

DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT  
OF LAND OFF  
MAIN STREET,  
OFFENHAM,  
WORCESTERSHIRE

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## **Desk-based assessment of land off Main Street, Offenham, Worcestershire**

**Fiona Keith-Lucas**

### **Summary**

A desk-based assessment was undertaken of land off Main Street, Offenham, Worcestershire (centred on NGR SP 054 458). It was undertaken on behalf of Barratt / David Wilson Mercia, who intends to develop the site with thirty new houses, together with associated roads, sewers, drainage, planting and paving, etc., for which a planning application will be submitted.

This report describes and assesses the significance of the heritage assets (and potential heritage assets) that may be affected by the application. The setting of heritage assets is considered. The potential impact of the application, and the need for further on-site evaluation, is assessed.

The triangular parcel of land lies at a strategic location between roads that converge west towards a historic river crossing of the River Avon. Lying on fertile and well-drained soils, the surrounding area has widespread evidence of prehistoric settlement and activity, from excavation, find spots and cropmarks. Within 400m of the proposed development lies the site of a Roman cemetery from which 20 skeletons were excavated in 1887. With further evidence of Roman activity in the area, and the situation of the site on a possible Roman road from the ford to Icknield Street, Roman archaeology may well be expected here. The site lies just to the south of the medieval village of Offenham, which is known to have Saxon origins. The built area of the village does not seem to have extended this far south, but the site would have been involved in the agricultural life of the medieval village and its hinterland. During the post-medieval period the area has depended heavily on market gardening, and the site is known to have supported an apple orchard. It was otherwise undeveloped. It now stands as meadow, and has the potential to contain archaeological deposits from any or all of the aforementioned periods.

## Report

### 1. Background

#### 1.1 Reasons for the project

A desk-based assessment was undertaken of land off Main Street, Offenham, Worcestershire (centred on NGR SP 054 458; Fig 1). It was undertaken on behalf of Barratt / David Wilson Mercia, who propose to develop the site with thirty new houses, together with associated roads, sewers, drainage, planting and paving, etc., for which a planning application will be submitted to Wychavon District Council.

The proposed development site is considered to include potential heritage assets with archaeological interest, the significance of which may be affected by the proposed development.

The project conforms to the project proposal including detailed specification, prepared by the Service (WA 2012). The project also conforms to the *Standard and guidance for archaeological desk-based assessment* (IfA 2008), and the *Standards and guidelines for archaeological projects in Worcestershire* (HEAS 2010).

The event reference for this desk-based assessment given by the HER is WSM 47372.

#### 1.2 Aims

The general aims of this desk-based assessment are to:

- collect relevant information relating to the archaeological potential of the proposed development area;
- assess the potential significance of any archaeological remains and the built heritage;
- assess the impact of the proposed development on these archaeological remains and the built heritage;
- recommend mitigation measures to offset detrimental effects of the development

#### 1.3 Methods

##### 1.3.1 Documentary research

All relevant information on the history of the site and past land-use was collected and assessed. Records of known archaeological sites and monuments were obtained from Worcestershire Historic Environment Record (HER). Historic maps, published sources and archives were consulted at Worcestershire Archive.

##### 1.3.2 Other methods

A site visit was undertaken on 23 July 2012. The site and surrounding area were inspected on foot in dry, bright weather conditions. Digital photographs were taken to inform the compilation of this report, a selection of which are presented as plates below.

Consultation has been undertaken with the Mike Glyde (Historic Environment Planning Officer, Worcestershire County Council), to establish the key issues of importance in decision-making in response to the planning application.

#### 1.4 Results

The results of the HER search (each with a specific reference beginning WSM) are mapped on Figures 2 and 3, and the details of individual features of the historic environment are given in the Appendix. Data entries of 'Events' such as the photographic survey of a historic building which essentially repeats the information already presented for that building, have been omitted from the Figures, but these were given due consideration and have been retained in the Appendix for completeness.

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## 2. **The application site**

### 2.1 **Location**

The site comprises a sub-triangular portion of land along the south-west frontage of Main Street, Offenham. It is bounded by the rear of properties off Ferry Lane to the north and Boat Lane to the south (centred on National Grid reference SP 054 458; Fig 1). The study site is situated to the south of the village of Offenham, just to the east of a historic crossing of the River Avon. For the purposes of this assessment, heritage assets within 500m of the site have been considered in order to provide a broader understanding of the local context.

### 2.2 **Topography, geology and soils**

The site lies on the floodplain to the east of the River Avon and north of the Broadway Brook tributary. It comprises an area of generally flat ground, at a height of 29m AOD.

