

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING
BRIEF
AT
CHURCH HOUSE FARM,
CLIFTON-UPON-TEME,
WORCESTERSHIRE.

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Project 2978
Report 1498
WSM 35800

Archaeological Watching Brief at Church House Farm, Clifton-Upon-Teme, Worcestershire

Background information

<i>Client</i>	Severn Trent Water Limited
<i>Site address</i>	Church House Farm, Clifton-Upon-Teme, Worcestershire
<i>National Grid reference</i>	SO 7168 6154
<i>Historic and Environmental Record reference</i>	WSM 35800
<i>Brief</i>	N/A
<i>Project parameters</i>	IFA 1999

Previous archaeological work on the site

There has been no previous archaeological work undertaken on site.

Archaeological background

Clifton-Upon-Teme has been the subject of a recent survey undertaken as part of the Central Marches Historic Towns Survey, which established the extent of the historic town and contains a summary of previous archaeological work in the village (Dalwood 1996).

There are two recorded historic features close to the site. These are two fishponds to the east of Church House Farm (WSM 11882), both of which appear on the Tithe Map of 1845. The other record (WSM 21474) relates to earthworks west of Church House Farm that consist of a hollow way and associated settlement features, both of which have been dated to the medieval period (AD 1066 to 1539). These earthworks are of particular interest as they continue within the current development area.

Few archaeological investigations have been undertaken within the village. Observation of drainage works within St Kenelm's churchyard revealed only modern disturbance and grave cuts (Wichbold 1993; WSM 21955).

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	HER Sources cited by the HER
Date(s) of fieldwork	26 th – 29 th September 2006
Area of site strip	c 263.76m ²
Dimensions of trenching observed	Topsoil strip length 81.20m width 3.60m depth 0.25m Pipe trench 1 length 96.6m width 0.60m depth 1.00m

Access to or visibility of deposits

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

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	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s)
100	Topsoil	Firm Mid Grey Brown Sandy Silt. Occasional small - medium rounded stones. Occasional small-large lumps of angular yellow grey sandstone. Occasional charcoal flecks.	0-0.25m
101	Subsoil	Firm Mid Orange Brown Sandy Silt. Moderate small-large lumps of angular yellow grey sandstone.	0.25-0.40m
102	Natural	Firm/Concrete Light Red/Yellow Grey Sandstone with patches and bands of Grey Silt.	0.61m +
103	Hollow Way	Cut of Hollow Way/Track Way leading to deserted medieval village. Linear feature running NE/SW. Very shallow 'U' shape profile with concave sides and base. Feature contains one fill (104).	0.25-0.47m
104	Hollow Way	Fill of Hollow Way 103. Firm Dark Brown Sandy Silt. Frequent small-large angular lumps of yellow grey sandstone. Occasional small-medium rounded and angular stones. Occasional charcoal flecks.	0.25-0.47m

Topsoil 100 was observed over the whole trench at the same depth and sealed subsoil 101. The subsoil was also observed over the whole trench, although this deposit varied in depth. Subsoil 101 sealed natural deposit 102. Hollow Way 103 was cut into subsoil 101 and sealed by topsoil 100.

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.

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 excavated area consisted of 16 sherds of pottery weighing 439g. In addition fragments of brick, clay tobacco pipe, glass and iron were recovered. The group came from three stratified contexts and could be dated from the medieval to post-medieval periods (see Table 1). Level of preservation was generally good with the majority of sherds displaying only moderate levels of abrasion.

Context	Material	Type	Total	Weight (g)
100	Clay tobacco pipe	Bowl	1	8
100	Glass	Post-medieval	1	40
100	Iron	Blade (sythe)	1	268
100	Pottery	Post-medieval	6	163
101	Pottery	Med	2	83
104	Brick	Post-medieval	3	305
104	Clay tobacco pipe	Bowl	2	8
104	Clay tobacco pipe	Stem	4	20
104	Glass	Post-medieval	1	15
104	Pottery	Post-medieval	8	193

Table 1: Quantification of the assemblage

Discussion of the pottery

All sherds have been grouped and quantified according to fabric type (see Table 2). All pottery sherds were datable by fabric type to their general period or production span. Where mentioned, all specific forms are referenced to the type series within the report for Deansway, Worcester (Bryant 2004).

