

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING
BRIEF
AT
RUSHALL HALL,
LEIGH ROAD,
WALSALL

Darren Miller

With a contribution by Angus Crawford

Illustrations by Steve Rigby

20 October 2011

Revised 31 October 2011

© Historic Environment and Archaeology Service,
Worcestershire County Council



Historic Environment and Archaeology Service,
Worcestershire County Council,
Woodbury Building,
University of Worcester,
Henwick Grove,
Worcester WR2 6AJ

Project P3581
Report 1875

Contents

Summary	1
Report	
1. Planning background	3
2. Aims	3
3. Methods	3
3.1 Documentary search	3
3.2 Fieldwork methodology.....	3
3.2.1 Fieldwork strategy	3
3.2.2 Structural analysis	4
3.3 Artefact methodology, by Angus Crawford	4
3.3.1 Artefact recovery policy	4
3.3.2 Method of analysis	4
3.4 Environmental archaeology methodology	4
3.4.1 Sampling policy	4
3.5 Statement of confidence in the methods and results	4
4. Historical and archaeological context	4
5. Results	5
5.1 Stratigraphy	5
5.1.1 Medieval walls and deposits.....	5
5.1.2 Post-medieval walls and deposits	5
5.2 Artefacts, by Angus Crawford.....	6
6. Synthesis	8
6.1 Medieval building and walls.....	8
6.2 Post-medieval building and walls.....	9
7. Publication summary	9
8. Acknowledgements	9
9. Personnel	10
10. Bibliography	10

Archaeological watching brief at Rushall Hall, Leigh Road, Walsall

Darren Miller

With a contribution by Angus Crawford

Summary

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken of groundworks at Rushall Hall, Leigh Road, Walsall (NGR SP 0259 9986) the site of a medieval fortified manor house (SAM 21574). Most of the work focused on an area to the south of the present late 18th century house which incorporates part of a medieval curtain wall.

Ground reduction and the excavation of foundation trenches exposed the remains of medieval and post-medieval walls. A substantial wall represented a stone building of 13th or 14th century date; the first evidence of what the medieval buildings within the curtain wall may have looked like. It was built on a rubble and mortar substrate and abutted by a mortar floor. Two contemporary walls suggested an enclosure between the building and the north curtain wall. One of these walls was abutted by three 16th or 17th century walls. Two of them were short and closely spaced and so probably represent a porch in front of a door. The other wall may represent the subdivision of the medieval enclosure or a cellar beneath a house. The remaining walls comprised two garden walls and two cellars. The cellars certainly represent a house, which was probably replaced by the present building.

Part 2 Detailed report

1. Planning background

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken at Rushall Hall, Leigh Road, Walsall (NGR SP 0259 9986, Fig 1), on behalf of Mr and Mrs Gandham.

The watching brief was required as a condition of Scheduled Monument Consent for a development at Rushall Hall, the site of a medieval fortified manor house off Leigh Road in Walsall.

Most of the site is a Scheduled Ancient Monument, under the terms of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act of 1979. The present Schedule includes the medieval walls around the site, the medieval gatehouse in the west wall, and all archaeological deposits within the walls (SAM 21574). The walls and gatehouse are also Grade II* listed buildings, while the present late 18th and 19th century house is a Grade II listed building.

The owners of Rushall Hall proposed to build a guest wing on the east side of the house (Fig 2). They applied for Scheduled Monument Consent from English Heritage, who administer the Schedule on behalf of the Secretary of State. After consulting with Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council (the Local Planning Authority), English Heritage required an archaeological watching brief, with provision for salvage excavation and recording, to ensure that any archaeological remains exposed by the groundworks were adequately recorded.

The project conforms to the *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (IfA 2008).

The project also conforms to a brief prepared by Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council (WMBC 2010) and for which a project proposal (including detailed specification) was produced (HEAS 2010).

2. Aims

The aim of the watching brief was to record any archaeological features uncovered during the groundworks, particularly any relating to the medieval fortified house (WMBC 2010, 1).

3. Methods

3.1 Documentary search

Prior to fieldwork commencing a limited amount of documentary research was undertaken to inform the fieldwork and place the results in their historical and archaeological context. The schedule entry for Rushall Hall and other records were obtained from the Black Country Sites and Monuments Record (BCSMR). Other information was obtained from published sources held by the Service and the Worcestershire Archaeological Society.

3.2 Fieldwork methodology

3.2.1 Fieldwork strategy

A detailed specification has been prepared by the Service (HEAS 2010).

Fieldwork was undertaken between 1 and 5 August 2011. A site monitoring meeting was attended by Ian George (Inspector of Ancient Monuments, English Heritage), Mike Shaw (Black Country Archaeologist, Wolverhampton City Council) and the Client, during which the recording strategy was identified and agreed upon.

Observation and recording followed the progress of the construction team. Most of the groundworks were associated with the construction of the east wing. The footprint was stripped of topsoil and made ground, and five foundation trenches were excavated. All excavation was undertaken by a mini-digger fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, except for

the excavation of the west foundation trench which was started by hand and finished by machine. No further hand-excavation was required as the ground reduction stopped at, or just above, the top of significant archaeological remains.

Most surfaces and some sections were cleaned using hand-tools. Drawn, written, and photographic records were made according to standard Service practice (CAS 1995). At the request of English Heritage, two profiles were drawn across the largest of the medieval walls described below.

3.2.2 **Structural analysis**

All fieldwork records were checked and cross-referenced. Analysis was effected through a combination of structural, artefactual and ecofactual evidence, allied to the information derived from other sources.

3.3 **Artefact methodology, by Angus Crawford**

3.3.1 **Artefact recovery policy**

The artefact recovery policy conformed to standard Service practice (CAS 1995; appendix 2).

3.3.2 **Method of analysis**

All hand-retrieved finds were examined. They were identified, quantified and dated to period. A *terminus post quem* or baseline date was produced for each stratified context where possible. The date was used for determining the broad date of phases defined for the site.

The pottery and ceramic building material was examined under x20 magnification and recorded by fabric type and form according to the fabric reference series maintained by the service (Hurst and Rees 1992 and www.worcestershireceramics.org).

3.4 **Environmental archaeology methodology**

3.4.1 **Sampling policy**

The environmental sampling strategy conformed to standard Service practice (CAS 1995; appendix 4). In the event, no deposits were identified which were considered to be suitable for environmental analysis.

