

**Programme of
Archaeological Works
at
Swan House
Watling Street
Leintwardine
Herefordshire**

**NGR: SO 40501 74044
SITE CODE: SHL10**

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Report specification

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1. Non-Technical Summary

From 15th December to 21st December 2010, Border Archaeology undertook a programme of archaeological evaluation at Swan House, Watling Street, situated within the Scheduled Area of the Roman fortified settlement of Leintwardine (Herefs.).

The programme of archaeological fieldwork revealed evidence of a pit containing prehistoric pottery (possibly of Bronze Age date) in Trench 1 and post-medieval deposits and features within both Trench 1 and Trench 2. No occupation deposits, finds or features of Roman date were identified in the evaluation trenches.

The relatively low ground level of 127.50m OD on the site suggests that the area was terraced in the post-medieval period, presumably when the Swan Inn and its yard and outhouses were built. This hypothesis is supported by the archaeological findings.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 Border Archaeology was instructed by Mr and Mrs. R & B Sudworth, to undertake a programme of archaeological works at their property Swan House, Watling Street, Leintwardine, Herefordshire in connection with its proposed development (**Fig. 1**).

- 2.2 In summary, this programme of works consisted of the following components:

The production of a Written Scheme of Investigation of the archaeological and historical resource within the site in preparation for an Archaeological Evaluation.

A programme of Archaeological Fieldwork comprising an Archaeological Evaluation consisting of two 2m × 2m trenches within the Scheduled Area (**Fig. 2**)

- 2.3 Fieldwork was undertaken between the 15th and 21st December 2010.

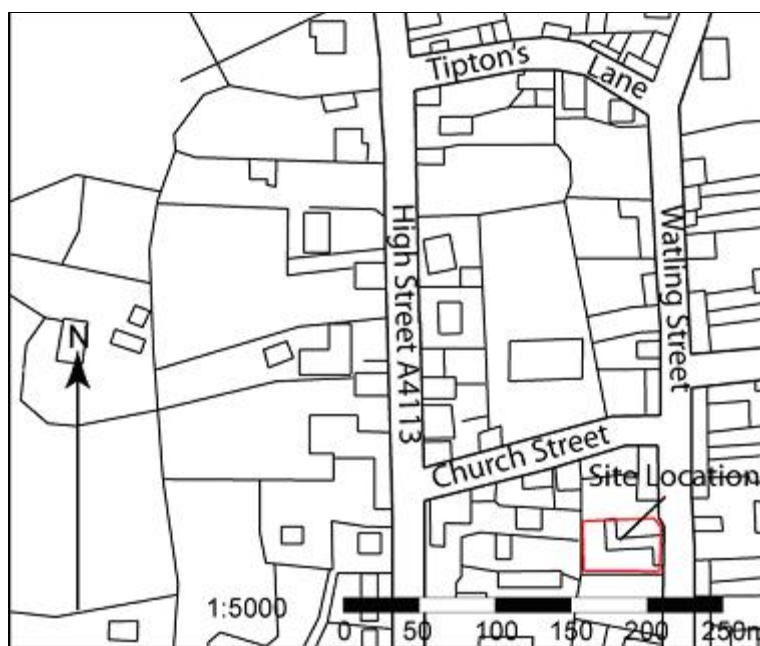


Fig. 1: Site location plan

- 2.4 The site lies within the Scheduled Area of the Roman station of *Bravonium* (HE28) and an application for Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC) to undertake the programme of archaeological works was sought from Tony Fleming Esq. Inspector of Ancient Monuments (English Heritage) by Neil Shurety of Border Archaeology, dated 25th October 2010.
- 2.5 A copy of this Report will be sent to Mr and Mrs Sudworth, Tony Fleming, English Heritage, and Julian Cotton, Archaeological Advisor, Herefordshire Council. A copy of the archive report and digital data relating to the archaeological remains investigated (.dxf or shapefile format) will be deposited with Herefordshire Sites & Monuments Record.

3. Aim

- 3.1 The project aim was to assess as fully as possible, by means of a detailed archaeological assessment and archaeological field evaluation, the location, extent, date, state of preservation and significance of the archaeological resource on the site.
- 3.2 Based on the results of this programme of archaeological works, a considered assessment can be made of the likely impact on the archaeological resource of the proposed developmental groundworks and thus an appropriate programme of mitigation can be devised.

