

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING  
BRIEF  
AT  
22 SANSOME PLACE,  
WORCESTER

Sarah Phear, Adam Lee and Angus Crawford

Illustrated by Carolyn Hunt

10<sup>th</sup> May 2007  
revised 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2007

© Historic Environment and Archaeology Service,  
Worcestershire County Council

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



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Project 3024  
Report 1527  
WSM 101508



---

## Archaeological watching Brief at 22 Sansome Place, Worcester.

**Sarah Phear and Adam Lee**

---

### Background information

<i>Client</i>	Quantum Construction Ltd
<i>Site address</i>	22 Sansome Place, Worcester
<i>National Grid reference</i>	SO 8523 5523
<i>Sites and Monuments Record reference</i>	WCM 101508
<i>Planning authority reference</i>	Worcester City Council P06D0267, L06D0043
<i>Brief</i>	WCMAS 2006
<i>Project design</i>	HEAS 2006
<i>Project parameters</i>	IFA 1999

### *Previous archaeological work on the site*

There has been no previous archaeological work undertaken on site, although the site is registered on the Worcester City Historic Environment Record as WCM 98651, as an industrial building, which lies within the larger Lowesmoor Conservation Area.

Building recording has been undertaken as phase one of this project and forms a separate report. It determined that the layout of buildings on the site has altered several times as the use of the site has changed. The building of most notable interest is a red brick building located in the NE corner of the site that was constructed in the mid Victorian period. It formed part of a larger building that ran along the northern part of the site to its western boundary and was probably used by Middleton & Co. wheelwrights and coachbuilders who occupied the site between 1873 and 1928 (Lacey 2007).

### *Previous archaeological work on associated sites*

The site is located immediately outside the medieval and post-medieval suburb of Lowesmoor. Other archaeological works have identified the presence of archaeological remains relating to industrial activity in the vicinity, and a large number of buildings have been recorded.

There is no evidence for prehistoric settlement in the site area based on current evidence.

Little evidence for activity in the Roman period has been recovered close to the site. An evaluation on Lion Court revealed some evidence for a low level of agricultural activity (WCM 100522) in both the Roman and medieval periods, although this is derived from only a few pottery sherds.

A watching brief located to the immediate southeast of the site uncovered a medieval kiln (WCM 86646, WCM 101269) and another watching brief located further south revealed two large medieval pits with stratified archaeological evidence dating to the 11<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> centuries (WCM 100995). This was sealed by a late medieval/early post-medieval gravel surface. Furthermore, medieval activities are recorded through documentary sources, which draw attention to a medieval/post-medieval road (WCM 96307), the orientation of which is currently defined by Lowesmoor Road. A medieval cross is reported to have been located on this road (WCM 96085) close to the kiln locality.

The majority of evidence for activities around the site within Lowesmoor Basin dates from the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards. This includes at least seven houses constructed in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century (WCM 98486, WCM 96647, WCM 96648), as well as buildings used for industrial purposes such as a glove factory (WCM 98623), and numerous houses and shops built in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century (WCM 98669, WCM 96650, WCM 98481, WCM 98484, WCM 98483, WCM 98482). With Lowesmoor Dockyard situated to the immediate north of the site, the area saw a lot of development related to industrial activities in the post-medieval period, evidenced by industrial features, such as a weighing machine (WCM 98265), warehouse buildings (WCM 98270, WCM 98279), as well as socio-cultural features, for instance a school (WCM 98047) and mission hall (WCM98274).

By the Victorian period the area was well settled. On the site itself there were at least three houses with backyards, and an alleyway extending east-west connecting Sansome Place to Lowesmoor (shown on the 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey map of 1884). Examples of other buildings nearby include the Holy Trinity school (WCM 98048), and houses including the port master's house on the dock (WCM 98264, WCM 101010), and also a well (WCM 101269).

