

# Land off Church Road, High Ercall, Shropshire

National Grid Reference: SJ 5944 1727 (centred)

## Archaeological Watching Brief

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### Fieldwork

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### Reporting

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### Illustrations

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Date:	Date:
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## OASIS SUMMARY FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
OASIS identifier	Arcus2_47898	
Project title	High Ercall, Shropshire	
Short description of the project	Watching brief on pipeline	
Project dates	21-07-08 to 25-07-08	
Previous/future work	No/unknown	
Monument type and period	Church of 12 <sup>th</sup> century origin, medieval manor house, medieval Priest's house, grade II*listed garden wall, site of post-medieval flax mill and post-medieval listed farm.	
Significant finds (artefact type and period)	None	
PROJECT LOCATION		
County/Parish	Shropshire, Magna Ercall	
Site address	Land adjacent to churchyard, off Church Road, High Ercall, Shropshire.	
Site co-ordinates	NGR SJ 5944 1727 (centred)	
Site area	600m <sup>2</sup>	
Height OD	69m AOD	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation	ARCUS	
Project brief originator	Shropshire County Council Archaeology Service	
Project design originator	ARCUS	
Project supervisor	Rob Barnett	
Project manager	Anna Badcock	
Sponsor or funding body	Severn Trent Water Ltd	
PROJECT ARCHIVES		
Archive Type	Location/Accession no.	Content (e.g. pottery, metalwork, etc)
Physical	n/a	n/a
Paper	Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery	[report, context sheets, plans, sections, etc]
Digital	[SMR]	[pdf copy of report]
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
Title	Archaeological Watching Brief, High Ercall, Shropshire	
Report no	1214.2(1)1	
Author	Rob Barnett	
Date	August 2008	

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## **LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS AND PLATES**

### **Illustrations**

- 1 Site location map.
- 2 Site plans  
2a showing topsoil stripped areas  
2b showing excavated trenches.

### **Plates**

- 1 Topsoil stripping looking north.
- 2 Trench for overflow chamber in northwest corner excavated to 1.20m depth.

## **NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY**

*ARCUS were commissioned by Severn Trent Water Ltd to undertake an archaeological watching brief at High Ercall, Shropshire centred on NGR SJ 5944 1727. The watching brief was required by Shropshire County Council Archaeology Service to monitor ground works on a sewerage scheme on land to the south of St. Michael's Church. The site lay adjacent to the boundary of the churchyard and several other sites of archaeological and historical interest are located in the immediate vicinity. No archaeological remains or artefacts were identified.*

# 1 INTRODUCTION

ARCUS were commissioned by Severn Trent Water Ltd to undertake an archaeological watching brief to monitor ground works on a sewerage scheme at High Ercall, Shropshire. Centred on NGR SJ 5944 1727. The watching brief was required by Shropshire County Council Archaeology Service as the site lies within an area of archaeological and historical interest.

## 1.1 Site Location and land use

The site of the watching brief is centred on SJ 5944 11727 and is located in a field south of St. Michael's Church, off Church Road , High Ercall (**Illustration 1**).The site is currently under pasture and slopes gently from north to south with undulations. The underlying geology consists of Bunter sandstone.

# 2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The site lies adjacent to the southern boundary of the churchyard associated with St. Michael's Church. The church itself is of 12<sup>th</sup> century origin, and is listed Grade 1. Several other sites of archaeological and historical interest are located in the vicinity of the sewerage scheme; these include the site of a medieval manor house, a medieval Priest's house, a Grade II\* listed garden wall, the site of the medieval flax mill and a post-medieval listed farm.

# 3 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

## 3.1 Aims

The aims of the archaeological watching brief were to:

- identify any archaeological remains along the route of the pipeline;
- record all archaeological remains disturbed by the works;
- recover artefacts disturbed by the works;
- produce an accurate and comprehensive record and report on the archaeology disturbed by the site works.

## 3.2 Methodology

The watching brief was undertaken in accordance with the project design (Badcock 2008), guidelines issued by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA 2001) and current industry best practice. All soil stripping and excavation was undertaken by mechanical excavator under controlled archaeological supervision. Topsoil stripping and manhole trenches were excavated with a flat bladed bucket and the pipe trench with a narrow toothed bucket.

### 3.3 Fieldwork Programme

The project was managed by Anna Badcock, ARCUS Assistant Director. Fieldwork was undertaken between the 21<sup>st</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> of July 2008 by Robert Barnett, ARCUS Project Supervisor.

## 4 RESULTS

Topsoil was stripped from an area of approximately 500 square metres prior to excavations commencing (**Illustration 2**).

### 4.1 Access route

An area measuring 27.00m by 3.60m alongside the churchyard wall was stripped for an access route to the site compound. The topsoil was a mid-brown sandy-silt containing 10% rounded and sub-rounded gravel and pebbles to 0.08m depth. Directly below the topsoil was a reddish-brown silty-sand subsoil which was not excavated. Both of these deposits contained varying amounts of red brick, sandstone and concrete rubble.

### 4.2 Pipeline excavations

Topsoil was then removed from the area of the pipeline excavations measuring 37.00m by 12.50m. The topsoil was a mid-brown sandy-silt containing 10% rounded and sub rounded gravel and pebbles varying in depth from 0.08 to 0.20m. Directly below the topsoil was a reddish-brown silty-sand subsoil, this deposit contained varying percentages of rounded and sub-rounded gravel and pebbles. Again both of these deposits contained sporadic inclusions of red brick, sandstone and concrete rubble.

The excavation of four trenches for manhole chambers and pipelines through the subsoil in was also monitored (**Illustration 2**)

**Trench 1** measured 6.20 by 4.80m and was excavated to 1.10m depth at the south end of the site for pipeline repair and replacement.

**Trench 2** measured 5.50m by 4.80m and was excavated to 2.70m depth for a storm drain manhole in the southwest corner of the site

**Trench 3** measured 7.20m by 1.00m and was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.20m for pipeline repair and replacement. This trench was widened to 2.00m width by 3.00m length at the north end.

**Trench 4** measured 6.00 by 6.00m and the excavation was monitored to 1.20m depth for an overflow chamber in the northwest corner of the site. Full excavation to 3.00m depth was not monitored.

## 5 CONCLUSION

The topsoil and subsoil deposits were the same in all of the excavated trenches across the site, both being slightly deeper down slope to the south. The rubble deposits represent dumping of building debris, probably an attempt to fill in hollows in the undulating ground surface. No archaeological remains or artefacts were identified during the watching brief.

## 6 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Badcock, A. 2008. *Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Mitigation, High Ercall, Shropshire*. Unpublished ARCUS report 1214.1 (1).

Institute of Field Archaeologists. 2001. *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief*.



## 7 ILLUSTRATIONS

## 8 PLATES



Plate 1 Excavating pipe trench looking north-west



Plate 2 Trench for overflow chamber in north-west corner excavated to 1.20m depth