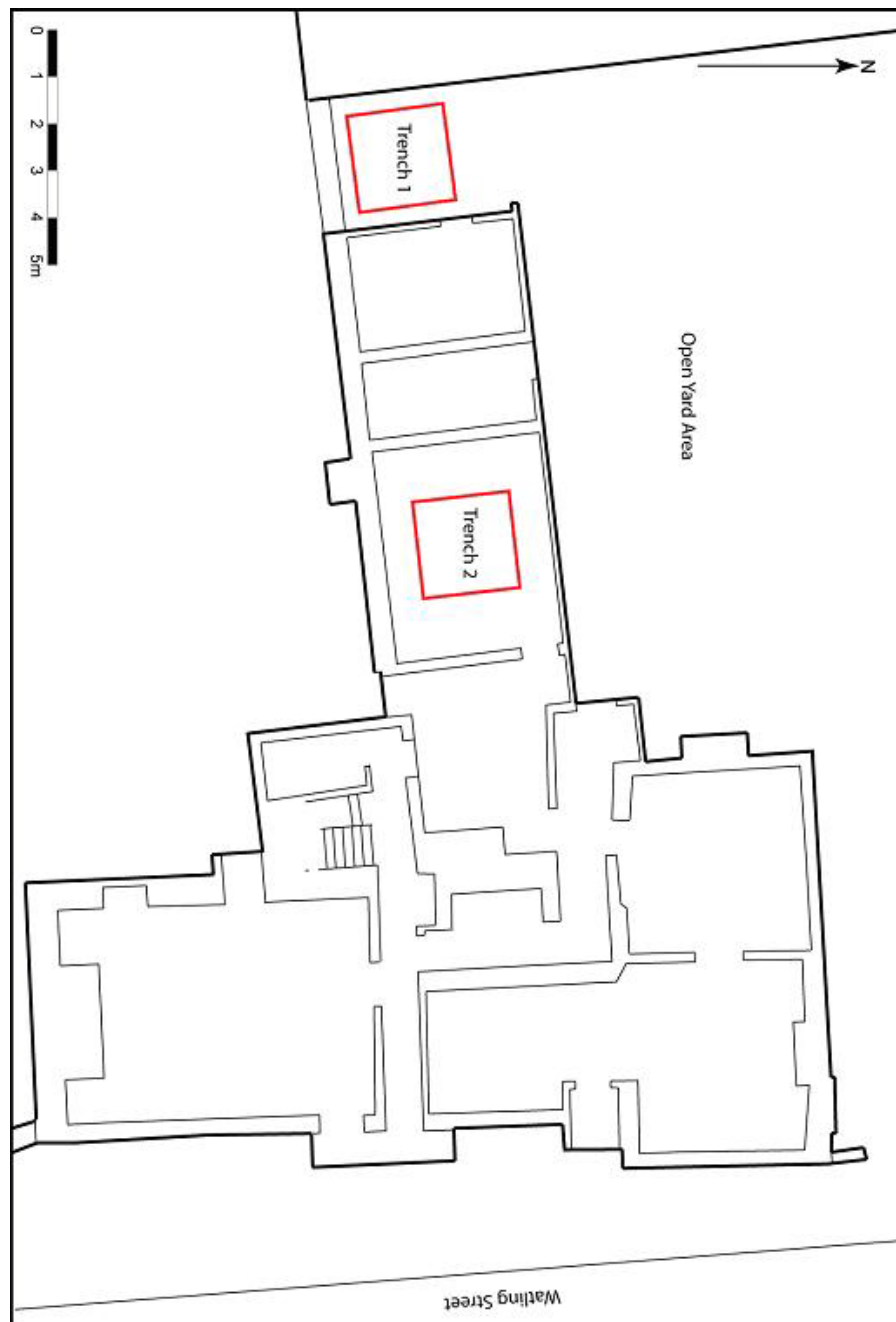


Fig. 2: Site plan showing location of trenches

4. Site description

- 4.1 The site is centred on SO 40501 74044 and comprises The Swan, a Grade II listed former public house, probably dating to the late 16th-17th century with later additions, an open yard and associated outbuildings (**Fig. 2**). The study area is characterised by argillic brown earths of the Rowton series (571A) composed of well-drained fine silty and fine loamy soils, locally over gravel, some fine silty over clayey soils with slowly permeable subsoils and seasonal waterlogging and some slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged fine silty over clayey soils. The underlying drift is glaciofluvial or river terrace gravel and till (SSEW 1983).

