

PRELIMINARY REPORT

CASTLE GARAGE

CORVE STREET

LUDLOW

SHROPSHIRE

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JOB N^o: BA1032CGL



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Report specification

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1. Introduction

This preliminary report provides a summary of results obtained from Border Archaeology's excavation at Castle Garage Corve Street Ludlow (*fig. 1*) and details the findings revealed in Trenches C, D and E. The initial phase of excavation was carried out between September 13th and October 14th 2011.



Fig.1: Plan showing location of site and trenches

1.1 Soils and Geology

Whilst the majority of Ludlow is classified as unsurveyed by the Soil Survey of England and Wales (1983), the predominant soil type in the vicinity of the study area consists of typical argillic brown alluvial soils of the Teme series (561b), comprising deep stoneless permeable silty soils overlying river alluvium.

2. Methodology

Excavation was carried out in accordance with *Standard and guidance for an archaeological excavation* (IfA, 2008). Border Archaeology adheres to the *IfA Code of conduct* (2010) and *Code of approved practice for the regulation of contractual arrangements in field archaeology* (2008).

Full written, graphic and photographic records were made in accordance with Border Archaeology's *Field Recording Manual* (2008). These included completed pro-forma context record sheets and field drawings, both in plan and section, at scales of 1:20 or 1:50. A photographic record was also made using a high-resolution digital camera. Plans, elevations and sections contain levels derived from a temporary benchmark (TBM).

Three trenches were opened, each of which measured approximately 7m × 4m. These were excavated to a minimum depth of 0.5m

3. Results

3.1 Trench C

Trench C was excavated in the northeast corner of the development plot, adjacent to the churchyard wall. The trench was initially 6.5m × 4.5m, but was subsequently extended at the northwest extent by 4m × 0.75m.

Archaeological deposits across the southern extent of Trench C were found to have been heavily truncated by modern demolition and temporary reinstatement work (to create a base for a site office). To the north of this disturbed area, a wall foundation was unearthed at a depth of 0.56m. This was oriented north-south/east-west and comprised the southern and western walls of a cellar. The wall was constructed principally of coursed, rough-hewn sandstone, with a yellow sandy lime mortar bond. The east-facing inner wall of the cellar and upper part of the wall were of hand-made, unfrogged brick bonded with a yellowish sandy lime mortar.

A cobbled surface to the south of the wall overlay a made-ground deposit containing late post-medieval pottery. A pit was revealed beneath this deposit and was found to contain a large quantity of horn cores.

The foundation walls revealed seem to have comprised part of a small dwelling or outbuilding situated well to the rear of the street frontage but displaying a similar alignment. This building seems to have been constructed at some point during the 19th century and a building is shown in this location in the town plans of 1885, although its function is unclear.

The pit underlying this building was provisionally dated as early post-medieval (c. 1500-1600) and may have been associated with localised tanning activity, based on the large number of horn cores revealed.

3.2 Trench D

Trench D (6.2m × 4m) was opened on the street frontage and was located in the access road leading into the development area.

Removal of the tarmac hard-standing and upper soil deposits revealed a series of wall foundations at a depth of 0.22m – 0.26m below current ground level, and oriented north-south/east-west. The southern extent of the trench revealed part of the cut for an earlier

archaeological evaluation trench; the northern extent contained a modern utility service and thus remained unexcavated.

Underlying the foundations were a series of possible disuse or demolition deposits, removal of which revealed two poorly preserved wall courses, part of a cobbled surface (heavily truncated by a robbing trench) and a floor surface of green-glazed tile. All of these features were oriented north-south/east-west.

Underlying the tiled and cobbled flooring was a feature of unknown form, probably a ditch, backfilled with a series of masonry and rubble fills. It was cut from the natural silts on the eastern side of the feature and from a loose sandstone deposit on the west.

The wall courses probably comprised the foundations for an 18th or early 19th century building or buildings on the street frontage; an uninterrupted street frontage is visible on John Wood's map of 1835. This shows an entrance between two buildings in this location. The buildings in this location were demolished between 1964 and 1968, presumably to create the garage forecourt.

Underlying the mid to late post-medieval deposits was an extensive burnt deposit overlying a rubble layer, perhaps indicating demolition or site abandonment during this period. The cobbled and tiled floors appeared contemporary (c. 1400-1500); the possible wall courses identified at this level were probably also of this date.

The 'ditch' identified beneath these features appeared to have been deliberately backfilled, probably to create a surface suitable for construction. A single sherd of pottery was removed from the primary fill (probably representing material accumulated at the base of the feature whilst it was still in use) this has been provisionally dated to the mid 14th century.

3.3 Trench E

Trench E (8m × 4m) was excavated immediately west of Trench D and slightly further to the south to avoid utility services.

Removal of the tarmac and sub-base revealed three stone walls on a broad north-south/east-west alignment, although this alignment differed markedly from that of the walls revealed at this level in Trench D. A crudely-built well was revealed in the northwest corner of the trench and a cobbled floor surface at the northeast extent. It was agreed with Mick Krupa that when construction starts, the well will be further investigated where safely possible to determine its potentially earlier age.

Underlying these features were a number of post-medieval made-ground deposits, extending to a depth of 0.55m below the current ground surface. An earlier wall foundation was identified at this level. Further layers of post-medieval soils were built up against this feature to a depth of 1.2m. At this level, a trench-wide soil deposit containing medieval pottery was revealed. Natural silts occurred at a depth of 0.55m below the surface of this deposit.

Analysis of the 1885 map of the area reveals a structure located behind and abutting the building on the street frontage, with an open area between them, facing onto an access to



the north. The wall complex identified seems to correspond with the location of this building on the map, as does the cobbled floor surface.

4. Copyright

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5. References

Border Archaeology, 2008, *Field Recording Manual*

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Department of the Environment, 1994, *Planning Policy Guidance 15: Planning and the historic environment*

IfA, 2008, *Standard and guidance for an archaeological excavation*

IfA, 2010, *Code of Conduct*

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SSEW, 1983, *Soil Map of England and Wales Scale 1:250,000*, Silsoe

5.1 Cartography

John Wood's Map of Ludlow – 1835

Ordnance Survey Town Plans of Ludlow – 1885

Document Control

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