The bedrock geology is of the carbonate-rich Blue Lias and Charmouth Mudstone Foundations (British Geological Society 2012). The soils of the area belong to the Wick 1 Soil Association (541r). The Soil Survey of England and Wales (1983) notes that these comprise 'deep well-drained coarse loamy soils and sandy soils, locally over gravel, some similar soils affected by groundwater, with a slight risk of water erosion, over parent material of glaciofluvial or river terrace drift'. Soils of the Wick series are classified with typical brown earths. They are extensive on low terraces along the Rivers Avon, Severn and Arrow and are very good arable soils supporting a wide range of crops including cereals, oilseed rape, root crops, hops and vegetables (Beard *et al* 1986).

### 2.3 **Current land-use**

The site currently lies largely empty and has run to meadow (Plate 1). A single dwelling and barn both stand derelict (Plate 2). The westernmost portion of the proposed development area is totally overgrown, with mature fruit trees from a previous orchard lost amongst the foliage. There are no hedgerows present on the site.

## 3. **Archaeological and architectural interest in the site**

### 3.1 **Terms and definitions**

The term 'heritage asset' is applied to elements of the historic environment that have significance because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic merit. Heritage assets include designated assets such as Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Listed Buildings, and undesignated assets that may be of equal significance. The term 'potential heritage asset' is used to denote undesignated assets that may exist in the form of archaeological deposits.

### 3.2 **Designated heritage assets**

There are no designated heritage assets within the proposed development site, but there are numerous listed buildings within the village of Offenham, centred to the north of the site. Those which fall within a 500m radius of the study site are plotted in Figure 2 and covered below.

Offenham has origins before the medieval period, although the standing buildings date from the 14<sup>th</sup> century onwards. The village grew around the Grade II listed church of St Mary and St Milburgh (WSM 02814). Its foundations pre-date the church that stands today, which was largely rebuilt in 1861. This rebuild was guided by the prolific church restorer Frederick Preedy who was native to the village. All that now remains of the medieval building is the tower. A recent attempt was made to use dendrochronology (tree ring analysis) to date some of the timbers (Bridge 2010), but this was unsuccessful so the postulated date of 15<sup>th</sup> century remains.

To the north of the church stands the cottage 'Longthatch' (WSM 26413), where two houses have been combined, including a cruck framed hall house probably dating from the 14<sup>th</sup>

century (Watson 1989). There is a striking Grade II listed thatched terrace (WSM 20447) on Main Street which dates, in part, from the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The northernmost house of this terrace, called 'Old Timbers', contains a true cruck amongst its later rebuilds. The other parts of the terrace preserve elements that may also date from this period, but more definitely include structural elements from the 16<sup>th</sup> through to the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The more southerly section of this terrace is listed separately (Cottage Row; WSM 38123) and dates mainly from the early 18<sup>th</sup> century.

In close proximity lie four further listed buildings within the study site; many more can be found further north. The Malt House, Milburgh House, Halfthatch and Greywalls (WSM 38300, 20448, 38097 and 38099) are all Grade II listed and date from the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

### 3.3 Undesignated heritage assets

Specific evidence is given below of undesignated heritage assets within a 500m radius of the study site. These have been divided into archaeological period to further inform the assessment of potential buried archaeological deposits.

#### 3.3.1 Prehistoric

There is widespread evidence for prehistoric activity and settlement in the vicinity. The well-drained soils have attracted settlement throughout the prehistoric period (Jackson and Dalwood 2007), and the ford on the River Avon (WSM 25302) is considered very likely to have been used as a crossing point in prehistory.

The HER record for the parish of Evesham includes reference to a leaf-shaped flint arrow head which, although classified on the database as Iron Age (WSM 21048), is almost certainly Neolithic in origin. Unfortunately its provenance is unknown, as is also the case for a Neolithic blackstone axe (WSM 35820) which is thought to now reside in Birmingham University Geological Museum.

Later prehistoric remains have been found within 500m of the site. A Bronze Age archer's wrist guard (WSM 02812) was discovered in gravels just to the south of the study site, along with what appears to be evidence of roundhouses. To the north-west of the study site, just west of the church, cropmarks (WSM 02811, 02813 and 05484) have also been observed. These show a ring ditch, rectangular enclosure and probable droveway. It is possible that these originate in the Romano-British period, but a prehistoric, probably Iron Age, date is thought more likely for these features.

#### 3.3.2 Romano-British

The Roman road of Icknield Street, known locally as Buckle Street, runs south from Alcester. Tomes (Cox 1953) traces a secondary Roman road branching west from Icknield Street, passing through the Littletons and Offenham to the ford just west of the site. This seems to have taken the route of Three Cocks Lane which practically borders the site to the north. This would have taken traffic from Worcester to London and was essentially the precursor to the modern A44.

A not inconsiderable amount of Roman archaeology is known from the study area and its surroundings. Of particular note is a Romano-British cemetery (WSM 02827) around 400m south of the proposed development site. Twenty skeletons were discovered here in 1887, along with associated artefacts (WSM 34735) including samian pottery, flue tiles and a range of Roman coins, predominantly from the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries. Cox (1953) also mentions that 'several odd [Roman] skeletons have also been found in this area; three of these were headless and one was found lying on a slab'. It is unclear, however, whether these are additional to the 20 previously recorded. To the north of the site, finds have been recovered that are potentially indicative of a Romano-British settlement (WSM 02810), including a large key and coins from Tiberius (AD 14-37) to Allectus (AD 293-6), whilst further Romano-British finds have been recovered close to the ford (WSM 07336).