5. Brief Historical & Archaeological Background

- 5.1 The Roman outpost of *Bravonium* (SMR Ref. 549; SAM HE28) was established at a strategic point at the confluence of the River Teme and River Clun, on the line of Watling Street (West) and commanding a key route leading into mid-Wales. The earliest occupation at Leintwardine dates from c.65-70 AD, consisting of a *vicus* settlement containing a *mansio* (posting station) and bath-house (built c.140 AD). This occupation was associated with the nearby cavalry forts of Jay Lane and Buckton, which were successively occupied from c.70AD to 160AD (Stanford 1968; Brown 1996).
- 5.2 Following the abandonment of Buckton Fort in about 160AD, it appears that another outpost was established at Leintwardine, consisting of a rectangular enclosure fortified with a timber-laced rampart, together with an annexe rampart surrounding the bath-house, which was partially rebuilt and enlarged. Although the construction of the ramparts strongly suggests a military function (Stanford 1968), there is a lack of regularly laid-out structures which would normally be found within a late 2nd century Roman fort, which has led some writers to suggest that it might have functioned as a supply base or defended settlement (Brown 1996, 513) Although Stanford suggested that *Bravinium* experienced several periods of abandonment and re-occupation in the 3rd and 4th centuries (Stanford 1968, 317), more recent analysis suggests the site remained in continuous occupation from the late 2nd century through to the mid to late 4th century AD (Brown 1996, 565-6).
- 5.3 It is unclear when Roman occupation at *Bravinium* finally ceased; Stanford's excavations have suggested that the final occupation might have ended c. 350AD (Stanford 1968, 316), although more recent studies suggest occupation may have continued into the post-Roman period (Brown 1996, 53).
- 5.4 Post-Roman occupation of Leintwardine is less well documented, although it was recorded in the Domesday Survey of 1086 as a substantial manor. The focus of the medieval settlement was believed to have centred on the area within the former Roman defences, in the vicinity of High Street. However, it appears that the focus of settlement shifted towards Watling Street during the early post-medieval period, with an increase in the size and importance of the village associated with the growth of the local wool industry in the late 17th-early 18th century.

- 5.5 Archaeological investigations carried out in the vicinity of the present site include a watching brief on excavations at the Veterinary Surgery in Church Street (Stanford 1972, 318-20), which identified the line of a timber-laced rampart oriented north-south and evidence of masonry foundations and a gravel road of Roman date (SMR Ref. 2378). Further work earlier this year (Border Archaeology 2010a) revealed evidence of a possible defensive structure corresponding closely with the Period 2 'Inner Ditch', which is believed to have surrounded the entire settlement (Stanford 1968, 259).
- 5.6 Excavations carried out immediately to the west of the site at Sawpit Bank (SMR Ref. 1055) in 1971 investigated the eastern defences of the Roman outpost, revealing at least two phases of rampart development and evidence of intensive domestic occupation ranging in date from the late 1st to the late 3rd/4th century AD, including hearths, rubbish pits and a well (Brown 1996, 515-33). Further to the north, in gardens to the rear of Nos. 34-6 Watling Street, an archaeological evaluation undertaken by WCAS in 1997-8 revealed another section of the eastern rampart and ditch (Wichbold 1998). An excavation undertaken on the same site in 2001 failed to reveal further evidence of the defences but did uncover the foundations of a medieval timber-framed building and part of the medieval street frontage (Border Archaeology 2001).

6. Scheme of Works

6.1 Summary Description of Works

- 6.2 The programme of archaeological fieldwork at Swan House, Leintwardine, detailed in this report consisted of the excavation of two 2m × 2m trenches located within the Scheduled Area for *Bravinium* (SAM HE28).
- 6.3 The programme was carried out in accordance with *Standard and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (IfA 2008) and *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: The MoRPHE Project Managers' Guide* (English Heritage 2006) and with other relevant published sources of technical, professional and ethical guidance. 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).

6.4 Methodology

6.5 Archaeological Field Evaluation (Evaluation Trench and Test Pits)

- 6.6 Two evaluation trenches were excavated within the site (**Fig. 2**).
- 6.7 The modern ground was broken out by and cleared by contractors under Border Archaeology's supervision. Excavation of the evaluation trenches was undertaken by hand; the revealed archaeological deposits were defined by trowelling and characterised by extent, colour, texture, boundary characteristics etc. The trenches were excavated to the top of the natural deposits, with sondages dug into natural in both trenches.
- 6.8 Evaluation trench locations were recorded by Border Archaeology by offsetting from adjacent boundary walls and plotting onto a scale site plan. A temporary benchmark was established adjacent to the north boundary wall of

the site, with a value of 127.72mOD.