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	Fabric	Fabric name	Total	Weight (g)
100	78	Post-medieval red sandy ware	4	119
100	90	Post-medieval orange ware	2	44
101	55	Worcester-type sandy unglazed ware	1	29
101	64.1	Worcester-type sandy glazed ware	1	54
104	78	Post-medieval red sandy ware	8	193

Table 2: Quantification of the pottery by fabric

Medieval

Only two sherds within the assemblage were identified as medieval and both came from context 101. These consisted of a single rim sherd of Worcester-type unglazed ware cooking pot (fabric 55) and a body sherd of Worcester-type glazed ware (fabric 64.1). The Worcester-type unglazed cooking pot is of everted rim type and could be dated to the 12th–14th century. The Worcester-type glazed ware had no evident diagnostic features and therefore could only be dated to its period of production of between the late 11th to 14th centuries.

Post-medieval

The post-medieval pottery assemblage consisted of twelve sherds of post-medieval red sandy ware (fabric 78, contexts 100 and 104) dating to the 17th–18th century and two sherds of post-medieval orange ware (fabric 90, context 100) dating to the 18th century. All sherds were representative of domestic wares which included tankard and plate fragments.

Other finds

The remainder of the assemblage consisted of mid 17th to 18th century brick fragments (context 104), 18th century bottle glass (contexts 100 and 104), clay tobacco pipe fragments (contexts 100 and 104) dating from 1660-1680 and a section of blade from a scythe (potentially 17th-18th century).

Date range	Material	Total	Weight (g)	Specialist report?	Important research assemblage?
L11-14th c	Pottery	1	54	Y	N
	Iron	1	268	Y	N
12-14th c	Pottery	1	29	Y	N
1660-1680	Clay tobacco pipe	1	8	Y	N
1660-80	Clay tobacco pipe	2	8	Y	N
17-18th c	Pottery	12	312	Y	N
17th c	Glass	1	40	Y	N
18th c	Clay tobacco pipe	4	20	Y	N
18th c	Pottery	2	44	Y	N
18th-19th c	Glass	1	15	Y	N
M17th-18th	Brick	3	305	Y	N

Table 3: Summary of the assemblage

Discussion

The site is situated within the extent of the historic town of Clifton-upon-Teme and HER records show that the field through which the sewer pipe runs contains the remains of a shrunken medieval village. The shrunken medieval village consists of a complex of earthworks including several hollow ways and building platforms (WSM 21474).

During the excavation of the sewer trench (Fig 2) a hollow way [103] running NE-SW, from the road to the SW of the site to the shrunken medieval village, was observed (Plate 2). The pottery and other finds recovered from this feature were dated to the post-medieval period and are considered as general rubbish discard. However it is probable that this feature is of an earlier, medieval date, contemporary with the shrunken medieval village. The hollow way would have continued to be used into the 17th and 18th, which accounts for the date of the finds.

Two sherds of medieval pottery were recovered from subsoil (101) and were dated to the 12th–14th century. They are likely to have derived from activity associated with the shrunken medieval village. The sherds may have been ploughed out of a specific archaeological feature or may be residual material from activity adjacent.

Conclusions

The location of the sewer pipe trench was such that it missed the main focus of the shrunken medieval village (Fig 2) and therefore it remains largely preserved. During the excavation of the sewer trench no specific medieval settlement features were encountered (Plate 1). The field containing the former medieval settlement remains appears to have been used as pasture during the 20th century as the earthworks remain pronounced and the site does not appear to have been deep ploughed at any stage.

The artefacts recovered from contexts 100 and 104 are suggestive of general rubbish discard during the 17th and 18th century and are of little archaeological significance. However the medieval pottery sherds from context 101 would indicate potential medieval archaeological deposit on or in the immediate vicinity of the watching brief.

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 Severn Trent Water Limited at Church House Farm, Clifton-Upon-Teme, Worcestershire (NGR: SO 7168 6154; HER ref. WSM 35800). During excavation of the sewer pipe trench an earthwork was identified and interpreted as a hollow way leading to the deserted former medieval settlement remains west of Church House Farm. The artefacts recovered from hollow way were dated to the post-medieval period but it is likely that this feature is of medieval date and continued to be used into the 17th and 18th. No defined medieval layers or features were identified, although two residual medieval pottery sherds were recovered from the subsoil, which may relate to the settlement activity or later agricultural activity.

Archive

Fieldwork progress records AS2	3
Photographic record sheets	2
Digital photographs	71
Abbreviated context records AS40	1
Trench records AS41	1
Drawings	1
Boxes of finds	1
Computer disks	1

The project archive is intended to be placed at:	Worcestershire County Museum Hartlebury Castle, Hartlebury Near Kidderminster Worcestershire DY11 7XZ
telephone	01299 250416

Acknowledgements

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Plates



Plate 1: North West section of excavated pipe trench, showing original sewer pipe.



Plate 2: Excavated section of pipe trench through Hollow Way 103. The dark deposit 104 filling the Hollow way is visible in the top of the trench.