3.5 **Statement of confidence in the methods and results**

Having undertaken the project the following comments may be made with regard to the methods adopted. The observations and records made during the watching brief afforded some scope for stratigraphic analysis. In particular, it was possible to identify the earliest walls and deposits and infer the phasing of later walls. However, in view of the limited scope of the project, and the absence of further hand-excavation, the phasing presented below should be regarded as provisional.

4. **Historical and archaeological context**

For most of its history, Rushall Hall has been the main residence of a manor, or landed estate.

An estate of one hide at Rushall is recorded in the Domesday survey of 1086 (Williams and Martin 1992). It had been held before the Conquest by Virfari, and was held in 1086 by Turchil, a sub-tenant of William fitz Ansculf.

In the medieval period, the manor was held by a succession of gentry families (Schedule entry copy; Emery 2000, 431). The main residence was also fortified, though not as strongly as other manor houses in the region. The curtain wall around the present house and grounds and the earlier fabric of gatehouse in the west wall have been dated to the late 13th or early 14th century (Schedule entry copy), and so must have been built by a member of the Boweles family, who held the manor between *c* 1230 and 1346. The manor house of this period was apparently rebuilt by one Geoffrey Ive around 1400. Four centuries later, a local historian

suggested that the new house stood in the present courtyard, which he knew, or thought, to be 'full of foundations' (cited in Emery 2000). The manor was held by the Harpur family between c 1430 and 1540. The rebuilding of the gatehouse in the west wall can be attributed to a member of this family.

The manor was held by the Leigh family between c 1540 and 1811 (Schedule entry copy). In 1643, Rushall Hall was captured and garrisoned by Royalist forces under Prince Rupert but taken, after a brief siege, by Parliamentary forces under the Earl of Denbigh (Pennington and Roots 1955, lxvii).

The present house was built in the late 18th century, and modified in the 19th century. It is a brick building with a pitched roof and flat-topped casement windows. A late 18th century cart shed abuts the east end of the house, and formed part of the recent development.

5. Results

5.1 Stratigraphy

The walls (or foundations) and the most significant deposits recorded in the watching brief are summarised below with reference to Figures 3-5 and Plates 1-10. More details are set out in Appendix 3.

5.1.1 Medieval walls and deposits

Wall 101 and associated deposits

Wall 101 was found in the west of the area (Fig 3; Plates 1 and 2). It was aligned roughly north-south, and made of roughly-hewn blocks bonded with white lime mortar. It was up to 0.70m wide and 0.65m high. Both ends of the wall had been truncated by later walls, described below, although part of a buttress survived at the south end (Fig 3; context 122; Plate 3). The surviving length of the wall was 5.60m.

The excavation of the west foundation trench, alongside wall 101, showed that it had been built on a substrate of medium to large blocks in a matrix of white lime mortar and light brown clay silt (Fig 4; context 113; Plate 4). Two sherds of 13th or 14th century pottery were recovered from this deposit. It was broadly contemporary with the deposit to the east of the wall (Fig 3; context 112).

The west face of wall 101 was abutted by a thin layer of mortar interpreted as a floor surface (Figs 3 and 4; context 103; Plate 4). This implies that the building represented by the wall extended to the west. The east face of the wall was abutted by a linear spread of lime mortar (Fig 3; context 102; Plates 1 and 2).

Walls 137 and 140

Wall 137 ran across the area from east to west (Fig 3; Plate 5). It was of similar construction to wall 101, and the two walls were probably contemporary (Fig 5). The north end of the wall was truncated by a later cellar (Fig 3; context 110).

Wall 140 represents the return of wall 137 to the north (Fig 3; Plates 5 and 6). The base of the wall was exposed in the east foundation trench and could be seen above ground for 8m, beneath a later wall (Fig 3; context 141). It probably continued beneath the former cart shed and abutted the medieval curtain wall.

5.1.2 Post-medieval walls and deposits

Wall 125

Wall 125 abutted the north face of wall 137 and continued northwards for at least 3.75m (Fig 3; Plate 5). There was some evidence of a return to the west, truncated by a later cellar (Fig 3; context 110). Like the medieval walls, wall 125 was built of roughly-hewn blocks. Unlike the medieval walls, however, it was bonded with a mixture of mortar and light brown sandy silt. The excavation of the north foundation trench exposed up to nine courses of roughly-hewn blocks bonded with white lime mortar (Plate 7).

Walls 134 and 135

Walls 134 and 135 also abutted the north face of wall 137 (Fig 3; Plate 5). They were of similar construction to wall 125, although wall 134 incorporated several brick fragments. They do not appear to have extended further to the north, although three large floor tiles and a length of mortared bricks were found 0.25m north of wall 135 (context 136).

Cellar 110

Cellar 110 truncated the north end of wall 101 and extended to the west, beyond the area investigated (Fig 3; Plate 8). It was 4m wide and 1.80m deep, built of handmade bricks measuring $9\frac{1}{2} \times 4\frac{3}{4} \times 2\frac{3}{8}$ - $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches. The dimensions of the bricks and their character suggest a late 17th or early 18th century date. This date is supported by a sherd of red sandy ware found in the fill of the construction trench (fill 121 of cut 107).

Wall 108

Wall 108 truncated the south end of wall 101 (Fig 3; Plate 9). It was also built over the wall, however, and extended to the south, as far as the medieval curtain wall. It was made of handmade bricks measuring $9\frac{1}{2} \times 4 \times 2\frac{3}{8}$ inches. The dimensions of the bricks and their character suggest a late 17th or early 18th century date.

Wall 109

Wall 108 comprised a single skin of bricks built against the east fact of wall 108 (Fig 3; Plate 9). Its original and present extent is uncertain. The bricks were of different kinds and dimensions, including handmade bricks measuring $11 \times 4 \times 2\frac{1}{2}$ inches and mould-made bricks measuring $9 \times 4 \times 2\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The mould-made bricks suggest a date in the mid to late 18th century.

Cellar 126

Cellar 126 truncated cellar 110 (Fig 3; Plate 10). With the earlier wall 125, it formed a small cellar that was filled with deposits of brick rubble and light brown sandy silt (contexts 127-130). A large piece of a late 18th or early 19th century dinner plate was found in the first of these fills (context 130).

