FORMER CITY AND COUNTY SUZUKI GARAGE, FARRIER STREET, WORCESTER, WORCESTERSHIRE

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

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Author: Jo Wainwright
Contributors: Dennis Williams
Illustrator: Laura Templeton
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Former City and County Suzuki Garage, Farrier Street, Worcester, Worcestershire

Author Jo Wainwright

With contributions by Dennis Williams

Summary

A programme of archaeological works was undertaken at the former City and County Suzuki Garage, Farrier Street, Worcester, Worcestershire (NGR SO 8480 5530). It was undertaken on behalf of Sanctuary Group, who propose to develop the site as office accommodation, and for which a planning application will be submitted to Worcester City Council.

The site lies on the northern side of the Roman town where previous archaeological interventions at Sanctuary House, the former Worcester Infirmary and at the Magistrates Court and Police Station have identified that well preserved layers and features associated with industrial activities survive.

The majority of the archaeological remains on the site are Roman in date. The finds from these deposits are consistent with 2nd to 3rd century activity across the site. There was no Roman pottery recovered later than the 3rd century. The quantities of slag from smelting found within the fills of features is typical of that found on other sites in the vicinity. There was no evidence of remains for secondary ironworking (smithing) on the site.

The surfaces identified in the west of the site are probably yards with features cut into them. The pits, especially the clay lined ones could have an industrial function, especially as other sites in the vicinity have identified metalworking. However, a domestic/agrarian function for these features cannot be ruled out. Less industrial material was recovered towards the eastern half of the site.

Roman features in all of the evaluation trenches were overlain by a dark earth layer which is found all over this part of Worcester and results from accumulation of horticultural soils from the post-Roman and into the post-medieval periods.

A watching brief during demolition and the removal of deep modern intrusions, including fuel tanks, during the demolition of the 20th century garage, revealed a boiler house and the probable remains of a greenhouse shown on the 1885 OS map.

Report

1 Background

1.1 Reasons for the project

A programme of archaeological works was undertaken at the former City and County Suzuki Garage, Farrier Street, Worcester, Worcestershire (NGR SO 8480 5530; Fig 1). It was commissioned by Sanctuary Group who propose to develop the site as office accommodation, and for which a planning application will be submitted to Worcester City Council.

The proposed development site is considered to have the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest.

The project conforms to a brief prepared by Heritage and Design, Worcester City Council (WCC 2012) and for which a project proposal (including detailed specification) was produced (WA 2012).

The project also conforms to the *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (IfA 2009), *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (IfA 2008) and *Statement of standards and practices appropriate for archaeological fieldwork in Worcester* (Worcester City Council 1999).

The event reference for this project, given by the HER is WCM 101965.

2 Aims

The aims of the programme of archaeological works are:

- to provide information to assist formulation of a strategy to ensure the recording, preservation or management of the resource;
- to provide information to assist formulation of a strategy to mitigate a threat to the archaeological resource;
- to provide information to assist formulation of a proposal for further archaeological investigation within a programme of research.

The brief identified a number of research questions, as being likely to be relevant to this site (cf WCC 2007).

- Roman road network (RP3.7).
- The Roman iron industry (RP3.19-3.23).
- Other Roman industries (RP3.24).
- Sampling and analysis of late Roman dark earth (RP3.26).
- Colonisation of back-plot areas and land in suburbs in the post medieval period (RP6.1).
- Landscapes of market gardening (RP6.22).

3 Methods

3.1 Personnel

The project was undertaken by Jo Wainwright MA PIFA; who joined Worcestershire Archaeology in 2007. She has been practicing archaeology since 1989. The project manager responsible for the quality of the project was Tom Rogers BA MSC. Illustrations were prepared by Laura Templeton BA MIFA. Dennis Williams PHD contributed the finds report.

3.2 Documentary research

Prior to fieldwork commencing a search was made of the Historic Environment Record (HER).

3.3 List of sources consulted

A search of the HER was undertaken and historic maps obtained through both the HER and Record Office, relevant sources are cited in the bibliography and relevant maps are indicated below.

- 1st edition OS map, sheet XXXIII.7, 25 inch, 1885.