---

### **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**

General specification for fieldwork	CAS 1995
Sources consulted	Worcester City HER Sources cited by the HER Lacey 2007 A.D. Horner Ltd Survey map of 22, Sansome Place, Worcester, March 2005, scale 1:100
Date(s) of fieldwork	26 <sup>th</sup> March to 16 <sup>th</sup> April 2007
Area of site	c 876.50m <sup>2</sup>
Dimensions of excavated areas observed	
	Site Strip
	area c 808.50m <sup>2</sup> depth 0.15-0.60m max.

### *Access to or visibility of deposits*

Observation of the excavated areas was undertaken during and after machine excavation. The exposed surfaces were sufficiently clean to observe well-differentiated archaeological deposits, though any less clear may have not been identified.

### *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 – Table 1**

Context	Context type	Feature type	Colour	Texture	Consistency	Description
1000	Deposit	Modern Layer	Mid-Brown	Loamy sand	Loose	Top levelling deposit and/or garden soil deposit.
1001	Cut	Posthole	n/a	n/a	n/a	Modern Cut in corner of car park area for phone pole. Filled by deposit 1002.
1002	Fill	Posthole	Dark Brown	Loamy sand	Loose	Fill of cut 1001.
1003	Deposit	Modern Layer	Light Brown	Sandy clay	Friable	Modern mixed makeup deposit containing cbm rubble and modern ceramics, appears to be demolition material.
1004	Deposit	Modern Layer	Dark Brown	Loamy sand	Loose	Modern deposit containing patches of light brown and dark brown material, cbm, modern pottery and animal bone.
1005	Structure	Wall	Red	n/a	Firm	Brick wall forming north side of alleyway. Frogged bricks, l.b.c stamped on back.
1006	Structure	Wall	Red	n/a	n/a	Same as 1005.
1007	Structure	Wall	Red	n/a	n/a	Same as 1006.
1008	Structure	Wall	Reddy/Brown	n/a	n/a	Same as 1007.
1009	Structure	Wall	Reddy/Brown	n/a	n/a	Same as 1008.
1010	Structure	Wall	Red	n/a	n/a	One row of bricks robbed at east end.
1011	Structure	Wall	Red	n/a	n/a	Same as 1010 but 2 rows thick.
1012	Structure	Wall	Red	n/a	n/a	Same as 1011.
1013	Deposit	Modern Layer	Brown/Grey	Loamy sand	Loose	Modern makeup deposit containing cbm, ash, ceramic fragments etc. and extends over most of northeast area.
1014	Deposit	Modern Layer	Black	n/a	Loose	Mixed cindery-ash deposit with patches of brown clay and cbm fragments. May form internal deposit of Victorian building.
1015	Deposit	Modern Layer	Dark Brown	Clay loam	Loose	Likely backfill deposit of circular feature but has been heavily disturbed during post-Victorian era.

### Artefactual analysis

All hand-retrieved finds were examined and a primary record was made on a Microsoft Access 2000 database. Artefacts were identified, quantified and dated and a *terminus post quem* date produced for each stratified context, where applicable.

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; Hurst 1994).

The pottery assemblage retrieved from the watching brief area consisted of 24 sherds of pottery weighing 947g. In addition fragments of animal bone, bottle glass, plastic and roofing slate were recovered. The group came from five stratified contexts and could be dated from the late post-medieval to modern period (see Table 2). Level of preservation was generally good with the majority of sherds displaying limited abrasion.

Context	Material	Type	Total	Weight
1000	Pottery	Modern	4	115
1003	Pottery	Modern	5	209
1004	Bone	Animal	5	1
1004	Glass	Window	1	3
1004	Plastic	Fragment	1	0.5
1004	Pottery	Modern	6	200
1013	Pottery	Modern	6	418
1013	Pottery	Post-medieval	2	4
1014	Glass	Vessel	2	79
1014	Pottery	Modern	1	1
1014	Slate	Roofing	1	33

Table 2: Quantification of the assemblage

### Discussion of the pottery

All sherds have been grouped and quantified according to fabric type (see Table 3). All sherds were datable by fabric type to their general period or production span.

The discussion below is a summary of the finds and associated location or contexts by period. Where possible, *terminus post quem* dates have been allocated and the importance of individual finds commented upon as necessary.