More broadly, the parishes that are represented in the study area have a wide array of Romano-British finds, with many catalogued through the Portable Antiquities Scheme. The structural remains of a Roman house were found at Blackminster Bridge in 1938; just over

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2km south-east of the study site. Cox (*ibid.*) proposes that Roman settlement spread along the Broadway Brook, an area which would potentially encapsulate the study site.

### 3.3.3 Saxon

The HER does not hold any reference to Saxon archaeology having been found within the 500m study area, but there was certainly Saxon settlement here. It seems that Offenham was an administrative centre by 705 AD when it was part of the initial land-grant given to Evesham Abbey, and the earliest reference to a church in Offenham dates from an Abbey document of 709 (Watson, no date). Documentary evidence may even indicate that a Saxon palace was once located in Offenham (pers comm Stephen Price).

In 1997, Dalwood and Ratkai recorded the excavation of three skeletons at Bennett's Hill, c 1.3km east of the proposed development site. These 5<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> century burials were discovered by metal detectorists and were found with rich grave goods including a large cruciform brooch and a necklace of over 100 amber beads. Closer to the site in question, Saxon Charters mention the ford as a landmark (Hooke 1990), and Cox (1953) states that Saxon coins have been recovered from the area known as King's Bank. This is within the HER search area, and there is an entry recording finds (WSM 02810), but it only records the Roman key, coins and pottery noted in the Appendix.

### 3.3.4 Medieval

Offenham village (WSM 41461) was already well established by the time it was recorded in the Domesday survey of 1086. It was an important local manor belonging to the Benedictine Abbey of Evesham, and it held a watermill which probably became Faulk Mill (WSM 07807). In 1591 this was recorded as 'ffowlke mylne' and is thought to have been the mill where medieval villagers communally processed their corn.

The village clustered to the north of the study site, around the church which had early medieval (Saxon) origins and the manor which lies to the north of the 500m study area. The medieval buildings of the village which still stand are all listed and provide the best evidence for the period, although archaeological evidence in the form of 15<sup>th</sup> century pottery was found near the church during an archaeological evaluation (WSM 27143). It appears that the extent of the medieval village might have once been greater, as Cox (1953) notes that this area has "produced many evidences of foundations about 18 inches to 2 feet below the surface", although the date and precise location of these is unknown. Certainly some archaeological evidence remains for lost buildings (WSM 05298 and 22330), which extends southwards to the immediate north of the study site (WSM 25910).

Between 1282 and 1316, Abbot John of Brokehampton erected eight costly barns, including one at Offenham which cannot now be traced. There are several fields called Barn Ground on the Tithe Map of 1841 that are likely candidates for its original location. One of these (WSM 24970) lies nearby the study site to the south-west and is notably close to the water-powered medieval corn mill.

Evesham Abbey held a grange in Offenham which became a favourite, and a deer park was created extending some miles from Bengeworth to the aforementioned 'King's Ditch' area which marked its boundary. It is unclear whether the study site would have lain within the park.

The first documentary evidence of a bridge at Offenham is from 1285 (Watson no date). This stone bridge crossed the river close to Dead Man's Ait (or island), where many skeletons of horses and men who did not manage to fully escape the battle of Evesham in 1265 have been found (Cox 1953).

### 3.3.5 Post-medieval

The stone footbridge that was once located to the west of the study site was probably removed when the Evesham to Stratford section of the Avon was made navigable in the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century; the crossing thereafter being served by a ferry. Ferry Lane and Boat Lane clearly refer to this part of the crossing's history, and the route continued to support traffic and a public house; the Bridge Inn (WSM 07366), which presumably originally dated

from the time of the bridge. For some time after the Battle of Waterloo (1815) this was known as the Waterloo Tavern, but it reverted to its original name at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Traffic from Worcester to Oxford became increasingly diverted through Evesham, and with the additional advent of the railways, Offenham rather lost its strategic location. These days, it is rather isolated, with few people just passing through. The prosperity of Offenham does not seem to have been markedly affected, however, as it has relied heavily on market gardening for generations, and the soil is still productive.

Ordnance Survey maps from the 1<sup>st</sup> edition of 1886 (Fig 4) through to the present day show the preponderance of fruit farming, and more recently of nurseries, in the area. The Tithe Map of 1841 shows the field name of the proposed development site to have been Crab Tree Leys, the name of the derelict house on the site. It was an apple orchard before 1886, and the Ordnance Survey maps depict a gradual decline in the number of fruit trees across the site. Only a few are now preserved within the site's western limits. In 1841, Crab Tree Leys and the field to the south, New Barn Ground, were owned and farmed as one. By the census of 1851, this was in the hands of James Myatt who lived at The Laurels to the south of the site. Myatt was hugely influential in horticultural circles and was responsible for varieties of cabbage, Brussels sprouts and parsnips all bearing the name of Offenham.

