

Archaeological watching brief  
(Phase 2) of  
land on the corner of  
Lapley Lane and Starkey's Lane,  
Wheaton Aston,  
Staffordshire



© Worcestershire County Council

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

Status: Addendum to Report 2357; revision 1: 9 October 2017  
Date: 27 September 2017  
Author: Graham Arnold, [garnold@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:garnold@worcestershire.gov.uk)  
and Tom Vaughan, [tvaughan@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:tvaughan@worcestershire.gov.uk)  
Illustrator: Carolyn Hunt  
Contributor: C Jane Evans  
Project reference: P4842  
Report reference: 2494  
Oasis id: fieldsec1-256394







---

## **Archaeological watching brief (Phase 2) of land on the corner of Lapley Lane and Starkey's Lane, Wheaton Aston, Staffordshire**

Graham Arnold and Tom Vaughan

Illustrations by Carolyn Hunt

Contributions by C Jane Evans

### **Summary**

The second phase of an archaeological watching brief was undertaken on land at the corner of Lapley Lane and Starkey's Lane, Wheaton Aston, Staffordshire (NGR SJ 8600 1378). It was undertaken on behalf of T Swift and Son, who intend to construct a new farmstead comprising two agricultural dwellings and a range of farm buildings for which a planning application has been submitted (reference number 14/007296/OUT).

Phase 1 was carried out by WA in 2016 and consisted of monitoring the topsoil strip for the construction of an access road and an agricultural dwelling. An interim report was submitted in 2016.

Phase 2 was undertaken in August 2017 and involved monitoring the topsoil strip for the construction of a yard and farm buildings. A defined subsoil horizon was only partially present, as generally the topsoil overlay the sandy clay natural geology. No significant archaeological features were observed. Features relating to later post-medieval and modern ploughing and agricultural activity were noted. No artefacts pre-dating the modern period were recovered. There was no evidence of settlement or other activity relating to the adjacent Roman road.

## Report

### 1 Background

#### 1.1 Reasons for the project

The second phase of an archaeological watching brief was undertaken on land at the corner of Lapley Lane and Starkey's Lane, Wheaton Aston, Staffordshire (NGR SJ 8600 1378). It was undertaken on behalf of T Swift and Son, who intend to construct a new farmstead comprising two agricultural dwellings and a range of farm buildings for which a planning application has been submitted (reference number 14/007296/OUT).

Phase 2 of the project was led by Graham Arnold (BA (hons.), MSc) who joined Worcestershire Archaeology in 2009 and has been practicing archaeology since 2004. The project manager responsible for the quality of the project was Tom Vaughan (BA (hons.); MA; ACIfA). The illustrations were prepared by Carolyn Hunt (BSc (hons.); PG Cert; MCIfA). C Jane Evans (BA, MA, MCIfA) contributed the finds report.

The project aims, background and methodology are identified within the previous report (Wilkins 2016).

### 2 Methods

A detailed specification has been prepared by Worcestershire Archaeology (WA 2016).

Two test pits were excavated to determine the stratigraphy (Test Pits 1 and 2). The topsoil was then stripped down to the undisturbed natural across the entire footprint of the new buildings (Trench 2).

Fieldwork was undertaken between 21 and 30 August 2017.

#### 2.1 Artefact methodology, by C Jane Evans

The finds work reported here conforms with the following guidance: for finds work by ClfA (2014), for pottery analysis by PCRG/SGRP/MPRG (2016), for archive creation by AAF (2011), and for museum deposition by SMA (1993).

##### 2.1.1 Recovery policy

The artefact recovery policy conformed to standard Worcestershire Archaeology practice (WA 2012; appendix 2). A small quantity of post-medieval and modern material was residual and of later date. This was retained for basic analysis then discarded.

##### 2.1.2 Method of analysis

All hand-retrieved finds were identified, quantified and dated to broad period.

### 3 Results

#### 3.1 Structural analysis

The areas observed are shown in Fig 4, and Plates 7-10.