3.4 Fieldwork strategy

A detailed specification has been prepared by Worcestershire Archaeology (WA 2012). A watching brief was carried out on the below ground intrusions of the fuel tanks, pier bases and a cellar associated with the 20th century garage (eg Plate 1). These works were carried out on the 14, 17 and 18 December 2012. As a result of the watching brief adjustments were made to the fieldwork strategy. The areas of known disturbance were avoided by the evaluation trenches.

The evaluation was undertaken between 4 and 6 March 2013. The site reference number and site code is WCM 101965.

Three trenches, amounting to about 81m² in area, were excavated over the site area of 1423 m², representing a sample of about 5%. The location of the trenches is indicated in Figure 2.

Deposits considered not to be significant were removed using a wheeled excavator, employing a toothless bucket and under archaeological supervision. Subsequent excavation was undertaken by hand. Clean surfaces were inspected and selected deposits were excavated to retrieve artefactual material as well as to determine their nature. Deposits were recorded according to standard Worcestershire Archaeology practice (WA 2012a). Mention any variation from standard practice. On completion of excavation, trenches were reinstated by replacing the excavated material.

The following techniques were considered for use but were not considered to be appropriate for this project; geoarchaeology

3.5 Structural analysis

All fieldwork records were checked and cross-referenced. Analysis was effected through a combination of structural and artefactual evidence, allied to the information derived from other sources.

3.6 Artefact methodology, by Dennis Williams

3.6.1 Artefact recovery policy

The artefact recovery policy conformed to standard Service practice (WA 2012; appendix 2).

3.6.2 Method of analysis

All hand-retrieved finds were examined. They were identified, quantified and dated to period. A *terminus post quem* date range was produced for each stratified context. These date ranges were used for determining the broad phases defined for the site. All information was recorded on *pro forma* sheets.

The pottery and ceramic building material was examined under x20 magnification and referenced as appropriate by fabric type and form according to the fabric reference series maintained by the Service (Hurst and Rees 1992 and www.worcestershireceramics.org).

3.6.3 Discard policy

The following categories/types of material will be discarded after a period of six months following the submission of this report, unless there is a specific request to retain them (and subject to the collection policy of the relevant depository): where:

- Unstratified,

- post-medieval pottery, and;
- where material has been assessed as having no obvious grounds for retention.

3.7 Environmental archaeology methodology

3.7.1 Sampling policy

None of the deposits suggested that they would contribute significantly to assessment of environmental remains, and environmental material from adjacent sites is considered to be representative of this site.

One sample was taken from a deposit considered to be of high potential for the recovery of metalworking debris. The metalworking debris from this sample is included in the finds section of this report.

- Sample number 1, context number 107, Roman pit fill containing about 50% metalworking debris. A sample of 10 litres was taken.

3.8 Statement of confidence in the methods and results

The methods adopted allow a high degree of confidence that the aims of the project have been achieved.

4 The application site

4.1 Topography, geology and archaeological context

The site lies on the second terrace of the River Severn, which consists of sand and gravel that overlies Mercian Mudstone (Keuper Marl; British Geological Survey 1993). The terrace underlies the whole historic city of Worcester and rises to a maximum height of *c* 26m OD. The five boreholes from a geotechnical report (Wilson Associates 2012) undertaken before demolition indicated that the Mercian Mudstone was at a depth of 4-4.45m and that made ground was between 1.90-2.4m. The made ground was shallowest to the east and deepest to the west. "Clinker" is noted in a borehole (WS5) in the western part of the site and this may be a reference to Roman slag or furnace waste.

The site lies to the north of the medieval city wall and is adjacent to Foregate Street/The Tything, a medieval suburb.

Roman occupation within Worcester is thought to be focused around a ‘small town’ whose core is located beneath the southern part of the medieval city. A Roman road running north to south, identified within excavations at Broad Street (Barker 1969) and Blackfriars (Mundy 1985) and further to the south on Farrier Street (Dalwood *et al* 1994) is thought to form an axis for Roman settlement evidence in the area (Edwards *et al* 2002). To the north, Roman activity is dominated by areas of industrial activity, predominantly the production of iron interspersed with areas of domestic occupation. Early occupation within the area was intermittent during the first and second centuries, with more intensive occupation and industrial activity occurring during the 3rd and 4th centuries (Dalwood *et al* 1994).

