

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

**LAND TO THE REAR  
OF 63A HIGH STREET  
BRIDGNORTH**

---

For Hightown Homes

---

M. Williams MA MIfA

---

L~P:ARCHÆOLOGY



Archaeological Watching Brief Report

# LAND TO THE REAR OF 63A HIGH STREET BRIDGNORTH

---

Client: Hightown Homes

---

Local Authority: Shropshire Council

---

NGR: 371750, 293220

---

Planning App: X09/00562/FUL

---

Author(s): M.Williams

---

Doc Ref: LPI387M-WBR-v1.0

---

Date: October 12

---

Site Code: STL12

---

**L-P:ARCHAEOLOGY**

A trading name of the L – P : Partnership Ltd.

The Truman Brewery | 91 Brick Lane | London, E1 6QL | +44 [0]20 7 770 6045 | +44 [0]20 7 691 7245

**[www.lparchaeology.com](http://www.lparchaeology.com)**



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

*Table of Figures*

*Table of Tables*

*Table of Plates*

*Table of Appendices*

*Abstract*

1. Introduction
2. Historic Background
3. Aims and Objectives
4. Methodology
5. Results
6. Finds
7. Discussion
8. Archive

*Sources Consulted*

*Figures*

*Appendices*

# TABLE OF FIGURES

Figure 1 - Site Location

Figure 2 - Site Plan

Figure 3 - Sections

Figure 4 - Site profile

# TABLE OF TABLES

Table 1- Finds I

Table 2 - Pottery occurrence by number and weight (in g) of sherds per context by fabric type

Table 3- Animal bone

# TABLE OF PLATES

Plate 1 - Watching brief area looking north. 1m scale.

Plate 2 - Section 2, looking west.

Plate 3 - Trench looking north east. 1m scale.

# TABLE OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Oasis form

Appendix 2 - Specification for Archaeological Works

# Abstract

An archaeological watching brief and investigative trench was carried out on land at the rear of 63A High Street, Bridgnorth. Previous trial trenching had indicated Medieval deposits in the east of the site which had been cut by a later ditch.

The watching brief revealed the deposits in plan and confirmed that the ditch was post Medieval. The Medieval deposits consisted of hillwash from the top (west) of the site, adjacent to Hightown. They contained domestic refuse including pottery dating to the 13<sup>th</sup> century which was discarded from the rear of the plots fronting onto High Street. This was overlain by later hillwash containing pottery dating to the late 17<sup>th</sup> century. A ditch of similar date was recorded running along the eastern boundary of the site. No evidence for a Medieval defensive ditch was found.

# 1. Introduction

- 1.1. This document has been prepared by Matthew Williams of L - P : Archaeology on behalf of Hightown Homes Ltd and contains the results of the archaeological evaluation. The fieldwork was carried out by Matthew Williams of L - P : Archaeology on 17<sup>th</sup> August 2012. The work was carried out in accordance with the method statement prepared by Matthew Williams of L - P : Archaeology (doc. ref: LP1387M-SAW-v1.) and agreed with the client and Shropshire Council.
- 1.2. Planning consent has been granted for the site, the application reference is X09/00562/FUL. The watching brief was carried out as the mitigation works after trial trenching revealed Medieval deposits within the site area.
- 1.3. The site is on the west side of the River Severn to the north of the historic core of Bridgnorth at the rear of 63A High Street, Bridgnorth, WV16 4DX. It is bounded by open land to the north, St. Leonard's Steps to the east, dwellings and gardens to the south and buildings to the rear of High Street to the west (FIGURE 1). The site slopes down severely from 99.97m OD at the west of the site to 87.71m OD in the east.
- 1.4. The site was covered in vegetation and several trees. At the time of the watching brief the topsoil was being cleared and the platform for the development was being levelled in the east of the site.
- 1.5. The British Geological Survey GeoIndex for the site records the bedrock deposits as Bridgnorth sandstone ([HTTP://WWW.BGS.AC.UK/GEOINDEX](http://www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex)). Dark yellow natural sand was recorded during the watching brief.
- 1.6. This project is registered as part of the OASIS project (APPENDIX 1).



## 2. Historic Background

2.1. The projected line of the historic town defences (PRN 00374) crosses the eastern part of the site (FIGURE 1). The defences were originally built of timber between 1216 and 1223 and were gradually replaced with stone over the following two centuries (WWW.HERITAGEGATEWAY.ORG.UK). The site falls within a tenement plot that fronts Friar's Street to the east (PRN 05650). There is no evidence for medieval structures within the plot (WWW.HERITAGEGATEWAY.ORG.UK).

2.2. Trial trenching was carried out in the east and west of the site. The trench in the west, at the top of the slope, showed thick topsoil directly overlying disturbed natural sand. A large Post Medieval pit of unknown function was also recorded. In the east of the site three subsoils, containing Medieval and Post Medieval pottery, were recorded below thick topsoil. The subsoils were cut by a ditch almost on the eastern boundary.

### 3. Aims and Objectives

3.1. The general aims of the archaeological watching brief were to record the character, date, type, state of preservation, and extent of any archaeological remains on site exposed or disturbed during groundworks.

3.2. The specific aims of the watching brief and excavation were:

- ◆ To investigate the Medieval deposits within the area of impact.
- ◆ To identify the western edge of the defensive ditch and investigate the profile and fills of the ditch.
- ◆ To investigate the possibility of a rampart on the interior (western) side of the ditch.

### 4. Methodology

4.1. For a full description of the archaeological methodology employed please refer to the Specification for Archaeological Works included as Appendix 2.

4.2. The majority of the topsoil had been removed prior to the monitoring. The strip and levelling in the east of the site was monitored and the surface hand cleaned (PLATE 1).

4.3. After the topsoil strip a trench was hand excavated in the south east corner of the site, just north of evaluation trench 2, to investigate the profile of the Medieval deposits and the ditch (PLATE 2 AND FIGURE 2).

4.4. Detailed recording of the main east facing sections was difficult as they were high and the soils unstable (PLATE 2).

## 5. Results

- 5.1. Deposit numbers are given in (parentheses) and cut numbers are given in [square brackets]. A plan of the site is included as Figure 2 and a section of the trench as Figure 3.
- 5.2. The natural geology was a mid coarse sand that varied in colour from pale pink to dark yellow.
- 5.3. The evaluation showed that in the western part of the site the top of the natural sand was disturbed and directly overlain by topsoil 0.70m thick. This area was not excavated during the watching brief.
- 5.4. Overlying the natural sand in the stripped area was a firm pale pink and grey sand (27) with occasional rounded pebbles, 0.30m thick. This represents the earliest layer of hillwash and contained 13<sup>th</sup> century pottery.
- 5.5. This was overlain by a firm dark grey brown silt sand (26) with occasional rounded pebbles up to 0.80m thick. This represents the second hillwash deposit and contained pottery dating to the 13<sup>th</sup> century.
- 5.6. At the eastern edge of the site this was overlain by a soft mid brown silt (25) which represents the latest hillwash deposit and contained pottery dating to the late 17<sup>th</sup> century.
- 5.7. At the western edge of the watching brief area (26) was overlain by three mottled orange and brown sand layers (22), (21) and (20) (SECTION 2, FIGURE 3). These appeared to be mixed deposits of all the hillwash deposits noted above and were probably the result of erosion and disturbance further up the slope. Close investigation of these deposits was impossible for safety reasons. The western extent of these layers was not observed, although it must be between Section 2 and evaluation trench 1 (FIGURE 4).
- 5.8. In the north west area of the watching brief was an amorphous cut [29] 2m across. It was filled with a mottled sand (28) that resembled a mix of (26) and (27). It was too close to the east and south facing sections to be properly investigated but the irregular nature of the cut suggests it was a tree throw or other natural feature.

5.9. In the east side of the watching brief trench was a rounded ditch [31] that appeared to run on a north south alignment (FIGURE 3). It was filled with a soft brown silt (30). It was not clearly visible in plan due to heavy rain, and in the area of the trench it was sealed by the compact remains of the topsoil (1).

5.10. A dark brown humic topsoil up to 1m thick covered the entire site. It was very mixed and contained modern refuse such as glass and plastic bottles. Towards the base of the deposit it became compact with some rubble fragment inclusions.

5.11. All the layers followed the natural gradient of the site down from west to east, as was visible in the evaluation trench 2 and the excavation trench (SECTION 1, FIGURE 3)



Plate 1 - Watching brief area looking north. 1m scale.



Plate 2 - Section 2, looking west.



Plate 3 - Trench looking north east. 1 m scale.

