

The Leys, Welsh Road Priors Hardwick, Southam Warwickshire

Archaeological Watching Brief



for
Mr Glen Wilson

Site Code: WRP 15

CA Project: 5372
CA Report: 15221

April 2015



The Leys, Welsh Road
Priors Hardwick, Southam
Warwickshire

Archaeological Watching Brief

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SUMMARY

Project Name: The Leys, Welsh Road
Location: Priors Hardwick, Southam, Warwickshire
NGR: SP 4744 5608
Type: Watching Brief
Date: 20-22 April 2015
Planning Reference: 14/01546/FUL; APP/J3720/D/14/2229193
Location of Archive: To be deposited with Warwickshire Museum
Site Code: WRP 15

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during groundworks associated with the construction of extensions to an existing residential property.

No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during groundworks, and no artefactual material pre-dating the modern period was recovered.



1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In April 2015 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological watching brief for Mr Glen Wilson at The Leys, Welsh Road, Priors Hardwick, Southam, Warwickshire (centred on NGR: SP 4744 5608; Fig. 1).
- 1.2 The watching brief was undertaken to fulfil a condition attached to a planning consent granted on appeal by Stratford-on-Avon District Council for the construction of extensions to an existing residential property at the site (planning ref. 14/01546/FUL; APP/J3720/D/14/2229193; Condition 3).
- 1.3 The scope of the archaeological work has been set out in a *Brief for Archaeological Work* issued by Anna Stocks, Warwickshire County Council's Planning Archaeologist (WCC 2015), with a subsequent detailed *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) produced by CA (2015). This was guided in its composition by the *Brief* (WCC 2015) and was prepared in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (CIfA 2014), the English Heritage procedural documents *Management of Archaeological Projects 2* (EH1991) and *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE): Project Manager's Guide* (EH 2006).

The site

- 1.4 The village of Priors Hardwick is located c. 7.5km to the south-east of Southam town centre and the site is situated at the eastern edge of the village, off Welsh Road. The site is currently occupied by The Leys, a two-storey house with associated garage, timber outbuilding and garden. To the east, the house fronts on to Welsh Road, there are neighbouring properties to the north and south and to the rear the house overlooks an expanse of open pasture, which forms part of the Scheduled site of the medieval village of Priors Hardwick. Locally the ground is relatively flat and lies at c. 144m above Ordnance Datum (AOD); to the south of the village the ground climbs to c. 187m AOD near Berryhill Farm.
- 1.5 The solid geology of the site comprises Jurassic rocks of the Charmouth Mudstone Formation, with rocks of the Dyrham Formation forming the higher ground to the south of the village (BGS 2015).

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Reference to the Warwickshire Historic Environment Record (HER) shows that the proposed development area lies adjacent to the Scheduled site of the shrunken medieval village (smv) of Priors Hardwick (Scheduled Monument ref. 30046) and therefore had the potential to contain archaeological remains, particularly of medieval date.
- 2.2 The Scheduled Monument (multiple HER records encompassed by MWA8998) comprises three areas of earthworks, with the main area lying between Welsh Road and Church End and two smaller areas lying to the south of London End. The earthworks include a hollow way, enclosures, house platforms, tofts, crofts, a fishpond and ridge and furrow. The site of the manor house is thought to lie c. 50m to the south of the parish church of St Mary's, where the remains of a moat can still be seen (MWA6206).
- 2.3 Hardwick was one of the twenty-four *vills* which formed Leofric, Earl of Mercia's original endowment of the monastery which he founded at Coventry, and his gift was confirmed by Edward the Confessor in 1043 (VCH 1948). At the time of the Domesday Survey in 1086 *Herdewicke* was among the estates of the priory and was assessed at fifteen hides (Smith 1830). The manor remained in the possession of the monastery until the Dissolution when, in April 1542, it was granted to Sir Edmund Knightley and the Lady Ursula his wife. Following his death later that year the manor passed to his widow and on her death in 1558 it passed hands through the family and was eventually sold to Ralph Blount. Ralph's son Richard enclosed the manor and sold it to Sir William Samuel of Upton, whose son Arthur sold it in 1633 to William, Lord Spencer, in whose family it descended.
- 2.4 Two watching briefs have been undertaken during development work at The Leys. The first was undertaken in 2004 by Warwick Museum Field Services (Thompson 2004); the second was maintained by CA during the construction of a garage block in the northern part of the site in 2008 (CA 2008). No archaeological remains were encountered by the watching briefs and the only observed features were two modern field drains.
- 2.5 Other archaeological investigations in the vicinity include watching briefs at Hill Farmhouse (Jones and Gethin 1999) and Elmer's Farm (Gethin 2003) and during

the excavation of a service trench for an electricity cable (Coutts 2002). Other than some undated features of probable horticultural origin at Elmer's Farm, no significant archaeological remains were encountered by the watching briefs.