Directly to the north of the site two phases of Roman activity have been identified (Mann 2009, WCM 101701). The earliest of these comprised a scatter of pits and ditches containing pottery dating to 120 -160 AD representing low level agricultural activity. Sealing these features in the west of the site was a series of metalled surfaces and dumped slag dating to the late 3rd -4th centuries. It is likely that metalworking was taking place in the vicinity as furnace debris was recovered from the site and a possible furnace or hearth may have been associated with metalworking. A furnace is especially interesting as it is likely to have related to metalworking though there was also evidence of smithing on this site rather than smelting (Daffern and Arnold 2010, 21). Excavations 40m to the

south-west, at Condor building, also uncovered metalled surfaces and evidence of metalworking (WCM 100591, WCM 100592).

No Roman archaeology has yet been identified to the east of Foregate Street within the area to the north of the medieval city walls. Late Roman occupation is thought to have contracted during the 4th century.

The development area lay outside the core medieval and post-medieval town and was used for agricultural and horticultural use until the late 18th century.

The 1870 Board of Health map shows a row of terraced houses along the street frontage. These are also present on the 1885 first edition OS map as well as a building and a greenhouse along the northern edge of the site. The row of houses was demolished between 1928 and 1940 when the road was widened. A garage was built on the site after 1940 which was remodelled several times and survived into the 21st century.

4.2 Current land-use

The site was formerly a garage, whose buildings have been demolished (Plate 2). The deeper modern intrusions were removed during the watching brief which forms part of this report.

5 Structural analysis

The trenches and features recorded are shown in Figures 2, 3 and 4. The results of the structural analysis are presented in Appendix 1.

5.1.1 Phase 1: Natural deposits

Natural deposits were only seen in trenches 1 and 3. These consisted of soft dirty brownish yellow sands with occasional pebbles which became firmer and cleaner with depth. The 'dirty natural' has been interpreted as an undisturbed alluvial sand that has been contaminated with organic soils from above (Mann, 2009). In trench 1 the natural was observed at 20.99m OD and in trench 3 at 21.24m OD. Layer 203, in trench 2, probably represents the top part of this deposit. This was observed at 21.10m OD.

5.1.2 Phase 2: Roman deposits

All of the evaluation trenches contained Roman deposit. In trenches 1 and 2 a layer of slag (208; Fig 2) and a small area of cobbles (140) are probably contemporary and could represent surfaces perhaps associated with industrial activity (Plates 3 and 4). These directly overlaid the dirty natural. The finds from the slag deposit date from the 2nd century.

Three pits (110, 112 and 128; Fig 3) excavated in trench 1 contained quantities of slag and two of these features were lined with clay, which could indicate that they had an industrial function (Plates 5, 6 and 7; Fig 3). A gully which was cut through the cobbled surface was backfilled with clay fragments (Plate 4; Fig 3). The pits and the gully were all aligned east to west which suggests that they were contemporary with each other and were all backfilled during the 2nd to 3rd century. The other features in trench 1 cutting the cobbled surface or the natural, though largely unexcavated and undated, must also be broadly contemporary to the pits and gully. Given the limited size of the trench area, however, it was not possible to establish to what structure, if any, these features belonged to.

In the western end of trench 3 a pit and three postholes were seen cut into the natural (Plate 8; Fig 4). Only two of the postholes were excavated but these features were probably all associated with each other.

5.1.3 Phase 3: Post-Roman to earlier post-medieval soils

All of the trenches had a layer of humic soils (102, 202 and 306) directly above the natural or dirty natural. Roman pottery and slag was recovered from this deposit in all three trenches. This layer

was thicker in the west of the site, in trench 1, and contained more pottery and slag than the deposit in the east. This top of the dark earth was at a broadly similar height in all trenches of between 21.44m OD in trench 3 and 21.30m OD in trenches 2 and 3.

One sherd of residual medieval pottery and a fragment of glazed roof tile were recovered from the site. There were no features dated to this period.

5.1.4 Phase 4: Later post-medieval deposits

A thick layer of post-medieval garden or horticultural soil (101, 201 and 305) was present in all of the trenches. This soil contained finds from the 17th to 19th centuries. The depth of this deposit varied across the site from about 0.30m in trench 3, 0.47m in trench 2 and 0.63m in trench 1. In trench 3 the top of the deposit had been truncated by later features.