## 6. Finds

### POTTERY BY PAUL BLINKHORN

6.1. The pottery assemblage comprised 51 sherds with a total weight of 844 g. It was all medieval or later. The fabric types given in Table 1 were noted:

<b>F1: Reduced Sandy Coarseware</b> , 12 <sup>th</sup> – 14 <sup>th</sup> century? Moderate to dense quartz up to 0.5mm, rare black ironstone up to 2mm. 20 sherds, 259g.
<b>F2: Malvernian Ware</b> , late 12 <sup>th</sup> – 14 <sup>th</sup> C (Vince unpub). 4 sherds, 34g.
<b>F3: White ware I</b> , 13 <sup>th</sup> – 14 <sup>th</sup> C? Moderate to dense quartz < 0.5mm, rare red iron ore up to 2mm, bright green glaze. Handmade. 2 sherds, 10g.
<b>F4: White ware II</b> , 13 <sup>th</sup> – 14 <sup>th</sup> C. Fine, sandy wheel-thrown fabric with darker, yellow surfaces. Yellow-green glaze. 6 sherds, 127g.
<b>F5: Glazed Ware</b> , 12 <sup>th</sup> – 14 <sup>th</sup> century? Smooth, slightly soft dark grey fabric with buff surfaces. Few visible inclusions apart from sparse quartz and mica flakes. Underfired green glaze. 2 sherds, 10g.
<b>F6: Orange Ware</b> . Sparse to moderate quartz up to 2mm, rare rounded red iron ore up to 3mm. splashes of clear orange glaze. 15 <sup>th</sup> – 16 <sup>th</sup> century. 10 sherds, 102g.
<b>MP: Midland Purple ware</b> : 15 <sup>th</sup> – mid 17 <sup>th</sup> century. Hard-purplish grey ware, purple to black glaze (McCarthy and Brooks 1988, 427). 1 sherd, 6g.
<b>CIST: Cistercian Ware</b> : c. AD1470-1550 ( <i>ibid.</i> ). Hard, smooth fabric, usually brick-red, but can be paler or browner. Few visible inclusions, except for occasional quartz grains. Range of vessel forms somewhat specialised, and usually very thin-walled (c. 2mm). Rare white slip decoration. 2 sherds, 19g.
<b>TGW: Anglo-Dutch Tin-glazed Earthenware 17<sup>th</sup> – early 18<sup>th</sup> century</b> (Orton 1988). Fine white earthenware, occasionally pinkish or yellowish core. Thick white tin glaze, with painted cobalt blue or polychrome decoration, . Range of table and display wares such as mugs, plates, dishes, bowls and vases. 1 sherd, 14g.
<b>GRE: Glazed Red Earthenware</b> , 16 <sup>th</sup> – 19 <sup>th</sup> century (Brears 1969). Fine sandy earthenware, usually with a brown or green glaze, occurring in a range of utilitarian forms. Such 'country pottery' was first made in the 16 <sup>th</sup> century, and in some areas continued in use until the 19 <sup>th</sup> century. 2 sherds, 29g.
<b>SMW: Staffordshire Manganese Mottled Ware</b> . Late 17 <sup>th</sup> – 18 <sup>th</sup> century. Hard buff fabric with distinctive purplish-brown glaze. Usually fine drinking pottery, but chamber pots and other more utilitarian vessels also known. 3 sherds, 234g.

Table 1- Finds 1

6.2. The pottery occurrence by number and weight of sherds per context by fabric type is shown in Table 2. Each date should be regarded as a terminus post quem. In the case of the Medieval wares, the assemblage is generally in good condition, with little sign of abrasion, although each sherd originated from a different individual vessel, suggesting very strongly that the 13<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> century material is all the product of

secondary deposition. This is further reinforced by the mean sherd weights for each fabric, which appear on the low side for pottery of this type.

- 6.3. The range of Medieval fabrics is typical of sites in the region, although the paucity of previous work in Bridgnorth means that it is, in most cases, difficult to ascribe an exact province and date to most of the pottery, the Malvernian Ware aside. The other types all have parallels. The Reduced Sandy Coarsewares and the glazed wares, particularly the iron-poor White Wares are very similar to pottery which occurred at Wolverhampton and Shrewsbury (RATKAI 2010, 33; BRYANT 2002), as well as many other centres in the wider region, such as, in the case of the Reduced Wares, Hen Domen (BARKER 1970, 23).
- 6.4. The range of pottery types suggest that there may have been activity at the site throughout the medieval period, although wares dating to the post-Black Death period are scarce. All the lower deposits only produced medieval wares, and they all appear to be of 13th – 14th century date.
- 6.5. The range of earlier medieval vessel types is typical of the period, consisting entirely of unglazed jars and glazed jugs. The sherd of Malvernian Ware from context (27) has both applied and lightly incised decoration and may be from a tripod pitcher. The late-and post medieval pottery is mainly utilitarian, although the sherd of TGW is from a good-quality plate with blue-painted decoration, which although typical of the tradition, would have been used at the table, and perhaps even for display.

Cntxt	F1		F2		F3		F4		F5		F6		MP		CIST		GRE		TGW		SMW		Date
	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	
U/S	4	100	1	13	1	5	1	14	1	6	1	15			1	5	1	11					U/S
2 (eval)																	1	18			1	79	L17thC
5 (eval)					1	5	2	69															13thC
6 (eval)	2	16	1	7			1	5			1	2											13thC
7 (eval)											2	24											13thC
8 (eval)	1	3									1	2											13thC
25	4	35	1	8			2	39	1	4	2	46	1	6	1	14			1	14	2	155	L17thC
26	4	32									1	6											13thC
27	5	73	1	6							2	7											13thC
Total	20	259	4	34	2	10	6	127	2	10	10	102	1	6	2	19	2	29	1	14	3	234	

Table 2 - Pottery occurrence by number and weight (in g) of sherds per context by fabric type



## 6.6.ANIMAL BONE

6.6.1. Nine fragments of animal bone were recovered from the watching brief (TABLE 3). None was recovered during the evaluation.

Context	ID (Species/element)*	Notes
25	Young s/g phalange	None
25	s/g tibia	Butchery marks on proximal and distal ends.
25	u. longbone	Fragment of shaft, size suggests pig or s/g
26	s/g tibia	Distal end broken off
26	u. longbone	Fragment of shaft, size suggests cattle
26	s/g tarsal	Distal end broken off
26	u. longbone	Fragment of shaft, size suggests cattle
27	u. ?longbone	Fragment of shaft, size suggests domestic animal
27	u. longbone	Fragment of shaft, size suggests young domestic animal

\*s/g = sheep/goat (Canid), u=unidentified

Table 3- Animal bone

6.6.2. The assemblage comprised generally of meat bearing longbones from domesticated animals. One item (tibia from (25)) showed evidence of butchery. The bones are moderately well preserved though some have a slightly spongy appearance which may be the result of cooking. This is unsurprising given that the deposits also contained domestic pottery wares and suggests that the bones also formed part of the domestic refuse discarded over the rear boundaries of the plots fronting the High Street.

6.6.3. The associated pottery dates the bones from contexts (26) and (27) to the 13<sup>th</sup> century. The bones from (25) date to the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

## OTHER ARTEFACTS

6.6.4. One fragment of clay tobacco pipe stem was recovered from (25). The bore is narrow (1.5mm) and offcentre, suggesting a late 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> century date.

6.6.5. A very corroded cast iron wedge shaped object weighing 780g was recovered from (25), measuring 90mm x 40mm x 55mm. It may be a part of a hammer or axe head.

6.6.6. No environmental samples were taken.

## 7. Discussion

- 7.1.1. The watching brief and trench revealed two main phases. The earliest phase consisted of two layers of hillwash, each between 0.20 and 0.50m thick, that spread evenly across the eastern (lower) third of the site. These layers contained relatively small fragments of non-abraded pottery from many different vessels, all dating to the 13<sup>th</sup> century. There was also a small amount of animal bone, mainly longbones or longbone fragments from domesticated species. These deposits indicate that domestic refuse was being discarded at the top of the slope, probably over the rear boundaries of the plot fronting onto High Street (now 63A High Street), and moving down the slope within the hillwash.
- 7.1.2. There is no evidence for activity/refuse disposal on the site from the Late Medieval period to the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The inferences are that no refuse was being produced at the High Street plot, or the refuse was being disposed elsewhere. Further research may shed light on this.
- 7.1.3. Overlying the lower hillwash layers is a brown silt containing pottery from the late 17<sup>th</sup> century. A ditch had been cut through this layer which was filled with a similar soft brown silt and is probably of a similar date. The ditch is too small to be considered defensive and may be a water management feature associated with the construction of St. Leonard's Steps to stop water flowing off the slope onto the path.
- 7.1.4. There was no evidence for a Medieval defensive ditch within the site. The 13<sup>th</sup> century layers were not contained within a feature and were not noticeably thicker in the proposed area of the ditch. In addition, the topography of the area would make the excavation of a ditch almost impossible, being as it is on the steep slope down towards the river. It is more likely that the town boundary was at the top of the slope.
- 7.1.5. The archaeological deposits were not wholly removed by the groundworks and remain in the slope immediately to the west of the development and also below the east side of the development, approximately 4m in from the eastern site boundary.

## 8. Archive

8.1. The paper archive consists of:

- ◆ 1 x Drawing Register
- ◆ 3 x Drawing Film
- ◆ 1 x Photographic Register
- ◆ X x Black and white photographs and negatives
- ◆ 1 x Context Register
- ◆ 9 x Context sheets

8.2. The finds archive consists of:

- ◆ 1 x box artefacts as described in Section 6 (all materials).