Context	Common fabric name	Fabric number	Total	Weight (g)
1000	Modern stone china	85	4	115
1003	Modern stone china	85	5	209
1004	Miscellaneous modern wares	101	1	36
1004	Miscellaneous late stonewares	81.4	2	152
1004	Modern stone china	85	3	12
1013	Post-medieval red sandy ware	78	1	2
1013	Miscellaneous late stonewares	81.4	1	11
1013	Porcelain	83	2	404
1013	Creamware	84	1	2
1013	Modern stone china	85	3	3
1014	Modern stone china	85	1	1

Table 3: Quantification of the pottery by fabric

### Post-medieval period

Only two sherds of pottery were identified as post-medieval in date. Both were from context 1013 and consisted of a single sherd of post-medieval red sandy ware (fabric 78 dating to the 18<sup>th</sup> century) and a single sherd of creamware (fabric 84 dating from 1760-1790). Context 1013 also contained pottery sherds of 20<sup>th</sup> century date indicating that both sherds are of residual 18<sup>th</sup> century pottery.

---

## Modern period

The remaining twenty-two pottery sherds were of common modern domestic types from cups and plates. The dominant fabric was modern stone china (fabric 85). All of these sherds were datable to the late 19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century and displayed various transfer prints or hand-painted floral designs. The second largest fabric group was of miscellaneous late stonewares (fabric 81.4) in the form of a jam jar, a serving bowl and a possible bottle sherd. All of the miscellaneous modern stoneware could be dated to the late 19<sup>th</sup> to mid 20<sup>th</sup> century in date.

The remaining modern sherds consisted of a large fragment of porcelain (fabric 83) wash basin of 20<sup>th</sup> century date, a porcelain cup rim dating from the late 19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century and the base of a flower pot of miscellaneous modern ware (fabric 101) also dating from the late 19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century.

## Other finds

The remaining material consisted of two shards of 20<sup>th</sup> century glass bottle, animal bone, a roofing slate fragment and modern plastic.

---

## Discussion

After removal of topsoil/levelling deposit 1000 in the SE and NW of the development site a series of walls and deposits were observed (Fig 2). The area to the SE contained two modern deposits 1013 and 1014, which would appear to be material spread over the site after the demolition of earlier buildings on the site. The pottery recovered from deposits 1013 and 1014 dated these contexts to the late 19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century.

In the centre of the development area a circular deposit 1015 was identified. This deposit was very loose and is thought to be the location of a circular stone identified on the A.D. Horner survey undertaken in 2005. The circular stone and any foundations were removed prior to archaeological monitoring. Therefore all that remained was the recently infilled circular hollow where the stone would have been set in the ground.

The area stripped to the NW of the development site revealed a number of brick walls (Fig 2). Two walls 1005 and 1006 running parallel to each other are the remains of an alleyway that appears on both the 1<sup>st</sup> edition OS map of 1884 and the 1928 map. Two other walls 1008 and 1009 in the NW corner of the site again match up with buildings that appear on the aforementioned OS maps. Running off wall 1008 to the SE are 4 walls: 1007, 1010, 1011 and 1012. It is not known what these walls relate to as they do not appear on the OS maps. At the northern end of wall 1005 several walls run off to the NE. The northernmost three walls relate to part of a mid-Victorian building that was joined to the existing building in the NE corner of the site. The southernmost wall formed part of another building. All of these walls again appear on the OS maps. The walls identified in the development area considered to date to the Victorian Period (Fig 3). Deposit 1003 identified in the NW part of the site within the brick walls was dated to the late 19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century and is conjectured to derive from the demolition of the Victorian buildings on the site.

The strip foundations for the new building were excavated to a depth of 0.55-0.60m within modern post-Victorian deposits. Pile foundations were also used. These piles were driven in to the ground and therefore any archaeological deposits through which they were driven could not be observed.

No structures, horizons or deposits predating the 19<sup>th</sup> century were identified, nor was the natural undisturbed matrix observed at any stage.