In 1846 a school was built just beside the proposed development area; within the triangular junction of Boat Lane and Ferry Lane. This became too small and was superseded in 1873 by a school built next to the church. There are several other historic buildings recorded on the HER which, although not listed, contribute to the historic character of Offenham. In the centre of the village, these include The Hollies (WSM 20453) and 5, Church Street (WSM 45974); both 18<sup>th</sup> century cottages, indicated on Figure 2. Further afield, a post-medieval threshing barn (WSM 30498) still stands next to the site of Faulk Mill.

The wider parcel of land that is bounded by Ferry Lane, Boat Lane and Main Street saw development around the perimeter throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and the study site itself retains an Edwardian farmhouse, known as Crabtree Leys, with an associated later concrete barn (Plate 2).

An archaeological evaluation (WSM 34043) to the east of the study site found evidence for post-medieval activity such as a north to south orientated ditch thought to demarcate a field boundary (Goat 2004). Elsewhere, however, the evidence from archaeological evaluations (WSM 29085 and 36113) have only returned evidence of 19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century cultivation.

### 3.4 Potential heritage assets

The above evidence provides a basis for inferring whether heritage assets in the form of archaeological deposits may exist on the site.

As can be seen from the above discussion, there has been continued settlement and activity in the region for many centuries, if not millennia. There are no records of finds dating from the Palaeolithic or Mesolithic in the vicinity, although Garwood's (2011) distribution maps of finds from these periods could easily support an argument for their potential. Spot finds have, however, been found that date from the Neolithic. These finds, and the evidence of Bronze Age settlement to the south of the site, fit with Jackson and Dalwood's (2007) correlation between the distribution of prehistoric evidence and the well-drained aggregate producing areas that follow the river courses of Worcestershire (a gravel pit is seen within 300m of the south of the site in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, prior to archaeological conditions being placed on such work). Combined with the evidence of possible Iron Age cropmarks to the north-west of the site, it is thought that the potential for prehistoric archaeology on this site is **high**.

The potential for finding archaeological remains dating from the Romano-British period is also considered to be **high**, given the nearby evidence of a Roman cemetery and settlement, and the location of the site close to a Roman road that leads to a significant crossing of the River Avon. Although villa sites are unusual in Worcestershire, and to find one here would be truly remarkable, it has been argued that 'the location of villas displays a preference for the islands of sand and gravel that occur within the predominant geology of lias clays' (Holbrook 2004; cf Moreton and Holbrook 2007). This fits the topography of the study site, which is located just to the south of a postulated Roman road.

Despite documentary evidence supporting the significance of Offenham during Saxon times, there have been no (trustworthy) sources of Saxon finds or deposits in the vicinity. For this reason, the likelihood of finding Saxon archaeological remains is thought to be **low**, however it must be stated that if it were present, it would be all the more significant in its rarity.

It is thought unlikely, although not impossible, that medieval structural remains extended this far south of Offenham village, but medieval archaeology in other forms, such as ridge and furrow (WSM 39379) is perhaps probable. The potential of medieval archaeology on this site is therefore thought to be **low to moderate**.

There is thought to be a **low to moderate** potential for Post-medieval archaeology, as this would probably relate to cultivation in the form of plough marks or pits for the planting or removal of orchard trees.

An area to the south of the study site was recently the subject of an archaeological evaluation (WSM 36113; Phear 2007). No archaeology was found to pre-date the post-medieval period and all features were related to market gardening. It may be that any previous deposits had been removed by ploughing, but it is unusual to not find at least some archaeological deposits on the well-drained terraces of the Avon (pers comm Hal Dalwood).

#### 4. **Summary of significance**

##### 4.1 **Assessment of significance**

The desk-based assessment has brought together wide ranging evidence about heritage assets within the application area. As a result, an assessment can be made of the significance of the site in terms of the nature, importance and extent of the potential archaeological interest in site.

###### *Nature of the archaeological interest in the site*

The development site is located in an area known to preserve a wide range of archaeology. More specifically, the site lies on the eastern approach to a historically significant river crossing on the Avon and just to the south of a medieval village with documented Saxon origins. A Roman cemetery has been found in the vicinity, and prehistoric settlement is also known; mostly from cropmarks. This document has broadened the understanding of the site and its potential for a wide array of buried archaeological deposits.

Although there is clearly the potential for a wide date-range of archaeology, it is not thought that this would necessarily be very dense; the find spots and sites recorded on the HER in the area are fairly widely distributed. It is perhaps most likely that a **low to medium density** of cut features may be preserved; in the form of ditches, pits and postholes from a wide date-range. The likelihood of finding structural remains, or indeed further human remains, is thought to be **low**, although this would clearly be of some significance if encountered.