8.3. The archive is to be deposited with the Shropshire Museum Service.



# SOURCES CONSULTED



## **BIBLIOGRAPHIC**

- BARKER, P, 1970 *The Medieval Pottery of Shropshire from the Conquest to 1400* Shropshire Archaeological Society
- BREARS, P C D 1969 *The English country pottery: its history and techniques*. Newton Abbot: David & Charles
- BRYANT, V, 2002 The pottery from the Queen Anne House site, in N Baker (ed), *Shrewsbury Abbey. Studies in the archaeology and history of an urban abbey*, Shropshire Archaeological and Historical Society Monograph Series **2**, p87-111
- L - P : Archaeology 2012 *Archaeological Evaluation Report*. 63A High Street, Bridgnorth. Unpublished archive report.
- L - P : Archaeology 2012 *Specification for Archaeological Works*. 63A High Street, Bridgnorth. Unpublished archive report.
- MCCARTHY, MR AND BROOKS, CM, 1988 *Medieval Pottery in Britain AD900-1600* Leicester University Press
- ORTON, C, 1988 *Post-Roman Pottery in P Hinton (ed.) Excavations in Southwark 1973-76 and Lambeth 973-79*. MoLAS and DGLA Joint Publication 3, 295-364
- RATKAI, S, 2010 *The Pottery* in C Hewitson, E Ramsey, M Shaw, M Hislop and R Cuttler, *The Great Hall Wolverhampton: Elizabethan Mansion to Victorian Workshop*. *Archaeological Investigations at Old Hall Street, Wolverhampton, 2000 – 2007* British Archaeological Reports British Series 517, 33-59
- VINCE, AG, UNPUB. *The Medieval Ceramic Industry of the Severn Valley* Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Southampton, 1984

## **STATUTORY AND GUIDANCE**

STANDARD AND GUIDANCE FOR AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF Institute for Archaeologists 2008



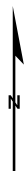
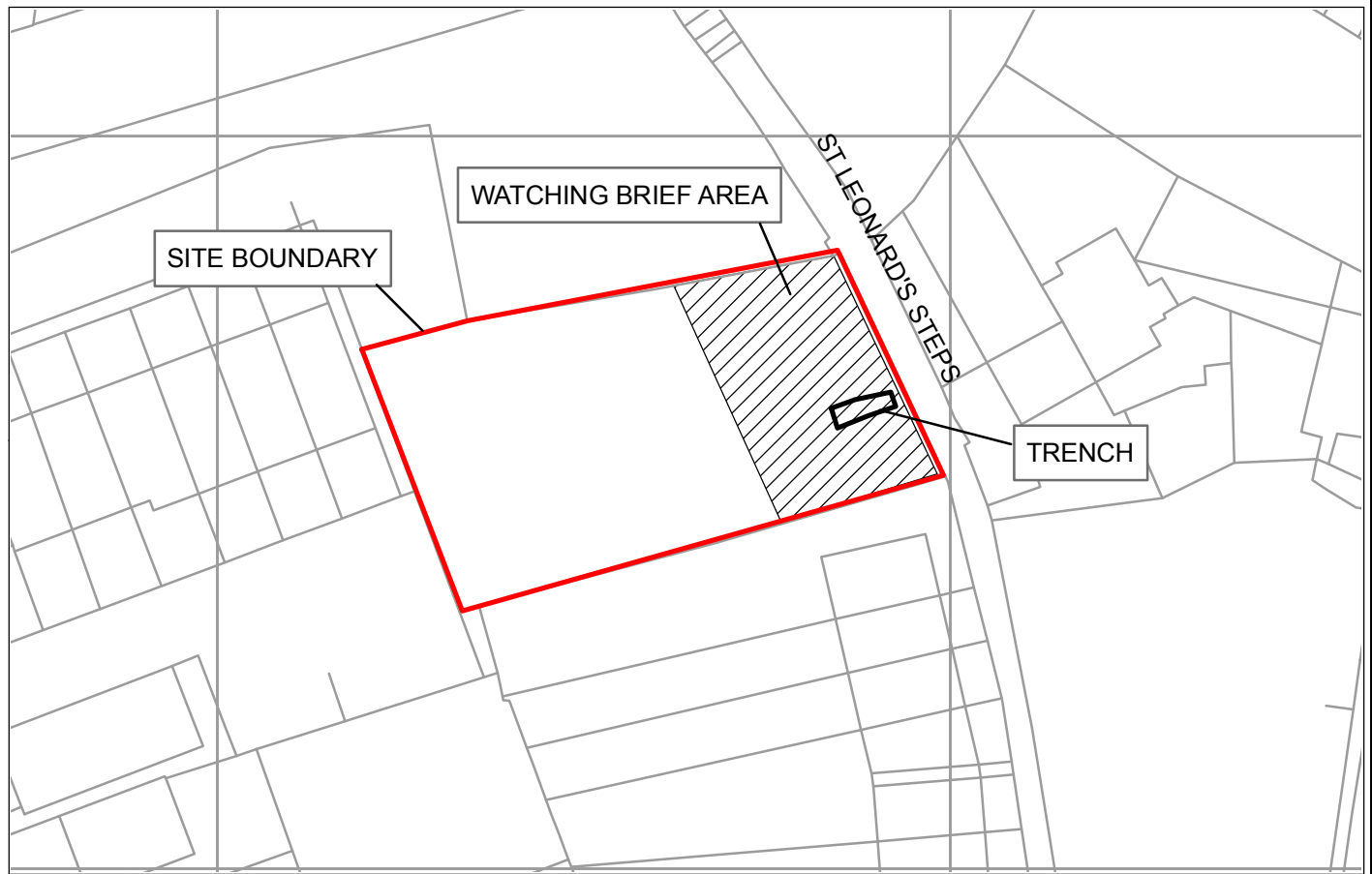
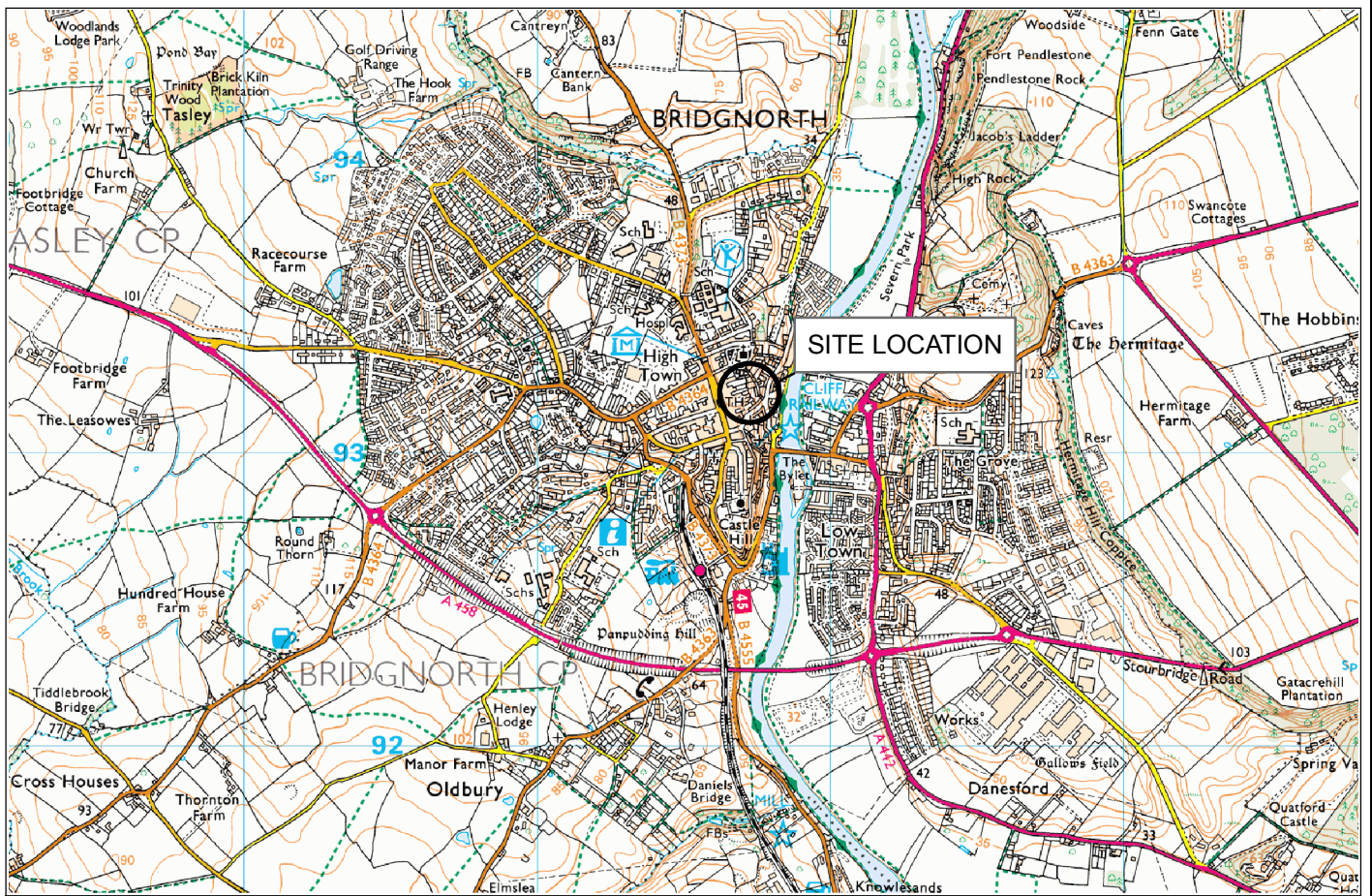


