

Archaeological Observation

The Willows
Lincoln Green Lane
Tewkesbury
Gloucestershire

NGR SO 889 313

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1. Non Technical Summary

Border Archaeology carried out a programme of archaeological observation of groundworks relating to the erection of a new dwelling at The Willows Lincoln Green Lane Tewkesbury Gloucestershire in January 2010.

The groundworks area occupies the northern part of the registered battlefield of Tewkesbury, the site of an important engagement on May 3^d 1471, which proved to be a turning point in the second phase of the Wars of the Roses. The programme of archaeological work in this potentially sensitive area was carried out following demolition of an existing dwelling, the aim being to record any deposits, features or structures of archaeological significance revealed during the excavation of foundation trenching for a new dwelling.

The groundworks excavations revealed a series of uniform, sterile deposits extending across the site and present in all trenches. Archaeological observation has thus confirmed that no features, structures or deposits of archaeological significance have been affected by development activity.

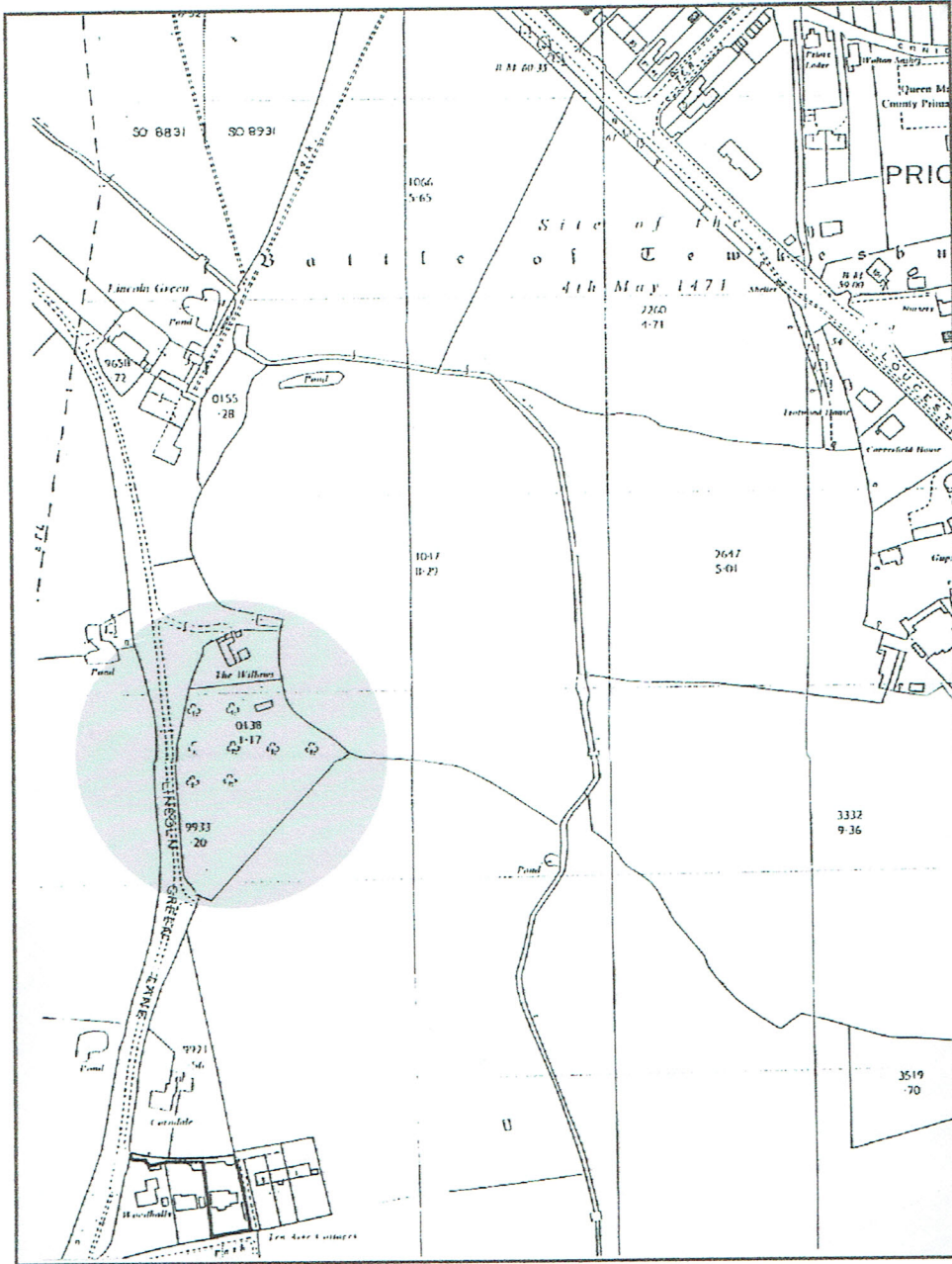


Fig. 1: Site location plan

2. Introduction

- 2.1 Border Archaeology was instructed by Richard Davies Esq. to undertake the archaeological observation of groundworks in respect of a new dwelling to be erected on the footprint of a demolished property at The Willows Lincoln Green Lane Tewkesbury Gloucestershire (NGR SO 889 313) (Tewkesbury Borough Council Planning Ref: 09/0091/FUL) (Figs. 1-2). Architectural drawings were supplied by Ten Acre Services Tewkesbury and used to locate foundation trenches.
- 2.2 Copies of this report will be sent to Mr Davies, Charles Parry Esq. Senior Archaeological Officer Gloucestershire County Council, and the Gloucestershire SMR.

2.3 Soils & Geology

- 2.4 The area is characterised by typical calcareous pelosols of the EVESHAM 2 series (411b) and typical argillic pelosols of the WORCESTER series (431). The former consist of slowly permeable calcareous clayey soils and some slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged non-calcareous clayey or fine loamy or fine silty over clayey soils, the underlying geology being Jurassic and Cretaceous clay. The WORCESTER (431) soils consist of slowly permeable non-calcareous and calcareous reddish clayey soils over mudstone, which can be associated with similar non-calcareous fine loamy over clayey soils. The associated geology consists of Permo-Triassic reddish mudstone.