###### *Relative importance of the archaeological interest in the site*

Of all the prehistoric periods that have the potential of being represented on this site, the Neolithic holds the most compelling case for importance and research. As highlighted above, it is thought that a locally derived Neolithic flint is misinterpreted as Iron Age on the HER; a scenario that is not uncommon according to Jackson and Dalwood (2007) who highlight a reassessment of local material as a research priority. Prehistoric remains of later periods would add to a growing corpus of information about the way in which the landscape was utilised, but in these free-draining soils it is unfortunately unlikely that good environmental assemblages would be preserved. Despite the relatively high likelihood of finding prehistoric remains on this site, it is considered fairly unlikely that these would be of high research potential.

The proximity of the site to a Roman cemetery (WSM 02827) brings additional importance to any Romano-British archaeology that may be encountered on the site, since it would bring a broader understanding of the area in which the cemetery was located. Any Roman archaeology may also help determine the truth behind the suggestion that there was a Roman road running from the ford to Icknield Street. Moreton and Holbrook (2007) note that the

road system in Worcestershire is still imperfectly known, and any supportive information would clearly be of importance. The chance of there being a villa site preserved here is unlikely, but of all potential locations, this would appear a prime spot. This would, of course, be very rare and highly significant. The more predictable scenario, however, is that there may be piecemeal remains of a wider Romano-British landscape including field systems and perhaps dispersed settlement, etc., that add to our understanding of the Roman people buried nearby.

Any Saxon archaeology is unlikely but would be of great significance if found.

Moving into the medieval period, although Offenham retains elements of its well-documented medieval settlement, any medieval archaeological remains could widen the picture of the hinterland of this settlement. The site may add to our understanding of the way in which the local area developed nucleated villages and open field farming; typically during the 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> centuries (Dalwood 2007), but here preceeded by a Saxon administrative centre.

Post-medieval archaeology is thought most likely to be associated with cultivation and market gardening. This would generally be considered of low importance, but given the specialised focus of market gardening in Offenham, it would add to the record of this element of the history of the village.

#### *Physical extent of the archaeological interest in the site*

The site has stood as apple orchard for at least some of the post-medieval period, and as such may not have suffered unduly from deep ploughing. The methods by which the orchards may have been planted and subsequently grubbed-out will, however, have had a bearing on the preservation of any archaeological deposits. Past references to finds in the vicinity include that the Bronze Age settlement evidence and implement from WSM 40495 were found 'five feet into the gravels' and that building foundations to the west of the church were 18 inches to 2 feet below the surface (Cox 1953). The first of these is perhaps thought to be an exaggeration, as a nearby evaluation (WSM 36113) encountered natural deposits at c 0.32m below ground level (Phear 2007), but it does seem to imply that archaeological deposits may be sealed by a relatively thick layer of subsoil, protecting them against later truncation. The subsoil that forms over in this area is well-drained, so waterlogged or organic-rich deposits should not be expected.

## 5. **The potential impact of the application and further recommendations**

This desk-based assessment, and the information provided by the Client, allows an assessment to be made of the potential impact of the proposed development on the archaeological interest in the site. The desk-based assessment has identified that there is wide potential for archaeological deposits from practically any period, and it is considered that any intrusive groundworks have the potential to impact detrimentally on these deposits. There is, however, at present insufficient knowledge of these deposits to confidently predict the impact of any development upon them. In these instances, it is considered that a field evaluation would be required by the planning authority.

In the recently published frameworks for archaeological research in the West Midlands, Hurst (2011) recommends a 6 to 10% sample area for suspected prehistoric sites. An evaluation may lead to the appropriate mitigation of the archaeological resource, such as by excavation or watching brief. The scope and specification of mitigation works needs to be agreed with the Historic Environment Planning Officer, Worcestershire County Council. Any required archaeological investigations would be concluded by the production of an archaeological report to be deposited for public consultation with the Worcestershire Historic Environment Record (HER), a project archive to be deposited at a local museum, and appropriate publication potentially within an archaeological journal.

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The following sources have also been cited in this assessment.