---

# FIGURES



FIGURE I // Site location



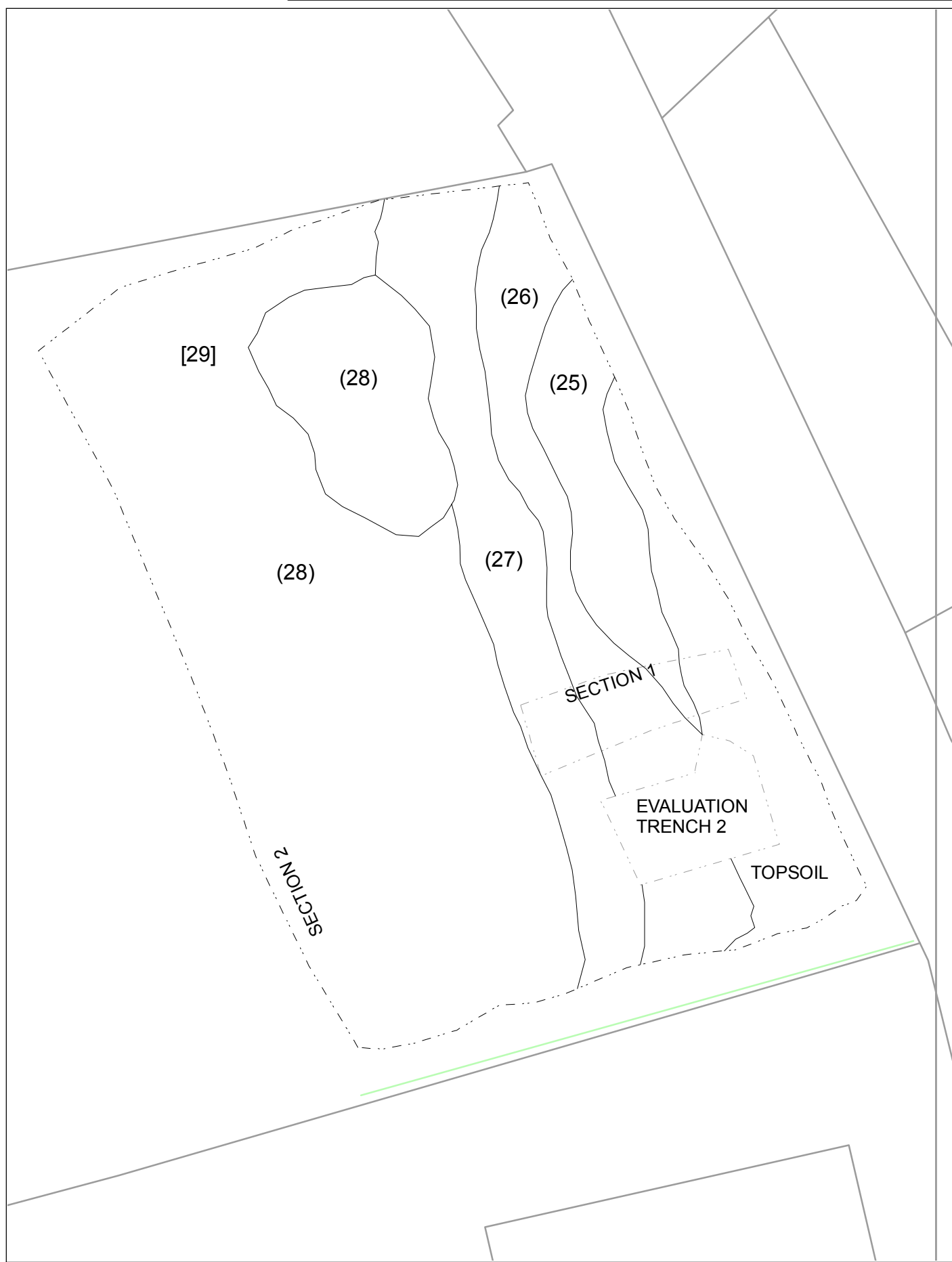
PROJECT // I387M - High Street, Bridgnorth

DESCRIPTION // Site location

Reproduced by permission of the controller of HMSO, Licence 10053067

DOC REF: LPI387M-WBR-v1 L-P:ARCHAEOLOGY

FIGURE 2 // Site plan



0 5m

1:100 @ A4

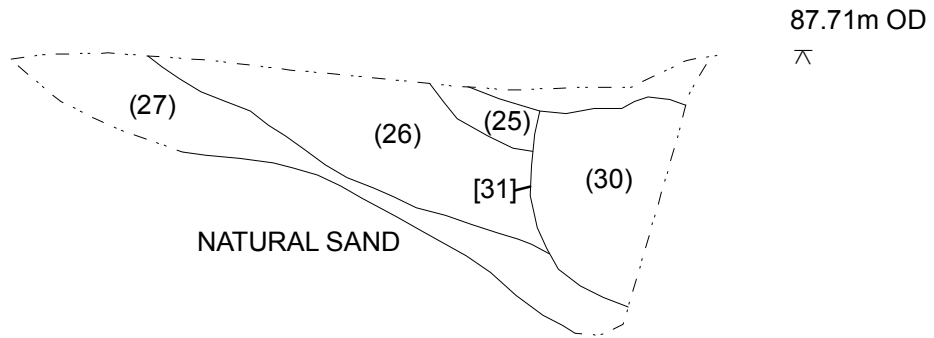
PROJECT // 1387M - High Street, Bridgnorth