3. Brief Historical & Archaeological Background

- 3.1 The site occupies the northern part of the registered battlefield of Tewkesbury, the site of an important engagement on May 3rd 1471, when the 6,000-strong Lancastrian army was routed by a Yorkist force commanded by Edward IV numbering some 4,000 men, which proved to be a turning point of the second phase of the Wars of the Roses
- 3.2 The core of the battlefield remains largely undeveloped and much of the original character of the landscape is preserved in the pattern of ancient narrow fields, with the Abbey, where the fleeing Lancastrian army vainly sought sanctuary, forming the dominant backdrop (EH, 1995).
- 3.3 Bloody Meadow (NGR SO 88700 31900), the site traditionally commemorating the slaughter of the defeated Lancastrian army, where cropmark evidence suggests the possible presence of mass graves, has yielded a range of archaeological material, including 42 sherds of Roman pottery consisting mostly rim sherds of Severn Valley Ware but including fragments of Black Burnished Ware (with lattice pattern) and mortarium, together with several possible *tesserae*.
- 3.4 An archaeological evaluation at The Willows carried out in 2008 by Cotswold Archaeology revealed no finds or features of archaeological significance (Joyce, 2008).

- 3.5 A single evaluation trench was opened by Border Archaeology in 2009 on the site of a proposed stable block immediately to the S of the present development area, which revealed a possible post-medieval feature at 0.3m below final engineering depth. No finds or features dated earlier than the later post-medieval period were identified (Wellicome, 2009).

4. Methodology

- 4.1 Archaeological observation within the area specified was carried out in accordance with *Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (IfA, 2001). Border Archaeology adheres to the IfA *Code of conduct* and *Code of approved practice for the regulation of contractual arrangements in field archaeology*.
- 4.2 A series of interconnecting foundation trenches occupying the footprint of the original dwelling, now demolished, were machine excavated under archaeological supervision (Fig. 3). Excavation was carried out using a toothless bucket and all associated spoil was scanned for artefacts.
- 4.3 An overall trench depth of 0.8-1.2m was maintained across the site reflecting engineering requirements in respect of construction depth.