##### Test Pits 1 and 2, and Trench 2

Site area: Farm yard

Maximum dimensions: Length: Width Depth: 0.22m-0.44m

Main deposit description:

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s.) – top and bottom of deposits
200	Topsoil	Friable, dark greyish-brown, clay loam. Contains frequent charcoal flecking, sub-rounded pebbles and cobbles..	0.00-0.40m
201	Subsoil	Moderately compact reddish brown sandy clay loam with occasional pebbles, roots. Only observed in patches. Diffuse and irregular boundary with layers above and below.	0.10-0.30m
202	Natural	Compact, light yellow and mottled orange sands and gravels with patches of mid reddish brown clay; over red Mercian mudstone.	0.30m +

##### 3.1.1 Phase 1: Natural deposits

The natural geology (201) observed across the site consisted of brownish orange and yellow till, with red marl Mercian mudstone present in patches and at depth.

##### 3.1.2 Phase 2: Modern Deposits

A dark, clay loam topsoil (200) was present across the entirety of the trench, up to 0.40m deep. This topsoil lay directly above the natural geology (201). Subsoil was extant only in patches. It comprised a reddish brown sandy clay subsoil (210) overlying the natural. Occasional plough scars and shallow furrows were noted within the surface of the natural.

A small quantity of modern debris and pottery was noted but not retained.

#### 3.2 Artefactual analysis, by C Jane Evans

The artefactual assemblage recovered is summarised below. All finds were modern and recovered from the topsoil (100). These were scanned and discarded as no further analysis was required.

period	material class	material sub-type	object specific type	count	weight
modern	ceramic	earthenware	land drain	9	204
modern	ceramic	earthenware	tile	1	24
modern	ceramic	earthenware	glazed tile	2	24
modern	glass	green	bottle glass	2	45
modern	ceramic	earthenware	pot (modern china)	1	3
modern	ceramic	earthenware	pot (late stoneware)	1	3

*Finds Table: Quantification of the assemblage*

## 4 Synthesis

The topsoil strip across the entire area of groundworks was monitored, down to the natural geology. No significant archaeological features, layers, structures or horizons were revealed during the project, nor finds recovered. It is interpreted that deep ploughing had largely disturbed the natural soil profile, creating an amorphous plough soil, which lay directly over the natural. Any shallow early features would therefore have been disturbed by this ploughing activity, although the lack of finds predating the modern period indicates that there has never been intensive activity, other than agricultural, across the area monitored. It is therefore considered unlikely that there was intensive activity associated with the adjacent Roman road on the current site.

## 5 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.

*The second phase of an archaeological watching brief was undertaken on behalf of T Swift and Son, on land at the corner of Lapley Lane and Starkey's Lane, Wheaton Aston, Staffordshire (NGR SJ 8600 1378).*

*Phase 1 was carried out by WA in 2016 and consisted of monitoring the topsoil strip for the construction of an access road and an agricultural dwelling. An interim report was submitted in 2016.*

*Phase 2 was undertaken in August 2017 and involved monitoring the topsoil strip for the construction of a yard and farm buildings. A defined subsoil horizon was only partially present, as generally the topsoil overlay the sandy clay natural geology. No significant archaeological features were observed. Features relating to later post-medieval and modern ploughing and agricultural activity were noted. No artefacts pre-dating the modern period were recovered. There was no evidence of settlement or other activity relating to the adjacent Roman road.*

## 6 Acknowledgements

Worcestershire Archaeology would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project, John Swift (T Swift and Son), Andrew Richards (AR Richards Contractors Ltd), Suzy Blake (Historic Environment Record Officer, Staffordshire County Council) and Stephen Dean (Principal Archaeologist, Staffordshire County Council).



---

## 7 Bibliography

AAF 2011 Archaeological archives: a guide to the best practice in the creation, compilation, transfer and curation, <http://www.archaeologyuk.org/archives/>

CIfA 2014 Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials, <http://www.archaeologists.net/codes/ifa>