5.2 Artefacts, by Angus Crawford

The artefactual assemblage recovered is summarised in Tables 1 and 2. The pottery assemblage retrieved from the excavated area consisted of 13 sherds of pottery weighing 614g. In addition, fragments of roof tile, animal bone, slag and clay tobacco pipe stem were recovered. The group came from five stratified contexts and could be dated from the medieval period onwards (see Table 1). Level of preservation was generally good with the majority of sherds displaying only minimal levels of abrasion

period	material class	object specific type	count	weight(g)
medieval	ceramic	pottery	10	222
medieval	ceramic	roof tile	2	1284
post-medieval	ceramic	clay tobacco pipe	1	1
post-medieval	ceramic	pottery	3	392
undated	bone	Bovine toe	1	14
undated	slag	slag	1	98

Table 1: Quantification of the assemblage

Pottery

All sherds were grouped and quantified according to fabric type (Table 2). A total of three diagnostic form sherds were present and could be dated accordingly, the remaining sherds were datable by fabric type to their general period or production span.

period	fabric code	Fabric common name	count	weight(g)
medieval	99	Miscellaneous medieval wares	10	222
post-medieval	78	Post-medieval red wares	1	208
post-medieval	84	Creamware	1	154
post-medieval	91	Post-medieval buff wares	1	30

Table 2: *Quantification of the pottery by period and fabric-type*

Medieval

Ten sherds of medieval pottery were present within the assemblage with three distinct fabric types (all classified under general medieval fabric number 99). While some sherds appeared to have some similarity to those examined from The Moat Site, Walsall (Wrathmell and Wrathmell 1976 and 1976) and Wishaw (Ratkai 2008) the small size of the assemblage made direct correlations difficult and they would need to be compared directly for secure parallels to be made.

Of the medieval fabrics, two conjoining sherds from the substrate beneath wall 101 (context 113) were of a mid grey to black fabric with a sandy/coarse gritting (possibly Wrathmell fabric 3) and identified as originating from an unglazed cooking-pot with a pronounced sagging base. A further similar base sherd (context 114) was of an oxidised fabric with a thin reduced core, abundant quartzite-like inclusions and a speckled internal green glaze. A further four sherds were of similar fabric, though of slightly more orange coloured (context 131). These were all thin sherds, possibly from the same vessel and probably from a jug. All featured an olive green varying to translucent brown glaze over a red slip. One sherd had further decoration with an applied band with finger indentations.

Three further sherds also probably from a jug and though of a hard white to creamy pink fabric with abundant small quartz-like inclusions (context 113) with a patchy pale green to yellow glaze over a reddish brown slip. Further decoration included narrow and thinly incised parallel lines on the exterior of two of the sherds.

While definite parallels between the medieval pottery fabrics from Rushall Hall are difficult to find, all the medieval sherds recovered from the site were typical of pottery manufactured during the 13th to 14th century.

Post-medieval

The post-medieval assemblage was of small size and consisted of only three sherds of pottery. Of these, two were of 18th century date and of types commonly available during the period. These included a large storage jar rim sherd of post-medieval red sandy ware (fabric 78, context 121) and a base/body sherd of post-medieval buff ware (fabric 91, context 114). Both sherds were finished in a glossy black glaze common to these fabric types. The remaining sherd was a large portion of a creamware dinner plate of late 18th or early 19th century date (fabric 84, context 130). Unlike the majority of pale greenish/yellow glazed creamware this particular plate was highly decorated with hand painted polychrome decoration including a floral design in red, green and yellow; blocked panels in green, linear decoration with pellets and gilded edges.

Other artefacts

Two joining fragments of roof tile were sampled from wall 101 but could only be generally dated to a broad medieval date range of 13th to 15th century date. The remaining artefacts included a *bovine tarsal*, a lump of non-ferrous slag (undated) and a fragment of clay tobacco pipe stem of 18th century date (all from context 131).

Overview of artefactual evidence

context	material class	object specific type	count	weight(g)	start date	end date	<i>Context terminus post quem</i>
101	ceramic	roof tile	2	1284	1201	1500	13 th to 15 th century
113	ceramic	pot	2	72	1201	1400	13 th to 14 th century
113	ceramic	pot	3	30	1201	1400	
114	ceramic	pot	1	30	1701	1800	18 th century
114	ceramic	pot	1	68	1201	1400	
121	ceramic	pot	1	208	1701	1800	18 th century
130	ceramic	pot	1	154	1770	1820	Late 18 th to early 19 th century
131	bone	Bovine toe	1	14	0	0	18 th century
131	slag	slag	1	98	0	0	
131	ceramic	clay tobacco pipe	1	1	1701	1800	
131	ceramic	pot	4	52	1201	1400	

Table 3: Summary of context dating based on artefacts

Medieval

The medieval assemblage was consistent with site occupation during the 13th to 14th century. While the pottery assemblage was of small size it was typical of kitchen wares of the period including cooking pots and jugs in fabric types of, probable, local production. The two tile fragments from the more substantial wall (context 101) could only be generally dated to the medieval period, however this supports the 13th to 14th century date ascribed to the pottery from the substrate.

Post-medieval

The post medieval assemblage was surprisingly small considering the Civil War history and later 18th century domestic occupation of the site. However, the assemblage was typical of 18th century material culture with the exception of the polychrome creamware plate. This was more in keeping with high status dinner wares and the gentry owners of Rushall Hall in this period.

6. Synthesis

6.1 Medieval building and walls

The medieval walls and deposits suggest a large stone building with a yard to the east and a walled enclosure to the north. Wall 101 was wide and strongly built. These attributes, and the buttress at the south end of the wall, suggest a substantial stone building. The land to the east apparently remained open and unsurfaced. Walls 137 and 140 were less substantial and there was no evidence in either case of corresponding walls which could have been spanned by a roof. They can therefore be interpreted as free-standing walls which defined an area between the stone building and the north curtain wall. All these remains appear to date to the 13th or 14th century, judging by the pottery found beneath wall 101. They can therefore be associated with the residence of the Boweles family, rather than that of Geoffrey Ives or the Harpur family (see above, Section 4). However, walls 137 and 140 clearly remained standing into the post-medieval period, and if the same was true of wall 101, it cannot represent the hall demolished by Geoffrey Ives around 1400.

Similar arrangements have been found, and can still be seen, on manorial sites across the country. Rushall Hall was one of four fortified manor houses in South Staffordshire, and formed part of a larger concentration in the well-wooded Arden region between Cannock

Chase and the Warwickshire Avon (Emery 2000, 342). Few sites have medieval fabric, however, and even fewer have been investigated archaeologically. The recently published research framework for archaeology in the West Midlands identifies the archaeology of 'medieval manorial complexes' as a neglected theme (Hunt 2011, 197), and the evidence from Rushall is therefore very welcome. In particular, it shows that the site contained buildings on the same scale as its fortifications (most buildings elsewhere were timber-framed), and that medieval arrangements strongly influenced post-medieval and even modern developments.