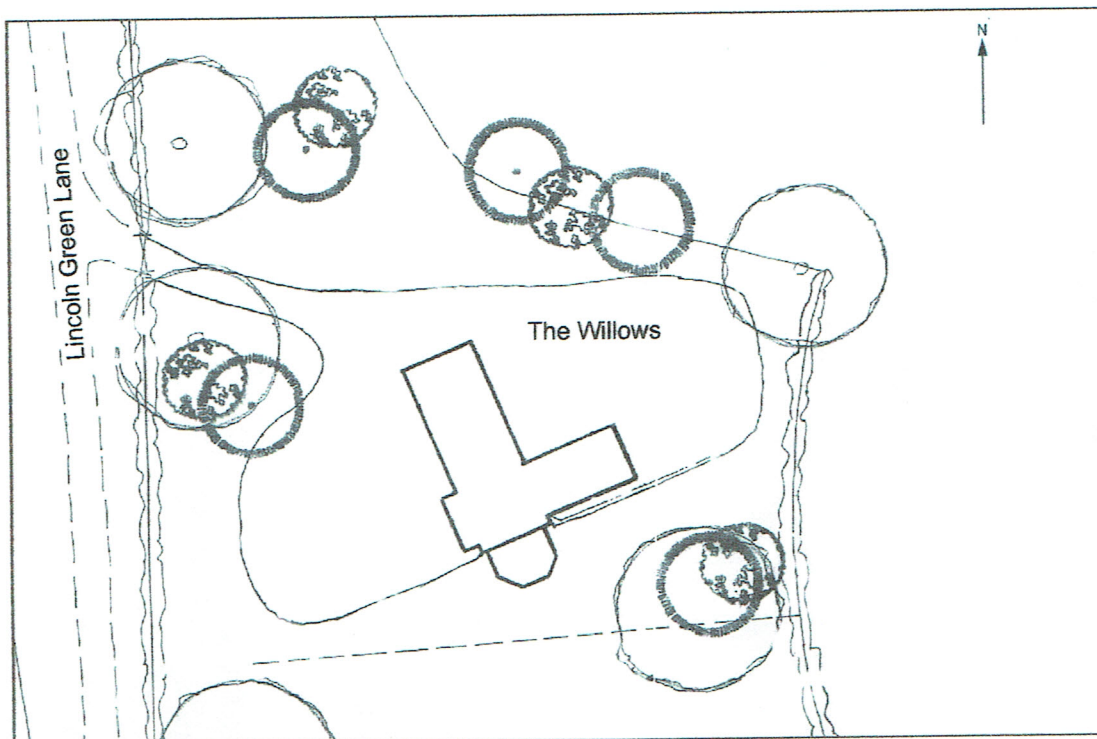


Fig. 2: Plan showing location of trenching

4.4 Recording

- 4.5 Full written, graphic and photographic records were made in accordance with Border Archaeology's *Field Recording Manual*.
- 4.6 Plans, sections and elevations were produced on gridded, archivally stable polyester film at scales of 1:50 or 1:20, as appropriate. A representative measured section was recorded showing the sequence and depths of deposits. A temporary benchmark (TBM) of 15.13m was established on the site and plans, elevations and sections thus contain level information relative to OS data. All drawings have been numbered and listed in a drawing register, these drawing numbers being cross-referenced to written site records.
- 4.7 A photographic record has been compiled using a high-resolution 10.3MPX digital camera. Each photograph other than general shots of work in progress contains an appropriate scale and records are indexed and cross-referenced to written site records. Details concerning subject and direction of view are maintained in a photographic register, indexed by frame number.

5. Evaluation results

- 5.1 The trenching excavations revealed three contexts, which were uniformly present across the entire site (**Plate 1**).
- 5.2 The first of these was a topsoil deposit (001) composed of moderately compact clayey silt extending to a thickness of 0.15-0.2m below existing ground level. It should be noted that part of this upper soil level had been truncated during site clearance works.
- 5.3 Underlying (001) were subsurface clayey horizons exhibiting evidence of gleying and ranging in colour from brownish-yellow (002), becoming increasingly mottled in appearance to a uniform bluish-grey (003) at the base of the trench (**Plates 2-4; Fig 4**).
- 5.4 No structural evidence, features or deposits of archaeological significance were identified in any of the trenches.