---

## Conclusions and significance

---

The watching brief at 22, Sansome Place revealed a series of walls, many of which appear on the 1<sup>st</sup> edition and 1928 SO map, and would appear to be Victorian in date. The deposits identified appear to all be modern post-Victorian demolition material that has been spread across the site to level and raise up the ground surface. The footings were not excavated deep enough to impact on earlier deposits and therefore a definitive statement regarding the presence or absence of pre-Victorian deposits, structures or features cannot be made.

The finds assemblage is indicative of general household rubbish discard in the latter 18<sup>th</sup> century and particularly late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The remains identified on site are therefore considered to be of low archaeological significance.

---

### **Publication summary**

The Service has a professional obligation to publish the results of archaeological projects within a reasonable period of time. To this end, the Service 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 Quantum Construction Ltd at 22, Sansome Place, Worcester (NGR SO 8523 5523; HER ref. WCM 101508). During ground works on a series of walls and deposits were identified. Many of the walls appear on the 1<sup>st</sup> edition OS map of 1884 and probably all relate to previous Victorian buildings. The deposits identified are thought to relate to demolition of these buildings and others which occupied the site in the late 19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century. The ground works were undertaken to a maximum depth of 0.60m and did not reveal deposits or structures pre-dating the Victorian period, nor the natural matrix. All finds recovered were residual, date from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards and relate to the discard of domestic rubbish.*

---

### **Acknowledgements**

The Service would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project, Quantum Construction Ltd, Peter Wardle (The Historic Environment Consultancy) and James Dinn (Archaeological Officer, Worcester City Museum Archaeology Section).

---

### **Bibliography**

Bryant, V 2004 Medieval and early post-medieval pottery in Dalwood, H, and Edwards, R. *Excavations at Deansway 1988-89*, CBA Res Rep, 139, pp 281-331

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

HEAS 2006 *Proposal for an archaeological evaluation and building recording at 22 Sansome Place, Worcester*, Historic Environment and Archaeology Service, Worcestershire County Council, unpublished document dated 13<sup>th</sup> December 2006, **P3024**

Hurst, J D 1994 Ceramic building material, in Woodiwiss, S (ed), *Iron Age and Roman salt production and the medieval town of Droitwich*. CBA Res Rep **81**, pp 155-157

---



---

Hurst, J D, and Rees, H 1992 Pottery fabrics; a multi-period series for the county of Hereford and Worcester, in Woodiwiss, (ed), Iron Age and Roman salt production and the medieval town of Droitwich. CBA Res Rep **81**, pp200-209