6.2 Post-medieval building and walls

Walls 108 and 109 clearly represent two phases of the same garden or boundary wall, while walls 134 and 135 probably represent a porch in front of a door through wall 137.

Wall 125 is more difficult to interpret. It may represent a subdivision of the medieval walled enclosure but if so it was very deeply founded, well below what seems to have been the contemporary ground surface. Alternatively, it could have formed the south wall of a cellar, with wall 137 forming the west wall (before it was truncated) and the other walls lying outside the area observed. This interpretation implies a house above the cellar, extending to the north and east. If this reasoning is correct, wall 125 probably represents part of the residence of the Leigh family around the time of the Civil War.

Cellars 110 and 126 clearly formed part of (rather than represent) an 18th century house. Cellar 110 extended to the west, but was replaced by cellar 126, which extended to the south and re-used wall 125. The late 18th or early 19th century dinner plate from the lower fill of cellar of cellar 126-125 gives a *terminus post quem* or baseline date for the demolition of the house. In all probability, the house was replaced by the present building to the north.

These remains add important new information to the history of Rushall Hall. Their wider significance is less clear, as remains of this period are ubiquitous and archaeological research frameworks for the post-medieval and modern periods are only beginning to emerge (Belford 2011).

7. Publication summary

The Service has a professional obligation to publish the results of archaeological projects within a reasonable period of time. To this end, and unless directed otherwise, the Service intends to publish the following summary in the most appropriate journal or journals.

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken on behalf of Mr and Mrs Gandham on groundworks at Rushall Hall, in Walsall (NGR SP 0259 9986), the site of a medieval fortified manor house (SAM 21574). Most of the work focused on an area to the south of the present late 18th century house which incorporates part of a medieval curtain wall.

Ground reduction and the excavation of foundation trenches exposed the remains of medieval and post-medieval walls. A substantial wall represented a stone building of 13th or 14th century date; the first evidence of what the medieval buildings within the curtain wall may have looked like. It was built on a rubble and mortar substrate and abutted by a mortar floor. Two contemporary walls suggested an enclosure between the building and the north curtain wall. One of these walls was abutted by three 16th or 17th century walls. Two of them were short and closely spaced and so probably represent a porch in front of a door. The other wall may represent the subdivision of the medieval enclosure or a cellar beneath a house. The remaining walls comprised two garden walls and two cellars. The cellars certainly represent a house, which was probably replaced by the present building.

8. Acknowledgements

The Service would like to thank Mr and Mrs Gandham (Rushall Hall), Ian George (Inspector of Ancient Monuments, English Heritage), Mike Shaw (Black Country Archaeologist, Wolverhampton City Council) and the construction team of HAB Builders Ltd, for their kind assistance during the project.

9. **Personnel**

The fieldwork and report preparation was led by Darren Miller. The project manager responsible for the quality of the project was Tom Vaughan. Fieldwork was undertaken by Angus Crawford and John Webster, finds analysis by Angus Crawford, and illustration by Steve Rigby. Shona Robson-Glyde commented on walls and buildings.

10. **Bibliography**

Belford, P, 2011 'The archaeology of everything' – grappling with post-medieval, industrial and contemporary archaeology, in S Watt (ed.), *The Archaeology of the West Midlands. A framework for research*, Oxford and Oakville: Oxbow Books, 211-236

CAS 1995 (as amended) *Manual of Service practice: fieldwork recording manual*, County Archaeological Service, Hereford and Worcester County Council, report, **399**

Emery, A, 2000 *Greater Medieval Houses of England and Wales, Vol II: East Anglia, Central England and Wales*, Cambridge: University Press

HEAS 2010 *Proposal for an archaeological watching brief at Rushall Hall, Leigh Road, Walsall*, Historic Environment and Archaeology Service, Worcestershire County Council, unpublished document dated 8 October 2010, **P3581**

Hunt, J, 2011 The medieval period, in S Watt (ed.), *The Archaeology of the West Midlands. A framework for research*, Oxford and Oakville: Oxbow Books, 173-209

Hurst, J D, and Rees, H, 1992 Pottery fabrics; a multi-period series for the County of Hereford and Worcester, in S G Woodiwiss (ed), *Iron Age and Roman salt production and the medieval town of Droitwich*, York: Council for British Archaeology: Research Report No. **81**

IfA 2008 *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (Institute for Archaeologists)

Pennington, D H, and Roots, I A (eds.), 1955 The Committee at Stafford, 1643-1645. The Order Book of the Staffordshire County Committee, in *Collections for a History of Staffordshire*, Fourth Series, Vol. **1**

