

Archaeological watching brief at Greenfields, Field Farm Lane, Ipsley, Redditch, Worcestershire



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Background information

<i>Client</i>	Form Construction
<i>National Grid reference</i>	SP 06967 66597
<i>Historic Environment Record reference</i>	WSM 66591
<i>Planning authority</i>	Redditch Borough Council
<i>Reference</i>	2014/247/FUL
<i>Brief</i>	WCC 2014
<i>Project design</i>	WA 2015
<i>Project parameters</i>	CIfA 2014

Archaeological and topographical background.

There has been no previous archaeological work undertaken on site. A HER search was carried out prior to the watching brief. The site lies in the vicinity of the Ancient Settlement of Ipsley (WSM 00052), thought to have Late Iron Age origins and continuity of use up to present day, centred on NGR SP 0673 6659, 200m north-west of the site. Excavations in 1968 prior to the construction of the GPO and a later evaluation in 1994 west of St Peter's Church (Napthan and Hurst 1994; WSM 29821) found evidence of Roman and Post-Roman settlement. Various unstratified finds have also been found around the area including Roman pottery at Ipsley Court (WSM 01096) and a medieval pfennig (coin) in Ipsley Lane (WSM 09751).

The geological bedrock is Mercian Mudstone with no superficial deposits recorded (BGS 2015). The land slopes sharply from the north-west to the south-east with an average height of 76.00m AOD.

Aims

The aim of the watching brief was to observe and record archaeological deposits, and to determine their extent, state of preservation, date and type, as far as reasonably possible. The Brief suggested that significant deposits were those defined as likely to be of Roman date.

Methods

General specification for fieldwork

WA 2012

Sources consulted

Worcestershire HER

Date(s) of fieldwork

23 March 2015

Area of site

c 702m²

Sampling	area observed	c 225m ² . Indicated on Figure 2
	sample size	c 33% of total site area

Dimensions of excavated areas observed –

Foundations	length 15.00m width 13.00m depth 0.30 – 1.20m
Access	length 6.00m width 5.00m depth 0.30m

Access to or visibility of deposits

Observation of the excavated areas was undertaken during machine excavation. The exposed surfaces were sufficiently clean to observe well-differentiated archaeological deposits, though any less clear may not have been identified. Limited space for manoeuvring the machine around the site meant that once the area had been machined and it was clear no significant archaeology was present the machine tracked onto the area to reduce the ground for the floor slab.

Statement of confidence

Access to, and visibility of, deposits allowed a high degree of confidence that the aims of the project have been achieved.

Deposit description

Site area: Building footprint and access area ground reductions

Maximum dimensions: Length: 15.00m Width: 15.00m Depth: 0.30 – 1.20m

Orientation: See Figure 2

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
100	Topsoil	Friable dark greyish brown clayey silt with frequent rooting from trees, modern debris and occasional gravels.	0.00 - 0.20m
101	Subsoil	Compact gravelly yellowish brown silty clay with frequent large rounded pebbles, and occasional rounded boulders. Cut by modern drainage service trench that contains modern brick cbm inclusions.	0.20 – 0.45m
102	Natural	Compact reddish brown clay with occasional blue grey silt mottling. Moderate gravels becoming less gravelly and more sandy with depth. Becoming a brighter red colour with depth in southwest corner. Mercian Mudstone.	0.45 – 1.20m +
103	Made ground	Modern mixed backfill of pond including modern brick rubble, corrugated metal sheeting and other modern rubble debris. Backfill of modern pond in northeast of site. Full depth not reached.	0.20 – 0.50m+
104	Cut for modern pond	Edge between modern backfill and natural deposits. Revealed in plan but not excavated.	0.20 – 0.50m+

Discussion

The archaeological watching brief of ground reduction works observed the soil profile of topsoil, subsoil and the natural undisturbed geological substrate. In the north-east side of the site there was a modern pond that had been backfilled with various rubble and modern debris. The area was also cut by a modern drain service trench (Plates 1–4).

No significant archaeological deposits were observed during the works.

Conclusions

The Romano-British settlement at Ipsley (WSM 00052) did not extend into the study area. There was no evidence of any Romano-British settlement activity or any other significant archaeology within the area that was impacted upon by the ground reduction.