PCRG/SGRP/MPRG 2016 *A standard for pottery studies in archaeology*

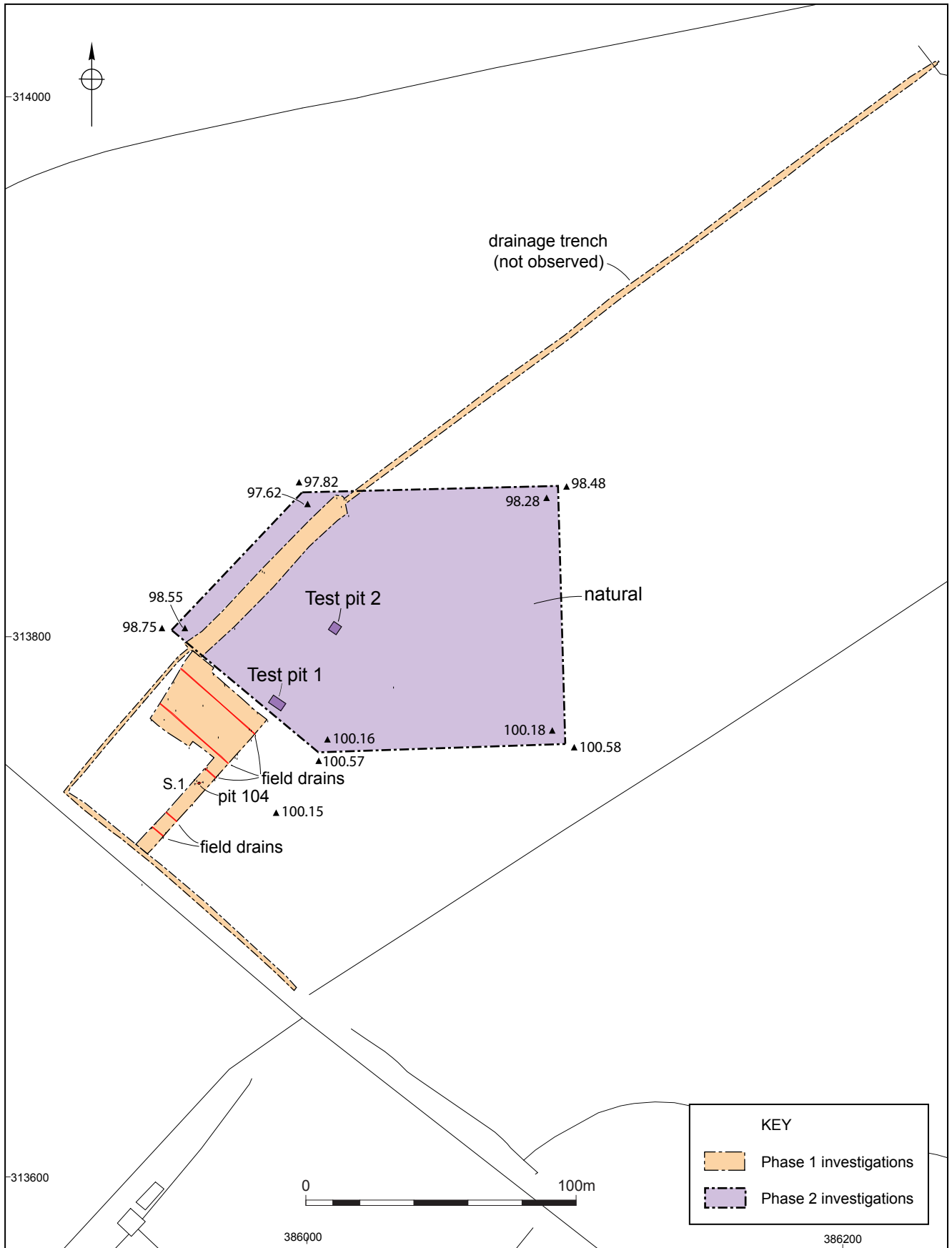
SMA 1993 *Selection, retention and dispersal of archaeological collections*, <http://www.swfed.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/selectionretentiondispersalofcollections1-SMA.pdf>

WA 2016 *Proposal for an archaeological watching brief at land on the corner of Lapley Lane and Starkey's Lane, Wheaton Aston, Staffordshire*, Worcestershire Archaeology, Worcestershire County Council, unpublished document dated 23 May 2016, **P4842**

Wilkins, J, 2016 *Archaeological watching brief of land on the corner of Lapley Lane and Starkey's Lane, Wheaton Aston, Staffordshire*, Worcestershire archaeology, Worcestershire County Council, report **2357**, revision dated 21 September 2017



**Figures**



© Crown copyright and database rights 2017 Ordnance Survey 100024230

Plan of Trenches (Phases 1 and 2)

Figure 4

## Plates



*Plate 7, initial test pit to determine the stratigraphy, view south, 2x 1m and 1x 0.30m scales*



*Plate 8, general view east of area stripped of topsoil, 2x 1m scales*

---



*Plate 9, general view south-west of area stripped of topsoil, no scales*



*Plate 10, general view along north side of area, view west, no scales (posts at 5m intervals)*