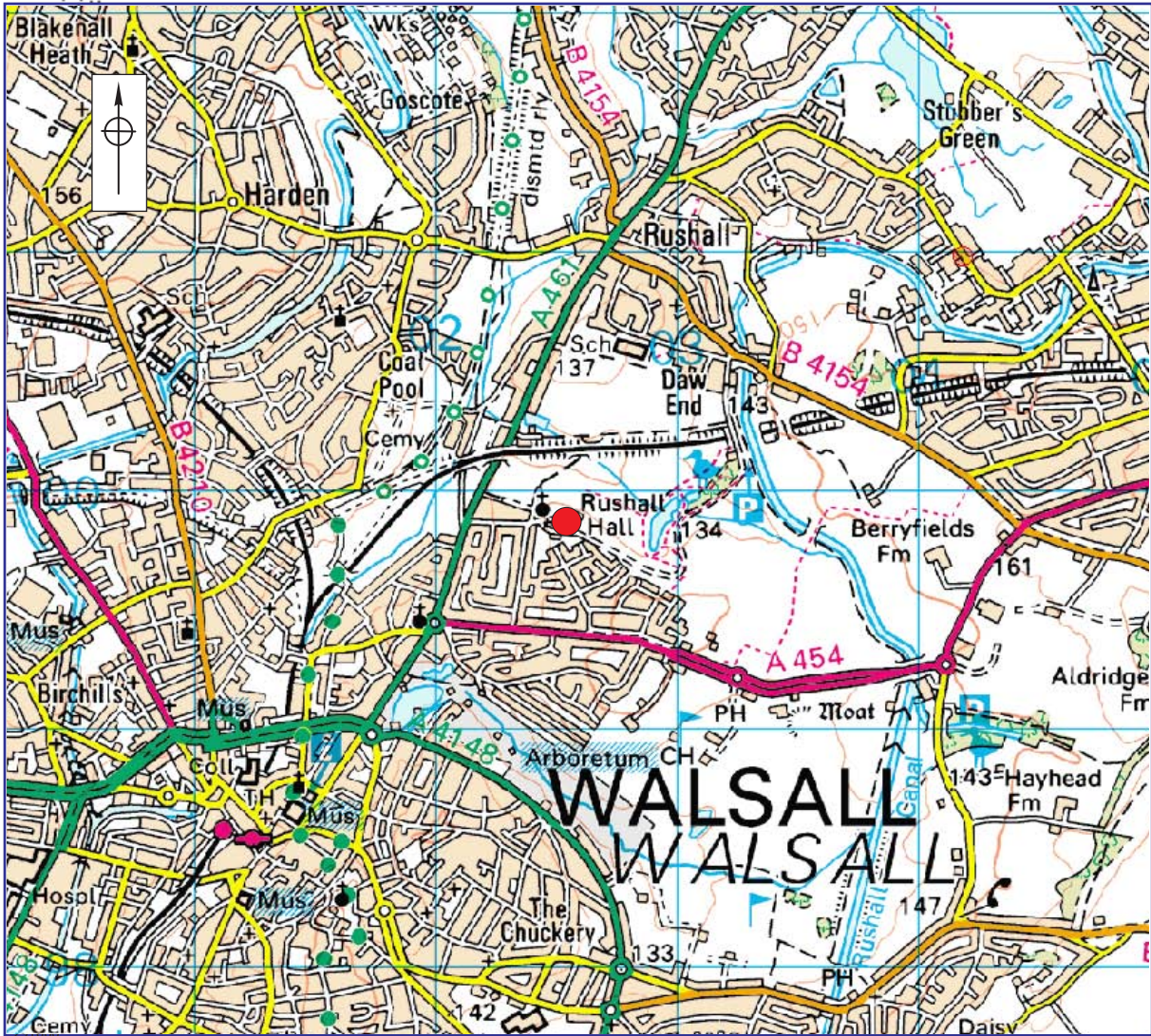
Ratkai, S, 2008 The medieval pottery, in A B Powell, P Booth, A P Fitzpatrick, and A D Crockett, *The Archaeology of the M6 Toll 2000-2003*, Oxford Wessex Archaeology, Monograph No. **2**, 491-501

WMBC 2010 *Rushall Hall, Leigh Road, Walsall, Brief for Archaeological Work*, unpublished document dated 5 October 2010, prepared by the Black Country Archaeologist on behalf of Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council

Wrathmell, S, and Wrathmell, S, 1976 Excavations at the Moat Site, Walsall, Staffs, 1972-4, in *South Staffordshire Archaeological and Historical Society, Transactions 1974-1975*, Vol. **XVI**, 19-53

Wrathmell, S, and Wrathmell, S, 1977 Excavations at the Moat Site, Walsall, 1975, in *South Staffordshire Archaeological and Historical Society, Transactions 1976-1977*, Vol. **XVIII**, 29-45

Figures



Scale 1:30,000

© Crown copyright and database rights 2011 Ordnance Survey 100015914.

