

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING  
BRIEF AT  
LAND TO THE WEST OF  
TANHOUSE LANE, REDDITCH,  
WORCESTERSHIRE



© Worcestershire County Council

Worcestershire Archaeology  
Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service  
The Hive  
Sawmill Walk  
The Butts  
Worcester  
WR1 3PB

Status:  
Date: 24<sup>th</sup> April 2013  
Author: Michael Nicholson – [mnicholson2@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:mnicholson2@worcestershire.gov.uk)  
Illustrator: Carolyn Hunt  
Project reference: P4090  
Report reference: 2005  
HER reference: WSM48210







---

## Archaeological watching brief at Land to the west of Tanhouse Lane, Redditch, Worcestershire

**Michael Nicholson**

### Background information

<i>Client</i>	David Myatt
<i>National Grid reference</i>	SP 0634 6909
<i>Historic Environment Record reference</i>	WSM48210
<i>Planning authority</i>	Redditch Borough Council
<i>reference</i>	R/11/0108
<i>Brief</i>	WA 2012
<i>Project design</i>	WA 2013
<i>Project parameters</i>	IfA 2012

### *Background*

The area of development lies immediately east of Ryknild Street (HER ref WSM30441), the Roman Road from Bourton on the Water in Gloucestershire to Templeborough in South Yorkshire. It lies on the western edge of a field marked as 'Mill Close' on the 1843-4 Tithe map of Beoley.

The site lies approximately 350m to the south west of the Mount at Beoley (WSM00045), which includes the partial remains of an Iron Age Hillfort and Medieval Ringwork.

### *Previous archaeological work on the site*

There has been no previous archaeological work undertaken on the site.

### *Previous archaeological work on associated sites*

An archaeological watching brief (WSM44964) was carried out by Cotswold Archaeology on a site immediately to the west on the opposite side of the Roman road. Here, the metalling of Ryknild Street was found almost directly under the modern tarmac following its line. Two probable marking-out gullies were noted and a roadside ditch was noted in section to the east (Coleman, L. 2011). Approximately 35m to the west an archaeological evaluation (WSM40833) was undertaken which revealed no significant archaeological remains apart from a group of modern pits one of which contained the skeleton of a juvenile pig.

## **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.

## **Methods**

An initial strip of topsoil across the site was undertaken initially. This exposed a subsoil but not the natural substrate and therefore it was resolved that the strip foundations of the houses should be monitored. The foundation strip of one house was monitored but as the strip foundations were over 3m deep, due to the proximity of trees with potentially penetrating roots, the pace of work was extremely slow. It was therefore agreed with Mike Glyde Historic Environment Planning Officer that areas could be opened up to natural or archaeological levels in the footprints of the remaining two houses. Two areas measuring 6m x 3m were opened within these areas.

## General specification for fieldwork

WA 2012a

## Sources consulted

HER

## Dates of fieldwork

12-21 March 2013

## Dimensions of excavated areas observed –

Foundations within plot 3            Length 10.5m

Width 9.8m

Trenches within plots 2 and 3    length 12m

Width 3m

*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 have not been identified. Access to deep trenches was not made for safety reasons.

*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**

Context	Type	Description	Interpretation	Depth (OD or below ground level)
1000	Topsoil	Mid/dark brown silty loam with frequent medium sub-angular stones, occasional charcoal flecks and heavy root disturbance.	Topsoil	Removed prior to excavation
1001	Subsoil	Light grey/brown silty clay with occasional small/medium sub rounded stones, rare charcoal flecks and frequent root disturbance throughout.	Subsoil below 1000	Top soil removed before excavation
1002	Historic Subsoil	Dark grey/brown silty clay with occasional/moderate small/medium sub rounded stones, rare charcoal flecks and frequent root disturbance. No dating evidence recovered.	Historic Subsoil below 1001	0.55-0.78m
1003	Natural	Red clay. No inclusions, homogenous throughout with occasional root disturbance.	Natural below 1002	0.78-2.6m
1004	Natural	Very compact red marl, no inclusions. Homogenous throughout.	Natural below 1003	2.6m+
2000	Subsoil	Mid grey/brown clay loam with rare charcoal flecks, occasional small/medium rounded stones and frequent root disturbance.	Subsoil	Topsoil stripped before excavation