DESCRIPTION // Site plan

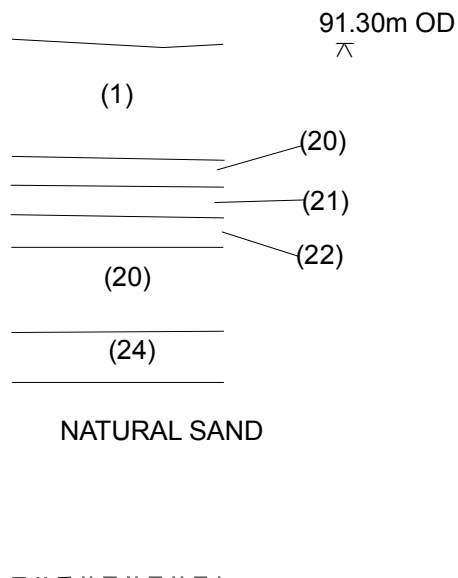
DOC REF: LPI387M-WBR-v1

L-P:ARCHÆOLOGY

SECTION 1  
WATCHING BRIEF INVESTIGATION TRENCH  
SOUTH FACING



SECTION 2  
REPRESENTATIVE SECTION  
EAST FACING



1:50 @ A4



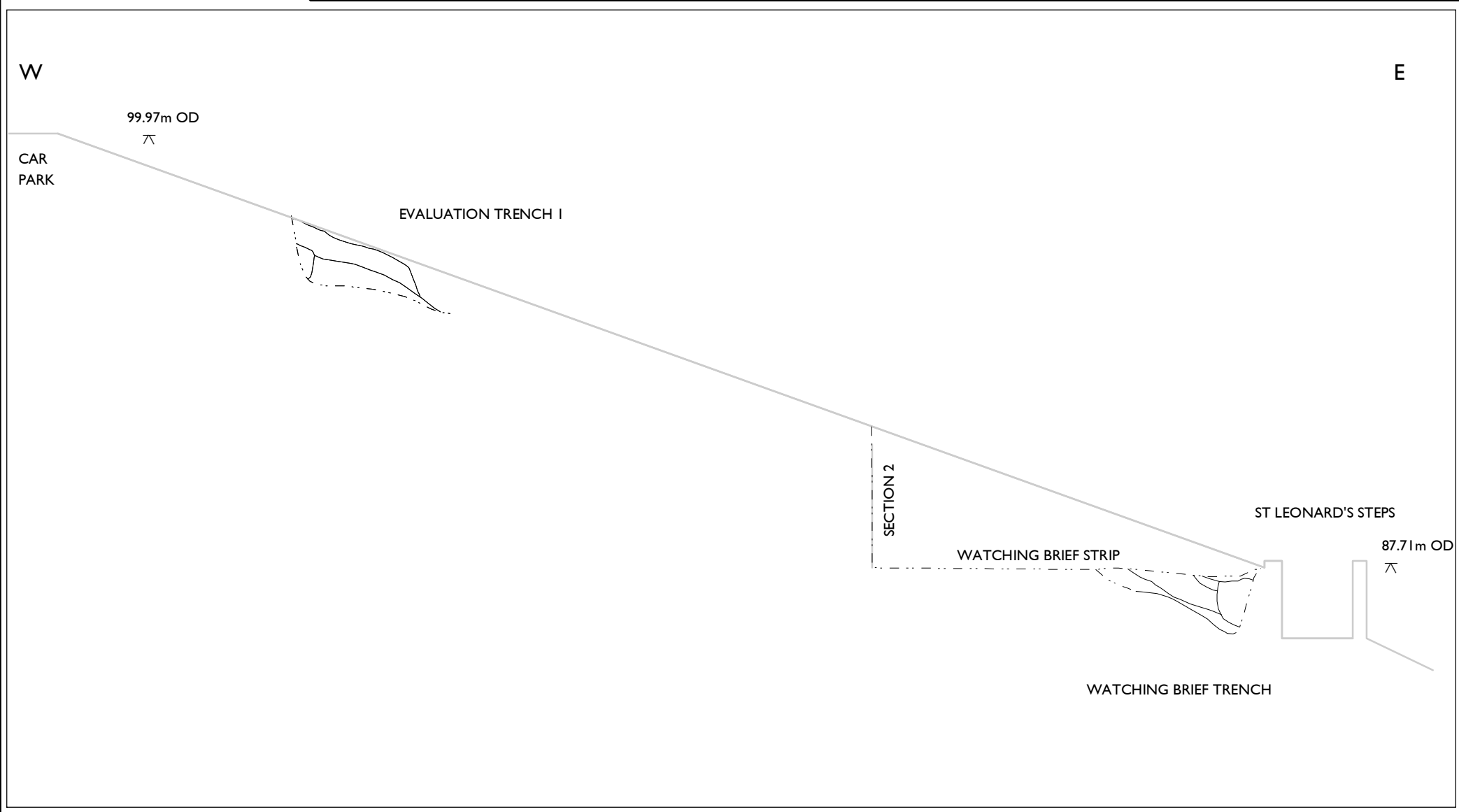
PROJECT // 1387M - High Street, Bridgnorth

DESCRIPTION // Sections

DOC REF: LPI 1387M-WBR-v1

L-P:ARCHAEOLOGY

FIGURE 4 // Site profile



0 10m

1:50 @ A4



PROJECT // 1387M - High St. Bridgnorth

DESCRIPTION // Site profile

DOC REF: LPI387M-WBR-v1

L-P:ARCHAEOLOGY

---

# OASIS FORM

## APPENDIX I

# OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

[List of Projects](#) | [Manage Projects](#) | [Search Projects](#) | [New project](#) | [Change your details](#) | [HER coverage](#) | [Change country](#) | [Log out](#)

## Printable version

**OASIS ID: Iparchae1-135266**

### Project details

Project name	63A High St, Bridgnorth
Short description of the project	Watching brief
Project dates	Start: 17-09-2012 End: 17-09-2012
Previous/future work	Yes / No
Any associated project reference codes	X09/00562/FUL - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 13 - Waste ground
Monument type	DITCH Post Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Medieval
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Planning condition

### Project location

Country	England
Site location	SHROPSHIRE BRIDGNORTH BRIDGNORTH 63A High Street
Postcode	WV16 4DX
Study area	730.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	SJ 717 932 53 -2 53 26 04 N 002 25 33 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 87.71m Max: 99.97m

### Project creators

Name of Organisation	L - P : Archaeology
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	L - P : Archaeology



Project director/manager	Matthew Williams
Project supervisor	Matthew Williams
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Hightown Homes

### Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Shropshire Museum Service
Physical Contents	"Animal Bones", "Ceramics"
Digital Archive Exists?	No
Paper Archive recipient	Shropshire Museum Service
Paper Contents	"Animal Bones", "Ceramics", "Stratigraphic"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Plan", "Report", "Section"

### Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Watching Brief Report for land to rear of 63A High ST, Bridgnorth
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Williams, M.
Other bibliographic details	report number LP1384M-WBR-v1.0
Date	2012
Issuer or publisher	L - P : Archaeology
Place of issue or publication	London
Description	A4 bound report with plastic cover
Entered by	Matthew Williams (m.williams@lparchaeology.com)
Entered on	8 October 2012

# OASIS:

Please e-mail [English Heritage](#) for OASIS help and advice

© ADS 1996-2012 Created by [Jo Gilham and Jen Mitcham](#), email Last modified Wednesday 9 May 2012

Cite only: <http://www.oasis.ac.uk/form/print.cfm> for this page



---

# SPECIFICATION

## APPENDIX 2



Specification for Archaeological Works

# 63A HIGH STREET BRIDGNORTH

---

Client: Hightown Homes Ltd

---

Local Authority: Shropshire Council

---

NGR: 371750, 293220

---

Planning App: X09/00562/FUL

---

Author(s): M. Williams

---

Doc Ref: LPI387M-SAW-v1.0

---

Site Code: STL12

---

Date: August 12

---

## L-P: ARCHAEOLOGY

A trading name of L - P : Heritage LLP.

The Truman Brewery | 91 Brick Lane | London, E1 6QL | +44 [0]20 7 770 6045 | +44 [0]20 7 691 7245

[www.lparchaeology.com](http://www.lparchaeology.com)

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## *Table of Figures*

1. Introduction
2. Site Background
3. Aims
4. Methodology
5. Report
6. Archive
7. Access and Safety
8. Staffing and Timetable

## *Sources Consulted*

## *Figures*

# TABLE OF FIGURES

Figure 1 - Site location

Figure 2 - Mitigation proposals

# 1. Introduction

- 1.1. This document has been prepared by Matthew Williams of L - P : Archaeology on behalf of Hightown Homes Ltd.
- 1.2. This document has been prepared in response to a planning condition attached to the planning consent granted for the site by Shropshire Council.
- 1.3. The document sets out the methodology for an archaeological watching brief and excavation on land at the rear of 63A High Street, Bridgnorth, WV16 4DX. The NGR is 371750, 293220.
- 1.4. This document sets out the detailed method to be employed for the fieldwork, reporting and archiving at the above site.

## **2. Site Background**

### **2.1.PLANNING**

2.1.1. Planning consent has been granted for two split level semi-detached dwellings with vehicular access, two parking spaces and new pedestrian access (FIGURE 2). The application reference is X09/00562/FUL.

2.1.2. Condition 8 set out the requirement for a programme of archaeological works. An archaeological evaluation was carried out to assess the archaeological potential of the site. The results of the evaluation forms the basis for the mitigation strategy described in this report.

2.1.3. The site is within an Area of Archaeological Importance as defined by Shropshire Council.

### **2.2.GEOLOGY**

2.2.1. The British Geological Survey GeoIndex for the site records the bedrock deposits as Bridgnorth sandstone ([HTTP://WWW.BGS.AC.UK/GEOINDEX](http://www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex)).

### **2.3.TOPOGRAPHY**

2.3.1. The site is located on the west side of the River Severn to the north of the historic core of Bridgnorth (FIGURE 1).

2.3.2. The site is bounded by open land to the north, St. Leonard's Steps to the east, dwellings and gardens to the south and buildings to the rear of High Street to the west (FIGURE 1).

2.3.3. The site slopes down from west to east. The area of impact slopes from 92.00m OD in the centre of the site to 86.40m OD in the east.

### **2.4.ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY**

2.4.1. The projected line of the historic town defences (PRN 00374) crosses the eastern part of the site (FIGURE 1). The defenses were originally built of timber between 1216 and 1223 and were gradually replaced with stone over the following two centuries ([WWW.HERITAGEGATEWAY.ORG.UK](http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk)).



2.4.2. The western part of the site falls within the rear of a medieval tenement plot that fronts onto High Street (PRN 05640) and the rest of the site falls within a tenement plot that fronts Friar's Street to the east (PRN 05650). There is no evidence for medieval structures within these plots (WWW.HERITAGEGATEWAY.ORG.UK).

2.4.3. An archaeological evaluation carried out by L - P : Archaeology on 13<sup>th</sup> August 2012 identified Medieval deposits in the east end of the site and the possible west edge of the town ditch. An undated pit was recorded at the west end of the site.

## **2.5.SITE CONDITIONS**

2.5.1. The site has been cleared of trees and shrubs and the topsoil is currently being removed.

### 3. Aims

3.1. The aims of the watching brief and excavation are:

- ◆ To investigate the Medieval deposits within the area of impact.
- ◆ To identify the western edge of the defensive ditch and investigate the profile and fills of the ditch.
- ◆ To investigate the possibility of a rampart on the interior (western) side of the ditch.