Location of the site

Figure 1

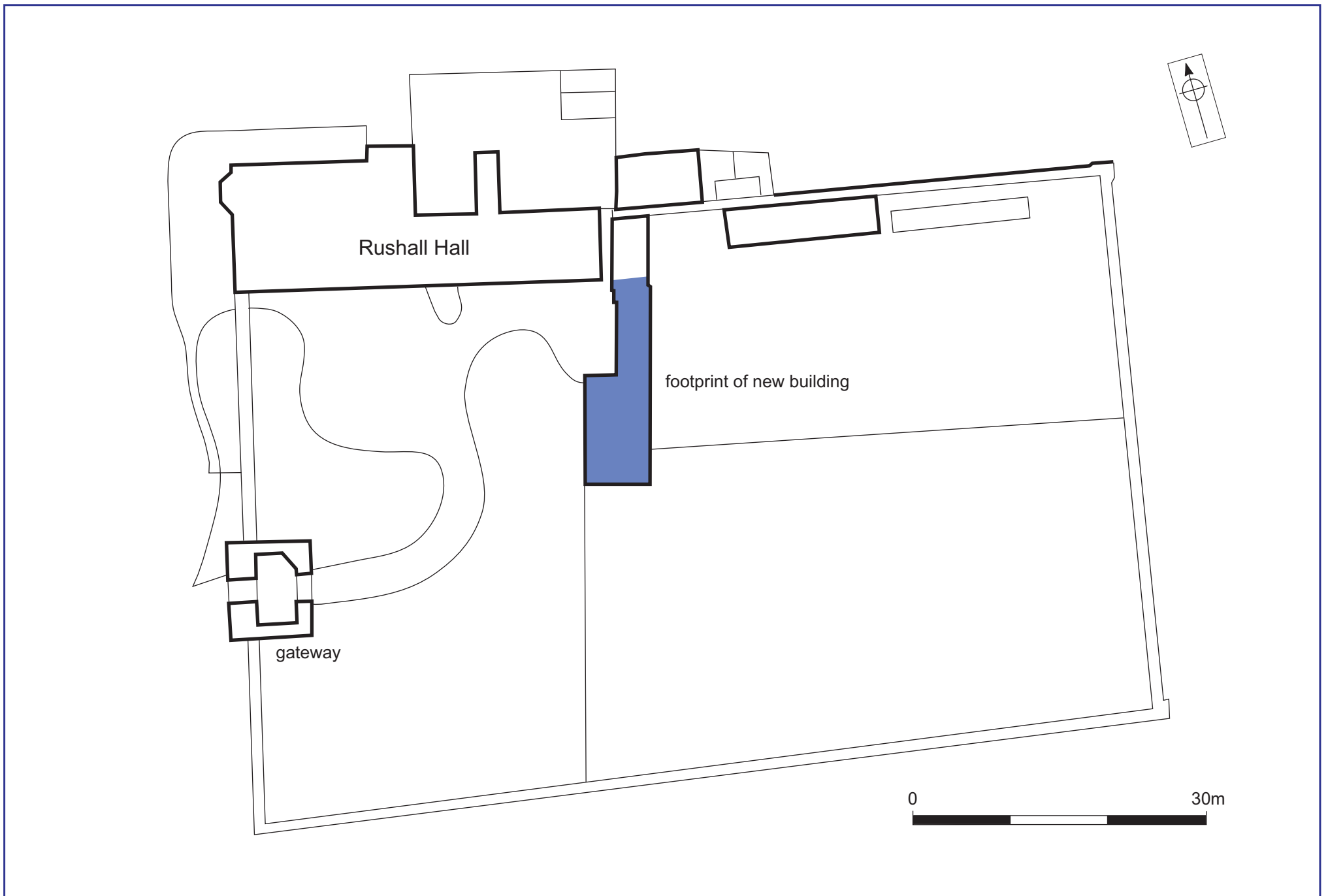


Figure 2: Location of watching brief

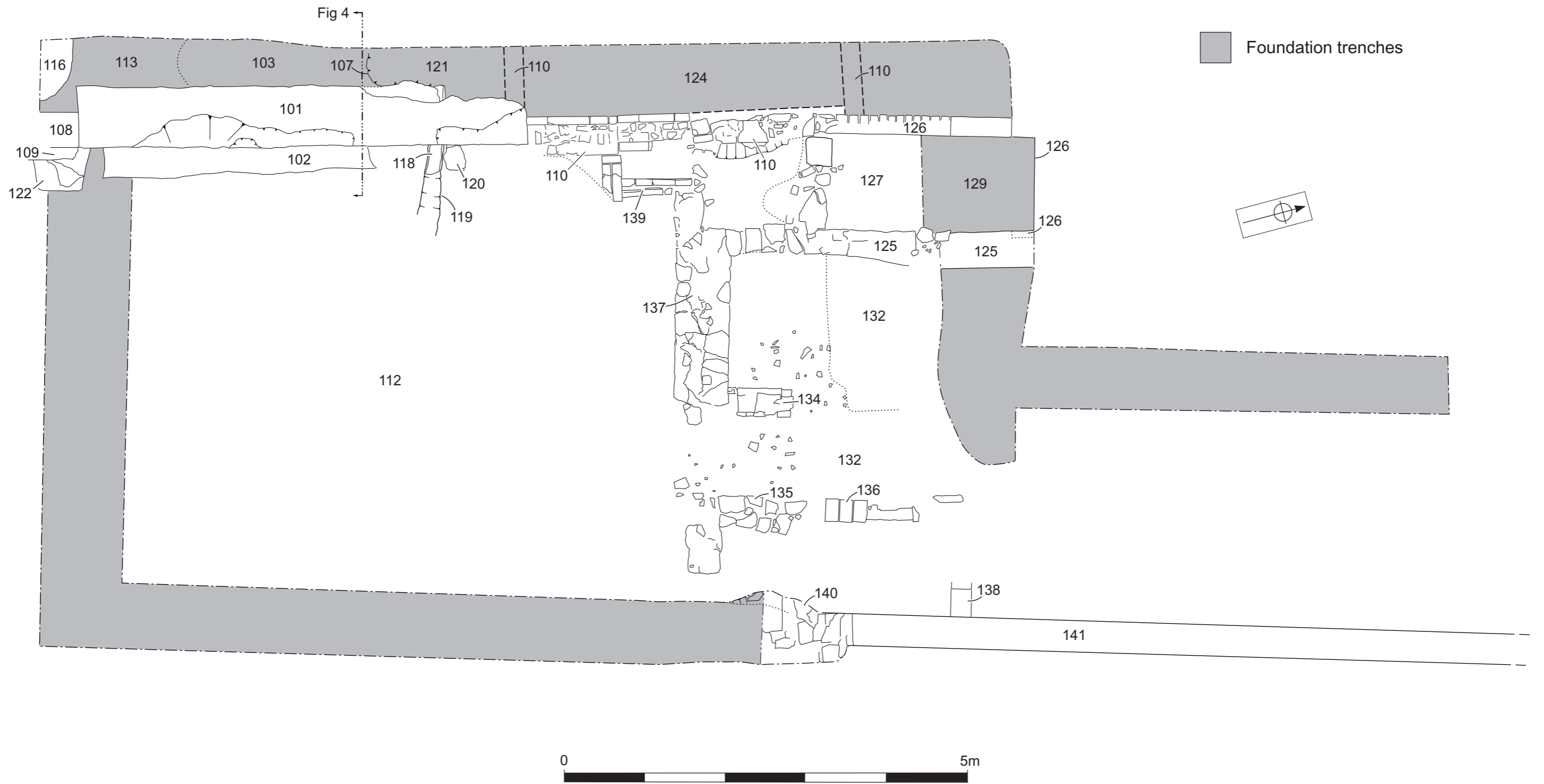


Figure 3: Plan of features

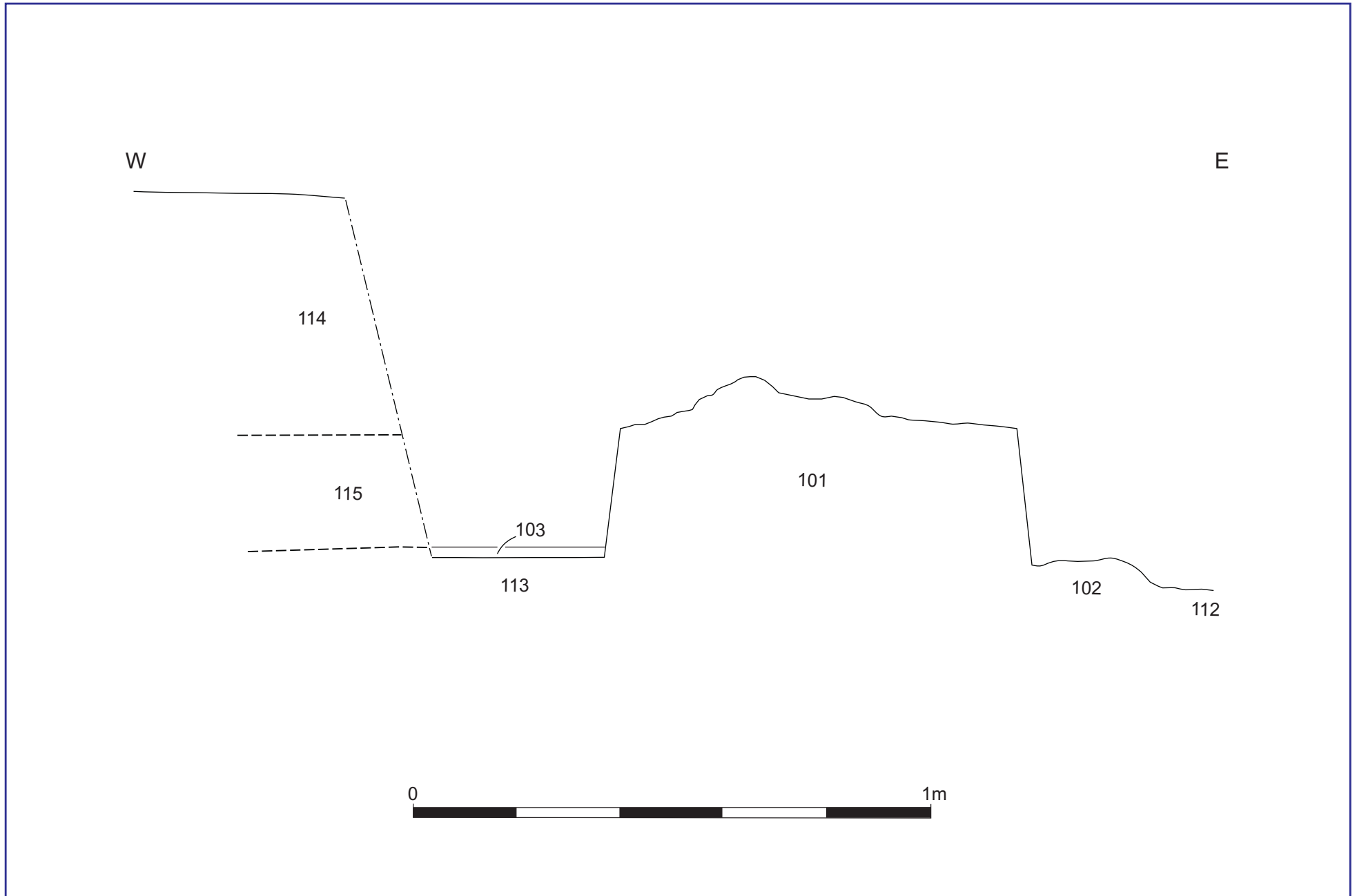


Figure 4: Profile across wall 101



Figure 5: Phased plan of main structural features

Plates



Plate 1: Wall 101, facing south-west



Plate 2: Wall 101, facing north-west



Plate 3: Buttress at south end of wall 101



Plate 4: Mortar floor 103 and substrate 113, facing south



Plate 5: Wall 137 (left) returning to north as wall 140 (bottom), and abutted by walls 125, 134, and 135 (running left to right, from top to bottom); facing west



Plate 6: Walls 137 (foreground) and wall 140 (right), beneath wall 141, facing north-east



Plate 7: West face of wall 125 (partially re-faced on left-hand-side by cellar 126)



Plate 8: Cellar 110, facing north



Plate 9: Walls 108 (right) and 109 (left), facing south



Plate 10: Cellar 126 (right), facing south

Appendix 1 Brief

Rushall Hall, Leigh Road, Walsall

Brief for Archaeological Work

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Rushall Hall is a Grade II Listed Building of 18th century date with mid-19th century alterations. It is surrounded by a curtain wall of late 13th to early 14th century date with a gatehouse of the same date, to which a second storey was added in the late 15th to early 16th centuries. The gatehouse and curtain walls are a Grade II* Listed Building.
- 1.2 The area within the curtain wall was previously the site of a medieval fortified house, the standing and buried remains of which are a Scheduled Ancient Monument.
- 1.3 The owner of Rushall Hall has submitted applications for planning consent and listed building consent to build self-contained guest accommodation and a car port as a separate wing connected to the main building of the current Rushall Hall. This entails the demolition of an outbuilding which forms part of the listed building and groundworks in the area of and adjacent to the outbuilding.
- 1.4 As a condition of Scheduled Monument Consent an archaeological watching brief with provision for salvage excavation and recording has been required. This document constitutes a brief for the work.

2. Requirements

- 2.1 The purpose of the work is to record any archaeological features uncovered during the groundworks for the development, particularly any relating to the medieval fortified house.
- 2.2 A watching brief should be maintained during all groundworks including excavation of foundations, service trenches, inspection chambers, and reduction of floor levels.
- 2.3 Any archaeological features uncovered should be cleaned, investigated and recorded. Particular attention should be paid to discovering the nature, shape, size of the feature and to the recovery of dating evidence.
- 2.4 On completion of the work the records and finds from the site should be analysed and a summary report produced detailing the results.

3. General conditions