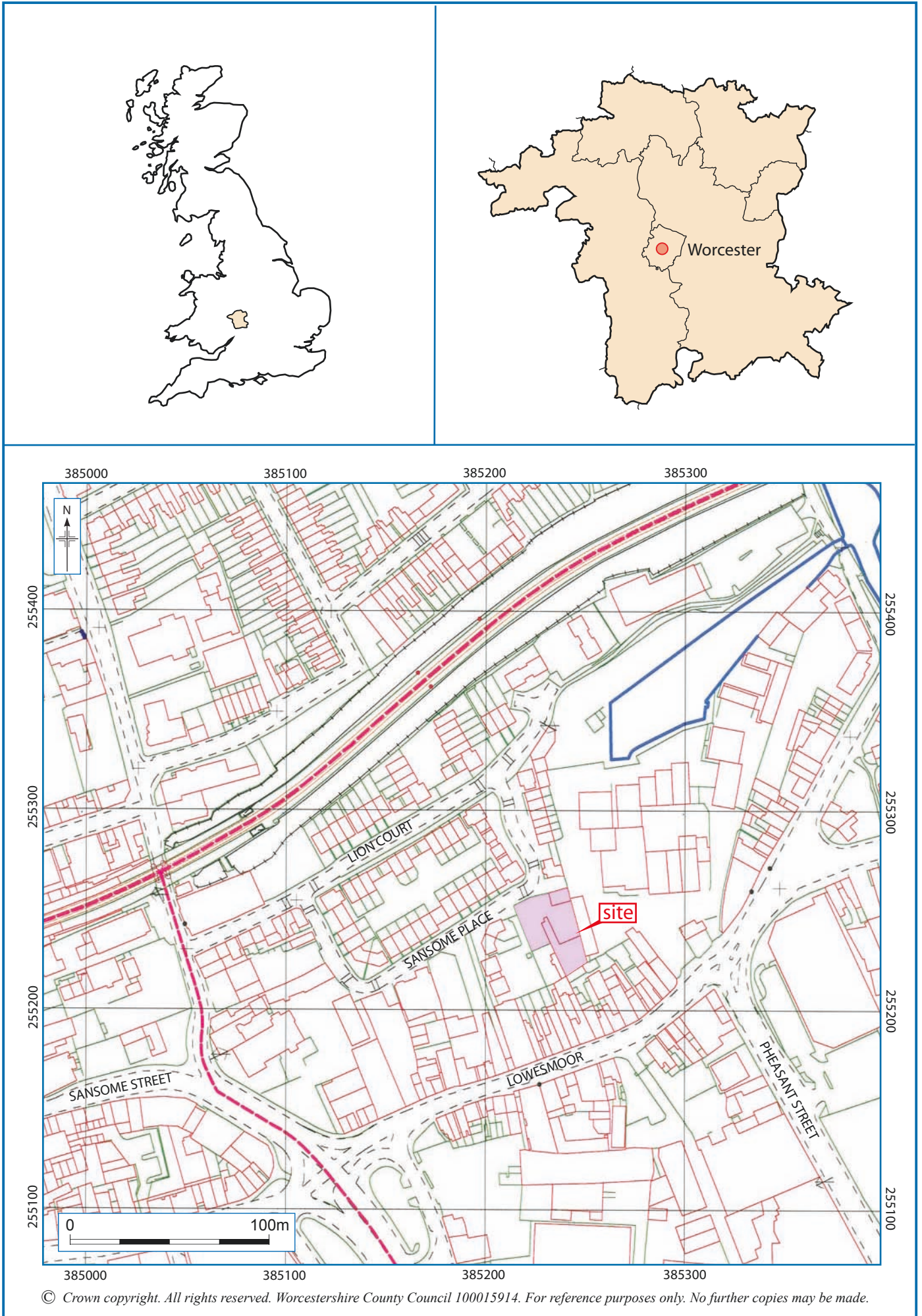
IFA 1999 *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief*, Institute of Field Archaeologists

Lacey, C 2007 *Building Recording: 22, Sansome Place, Worcester*, The Historic Environment Consultancy, unpublished report, dated 28<sup>th</sup> March 2007

WCMAS 2006 *Brief for an archaeological building investigation and recording and field evaluation at 22 Sansome Place, Worcester*, Worcester City Museum Archaeology Section, Worcester City Council unpublished document dated 12<sup>th</sup> December 2006