Plate 1: General view of site, looking N



Plate 2: View NE of SW-facing section

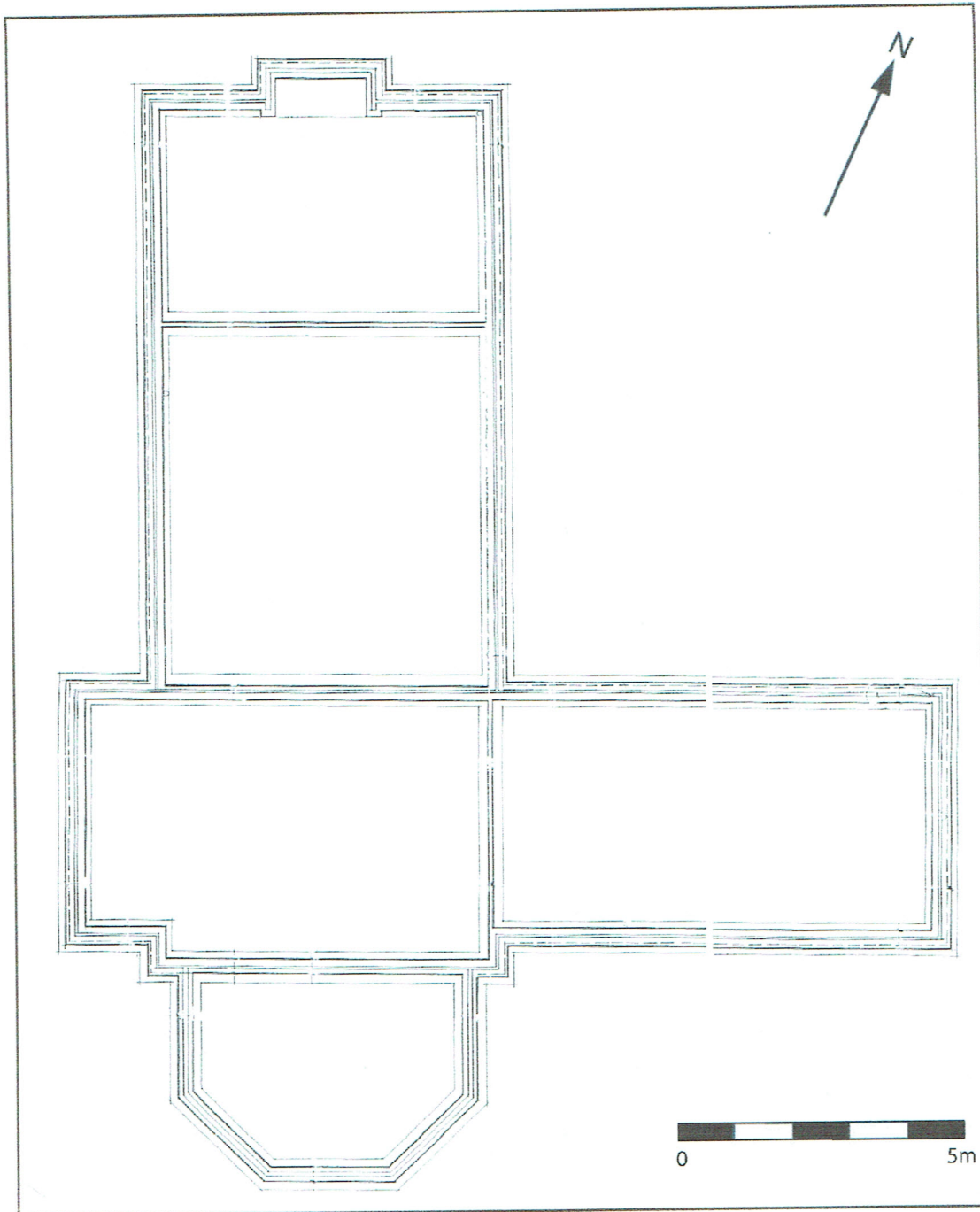


Fig. 3: Detailed trenching plan

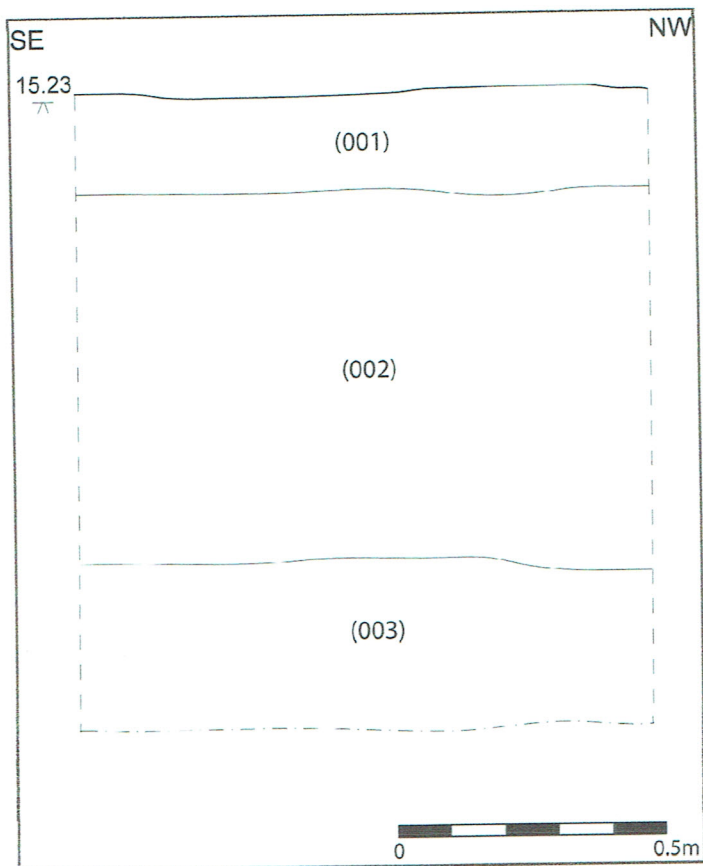


Fig. 4: NE-facing section – sample section

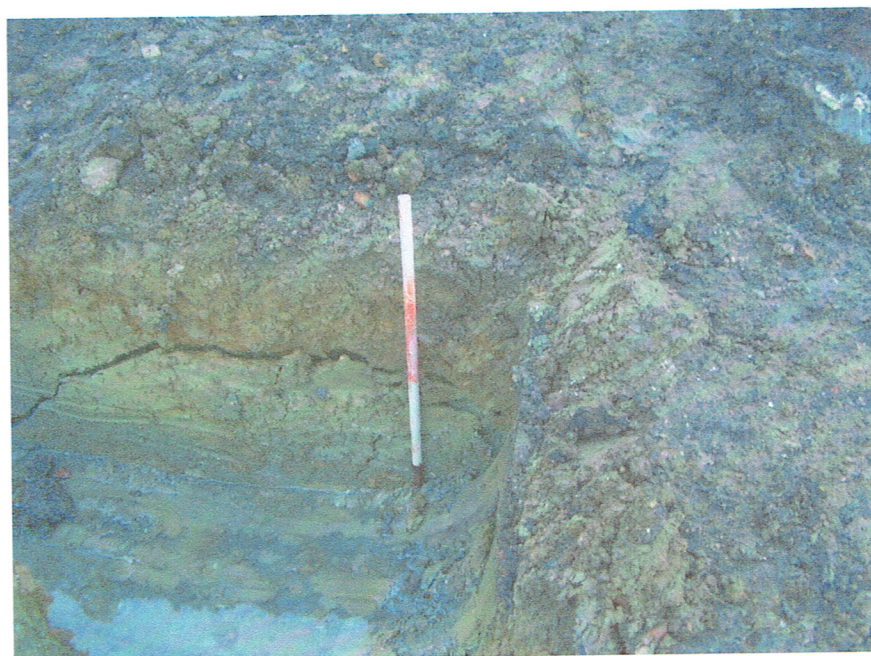


Plate 3: View S of N-facing section



Plate 4: View NE of SW-facing section

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The groundworks excavations revealed a series of uniform sterile deposits extending across the site and present in all trenches, the lower deposits reflecting the partially waterlogged nature of the soils in this area. No features, structures or deposits of archaeological significance were identified.

7. Copyright

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8. Bibliography

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