- 3.1 The work should be undertaken by suitably qualified and experienced archaeological staff, under the supervision of a Member of the Institute of Field Archaeologists or Project Manager with equivalent experience.
 - 3.2 An appropriate recording strategy should be used and the method and justification for this stated in the reports.
 - 3.3 The code of conduct, standards and guidance of the Institute of Field Archaeologists should be adhered to.
 - 3.4 The English Heritage regional archaeological science adviser should be consulted on scientific issues and scientific work should be undertaken in accordance with the recommendations of Environmental Archaeology (English Heritage 2002).
 - 3.5 A written scheme of investigation for the work required should be prepared by the contractor and agreed with English Heritage, the sponsor and the local planning authority (LPA) before the work commences.
 - 3.6 On completion of the work the site archive should be deposited with an appropriate museum/public archive. The site owner is encouraged to deposit any finds with the archive. In this case archives should be deposited with the Walsall Local History Centre (tel: 01922 721305).
 - 3.7 Copies of all reports should be provided to the English Heritage, the LPA, the Black Country Historic Environment Record and Walsall Local History Centre. This should comprise a bound copy and a digital copy in pdf or similar format. The report will normally become a publicly accessible part of the HER within 6 months of completion.
 - 3.8 Reports should contain the following information:
 - Location, aims and methodology
 - Results of documentary research
-

-
- A written summary of the findings together with appropriate illustrations, which should be related to the national grid. Levels should be related to the Ordnance Datum.
 - An analytical summary of features and deposits
 - A table showing categories and quantity of finds recovered from each feature/deposit and where finds are dateable, such as pottery, their date
 - Finds research to an appropriate level to be agreed with the Black Country archaeologist
 - List of sources consulted and their full titles/reference numbers
 - A copy of the brief
- 3.9 On completion of the work an OASIS record form should be completed and a summary report should be sent for publication in West Midlands Archaeology and any other appropriate local or national archaeological journal.
- 3.10 Health and Safety

It is the responsibility of the contractor to ensure that all work is carried out in accordance with relevant Health and Safety regulations.

Site procedures should be in accordance with the guidance set out in the Health and Safety Manual of the Standing Conference of Archaeological Unit Managers

3.11 Monitoring

The work will be monitored by the Ian George of English Heritage on behalf of DCMS and by Mike Shaw, the Black Country Archaeologist on behalf of the LPA and provisions for monitoring should be agreed with him. At least five working days notice of commencement of any fieldwork should be given to the Black Country Archaeologist. A draft of any report should be submitted to the Black Country Archaeologist for approval ahead of finalisation.