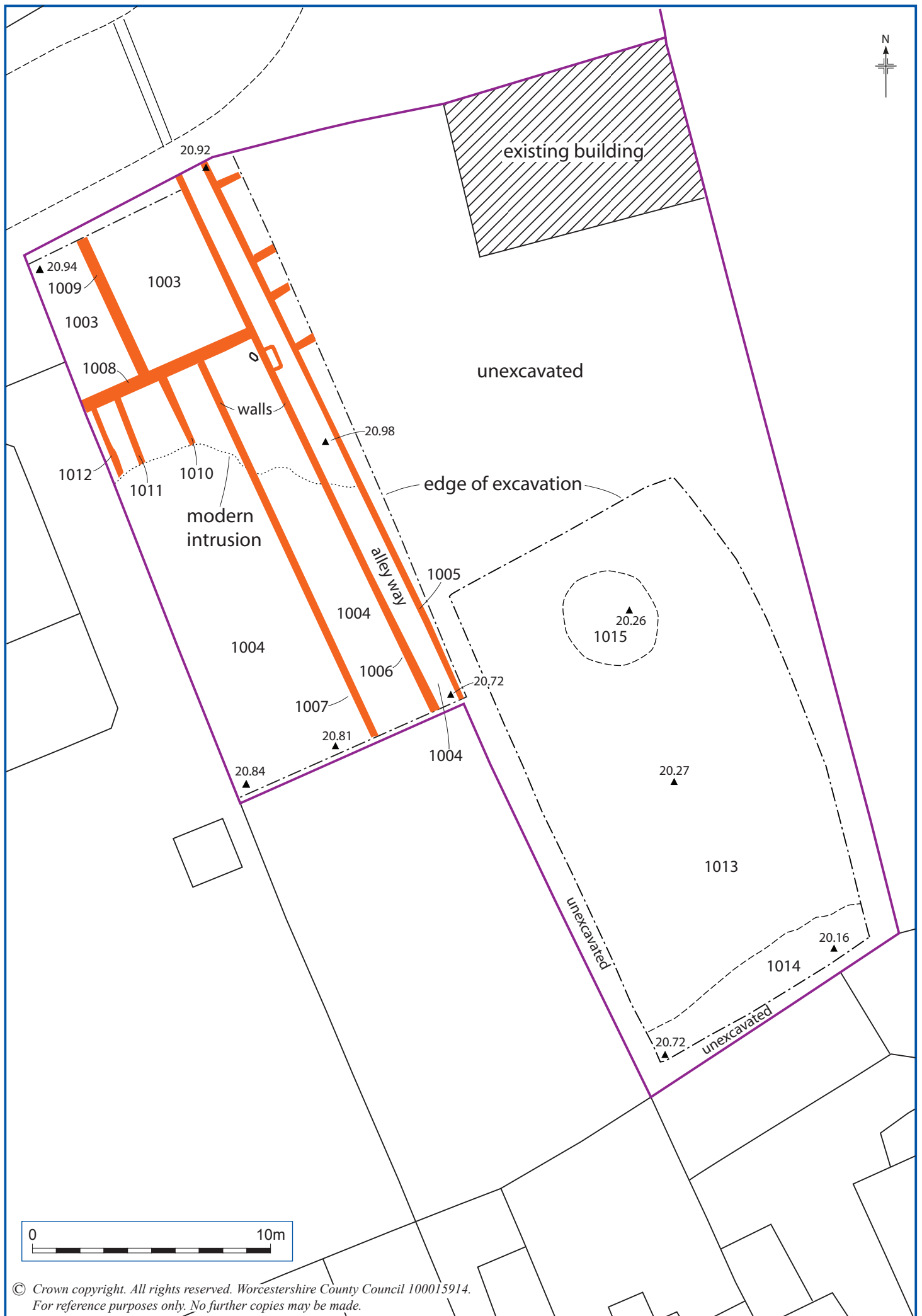
---





Location of the site.