1

2

## 4. Methodology

### 4.1. SITEWORKS

- 4.1.1. A watching brief will be carried out in the area of impact of the houses (FIGURE 2). It will commence after the removal of the topsoil and will focus on the removal of the Medieval layers identified during the evaluation.
- 4.1.2. The watching brief will continue until the edge of the full length of the ditch has been identified within the site area. At this point the area of the ditch will be given over to the archaeological contractor to excavate and record the ditch (FIGURE 2).
- 4.1.3. The ditch will be recorded in plan and a full section will be excavated to record the fills and profile.
- 4.1.4. Archaeologically sensitive areas will be excavated using appropriately sized plant. This will normally be a 360 degree tracked excavator with a toothless bucket.
- 4.1.5. Examination and cleaning of all archaeological deposits will be by hand using appropriate hand tools. Any archaeological deposits will be examined and recorded both in plan and section. Features will be investigated, where possible, as follows:
- ◆ 50% of each intrusive feature (pits, postholes).
  - ◆ 25% of the exposed surface area and all terminals and intersections of linear features.
  - ◆ 50% structural features (beamslots, ring ditches).
  - ◆ 50-100% domestic/industrial working features (hearths, ovens) - unless large and structural, in which case see above.
- 4.1.6. Should significant archaeological deposits be encountered that are worthy of preservation *in situ*, excavation will cease. A site meeting between the advisor to the Local Planning Authority and L – P : Archaeology will be held to assess the significance of the deposits and to decide on a strategy for sampling them to provide sufficient data for useful assessment.

4.1.7. All works will be carried out in accordance with the Code of Approved Practice as set out by the Institute for Archaeologists (IFA 2008).

## 4.2. FINDS

4.2.1. All identified finds, artefacts, industrial and faunal remains will be collected and retained. Certain classes of building material can sometimes be discarded after recording if an appropriate sample is retained. No finds will, however, be discarded without the prior approval of the archaeological advisor to the local authority.

4.2.2. Excavated material will be examined in order to retrieve information to assist in the analysis of the spatial distribution of artefacts.

4.2.3. The finds assemblage will be retained for deposition with the site archive in the Shropshire Museum Service.

4.2.4. Marking of finds will follow the requirements of the Shropshire Museum Service. Bulk finds will be bagged in clear self-sealing plastic bags marked with the same details.

4.2.5. All finds which constitute Treasure under the 1996 Treasure Act for England and Wales (amended 2003) will be reported to the coroner by the finder within 14 days of discovery.

4.2.6. Any human remains will be left *in situ*, covered and protected. If removal is essential it can only take place under appropriate government regulations. Furthermore, if removal is essential, such removal will be in accordance with the Excavation and Post Excavation Treatment of Cremated and Inhumed Human Remains (MCKINLEY & ROBERTS 1993) and the Guidelines for the Standards for Recording Human Remains (BRICKLEY & MCKINLEY 2004) as set out by the IfA.

4.2.7. Should finds that require immediate conservation be encountered, they will be exposed, lifted, cleaned, conserved, marked, bagged and boxed in accordance with the guidelines set out in the United Kingdom Institute for Conservation “Conservation Guideline No. 2” (UKIC 1983). Appropriate guidance set out in the Museums and Galleries Commissions “Standards in the Museum Care of

Archaeological Collections (MGC 1992)” and the current IFA guidelines (IFA 2001A) will also be followed. Packaging of all organic finds and metalwork will follow the UKIC/Rescue guidelines, ‘First Aid for Finds’ (LEIGH ET AL 1993). Any necessary conservation and treatment of metalwork will be arranged in conjunction with specialist conservators.

#### **4.3.ENVIRONMENTAL SAMPLING**

4.3.1. Environmental sampling during the evaluation will target a representative range of contexts from each phase and examine the survival of material and key archaeological contexts. Should significant environmental deposits be encountered, they will be taken and processed in line with English Heritage guidelines (ENGLISH HERITAGE 2002) and our internal policy (ALLEN 2008). Provision will be made for the requirement of the following samples:

- ◆ Bulk samples of 30-60 litres, or 100% of the context, for process using a floatation tank for the recovery of charred plant remains from the 'flot' and artefacts such as small bones, mineralised plant remains, charcoal and hammer scale from the residues.
- ◆ Samples of 1-5 litres from waterlogged deposits for analysis of waterlogged plant remains. These may be taken as sub-samples from bulk samples.
- ◆ Samples of 5-15 litres from waterlogged deposits for analysis of insect remains and other macroscopic artefacts. These may be taken as sub-samples from bulk samples.
- ◆ Bulk samples of 100 litres for coarse sieving on site for specific artefacts such as animal bone.
- ◆ Samples of 2 litres for mollusc analysis, with associated continuous column samples.
- ◆ Monolith samples which may be sub-sampled for diatom, spore or pollen analysis.
- ◆ Monolith samples for soil micromorphology.

4.3.2. All environmental samples will be assessed for potential through summary analysis by an environmental specialist.

4.3.3. Bulk samples will be processed as soon as possible or discarded with the agreement of the local authority archaeological advisor. Residues will be treated as part of the finds assemblage.

#### **4.4.SCIENTIFIC DATING**

4.4.1. Where appropriate, samples for scientific dating will be taken. Provision will be made for:

- ◆ Dendrochronological analysis from timbers.
- ◆ C14 dating from organic material, which may be taken as sub-samples from bulk or monolith samples.
- ◆ Archaeomagnetic dating from hearths or other suitable deposits.

#### **4.5.RECORDING SYSTEM**

4.5.1. The site code 'STL12' has been allocated by L - P : Archaeology. The site code will be used to label all sheets, plans and other drawings; all context and recording sheets; all photographs (but not negatives); all other elements of the documentary archive.

4.5.2. The recording system used will follow the Museum of London Archaeological Site Manual (SPENCE 1994). Context sheets will include all relevant stratigraphic relationships and for complex stratigraphy a separate matrix diagram will be employed. This matrix will be fully checked during the course of the evaluation. If there is any doubt over recording techniques, the Museum of London Archaeological Site Manual will be used as a guide (SPENCE 1994).

4.5.3. A location plan (at an appropriate scale, usually OS 1:25,000) will be prepared showing the site in relation to the surrounding locality.

4.5.4. This will be supplemented by a detailed plan (at an appropriate scale, usually 1:200 or 1:100), which will show the location of the areas investigated.

4.5.5. Burials will be drawn at 1:10. Other detailed plans will be drawn at an

appropriate scale, usually 1:50 or 1:20.

- 4.5.6. The extent of any visible archaeological deposits will be recorded in plan. Long sections showing layers and any cut features will be drawn at 1:50. Short sections will be drawn at 1:20.
- 4.5.7. Sections containing significant deposits, including half sections, will be drawn at an appropriate scale, usually 1:10 or 1:20. All sections will be related to the Ordnance Datum using spot heights and registers of sections and plans will be kept.
- 4.5.8. Upon completion of each significant feature at least one sample section will be drawn, including a profile of the top of natural deposits (extrapolated from cut features etc. if it has not been fully excavated). The stratigraphy will be recorded, even if no archaeological deposits have been identified.
- 4.5.9. An adequate photographic record will be made of any significant archaeological remains, including photographs of sections. This will include black and white prints and digital images, illustrating in both detail and general context the principal features. The photographic record will also include working shots to illustrate the general nature of the archaeological works. A register of all photographs taken will be kept on standardised forms.
- 4.5.10. A Harris Matrix stratification diagram will be compiled and fully checked during the course of the excavation.

#### **4.6.COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

- 4.6.1. On site staff will be allowed to answer questions from members of the public regarding the archaeology of the area and potential archaeology of the site as described in publicly available records.
- 4.6.2. Detailed inquiries from members of the public regarding the results of the works, or sensitive information, will be directed to the project manager.
- 4.6.3. Given the nature and scale of the works information boards, site tours and other community involvement activities are not considered appropriate.

## 5. Report

5.1.A formal report on the results of the archaeological monitoring will be prepared on completion of the fieldwork. The report will conform to Annex 2 of the Institute of Field Archaeologists Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief (IFA 2001B) and the GLAAS Archaeological Guidance Papers: Standards for Archaeological Work (GLAAS 2009) will include:

- ◆ A non-technical summary (abstract)
- ◆ Introductory statements and site background
- ◆ The aims and methods adopted in the course of the monitoring.
- ◆ A description of the nature, extent, date, condition and significance of all archaeological deposits recorded during groundworks, with specialist opinions and parallels from other sites if required.
- ◆ Illustrative material including maps, plans, sections, drawings and photographs as necessary.
- ◆ A catalogue of finds, including any specialist reports.
- ◆ A discussion and summary of the results, including a statement of significance.
- ◆ An index of the contents and location of the archive.
- ◆ Sources consulted.
- ◆ A copy of the OASIS record sheet.

5.2. Following approval, two bound copies of the report will be sent to the client. Subject to any contractual requirements on confidentiality, copies of the report will be submitted to the appropriate Sites and Monuments Record or Historic Environment Record within six months of completion of the report.

5.3. Subject to any contractual requirements on confidentiality, copies of the report will be submitted to the Shropshire Historic Environment Record within six months of completion of the report.



5.4.If requested, a copy of any relevant spatial data, including feature distribution and phase plans where appropriate and registered to the National Grid, will also be sent to the Shropshire HER in ESRI Shapefile format.