- DCLG 2012 *Model Planning Policy Framework*, Department for Communities and Local Government
- DCLG/DCMS/EH 2010 *PPS5 Planning for the historic environment: historic environment planning practice guide*, Department for Communities and Local Government/Department for Culture, Media and Sport/English Heritage
- HEAS 2010 *Standards and guidelines for archaeological projects in Worcestershire*, Planning Advisory Section, Historic Environment and Archaeology Service, Worcestershire County Council unpublished report 604, revised December 2010
- WA 2012 *Proposal for a desk-based assessment at main Street, Offenham, Worcestershire*, Worcestershire Archaeology, Worcestershire County Council, unpublished document dated 12 July 2012, **P3903**
- IfA 2008 *Standard and guidance for archaeological desk-based assessment*, Institute for Archaeologists

## 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, 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.

*A desk-based assessment was undertaken on behalf of Barratt / David Wilson Mercia of land off Main Street, Offenham, Worcestershire (centred on NGR SP 054 458; HER ref WSM 47372). The triangular parcel of land lies at a strategic location; between roads that converge west towards a historic river crossing of the River Avon. Lying on fertile and well-drained soils, the area has widespread evidence of prehistoric settlement and activity; from excavation, find spots and cropmarks. Within 400m of the proposed development lies the site of a Roman cemetery from which 20 skeletons were excavated in 1887. With further evidence of Roman activity in the area, and the situation of the site on a proposed Roman road from the ford to Icknield Street, Roman archaeology may well be expected here. The site lies just to the south of the medieval village of Offenham, which is known to have Saxon origins. The built area of the village does not seem to have extended this far south, but the site would have factored in the agricultural life of the medieval village and its hinterland. During the post-medieval period the area has depended heavily on market gardening, and the site is known to have supported an apple orchard. It was otherwise undeveloped. It now stands as meadow, and has the potential to contain archaeological deposits from any or all of the aforementioned periods.*

## 8. **Acknowledgements**

The Service would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project, Bruce Whittingham (Barratt / David Wilson Mercia), Stephen

Price (Worcestershire Archaeological Society) and Mike Glyde (Historic Environment Planning Officer, Worcestershire County Council).

9. **Personnel**

The assessment was undertaken by Fiona Keith-Lucas. The project manager responsible for the quality of the project was Tom Vaughan. The illustrations were prepared by Carolyn Hunt.

## Appendix 1 Heritage assets registered with the Historic Environment Record

### Buildings

HER No. (+legal status)	Site name	NGR (SP)	Date	Description
WSM 02814 Grade II listed; #1301324	Church of St Mary and St Milburgh	0530 4622	1401 – 2000 AD	15 <sup>th</sup> century tower. Remainder rebuilt in 19 <sup>th</sup> century
WSM 07366	Bridge Inn, Boat Lane	0499 4576	1801 – 2000 AD	Public House (was Waterloo Tavern)
WSM 07807	Faulk Mill	0550 4545	1601 – 1950 AD	Watermill; noted as "ffowlke mill" in 1591. Communal corn mill
WSM 20447 Grade II listed; #1081530 <sup>1</sup>	Range of Seven Cottages (Old Timbers and the Minories), Main Street [Re-listing split this into two groups; this retains the northernmost houses listed above. See also WSM 38123]	0535 4637	1401 – 2000 AD	Thatched terrace of several phases. Includes 15 <sup>th</sup> century cruck frame
WSM 20448 Grade II listed; #1081532	Milburgh House, Main Street	0537 4626	1601 – 2000 AD	17 <sup>th</sup> century house timber framing on lias ground floor
WSM 20453	The Hollies, Main Street	0533 4628	1701 – 2000 AD	Rubble built house
WSM 26413 Grade II listed; #1166524	Long Thatch, Church Street	0525 4637	1301 – 2000 AD	Hall house, cruck house and timber frame, remodelled in 17 <sup>th</sup> century
WSM 30498	Threshing Barn, Faulk Mill	0552 4543	1540 – 2000 AD	Brick threshing barn
WSM 31239 Grade II listed; #1350012	Thatch Cottage, Main Street (part of WSM 38123)	0535 4634	1701 – 2000 AD	Early 18 <sup>th</sup> century timber-framed and thatched building.
WSM 31240	Mock Morris, Boat Lane	0503 4581	1800 – 2000 AD	Thatched brick house dated 1800
WSM 38097 Grade II listed; #1081567	Halfthatch, Church Street	0525 4636	1601 – 2000 AD	Timber-framed and thatched building
WSM 38099 Grade II listed; #1350014	Greywalls, Main Street	0532 4637	1625 – 2000 AD	Early 17 <sup>th</sup> century timber-framed and thatched building
WSM 38123	Cottage Row, Main Street	0535	1701 – 2000	Row of early 18 <sup>th</sup> century timber-framed buildings. Includes

<sup>1</sup> As recorded on the HER. Re-listed as LB# 148745

Grade II listed; #1350012 <sup>2</sup>		4634	AD	Coombe Cottage, Mercia Cottage, No 3 and Abbots Retreat.
WSM 38300 Grade II listed; #1081531	The Malt House, Main Street	0535 4628	1625 – 2000 AD	Early 17 <sup>th</sup> century timber framed house with thatch
WSM 40593	Former farm buildings, Three Cocks Lane	0546 4605	1701 – 2000 AD	Stone and brick buildings – now demolished?
WSM 45974	5 Church Street	0523 4637	1701 – 2000 AD	18 <sup>th</sup> century brick cottage