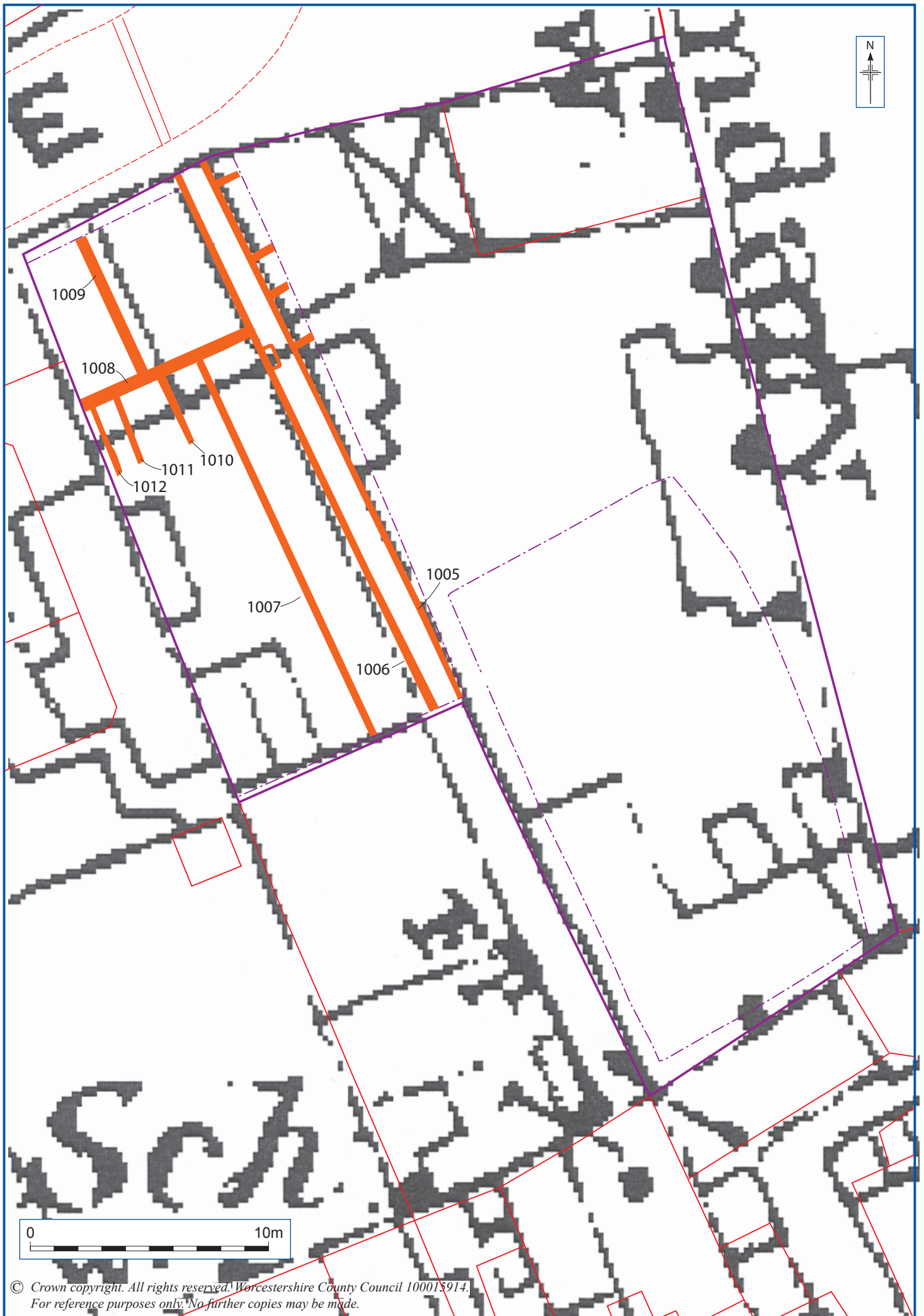
Figure 1



Detailed plan of excavated area

Figure 2





Extract from 1st Edition Ordnance Survey (1884) with detail from Fig 2 overlain

Figure 3



---

## Plates



**Plate 1:** The walls revealed in the NW part of the site after machining.



**Plate 2:** The SE part of the site after machining.





**Plate 3:** Installation of the driven piles in the SE part of the site.



**Plate 4:** The shallow footings excavated in the SE part of the site



---

## Appendix 1 Technical information

### The archive

The archive consists of:

15	Context records (Digital Format)
4	Fieldwork progress records AS2
2	Photographic records AS3
60	Digital Photographs
1	Scale drawings
1	Box of finds

The project archive is intended to be placed at:

Worcester City Museum and Art Gallery  
Foregate Street  
Worcester  
WR1 2PW

Tel. Worcester (01905) 25371

## **Addendum**

It was originally recommended that the archaeological investigation of the site take the form of a trial trench evaluation, in advance of development (WCMAS 2006). However initial site inspection identified the presence of ground contamination and syringes (pers comm Peter Wardle). Thus the investigation was modified to take the form of a watching brief of the developer's reduced level dig and foundation trenches. Service involvement on the site commenced after the site had been cleared of all vegetation; the standing structures had been demolished and associated floor surfaces taken up.