6.9 Recording

- 6.10 A detailed written, drawn and photographic record was produced in accordance with archaeological practices set out by the Institute for Archaeologists and Border Archaeology's *Field Recording Manual* (2008). The written component comprises a detailed stratigraphic record, with each unit of stratification identified by a unique context number.
- 6.11 Plans, sections and elevations were drawn onto gridded, archivally stable polyester film at appropriate scales, with representative measured sections recorded showing the sequence and depths of deposits. A temporary benchmark (TBM) was established on the site and plans, elevations and sections contain grid and level information relative to OS data.
- 6.12 Plans, sections and elevations were drawn onto pro-forma gridded archivally stable polyester film at a scale of 1:20. All plans, elevations and sections contain grid and level information relative to OS data. All drawings are numbered and listed in a register and numbers are cross-referenced to written site records.
- 6.13 Photographs were taken using a high-resolution digital camera (12MPX) of all stratigraphic units, comprising record views of contexts, samples or artefacts, together with a representative photographic record of the progress of the evaluation. All photographic records were indexed by frame number and cross-referenced to written site records. Details concerning subject and direction of view were maintained in a photographic register, indexed by film and frame number.
- 6.14 The progress of the evaluation was recorded & assessed by the Company's General Manager George Children MA MIfA using the Company's ISO 9001 procedures.
- 6.15 The site has produced 10 context records, two section drawings, two trench location plans at 1:20 and 13 photographs.
- 6.16 The site records can be found under the site code SHL10, and will be deposited with Hereford City Museum.

6.17 Recovery, processing and curation of artefactual data

- 6.18 All associated artefacts recovered were retained, cleaned, labelled and stored according to *Standard and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (IfA 2008) and *First Aid for Finds* (Watkinson & Neal 2001).
- 6.19 All artefacts were bagged and labelled with the site code and context number before being removed off-site and assemblages have been examined by an approved specialist according to typological or chronological criteria and conservation needs identified. The ceramic evidence has been identified and assessed in relation to existing national and regional research frameworks for Roman, Saxon and medieval pottery.

- 6.20 Conservation, if required, will be undertaken by an approved conservator on advice provided by a suitable specialist and in accordance with United Kingdom Institute for Conservation (now part of ICON, the Institute of Conservation) guidelines.

6.21 Environmental Strategy

- 6.22 No deposits considered suitable for environmental sampling were identified during the course of the fieldwork.

7. Results

7.1 Evaluation Trench 1

- 7.2 For trench locations see Fig. 2.

Evaluation Trench 1	
Location	southwest of the site within the open yard area
Dimensions	2.0m×2.0m×0.89m
Modern ground level/top of slab	128.22m OD
Base of modern fill/slab	127.92m OD
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	0.84m
Level of base of trench	127.33m OD
Natural observed	127.50m OD

- 7.3 Trench 1 was located to the southwest of the site within the open yard area, the ground level in this area being 128.22mOD. The trench consisted of 0.20m of modern overburden with frequent red brick and concrete (101) overlying a firm bluish-grey silty clay 0.40m in depth (102). Deposit (102) included charcoal and Ceramic Building Material (CBM) flecks but no datable finds. Beneath (102), in the southwest corner of the trench, was pit [104] and its fill (103). Much of [104] lay outside the area of Trench 1 and its overall size and function are thus unknown. Within its fill (103), were some fragments of prehistoric pottery, probably from a Bronze Age urn, and frequent charcoal flecks. Pit [104] was cut into the natural clay and gravels (105), which were observed at 127.50mOD.