## Monuments

HER No.	Site name	NGR (SP)	Date	Description
WSM 02810	Possible site, Romano-British Occupation Area, King's Bank	0552 4636	43 – 410 AD	Large Roman key, coins and pottery
WSM 02811	Cropmark showing ring ditch, west of church	0511 4626	Unknown	Ring ditch and associated ditches
WSM 02813	Cropmarks west of church	0513 4622	Unknown	Parallel ditches, possible droveway. See WSM 05484
WSM 02827	Romano-British Cemetery, (conjectural) Faulks Mill	0564 4547	43 – 410 AD	Cemetery site; 20 skeletons dug in 1887.
WSM 05298	Building foundations, north-west of church	0507 4637	1501 – 1841 AD	Foundations caught by plough in 'House Ground' field
WSM 05484	Cropmarks of enclosures etc, west of church.	0508 4620	Unknown	Possible sub-rectangular enclosure and continuation of droveway
WSM 22330	Site of cottage, opposite cottage range	0533 4630	1540 – 1950 AD	Demolished timber framed and thatched house
WSM 25302	Ford at Twyford; River Crossing Point across Avon	0494 4577	1066 – 1540 AD	Ford. Medieval bridge also known here - on 'sealstret'
WSM 25910	Byeways, Main Street	0547 4597	1540 – 1900 AD	Conjectured occupation site
WSM 40495	Bronze Age Occupation, north of Broadway Brook	0555 4547	2350 – 801 BC	Excavation of roundhouses

<sup>2</sup> As recorded on HER. British Listed Buildings records these houses as LB #148746

**Landscape component / Placename**

HER No.	Site name	NGR (SP)	Date	Description
WSM 41461	Offenham Historic Settlement	0526 4636	1066 – 2000 AD	Unplanned historic development, found in Domesday Book. Many significant buildings
WSM 24970	Barn Ground, Offenham	0633 4530	1801 – 1900 AD	Indicates historic barn

**Events**

HER No.	Site name	NGR (SP)	Date	Description
WSM 02812	Unstratified Bronze Age Implement	0555 4548		
WSM 07336	Unstratified Romano-British Finds	0504 4575		
WSM 27143	Evaluation in 1998, St Mary and St Milburgh's Church			
WSM 29085	Evaluation in 2000, Forge House, Church St	0524 4628		
WSM 30778	Building Recording in 2002, The Minories, Main Street	0535 4637		
WSM 34043	Archaeological Evaluation at Land off Laurel's Avenue	0592 4571		
WSM 34735	Find of Romano-British artefacts, Debden	0564 4547		
WSM 36113	Evaluation in 2007, Land Adjoining Laurel's Road	0557 4560		
WSM 37608	Unstratified finds of unknown date, King's Bank	0552 4636		
WSM 38677	Photographic survey in 2001, Faulk mill barn, Mill Road	0552 4543		
WSM 42540	Dendrochronological dating in 2008, Church of St Mary and St Milburgh	0530 4622		
WSM 46028	Ongoing DBA, New well behind pumping station, Boat Lane	0527 4583		
WSM 46036	Ongoing DBA, Land off Three Cocks Lane	0554 4621		
WSM 46460	Ongoing DBA, Hagley Hall, CgMs Consulting Job #14003	0555 4555		

## Events / General Parish information

(Not all included on Figs 2 or 3)

HER No.	Site name	Grid ref (SP)	Date	Description
WSM 21048	Unlocated unstratified finds	0374 4338	4000 – 2351 BC 43 – 410 AD 1601 – 1700 AD	Leaf shaped arrowhead <sup>3</sup> , Roman and post medieval pottery and coins
WSM 32194	Aerial photos of the parish of Evesham	0374 4338	Muilt-period	Aerial photographs showing evidence from many periods
WSM 35820	Unlocated, unstratified finds	0606 4603	4000 – 2351 BC 43 – 410 AD 1066 – 1539 AD	Neolithic axe, also silver gilt gargoyle and finds from Debden Cottage
WSM 37177	WWII bombing incident, parish of Evesham	0374 4338	1939 – 1945 AD	Dates of 4 bombing episodes
WSM 37179	WWII bombing incident, parish of Aldington	0581 4447	1939 – 1945 AD	10 high explosive bombs at Aldington
WSM 37186	WWII bombing incident, Norton and Lenchwick parish	0373 4748	1939 – 1945 AD	Fatal bomb dropped at Chadbury
WSM 38491	Norton and Lenchwick Portable Antiquities Scheme	0373 4748	43 – 410 AD; 1540 – 1900 AD	Roman coins and pottery, medieval to post medieval spur and buckle
WSM 38494	Parish of Offenham Portable Antiquities Scheme	0606 4603	800BC – 42AD; 43 – 410 AD	Metal finds, inc. a cosmetic mortar and a finger from a figurine
WSM 38650	Parish of Evesham Portable Antiquities Scheme	0374 4338	800BC – 42AD 43 – 410 AD 411 – 1065 AD 1066 – 1539 AD 1540 – 1900 AD	Arrowhead, prob Neolithic. Metal finds include coins, cloth seals & horse trappings. Mostly medieval.
WSM 39379	General parish information, Evesham	0374 4338	1066 – 1539 AD 1540 – 1900 AD	Ridge and furrow survey. Reference material for Evesham
WSM 41584	General parish information, Aldington	0581 4447	1066 – 1539 AD 1540 – 1900 AD	Ridge and furrow survey.
WSM 41801	General parish information, Norton and Lenchwick	0373 4748	1066 – 1539 AD	Mick Aston archive – contents unknown
WSM 45972	General parish information, Offenham	0606 4603	Multi-period	General bibliographic sources