2001	Natural	Red clay with patches of gravels and green clay. Moderate root disturbance.	Natural below 2000	0.52m+
3000	Subsoil	Mid grey/brown clay loam with rare charcoal flecks, occasional small/medium rounded stones and frequent root disturbance.	Subsoil	Topsoil stripped before excavation
3001	Natural	Red clay with patches of gravels and green clay. Moderate root disturbance.	Natural below 3000	0.42m+

## Discussion

The watching brief focused on 3 separate plots for 3 detached 5 bedroom dwellings and associated groundworks. (Fig 2). Each plot revealed a heavily root disturbed top soil (1001) above an homogenous subsoil deposit (1001/2000/3000) of up to 0.55m in depth, overlying a compact clay/marl natural (1003/2001/3001). Within plot 1, below subsoil (1001), a thin layer (0.23m) of dark earth (1002) was observed. This appeared to be restricted to the south west corner of site. No archaeological finds were recovered from this area. Plot 2 produced 1 piece of fragment of hand-made roof tile within subsoil (2001). This was probably post-medieval, although an earlier production date could not be ruled out. Its slight curvature suggested it may have been part of a ridge tile or a pantile (D Williams pers comm). No finds were recovered from plot 3.

## Conclusions

No significant archaeological features, structures or artefacts were identified during the works. The land appears to have been relatively undisturbed, formerly covered with trees and vegetation, except for a broken land drain observed within the subsoil to the very north of site. The results of the watching brief correspond with archaeological works previously undertaken in the vicinity.

It appears the only archaeological feature of note in the immediate vicinity of the site is the Roman Road itself (WSM44964), although well recorded late prehistoric remains survive to the north-east.

## 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 of the groundworks associated with the construction of three houses at land to the west of Tanhouse Lane, Redditch, Worcestershire. (NGR SP 0634 6909, HER ref WSM48210). The foundations of one house plot were observed but due to the proximity of deep rooted trees, very deep excavations were required into natural deposits and the pace of groundworks was consequently slow. It was therefore agreed with the Historic Environment Planning Archaeologist that two areas, each measuring 6m x 3m within the two remaining plots should be stripped of topsoil under archaeological supervision. The foundations trenches and stripped areas revealed between 0.42-0.55m of subsoil above a clay/marl undisturbed natural deposit. Dark silty clay below the subsoil was observed within the south west corner of site but no datable evidence was recovered from this deposit. No significant archaeological features were observed.*

---

## Acknowledgements

Worcestershire Archaeology would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project, David Myatt and the Mike Glyde Historic Environment Planning Archaeologist, Worcestershire County Council.

## Bibliography

Coleman, Laurie 2011 *The Hills, Tanhouse Lane, Redditch*. Cotswold Archaeology, Unpublished document.

IfA 2008 *Standard and guidance for excavation*, Institute for Archaeologists

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

Joyce, Stuart 2009 *Archaeological Evaluation: The Hills, Tanhouse Lane, Redditch*, Worcestershire. Cotswold Archaeology.

