] was not seen in plan and was recorded in section only. It is possible that, by this stage, the ditch had been replaced by a fence and that cut [105] was in fact

a posthole. The fill (106) was loose, with a number of stones, probably post-packing. It also contained patches of black ashy material similar to layer (102) and may have partly derived from that deposit. The stones were similar to those forming surface.

The cobbled surface (103) (*Plate 1; fig. 3*) seems to have been contemporary with the boundary, as no evidence was present, such as displaced stones, to suggest that it had ever extended to the E of that feature. A path running along the frontage is shown on the 1885 1:500 Town Plan of Ludlow; this feature is not shown on earlier maps and the cobbles may represent that feature. The cobbles included brick as well as stone, confirming their post-medieval date. Above it, a layer (102) containing a considerable amount of coal dust was clearly associated with this surface. The building to the N of the site is shown on the 1885 OS Town Plan as a smithy and the coal dust may therefore relate to that use.

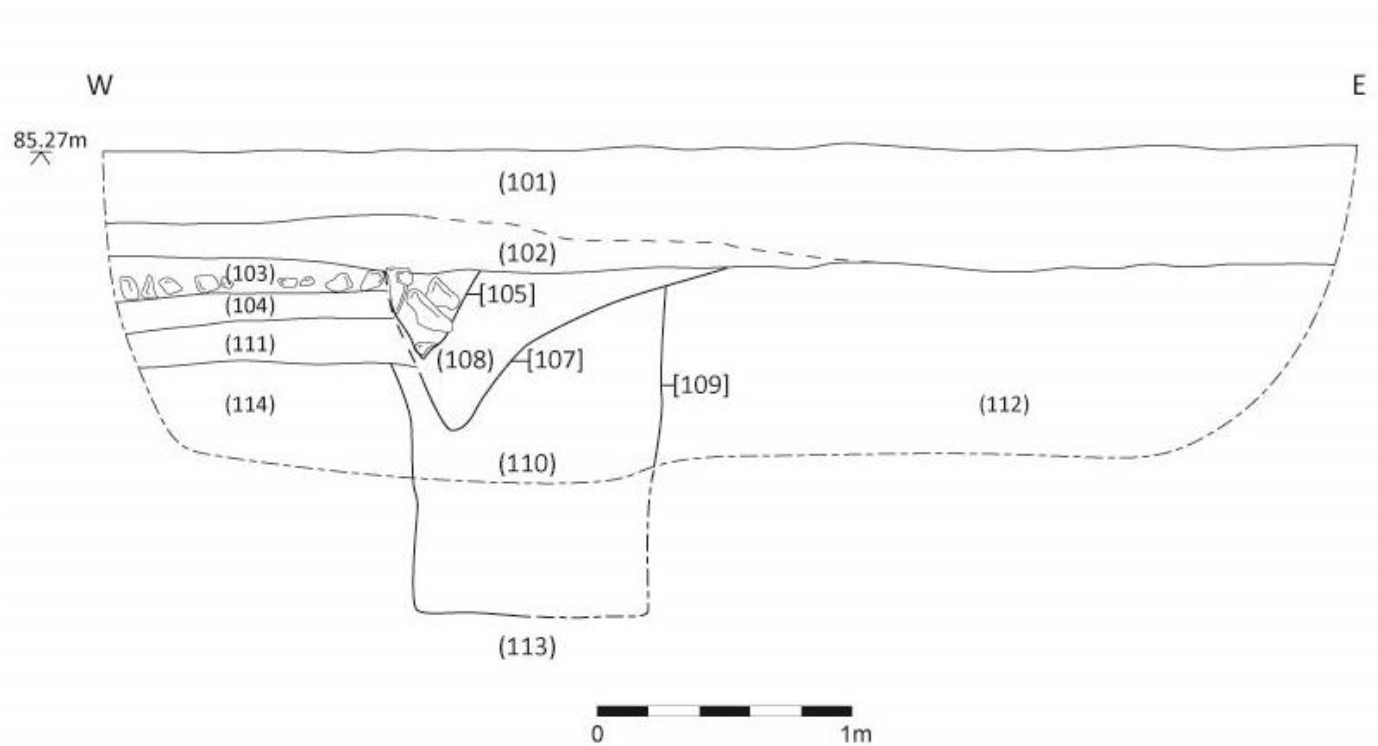


Fig 3: S-facing section of the trench showing sequence of ditches [105], [107] [109]



*Plate 1: Cobbled surface (103) looking E*



*Plate 2: View E of the trench showing sondage in ditch [109].*

The S end of Corve Street lies within an area of medieval burgrave plots (BAL 2015, 10); however, no features of medieval date were present on the site, which was excavated down to natural deposits. Furthermore, the paucity of pottery of later medieval or early post-medieval date may be interpreted as evidence suggesting this part, at least, of the E side of Corve Street has remained largely unoccupied.

## 7 Appendix 1: Pottery Assessment

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Three sherds of pottery were recovered during the evaluation, two of which were unstratified; sherds of modern (19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century) white wares seen in the topsoil were not retained.

### 7.1 Late medieval/early post-medieval pottery

The earliest pottery from the site was an unstratified bodysherd of Malvernian Oxidized Glazed Ware (8.6g), dating to the 14<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> centuries (Vince 2002, 72). The patchy internal rather than external glaze suggested a date in the later part of that period. Had the area been intensively occupied during the medieval period, more pottery would probably be expected. The form of the sherd could not be determined.

### 7.2 Post-medieval pottery

Both the remaining sherds from the site originated in Staffordshire. An unstratified sherd of a slipware dish (16g) with a combed slip and a 'piecrust' -decorated rim is of a type that dates to the later 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries. The remaining very small sherd of Staffordshire mottled slipware (1.1g) was found in (110), the fill of ditch [109]. It is dated to the early-to-middle part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Also unstratified on the site was a single small fragment of glazed medieval roof tile, the presence of which may suggest high-status occupation in the vicinity.

### 7.3 Discussion and Recommendations

The paucity of pottery from the site may suggest that it was not intensively occupied during the medieval period, with only a single sherd of pottery of medieval or early post-medieval date recovered. It would be expected that the two sherds of later 17<sup>th</sup>-mid 18<sup>th</sup>-century pottery date from shortly before No. 81 Corve Street was built in the later 18<sup>th</sup>-century.

It is not considered that further work is necessary, due to the small size of the assemblage.

### 7.4 References

Vince, A. G., 2002, *The Pottery*, in Thomas, A., & Boucher, A., *Hereford City Excavations Vol 4: Further Sites & Evolving Interpretations*; Hereford City & County Archaeological Trust Ltd.

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### 9.1 Cartography

John Wood's 1835 Plan of Ludlow



1847 Tithe Map for St Lawrence's Ludlow

T. Curley's 1862 Map of the Borough of Ludlow

OS 1885 1:500 Town Plan for Ludlow

1886 OS 1<sup>st</sup> Edition 1:2500 County Series Map

1903 OS 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition 1:2500 County Series Map

1926 OS 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition 1:2500 County Series Map

1968 OS 1:2500 National Survey

1988 OS 1:2500 National Survey

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