Prepared on 5th October 2010 by Mike Shaw, Black Country Archaeologist on behalf of Walsall MBC

Contact Details:

Mike Shaw: tel 01902 555493; e-mail mike.shaw.@wolverhampton.gov.uk; fax 01902 555637; address Black Country Archaeologist, Wolverhampton City Council, Regeneration and Transportation, Civic Centre, St Peter's Square, Wolverhampton WV1 1RP

Ian George, Inspector of Ancient Monuments, English Heritage, West Midlands Region, 112 Colmore Row, Birmingham B3 3AG

Appendix 2 Context descriptions

Context	Classification	Description
100	Foundation	Masonry exposed in base of drainage trench near front door of present house. Medium to large roughly-hewn blocks bonded with off-white, slightly pink lime mortar. 0.60m below ground surface.
101	Foundation	North-south wall exposed on west side of development. Built of large roughly-hewn blocks bonded with hard off-white lime mortar. Truncated at both ends with a surviving length of 5.60m. Up to 0.70m wide and 0.75m high. Above substrate 113. West face abutted by mortar floor 103. East face abutted by mortar spread 102.
102	Mortar spread	Linear spread of off-white lime mortar abutting east face of wall 101.
103	Mortar floor	Thin (30mm) layer of white to light yellowish brown sandy lime mortar abutting west face of wall 101.
104	VOID	VOID
105	VOID	VOID
106	VOID	VOID
107	Foundation trench	Cut for wall 110, truncating north end of wall 101. Filled with 121.
108	VOID	VOID
109	VOID	VOID
110	Cellar	North, south, and east sides of a cellar extending to the west. Four metres wide and 1.80m deep, made of handmade bricks measuring $9\frac{1}{2} \times 4\frac{3}{4} \times 2\frac{3}{8}$ - $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches.
111	VOID	VOID
112	Made ground	Made ground east of wall 101. Firm light, slightly yellowish-reddish brown fine silty sand with common small gravel, charcoal, and mortar inclusions. Broadly contemporary with 113.
113	Substrate	Substrate for wall 101 composed of <i>c</i> 15% medium to large roughly-hewn blocks in weakly cemented matrix of white lime mortar and light brown clay silt. 0.29m deep.
114	Topsoil	Loose mid greyish brown fine sandy silt with common gravel and mortar inclusions. Also abundant fine roots and fewer small to medium roots. 0.46m deep.
115	Made ground	As 114 but with <i>c</i> 40% small to medium fragments of mortar.
116	Dislocated masonry	Partially exposed large roughly-hewn stone lying on 113 next to south end of wall 101. Visible dimensions 600 x 320 x 120mm.
117	Fill of 119	As 112, but slightly darker.
118	Stone within 118	Large roughly-hewn stone measuring 400mm x 170mm.
119	Cut	Linear, parallel-sided cut extending on an east-west alignment from east face of wall 1010. Up to 0.25m wide and 0.10m deep. At least 1.15m long.
120	VOID	VOID
121	Fill of 107	Loose light brown fine silty sand with abundant small mortar fragments.
122	Buttress	Masonry projecting eastwards from south end of wall 101. Medium to large roughly-hewn blocks

Context	Classification	Description
		bonded with off-white, slightly pink lime mortar. Dimensions <i>c</i> 700 x 550 x 250mm.
123	VOID	VOID
124	Natural	Soft light yellowish brown medium sand with common small gravels.
125	Foundation	Foundation, aligned north-south, exposed in plan and in north foundation trench. Up to nine courses of medium to large roughly-hewn blocks bonded with hard off-white lime mortar. Up to 0.50m wide and at least 3.75m long. West face fair and partially re-faced with 126.
126	Cellar	Cellar wall. North-south length of 1.50m exposed in plan. West-facing elevation of 16 regular courses exposed in west foundation trench. Return to south and partial re-facing of wall 125 exposed in north foundation trench. Built of handmade bricks, mostly 2½ inches thick, bonded with hard light grey lime mortar. East face fair and roughly pointed.
127	Fill of cellar 125-126	Loose light brown sandy silt, up to 0.20m deep.
128	Fill of cellar 125-126	Loose dark brown sandy silt with abundant charcoal fragments, up to 0.13m deep.
129	Fill of cellar 125-126	Loose light brown sandy silt with abundant small to medium plaster fragments and few brick fragments. Up to 0.13m deep.
130	Fill of cellar 125-126	Loose brick rubble and plaster fragments in matrix of light brown sandy silt.
131	Cleaning layer	Cleaning layer south of 125.
132	Deposit/fill	Loose light brown silty sand and clinker south of 125.
133	Deposit	Compact light yellowish-reddish brown fine sandy silt under 132.
134	Foundation?	Foundation abutting east face of wall 137 and extending northwards for 0.80m. Built of medium to large roughly-hewn blocks faced with handmade brick. Bonded with hard off-white lime mortar.
135	Foundation?	Foundation abutting east face of wall 137 and extending northwards for 1.00m. Built of medium to large roughly-hewn blocks. Bonded with hard off-white lime mortar.
136	Foundation	Three large flat roof tiles laid on bed and single skin of mortared bricks aligned north-south. Separated from but continuing the line of foundation 135.
137	Foundation	Foundation aligned approximately east west, built of medium to large roughly-hewn blocks bonded with hard off-white mortar. Up to 0.65m wide. North end truncated by cellar 110. Surviving length 5.85m. Returns to north at east end as foundation 140.
138	Foundation	Truncated wall abutting foundation 140, representing return to north of wall 141. Built of 28 surviving courses of handmade 18 th or 19 th century bricks.
139	Foundation	Right-angled brick foundation. East-west length abuts south face of cellar 110. Longer north-south length abuts south face of foundation 137. Built of handmade bricks measuring 9½ x 4½ x 2½ inches.
140	Foundation	Return to north of foundation 137, represented by up to eight courses of medium to large roughly-hewn blocks bonded with hard white lime mortar. Up to 0.90m wide. Slighted but built up as 141.
141	Wall	North-south brick wall built on slighted foundation 140. Up to 35 courses of 18 th , 19 th , and 20 th century bricks.

Appendix 3 Technical information

The archive

The archive consists of:

17	Context records AS1
6	Fieldwork progress reports AS2
2	Photographic records AS3
1	Drawing number catalogue AS4
1	Context number catalogue AS5
5	Site drawing sheets AS34
2	Trench record sheets AS41
1	Box of finds
1	CD-Rom
1	Bound copy of report

The project archive is intended to be placed at:

Walsall Local History Centre,
Essex Street,
Walsall, WS2 7AS

Tel: 01922 721305