5.5.L -P : Archaeology shall retain full copyright of any report under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved; excepting that it hereby provides an exclusive licence to the client in all matters directly relating to the project as described in this document. Any document produced to meet planning requirements can be copied for planning purposes by the Local Planning Authority. Any information deposited in the Sites and Monuments Record or Historic Environment Record can be freely copied without reference to the originator for research or planning purposes.

## 6. Archive

- 6.1. The site code will be used to mark all plans, drawings, context and recording sheets, photographs and other site material during excavation.
- 6.2. The site archive will be so organised as to be compatible with current requirements of the Shropshire Museum Service. Individual descriptions of all archaeological strata and features excavated or exposed will be entered onto *pro-forma* recording sheets. Relevant context, sample and photograph registers and environmental sample sheets will also be used.
- 6.3. On completion of finds analysis, the landowner will be asked to sign a Deed of Transfer transferring title of the finds to the Shropshire Museum Service.
- 6.4. The integrity of the site archive will be maintained. All finds and records will properly be curated (subject to the Deed of Transfer) by the Shropshire Museum Service and be available for public consultation. Appropriate guidance set out in the MGC “Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections” (MGC 1992), and the “Selection, Retention and Disposal of Archaeological Collections” (SMA 1993) will be followed in all circumstances.
- 6.5. The minimum acceptable standard for the archival report is defined in the “Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment. PPN 3: Archaeological Excavation.” (ENGLISH HERITAGE 2008). It will include all materials recovered (or the comprehensive record of such materials) and all written, drawn and photographic records relating directly to the investigations undertaken. It will be quantified, ordered, indexed and internally consistent. It will also contain a site matrix, a site summary and brief written observations on the artefactual and environmental data.
- 6.6. United Kingdom Institute for Conservation guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage (WALKER 1990) will be followed. With consent of the landowner, arrangements for the curation of the site archive will be agreed with the appropriate museum.
- 6.7. Pursuant to these agreements the archive will be presented to the appropriate museum within six months of the completion of the fieldwork (unless alternative

arrangements have been agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority or English Heritage). In addition, written confirmation from the client will be provided for the transfer of ownership.

6.8. The project will be registered and regularly updated as part of the OASIS project.

6.9. The Shropshire Museum Service shall be granted licence for the use of the archive for educational purposes, including academic research, as long as such use is non-profit making and conforms to the Copyright and Related Rights regulation 2003.

## 7. Access and Safety

- 7.1. Reasonable access to the site will be arranged for the Local Planning Authority and their archaeological advisor who may wish to make site inspections to ensure that the archaeological investigations are progressing satisfactorily.
- 7.2. The archaeological advisor should be given notice of at least one working week prior to the commencement date of site works.
- 7.3. Before any site work commences, a full Risk Assessment Document will be produced setting out the site specific health and safety policies that will be enforced in order to reduce to an absolute minimum any risks to health and safety.
- 7.4. All relevant health and safety regulations will be followed. Barriers, hoardings and warning notices will be installed as appropriate. Safety helmets and visibility jackets will be used by all personnel as necessary.
- 7.5. No personnel will work in deep unsupported excavations. The installation of temporary support work and other attendance will be provided as required.

## **8. Staffing and Timetable**

8.1.1. The project manager is Matthew Williams of L – P : Archaeology.

8.1.2. Matthew will be responsible for the overall coherency of the team and for the management of the archaeological evaluation. Additional field officers, when required on site, will be under his direction and will be responsible for particular tasks that he assigns to them.

8.1.3. The fieldwork is timetabled to commence on the 17<sup>th</sup> August.

# SOURCES CONSULTED

## STATUTORY AND GUIDANCE

- BRICKLEY M AND MCKINLEY J 2004. *Guidelines to the Standards for Recording Human Remains*. IFA Paper No. 7.
- ENGLISH HERITAGE 2002. *Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-excavation*. English Heritage.
- ENGLISH HERITAGE 2008. *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment. PPN 3: Archaeological Excavation*. English Heritage.
- ENGLISH HERITAGE 2009 (V1.1). *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment*, English Heritage.
- INSTITUTE FOR ARCHAEOLOGISTS 2008. *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials*. Institute of Field Archaeologists.
- INSTITUTE FOR ARCHAEOLOGISTS 2008. *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation*. Institute of Field Archaeologists.
- INSTITUTE FOR ARCHAEOLOGISTS 2008. *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief*. Institute of Field Archaeologists.
- INSTITUTE FOR ARCHAEOLOGISTS 2002. *Code of approved practice for the regulation of contractual arrangements in field archaeology*. Institute of Field Archaeologists.
- LEIGH D, WATKINSON D (ED.) AND NEAL V (ED.) 1993. *First Aid for Finds*. United Kingdom Institute for Conservation of Historic & Artistic Works, Archaeology Section
- MCKINLEY J & ROBERTS C, 1993. *Excavation and post-excavation treatment of cremated and inhumed human remains*. IFA Technical Paper No. 13.
- MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES COMMISSION 1992. *Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections*. Museums and Galleries Commission.
- SOCIETY OF MUSEUM ARCHAEOLOGISTS 1993. *Selection, Retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections: Guidelines for use in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* Society of Museum Archaeologists.
- SPENCE C. (ED.) 1994. *Archaeological Site Manual*, 3rd edition. Museum of London.
- WALKER K 1990. *Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long term storage*. United Kingdom Institute for Conservation.
- UNITED KINGDOM INSTITUTE FOR CONSERVATION 1983 *Packaging and Storage of Freshly Excavated Artifacts from Archaeological Sites*. Conservation Guidelines No. 2.