## **Appendix 4 Technical information (Phases 1 and 2)**

### **The archive (WA project reference / site code: P4842)**

The archive consists of:

- 3 Context records AS1
- 2 Field progress reports AS2
- 1 Photographic records AS3
- 73 Digital photographs
- 1 Drawing number catalogues AS4
- 2 Scale drawings
- 2 Trench record sheets AS41
- 1 CD-Rom/DVDs
- 1 Copy of this report (bound hard copy)

The project archive is intended to be placed at:

The Potteries Museum and Art Gallery  
Bethesda Street  
Hanley  
Stoke on Trent  
ST1 3DW

A copy of the report will be deposited with the Historic Environment Record (HER) and the National Monuments Record (NMR) as appropriate.

---

## Appendix 5 Staffordshire County Council Historic Environment Record Activity and Source Submission Form

Submission date – 27 September 2017

### Site Activity or Event

Name of **event** (eg. Watching Brief at The Blue Boar, Ipstones.)

Watching Brief at Wheaton Aston

Location of **event** (eg. The Blue Boar P.H. Overton Lane, Ipstones.)

Land on the corner of Lapley Lane and Starkey's Lane, Wheaton Aston, Staffordshire

NGR  SJ 8600 1378

Parish

Lapley, Stretton, and Wheaton Aston

Brief Description of **event** (eg. Watching brief during cellar alterations and renovation, prior to conversion to residential use.)

Watching brief during the stripping of topsoil in order to construct an agricultural dwelling and related farm buildings; phases 1 and 2

“Activity Type(s)” (highlight as appropriate) *Air Photography / Evaluation-trial excavation / Field Walking / Measured survey-drawing / Geophysical survey / Archaeological excavation-full / Archaeological excavation-part / Field survey / Photogrammetric survey / Rectified photo survey / Photographic record / AP interpretation / Salvage-rescue excavation / **Watching brief** / Environmental sampling / Post-excavation analysis / Documentary research*

Commencement and completion dates

Phase 1: 27-28 June 2016 ; Phase 2: 21-30 August 2017

**Organisation or contractor details** (organisation name, address, telephone, e-mail etc.)

Worcestershire Archaeology, WAAS,  
Worcestershire County Council,  
The Hive,  
Sawmill Walk,  
The Butts,  
Worcester, WR1 3PB

01905 765908

### Report Details

Date

27 September 2017

Type of document (highlight as appropriate) *Written / Photographic / Cartographic / Drawn*  
Title

Archaeological Watching Brief at land on the corner of Lapley Lane and Starkey's Lane, Wheaton Aston, Staffordshire: Phases 1 and 2

Author(s)

Wilkins, J. (Phase 1); Graham Arnold and Tom Vaughan (Phase 2)

Brief summary of contents

#### Phase 1:

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken of land on the corner of Lapley Lane and Starkey's Lane, Wheaton Aston, Staffordshire (NGR SJ 8600 1378). It was undertaken on behalf of T Swift and Son, who intend to construct a new farmstead comprising two agricultural dwellings and a range of farm buildings for which a planning application has been submitted (reference number 14/007296/OUT).

Phase 1 of this project consisted of the stripping of topsoil allowing for the construction of an access road and an agricultural dwelling. No archaeological evidence was recorded that may relate to the construction or maintenance of the adjacent Roman road, or for related roadside activity. All finds were of post-medieval and modern date and were residual within the soils. A single pit was present within the observed area. The pit was sterile and undated. It may relate to the Roman road, but this cannot be confirmed. It does provide evidence for human activity and the potential survival of archaeological deposits within the wider site.

#### Phase 2:



Phase 2 involved monitoring the topsoil strip for the construction of a yard and farm buildings. A defined subsoil horizon was only partially present, as generally the topsoil overlay the sandy clay natural geology. No significant archaeological features were observed. Features relating to later post-medieval and modern ploughing and agricultural activity were noted. No artefacts pre-dating the modern period were recovered. There was no evidence of settlement or other activity relating to the adjacent Roman road.

Brief description of document (eg. Written text with illustrations, bibliography and references. Appendices dealing with environmental sampling, 32 pages. etc.)

Written text with photographs, figures, bibliography. Appendices dealing with trench descriptions and archiving.

Cross references to Staffordshire H.E.R. (if applicable please list Primary record numbers)

PRN 05209

PRN 01729-MST1721

EST154

EST1719

---