<sup>3</sup> Date recorded on HER as Iron Age, but almost certainly Neolithic

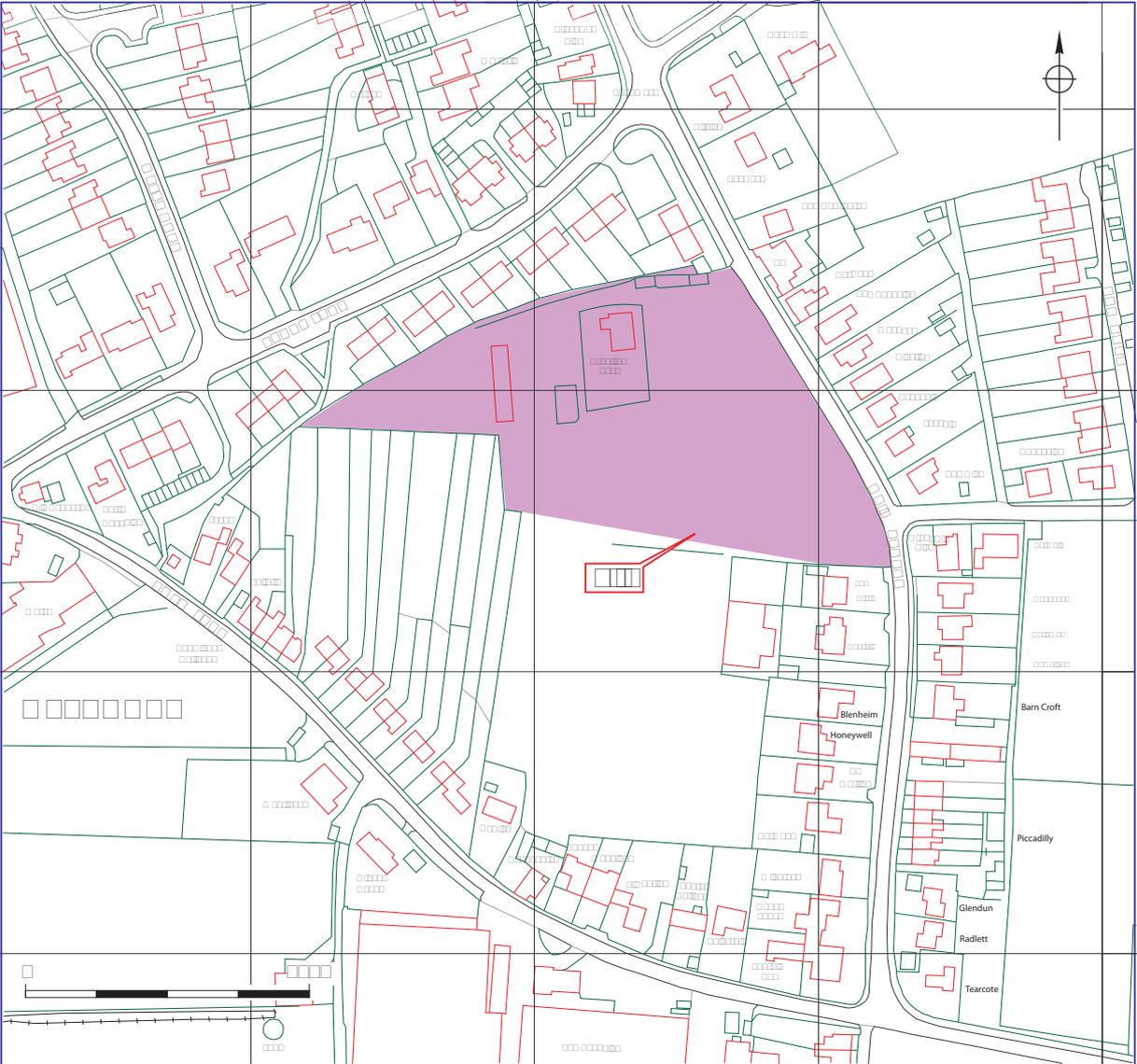
## Plates



*Plate 1 Looking across the site from the north-east*



*Plate 2 Derelict house standing within the proposed development area; looking east*



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