Plate 1: North-facing section of Trench 1 with pit [104] in southwest corner

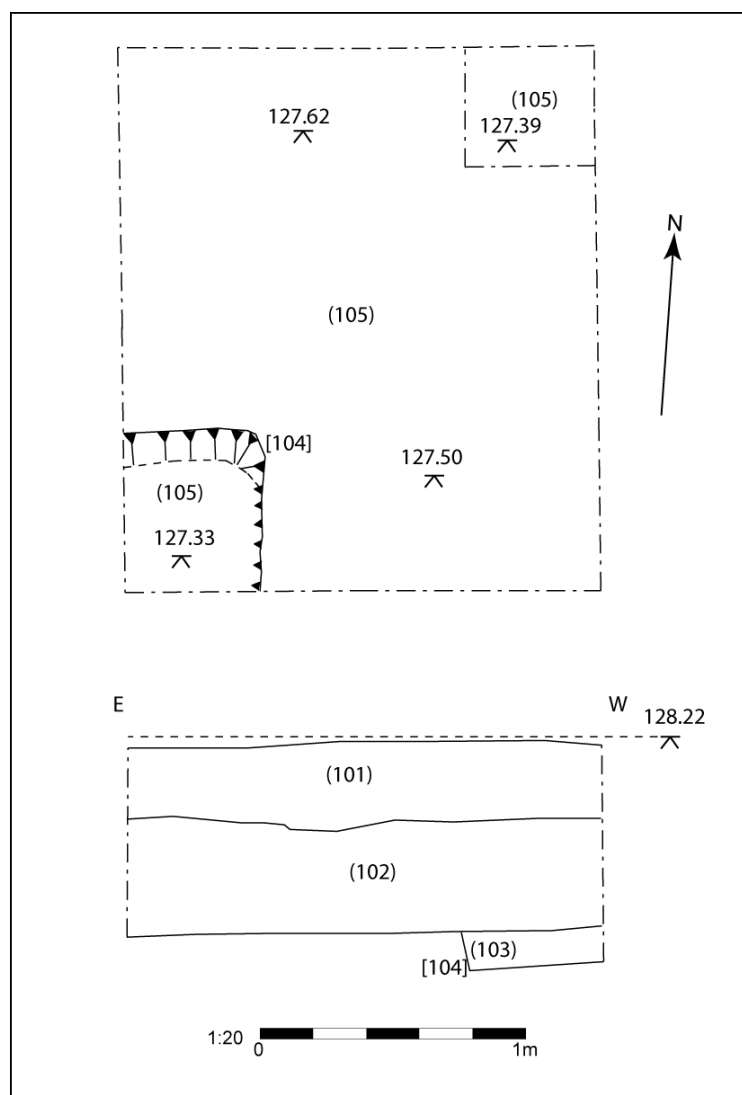


Fig. 3: Plan and west-facing section of Trench 1

7.4 Evaluation Trench 2

Evaluation Trench 2	
Location	old kitchen building at the south of the site
Dimensions	2.0m×2.0m×0.89m
Modern ground level/top of slab	127.81m OD
Base of modern fill/slab	127.61m OD
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	0.50m
Level of base of trench	127.23m OD
Natural observed	127.52m OD

- 7.5 Trench 2, located within the old kitchen building at the south of the site, consisted of modern floor tiles overlying a 0.24m bedding of indurated concrete (206). Underlying this, in the western part of the trench, was charcoal deposit (201), 0.20m in depth, which included fragments of post-medieval pottery, CBM, and Clay Tobacco Pipe (CTP), all of which dates to the later post-medieval period (c.19th-20th century). This deposit may relate to an old forge that was situated in the southwest corner of the building when it served as a coach house. Underlying (201) was a clean greenish-grey clay deposit (202), 0.36m in depth, which deposit was observed in the west-facing section but did not feature within the trench and so was not investigated. Posthole [204] was observed in the south-facing section and was filled with mid-brown silt (203), possibly decayed wood from a post. Both posthole [204] and deposit (202) cut into the natural clay and gravels (205), which were observed at 127.52mOD.



Plate 2: South-facing section of Trench 2, with posthole [204] visible in the section



Plate 3: Detail of the west-facing section, showing concrete (206), deposits (201) and (202) and natural (205)