Publication summary

Worcestershire Archaeology has a professional obligation to publish the results of archaeological projects within a reasonable period of time. To this end, Worcestershire Archaeology intends to use this summary as the basis for publication through local or regional journals. The client is requested to consider the content of this section as being acceptable for such publication.

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken on behalf of Form Construction at Greenfields, Field Farm Lane, Ipsley, Redditch, Worcestershire (NGR ref SP 06967 66597; HER ref WSM 66591). A regular soil profile was observed, cut by modern drainage trenches and a modern pond that had been recently backfilled to the north-east of the site, down the slope of the garden. No significant archaeological deposits, features or artefacts were observed, indicating that the Roman settlement previously identified c 200m to the west of the site did not extend into this area.

Acknowledgements

Worcestershire Archaeology would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project, Stephen Rankin (Form Construction), and Aisling Nash (Historic Environment Planning Officer, Worcestershire County Council).

Bibliography

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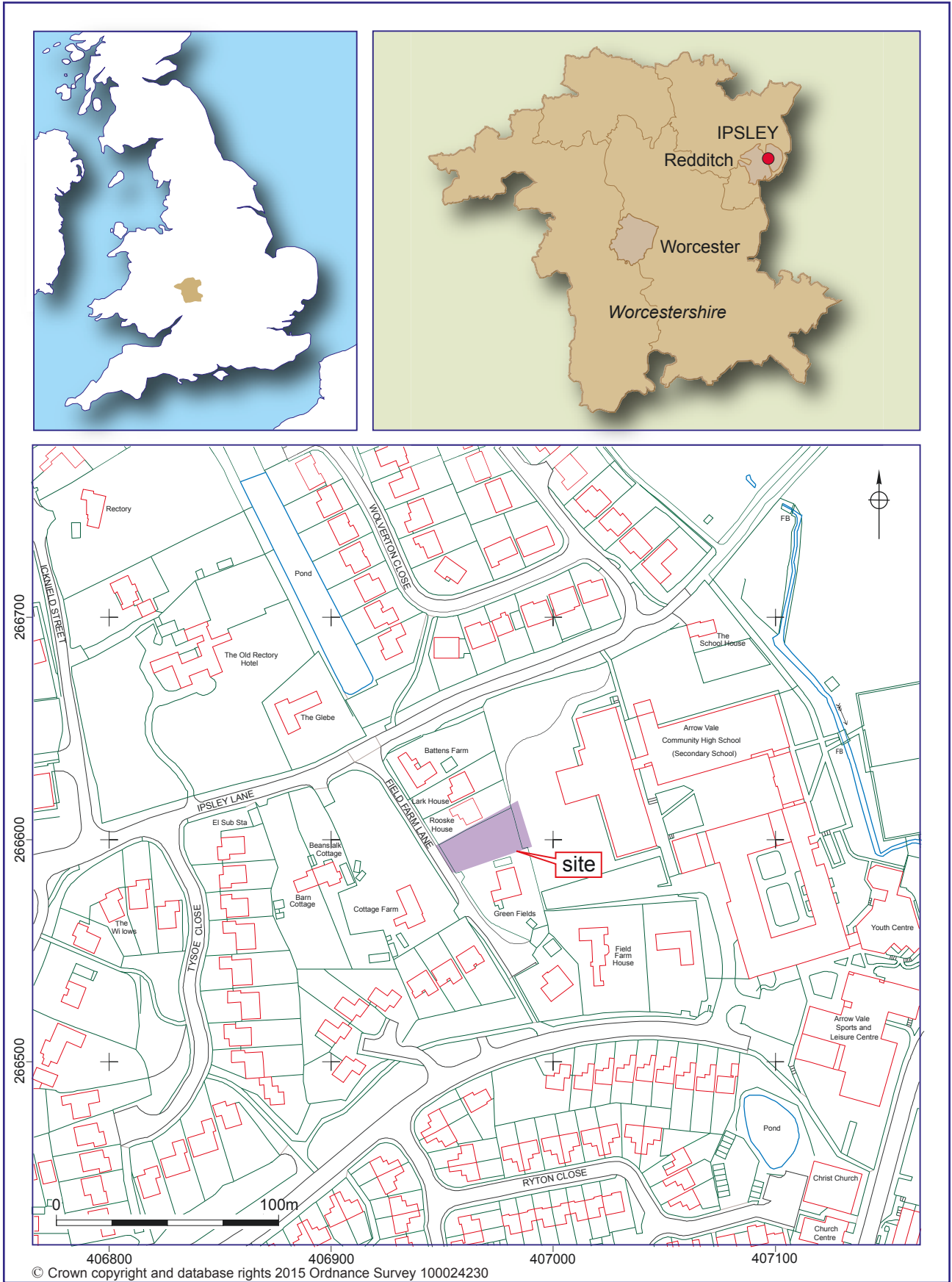
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WCC 2010 *Standards and guidelines for archaeological projects in Worcestershire*, Planning Advisory Section, Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service, Worcestershire County Council unpublished report **604**, amended July 2012