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

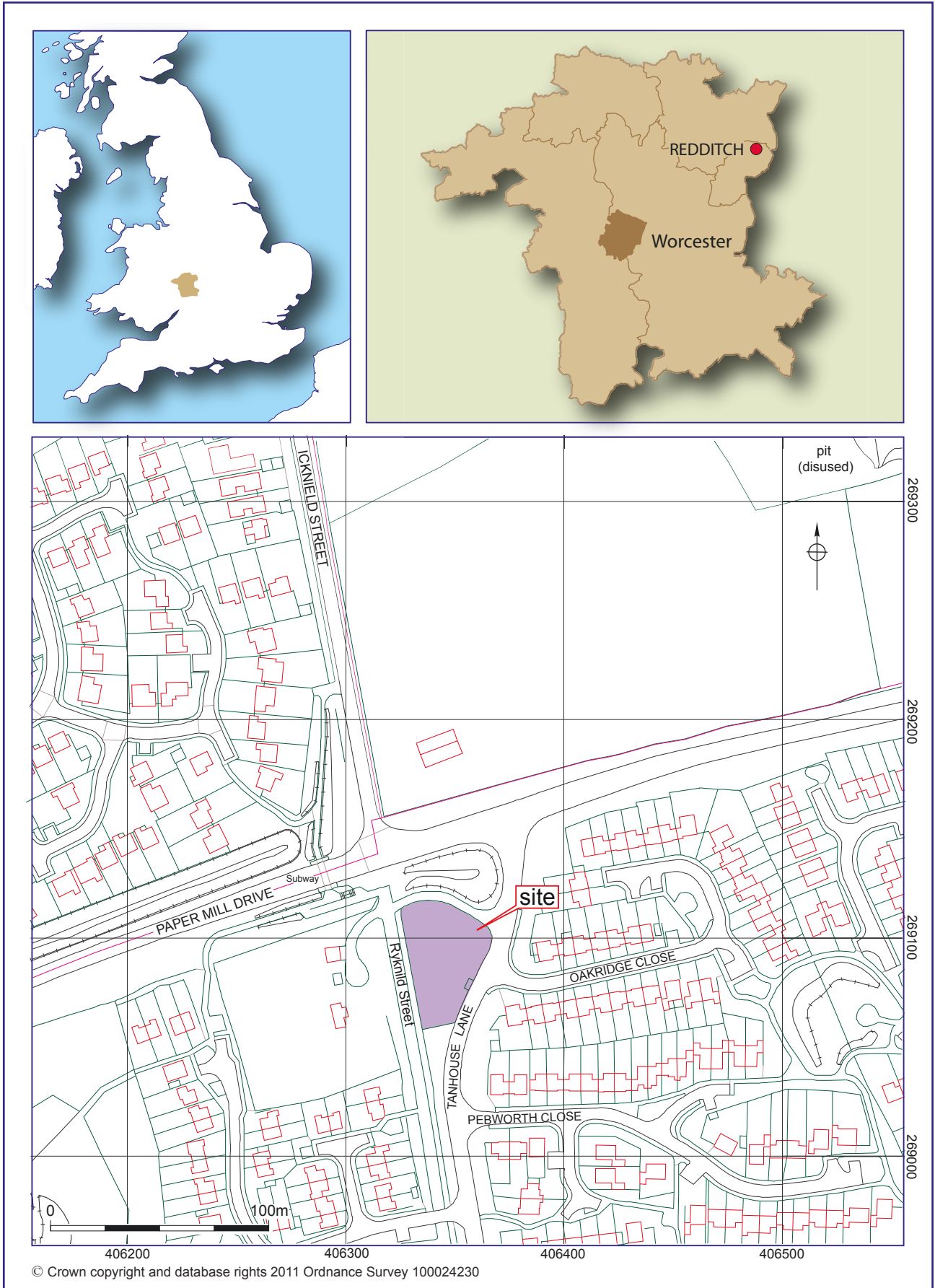
WA 2012a Manual of service practice, recording manual, Worcestershire Archaeology, Worcestershire County Council, report **1842**

WA 2012b *Proposal for an archaeological watching brief at land to the west of Tanhouse lane, Redditch, Worcestershire*, Worcestershire County Council, unpublished document, dated 5 March 2013, **P4090**

WCC 2012c *Requirements for a programme of archaeological work at land to the west of Tanhouse lane, Redditch, Worcestershire*, Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service, Worcestershire County Council, unpublished document dated 2 November 2012