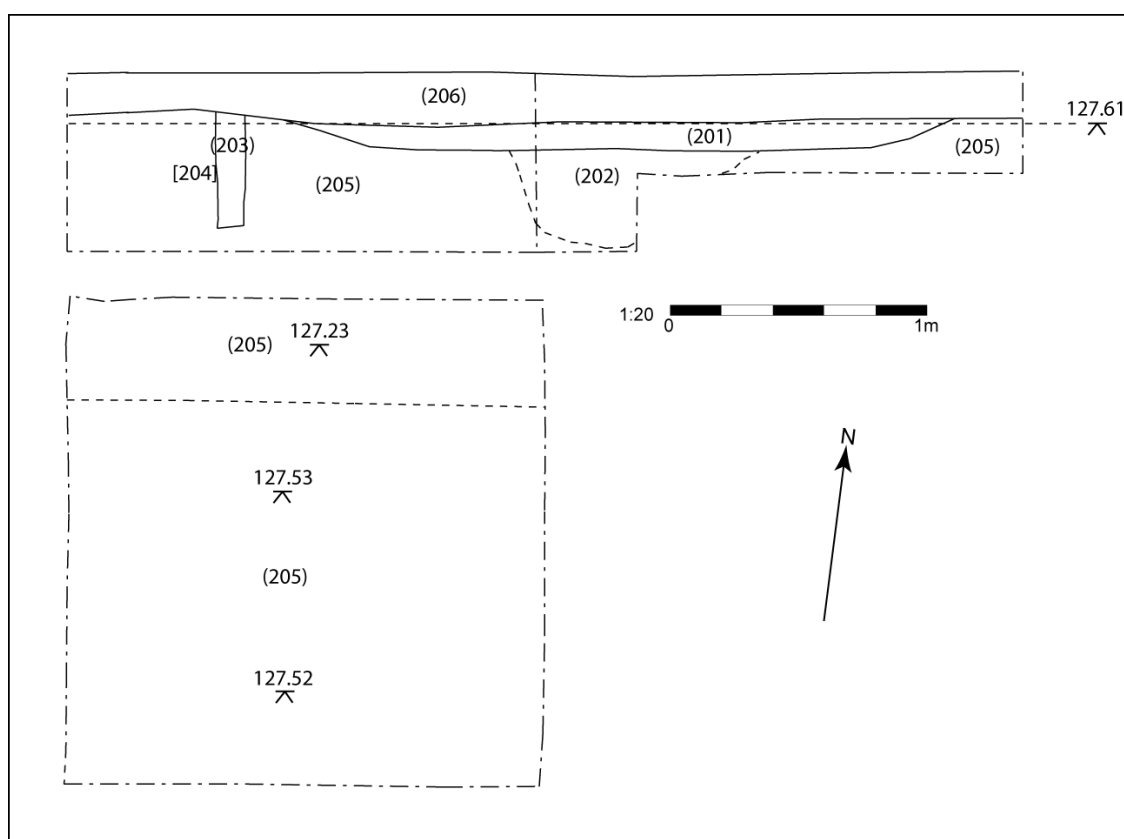


Fig. 4: Plan and south- and west-facing sections of Trench 2

7.6 Discussion of Results

7.7 Both Trench 1 and Trench 2 revealed a paucity of surviving archaeology at Swan House, comprising mainly late post-medieval deposits and features associated with the daily use of the yard area and outbuildings belonging to

the Swan Inn. The deficiency of archaeological evidence for earlier activity, coupled with the relatively low ground level of c.127.72mOD (compared to that of c. 133.50mOD on Church Street) suggests ground level had been previously reduced and levelled, presumably to build the yard, coach house and other extant outbuildings, truncating any earlier features. This hypothesis is supported by the presence of pit [104], located in the southwest corner of Trench 1, which contained pieces of prehistoric pottery, possibly Bronze Age in date. Pit [104] had been horizontally truncated by post-medieval deposit (102), indicating that the ground level had been intentionally terraced away in the post-medieval period and any earlier archaeological deposits removed, probably including evidence for Roman and medieval occupation deposits or features in this area.

- 7.8 The discovery of a small quantity of prehistoric pottery (possibly of Bronze Age date) in pit [104] is of some significance, as relatively little stratified evidence for prehistoric occupation within Leintwardine has been identified from previous fieldwork. A small assemblage of Mesolithic and later prehistoric flintwork was found in Roman deposits during the Sawpit Bank excavations (located just to the W of the Swan House site) in 1971, while scatters of Malvernian handmade ware, possibly of Iron Age date, have been identified on several sites in Leintwardine (Brown, 1996, 564).
- 7.8 The natural clay and gravels observed on the site correspond with those described as being typical to Leintwardine (Hodgson 1972, 82-6).

8. Conclusion

- 8.1 The programme of archaeological fieldwork undertaken at Swan House, Leintwardine, revealed that the site has been heavily truncated, presumably in the post-medieval period, during construction of The Swan Inn and its associated outbuildings. This horizontal truncation reduced the area to approximately 127.50mOD, removing any archaeological deposits above this level, hence the absence of any Roman occupation features or deposits in this area. Part of pit [104] survived this horizontal truncation and the fragments of prehistoric pottery (possibly Bronze Age) contained within it suggest the presence of earlier archaeological activity predating the Roman occupation.
- 8.2 Makeup layers outside in the yard and a charcoal deposit within the coach house, possibly associated with a forge formerly located within the same building offer evidence of later post-medieval activity.
- 8.3 The two trenches excavated were of sufficient size and depth and were adequately spaced to give a coherent picture of the subsurface deposits in general, and to establish that archaeological survival on site is low.

9. Copyright

- 9.1 Border Archaeology shall retain full copyright of any commissioned reports, tender documents or other project documents, under the Copyright, Designs & Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved; excepting that it hereby provides an exclusive licence to the client for the use of the report by the client in all

matters directly relating to the project as described in the Project Specification.