## ELECTRONIC

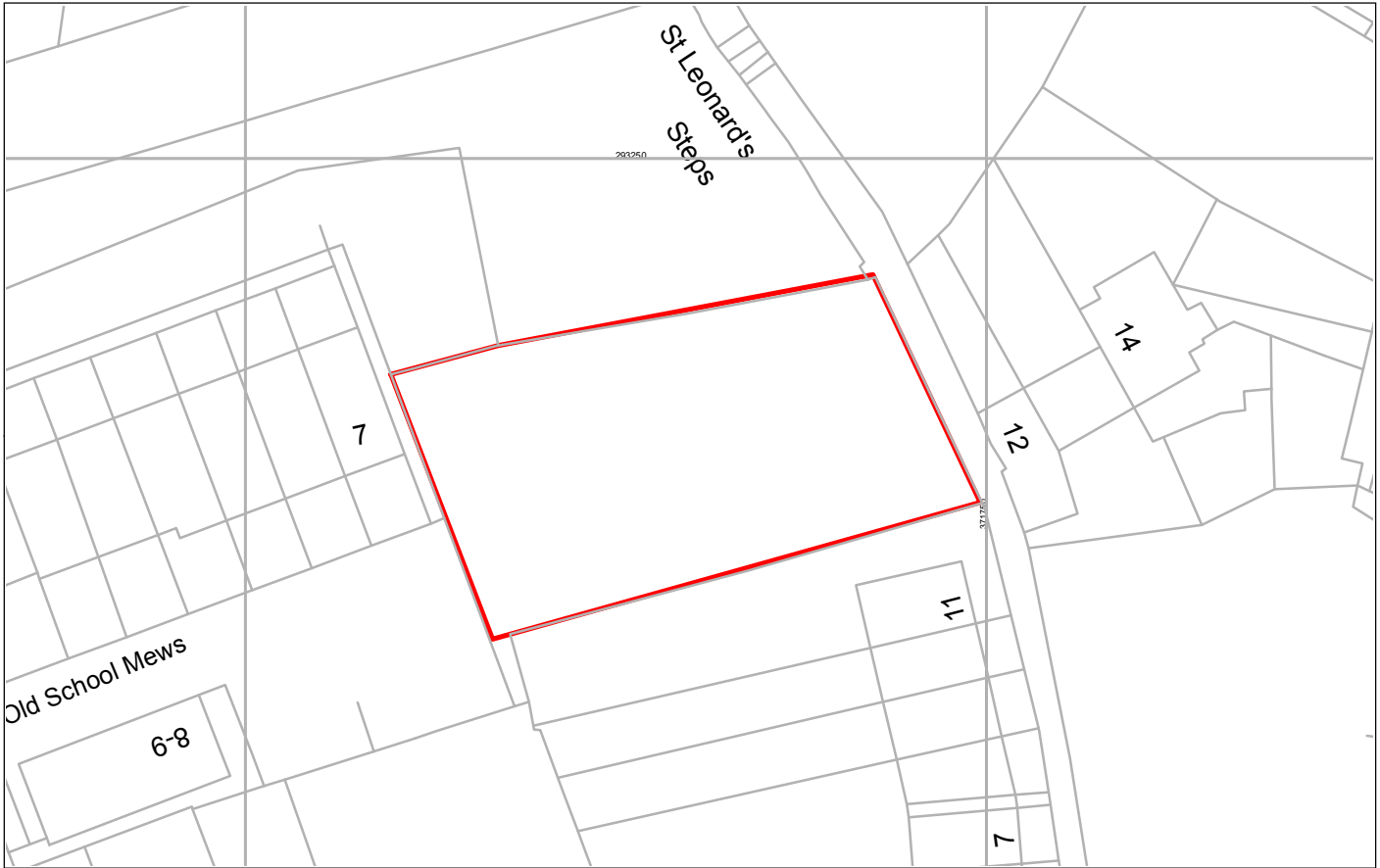
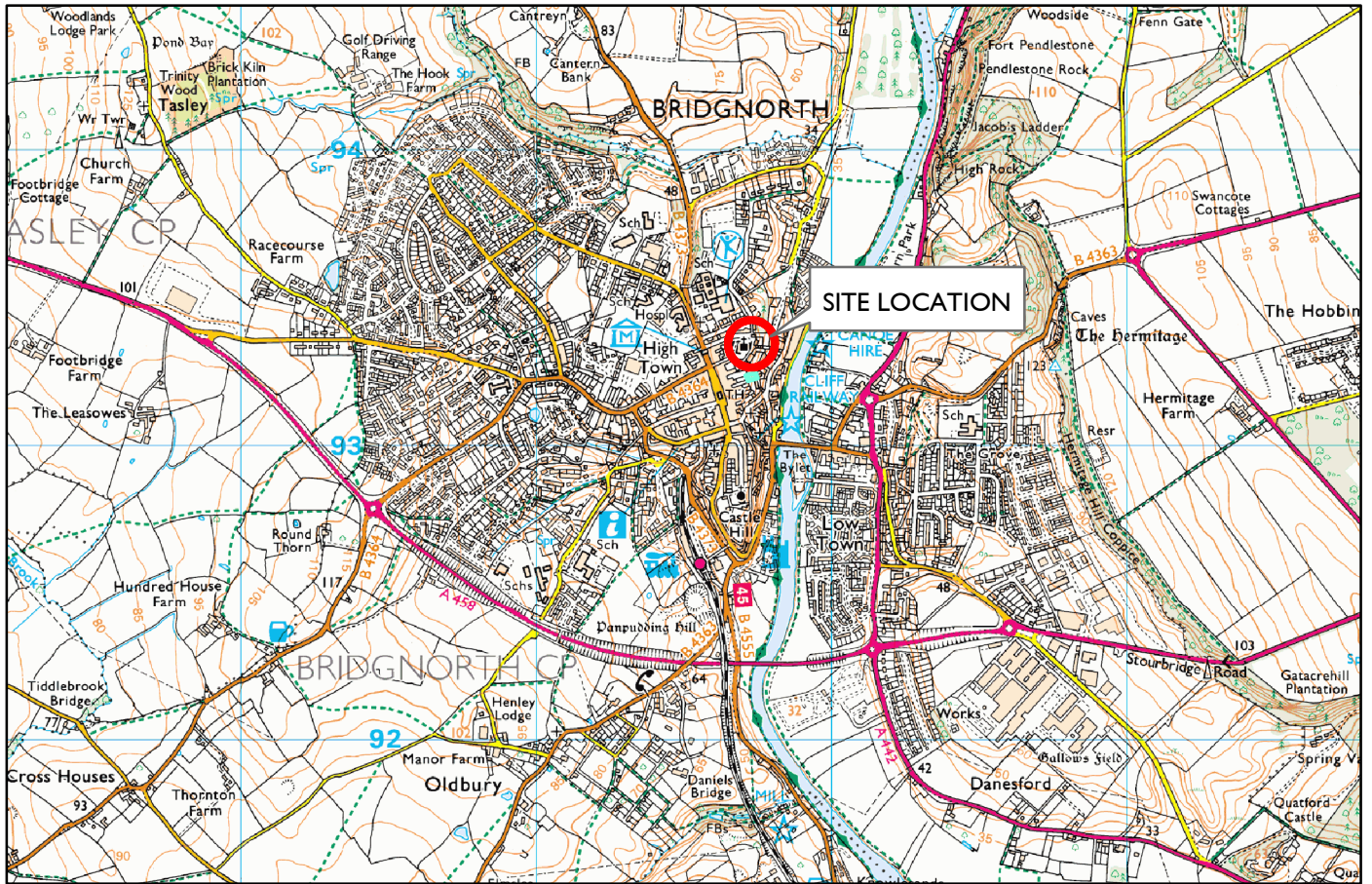
[www.heritagegateway.org.uk](http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk). Accessed 20/07/2012

---

# FIGURES



FIGURE I // Site location



TOP: SITE LOCATION 1:25000 @ a4

BOTTOM: SITE LOCATION DETAIL 1:500 @ A4



PROJECT // 1387M - 63A High St Bridgnorth

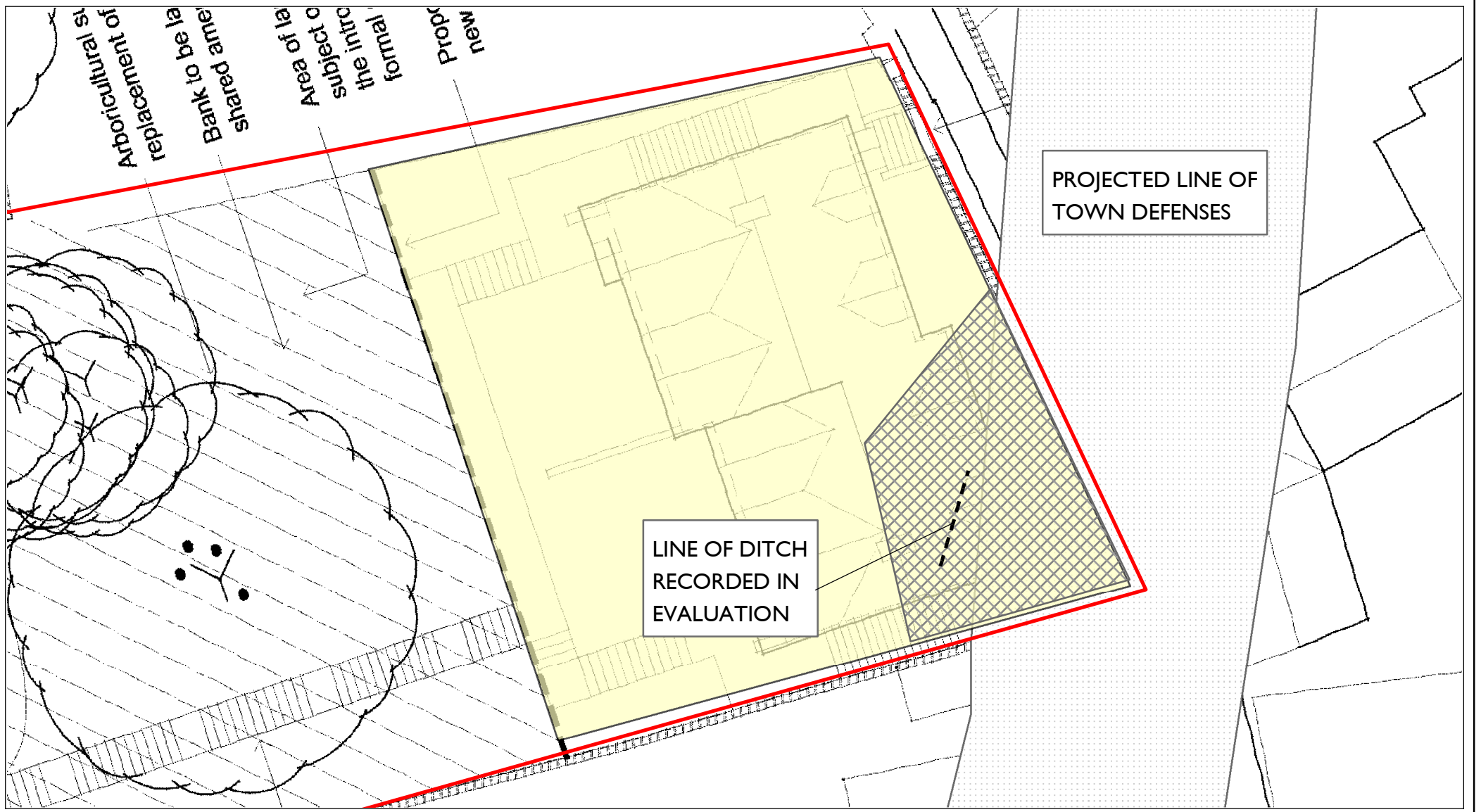
DESCRIPTION // Site location

Reproduced by permission of the controller of HMSO, Licence 10053067



DOC REF: LPI 387M-SAW-v1

L-P: ARCHAEOLOGY

FIGURE 2 // Mitigation



Legend:

-  general excavation area
-  watching brief area

Scale: 0 to 10m

PROJECT // 1387M - 63A High Street, Bridgnorth

DESCRIPTION // Mitigation areas

Proposals provided by Hightown Homes

DOC REF: LPI387M-SAW-v1

L-P:ARCHAEOLOGY