- 2.6 Reference to the Tithe Apportionment map of 1847 shows that at this time the site lay within the parish of Priors Marston it is now within the civil parish of Priors Hardwick and comprised a strip of land adjacent to 'Farm Close', which largely comprised the site of the SMV to the north of London End. The accompanying notes show that Farm Close (Plot 148) belonged to John Reading.

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 The objectives of the archaeological works as stated in the WSI were:

- to monitor groundworks, and to identify, investigate and record all significant buried archaeological deposits revealed on the site during the course of the development groundworks;
- at the conclusion of the project, to produce an integrated archive for the project work and a report setting out the results of the project and the archaeological conclusions that can be drawn from the recorded data. Where relevant, reference will be made to the regional research objectives outlined in *The Archaeology of the West Midlands: A Framework for Research* (Watts 2011).

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The fieldwork followed the methodology set out within the WSI (CA 2015). An archaeologist was present during all intrusive groundworks, comprising the excavation of two areas consisting of the footprints of the extensions.

- 4.2 The deposits encountered during the watching brief recorded in accordance with CA's *Technical Manual 1: Fieldwork Recording Manual* (CA 2007). Each context was recorded on a *pro-forma* context sheet by written and measured description, drawn sections (scale 1:10 or 1:20 as appropriate) and planned electronically using Leica 1200 series GPS in accordance with *Technical Manual 4: Survey Manual* (CA 2011). Photographs (35mm black & white negative film and digital colour) were taken as appropriate.

- 4.3 The archive from the evaluation is currently held by CA at their offices in Milton Keynes. Subject to the agreement of the legal landowner the site archive will be deposited with Warwickshire Museum. A summary of information from this project, set out within Appendix B, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

5. RESULTS (FIGS 2-6)

- 5.1 A similar stratigraphic sequence was encountered across the area of observed groundworks. The natural geological substrate consisting of yellow grey silty clay was identified at between 0.39m and 0.57m below present ground level. This was overlain by mid grey brown silty clay subsoil, measuring between 0.2m and 0.3m in thickness. This was in turn sealed by topsoil, measuring 0.19m to 0.27m in thickness.
- 5.2 No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during groundworks and, despite visual scanning of spoil, no artefactual material pre-dating the modern period was recovered. Modern service pipes were observed within Trench 1, with a modern land drain recorded in Trench 2.

6. DISCUSSION

- 6.1 Despite the archaeological potential of the application area (see archaeological background above), the watching brief identified no archaeological remains within the area of observed groundworks. The watching brief has demonstrated that remains associated with the medieval shrunken village of Priors Hardwick, located to the south-west of the site, either do not extend as far as or were not exposed by the development, or that they may have been removed during subsequent land-use.

7. CA PROJECT TEAM

The fieldwork and subsequent report were completed by James Coyne. The illustrations were prepared by Dan Bashford. The archive has been compiled by Emily Evans, and prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The project was managed for CA by Stuart Joyce.

8. REFERENCES

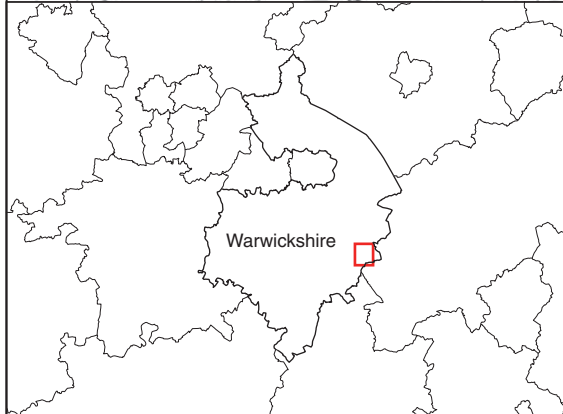
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APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench No.	Context No.	Type	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	Depth /thickness (m)	Spot-date
1	100	Layer	Topsoil	Dark greyish brown firm silty loam with moderate (1%) charcoal flecks, sub-angular stones and modern debris.			0.27	
1	101	Layer	Subsoil	Mid yellowish brown firm silty clay with moderate (1%) charcoal flecks, and modern debris.			0.3	
1	102	Layer	Natural	Mid yellowish grey firm silty clay with moderate (<1%) small, sub-angular stones.			N/A	
2	200	Layer	Topsoil	Dark greyish brown firm silty loam with moderate (1%) charcoal flecks, sub-angular stones.			0.19	
2	201	Layer	Subsoil	Mid greyish brown firm silty clay with moderate (1%) charcoal flecks, and modern debris.			0.2	
2	202	Layer	Natural	Mid yellowish grey firm silty clay with moderate (<1%) small, sub-angular stones.			N/A	

APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project Name	The Leys, Welsh Road, Priors Hardwick, Southam, Warwickshire	
Short description	<p>An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during groundworks associated with the construction of extensions to an existing residential property.</p> <p>No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during groundworks, and no artefactual material pre-dating the modern period was recovered.</p>	
Project dates	20-22 April 2015	
Project type	Archaeological watching brief	
Previous work	Watching brief (CA 2008)	
Future work	Unknown	
PROJECT LOCATION		
Site Location	The Leys, Welsh Road, Priors Hardwick, Southam, Warwickshire	
Study area (M ² /ha)	1200m ²	
Site co-ordinates	SP 4744 5608	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Brief originator	Warwickshire County Council	
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Stuart Joyce	
Project Supervisor	James Coyne	
MONUMENT TYPE	None	
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	None	
PROJECT ARCHIVES		
	Intended final location of archive	Content
Physical	N/A	None
Paper	Warwickshire Museum	WSI, pro-forma registers, recording forms.
Digital	Warwickshire Museum	Digital photographs, digital survey data
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
<p>CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2015 <i>The Leys, Welsh Road, Priors Hardwick, Southam, Warwickshire: Archaeological Watching Brief</i>. CA typescript report 15221</p>		



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PROJECT TITLE

The Leys, Welsh Road, Priors Hardwick
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FIGURE TITLE

Site location plan

Reproduced from the 2000 Ordnance Survey Explorer map with
 the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller
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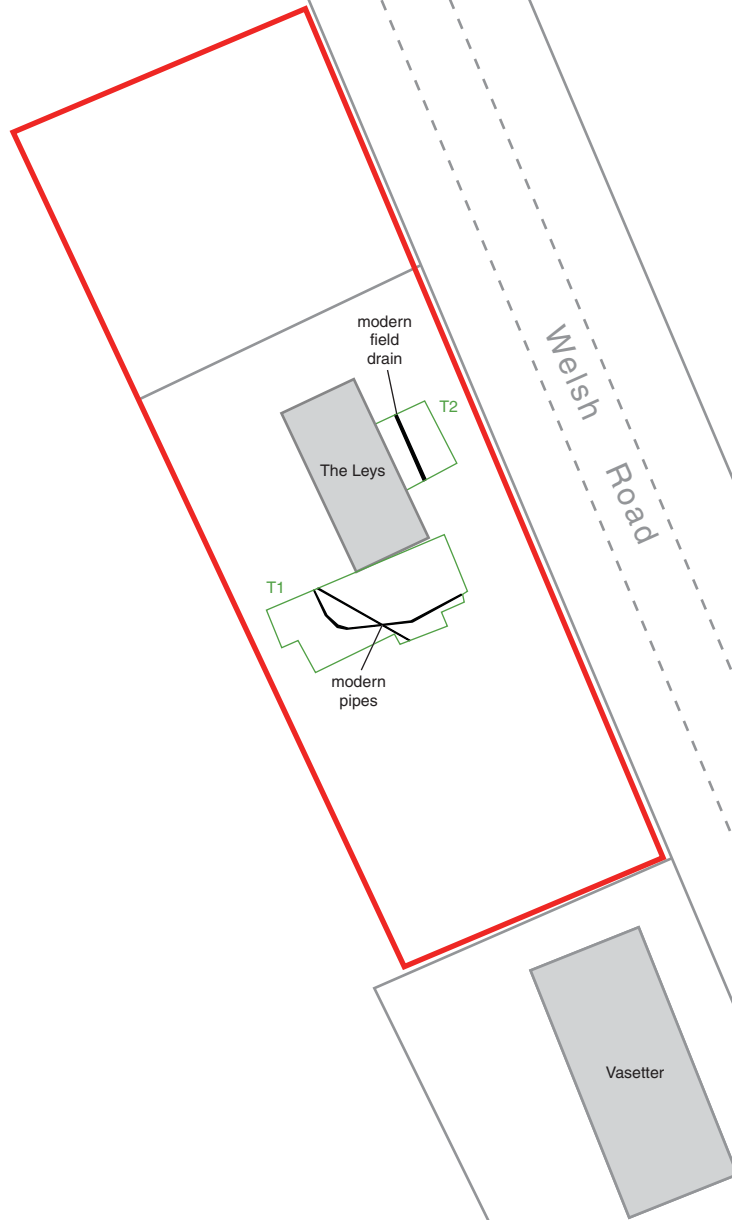
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FIGURE NO.




1

474

561



SP

-  site boundary
-  area of observed groundworks
-  modern



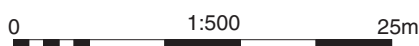
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PROJECT TITLE

The Leys, Welsh Road, Priors Hardwick
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FIGURE TITLE

The site, showing location of observed
groundworks



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FIGURE NO.

2



3



4



5



6

- 3 Trench 1, looking west (scales 1m)
- 4 Trench 1, looking south-east (scale 1m)
- 5 Trench 2 looking south (scales 1m)
- 6 Trench 2 looking south-east (scales 1m)


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PROJECT TITLE
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FIGURE TITLE
Photographs

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