10. References

10.1 Bibliography

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11. Appendix 1: Context Register

11.1 Trench 1

Context	Description
(101)	Well compact, mid brown/blackish sandy silt; concrete and brick; trenchwide × 0.2m. Overlies (102).
<i>INTERPRETATION:</i>	<i>Modern overburden</i>
(102)	Firm, blue grey, silty clay; charcoal & CBM flecking, occasional stone; trenchwide × 0.4m. Underlies (101). Overlies (103).
<i>INTERPRETATION:</i>	<i>Soil build-up over terracing</i>
(103)	Firm, bluish-grey, silty clay; occasional charcoal flecking, pot, burnt clay and daub; >0.6m × >0.5m × 0.2m. Fills [104].
<i>INTERPRETATION:</i>	<i>Fill of [104]</i>
[104]	Cut: square(?) in plan, corners rounded, measuring >0.6m × >0.5m × 0.2m; break of slope top, sharp, E side vertical, N side steeply sloping, break of slope base, sharp, base concave; oriented E-W(?). Cuts (105). Filled by (103).
<i>INTERPRETATION:</i>	<i>Cut of possible prehistoric pit</i>
(105)	Well compact, very light reddish-brown clay; very frequent gravel; trenchwide × >0.3m. Cut by [104].
<i>INTERPRETATION:</i>	<i>Natural soil deposition</i>

11.2 Trench 2

Context	Description
(201)	Firm, black, charcoal; >1.5m × >1m × 0.2m. Underlies (206). Overlies (202).
<i>INTERPRETATION:</i>	<i>Charcoal deposit possibly forging residue</i>
(202)	Firm, greenish-grey, clay; >1m × 0.1m × 0.36m. Underlies (201). Overlies (205).
<i>INTERPRETATION:</i>	<i>Clean clay deposit</i>
(203)	Loose, mid brown, silt; occasional <i>fe</i> artefacts; 0.09m × >0.08m × 0.4m. Fills [204].
<i>INTERPRETATION:</i>	<i>Fill of [204]</i>
(204)	Cut: square in plan; measures >0.09m × >0.08m × 0.4m; break of slope top, sharp, sides vertical, break of slope base, sharp, base concave. Cuts (205) Filled by (203).
<i>INTERPRETATION:</i>	<i>Cut of stakehole</i>
(205)	Well compact, reddish-brown, clay; frequent pebbles; trenchwide × >0.55m. Underlies (202). Cut by [204].
<i>INTERPRETATION:</i>	<i>Natural soil deposition</i>
(206)	Indurated concrete; trenchwide × 0.4m. Overlies (203) and (201).
<i>INTERPRETATION:</i>	<i>Concrete floor surface</i>

12. Appendix 2: Ceramic Assessment

Dr Jane Timby PhD, FSA, MIfA

12.1 The archaeological work at Swan House, Leintwardine, resulted in the recovery of a small assemblage of six sherds (two joining) of pottery and a single fragment of CBM. Pottery was recovered from just two individual contexts: (103), a pit fill and (201), a charcoal deposit. The assemblage was scanned to determine the date of the fabrics present and quantified by sherd count and weight for each context. .

12.2 Catalogue

12.2.1 Context (103)

Three bodysherds, two joining showing a fresh break, from a handmade pot. Grey-brown exterior and a red-brown core and interior. Slightly micaceous clay with a lumpy texture containing grog and sparse sandstone and quartz. The walls are quite thick (11mm) and there is no curvature to the sherds suggesting a moderately straight-sided vessel. Weight: 30g.

The character of the fabric, the low firing temperature and the technology of the vessel suggest this is likely to be of prehistoric date. It may be part of a Bronze Age urn but this is fairly speculative without other supporting evidence.

12.2.2 Context (201)

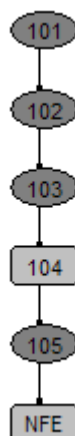
Deposit (201) produced three sherds of speckled brown glazed buff ware and one sherd of black (iron) glazed red domestic earthenware dating to the later post-medieval period. Weight: 59g. In addition the feature produced a small fragment of ceramic building material (7g).

12.3 Potential and recommendations

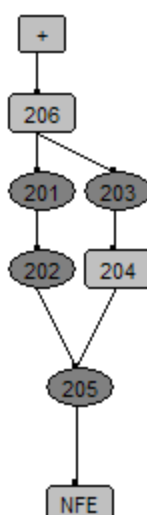
This is a very small assemblage documenting the presence of a possible isolated prehistoric feature and post-medieval activity. No further work is recommended at this stage.