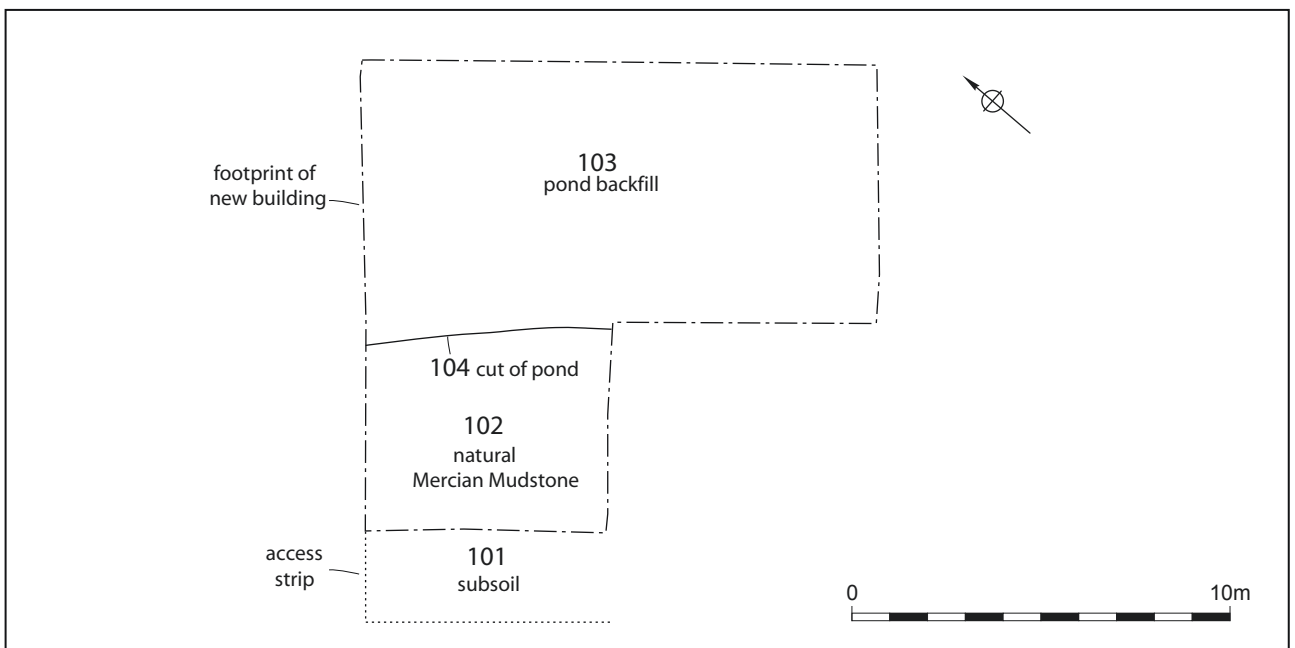
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Figures



Location of the site

Figure 1



Trench location plan and plan of trench

Figure 2

Plates



Plate 1 The site before excavation looking north-east



Plate 2 Excavating the south-west corner of the building footprint



Plate 3 View of south-east side of the building looking west



Plate 4 The south-east facing section of the building showing difference in slope and disturbance from existing tree roots

Appendix 2 Technical information

The archive (site code: WSM 66591)

The archive consists of:

- 1 Field progress reports AS2
- 1 Photographic records AS3
- 13 Digital photographs
- 1 Scale drawings
- 1 Trench record sheets AS41
- 1 Computer disk
- 1 Copy of this report (bound hard copy)

The project archive is intended to be placed at:

Worcestershire County Museum
Museums Worcestershire
Hartlebury Castle
Hartlebury
Near Kidderminster
Worcestershire DY11 7XZ
Tel Hartlebury (01299) 250416