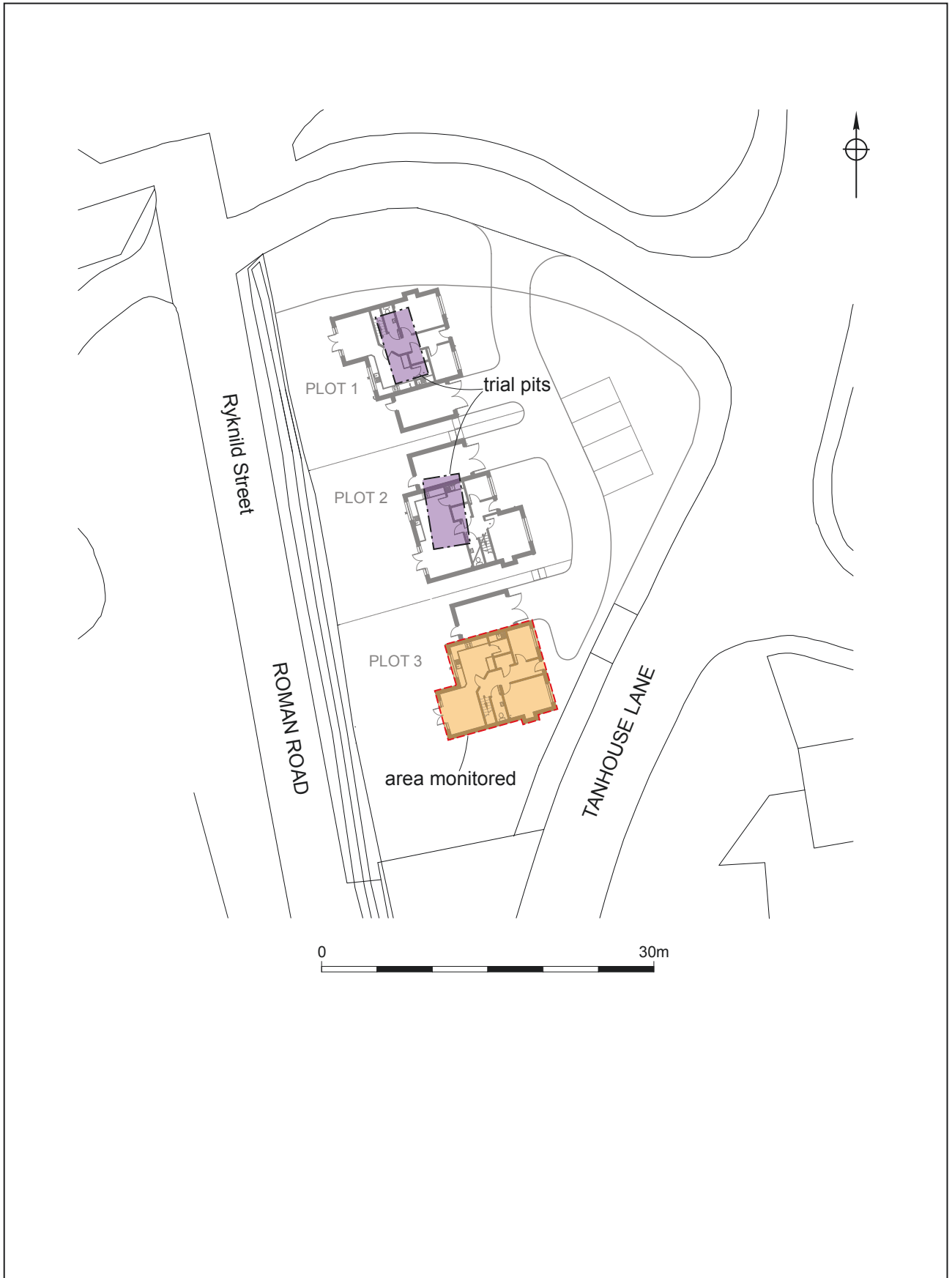


**Figures**



Location of the site

Figure 1



Location of area monitored and trial pits (based upon Thomas White Associates Drg No 1548/01A) Figure 2



## Plates



*Plate 1 Site prior to excavation*



*Plate 2 The site looking north after topsoil has been removed.*





*Plate 3 South West corner of site looking north. Plot 3*



*Plate 4 West facing section of foundation trench within plot 3.*





*Plate 5 General south east looking shot of Plot 3 foundation trenches.*



*Plate 6 Trench within plot 2 looking north.*





*Plate 7 West facing section of trench within plot 2*



*Plate 8 Trench within plot 1 looking north.*





*Plate 9 West facing section of trench within plot 1.*



---

## **Appendix 2 Technical information**

### **The archive (site code: WSM48210)**

The archive consists of:

- 2 Field progress reports AS2
- 2 Photographic records AS3
- 108 Digital photographs
- 2 Scale drawings
- 3 Trench record sheets AS41
- 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