13. Appendix 3: Site Matrices

13.1 Harris Matrices for Evaluation Trench 1



13.2 Harris Matrices for Evaluation Trench 2



14. Appendix 4: NMR OASIS archaeological report form

OASIS ID: borderar1-91110	
Project details	
Project name	Swan Lane Watling Street Leintwardine
Short description of the project	An evaluation took place at The Swan, Watling Street, Leintwardine. The site (centred on SO 40501 74044) consists of The Swan, a Grade II listed former public house, probably dating to the late 16 th -17 th century with later additions, an open yard and associated outbuildings. The underlying geology in the vicinity of the study area comprises of glaciofluvial or river terrace gravel and till, while the underlying solid geology is of undivided Old Red Sandstone (SSEW 1983). The ground level on site is 127.50mOD. Two trenches were opened and excavated to natural. The excavations revealed evidence of a possible Bronze Age pit in Trench 1, and post-medieval deposits and features within both Trench 1 and 2. The relatively low ground level of 127.50mOD on the site suggests that the area was terraced in the post medieval period, presumably when the Swan Inn and its yard and outhouses were built. This hypothesis is supported by the archaeological findings.
Project dates	Start: 15-12-2010 End: 21-12-2010
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	SHL10 – Site code
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	Scheduled Monument (SM)
Current Land use	Other 2 - In use as a building
Monument type	LAYERS Post Medieval
Monument type	PIT Bronze Age
Significant Finds	POT Bronze Age

Significant Finds	POT Post Medieval
Methods & techniques	'Sample Trenches'
Development type	Building refurbishment/repairs/restoration
Prompt	Scheduled Monument Consent
Position in the planning process	Not known / Not recorded
Project location	
Country	England
Site location	HEREFORDSHIRE LEINTWARDINE Swan House, Watling Street
Postcode	SY7 0LW
Study area	156.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	SO 40501 74044 52.3608355106 -2.873828952590 52 21 39 N 002 52 25 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 127.23m Max: 127.52m
Project creators	
Name of Organisation	Border Archaeology
Project brief originator	English Heritage/Department of Environment
Project design originator	Border Archaeology
Project director/manager	Border Archaeology
Project supervisor	Sarah Ritchie MA
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer

Name of sponsor/funding body	Mr and Mrs R & B Sudworth
Project archives	
Physical Archive recipient	Hereford City Museum
Physical Contents	'Ceramics'
Digital Archive recipient	Hereford City Museum
Digital Contents	'Stratigraphic'
Digital Media available	'Images raster / digital photography'
Paper Archive recipient	Hereford City Museum
Paper Contents	'Stratigraphic'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet','Map','Matrices','Plan','Report','Section'
Project bibliography 1	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Archaeological Evaluation Report for Swan House, Watling Street, Leintwardine
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Ritchie, S.
Date	2011
Issuer or publisher	Border Archaeology
Place of issue or publication	Leominster
Entered by	Sarah Ritchie (s.ritchie55@gmail.com)
Entered on	12 January 2011

Site Summary

<i>Report Title</i>	Archaeological Evaluation: Swan House Watling Street Leintwardine Herefordshire
<i>Contractor's Name and Address</i>	Border Archaeology PO Box 36 Leominster Herefordshire, HR6 OYA.
<i>Site Name</i>	As above
<i>Grid Reference</i>	SO 40501 74044 Planning Application No: N/A
<i>SMR number</i>	
<i>Date of Field Work</i>	15 th – 21 st December 2010
<i>Date of Report</i>	February 2011
	NUMBER AND TYPE OF FINDS
<i>Pottery</i>	Period: Prehistoric, Post-medieval Number of sherds: 6
<i>Other</i>	Period: Post-med/modern Quantity: None retained
	NUMBER AND TYPE OF SAMPLES COLLECTED
<i>Sieving for charred plant remains</i>	No of features sampled: N/A No of buckets: N/A
<i>C14/scientific dates</i>	No and Type: N/A Result: N/A
<i>Pollen</i>	No of columns/spot samples: N/A Name of pollen specialist: N/A
<i>Bone</i>	Number of buckets sieved for bone: N/A Quantity Recovered: N/A Period: N/A
<i>Other</i>	Type and specialist: N/A
<i>Summary of the report</i>	<p>The programme of archaeological fieldwork revealed evidence of a pit containing prehistoric pottery (possibly of Bronze Age date) in Trench 1 and post-medieval deposits and features within both Trench 1 and Trench 2.</p> <p>The relatively low ground level of 127.50m OD on the site suggests that the area was terraced in the post-medieval period, presumably when the Swan Inn and its yard and outhouses were built. This hypothesis is supported by the archaeological findings.</p>



Document Control

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