Cutting the garden/horticultural soil in trench 2 was a large pit and gully. In trench 3 a large pit was excavated during the earlier part of the 20th century (Plate 9). This was at least 1.66m deep and was probably excavated to remove an earlier feature, perhaps a cellar.

Wall foundations and a probable brick boiler house were removed during the watching brief. These were situated in the north of the site (Fig 2).

5.1.5 Phase 5: Modern deposits

A demolition deposit and foundations and other structural features relating to the garage complex were observed in the watching brief and the evaluation. A layer of modern hardcore overlay the whole of the site which was laid down during the demolition works in December 2012.

5.2 Artefact analysis, by Dennis Williams

The artefactual assemblage recovered is summarised in Table 1.The assemblage came from 21 stratified contexts and could be dated from the Roman period onwards (see Table 1). Using pottery as an index of artefact condition, this was generally good with the majority of sherds displaying moderate levels of abrasion. Average sherd weight was approximately 30g.

period	material class	material subtype	object specific type	count	weight (g)
undated	Bone	animal bone	-	34	654
undated	Ceramic	-	tile	1	148
undated	Shell	-	oyster shell	1	4
Roman	Ceramic	-	brick/tile	2	68
Roman	Ceramic	-	?oven material	6	330
Roman	Ceramic	-	pot	123	3593
Roman	ceramic		roof tile	3	306
Roman	ceramic	fired clay	-	7	722
Roman	metal	iron	?nail	1	42
Roman	slag	slag(Fe)	smelting slag	3	1868
Roman	slag	slag(Fe)	smelting slag (block)	2	860
Roman	slag	slag(Fe)	smelting slag (tap)	22	2734
Roman	stone	sandstone	-	1	52

medieval	ceramic	-	pot	1	8
medieval	ceramic	-	roof tile	2	302
post-medieval	ceramic	-	clay pipe	1	2
post-medieval	ceramic	-	pot	8	831
post-medieval	glass	-	vessel	2	120
modern	glass	-	window	1	6
undated	bone	animal bone	-	34	654
undated	ceramic	-	tile	1	148
undated	shell	-	oyster shell	1	4
			totals:	221	12650

Table 1: Quantification of the assemblage

The pottery assemblage is summarised in Table 2. The majority of the assemblage consisted of Roman pottery, although some medieval and post-medieval sherds were also recovered.

period	fabric code	fabric common name	count	weight (g)
Roman	3	Malvernian ware	6	362
Roman	12	Severn Valley ware	74	2388
Roman	14	Fine sandy grey ware	12	135
Roman	19	Wheelthrown Malvernian ware	4	160
Roman	20	White slipped ware	2	44
Roman	22	Black-burnished ware, type 1 (BB1)	9	112
Roman	28	Nene Valley ware	1	4
Roman	32	Mancetter/Hartshill mortaria	2	112
Roman	33.1	Oxfordshire white mortaria	1	170
Roman	42	Amphorae	1	38
Roman	43	Samian ware	6	30
Roman	98	Miscellaneous Roman wares	5	38
medieval	55	Worcester-type sandy unglazed ware	1	8
post-medieval	78	Post-medieval red wares	4	794
post-medieval	84	Creamware	3	29
post-medieval	85	Modern china	1	8
		totals:	132	4432

Table 2: Quantification of the pottery

Summary artefactual evidence by period

The context finds summary is shown in Table 3.

Roman

Significant amounts of Roman pottery were retrieved from layer 102, fills 106 and 107 (pit 110), fill 113 (ditch 114), fill 127 (pit 128), fill 129 (pit 130), fill 131 (pit 132), and fill 137 (posthole 138).

This material consisted mainly of Severn Valley ware (fabric 12), and included diagnostic rim sherds (Webster 24 jar from fill 102, Webster 1, 8, and 23 jars from fill 106, and a Webster 43 tankard from fill 131). Sherds from a samian Dr.33 cup were found in fill 102, and a Mancetter-Hartshill mortarium rim (fabric 32) in fill 106. These finds are all consistent with 2nd-3rd century activity. There was no Roman pottery later than 3rd century from the whole site.

Small fragments from *tegula* roof tiles were recovered from fills 102 and 113, while coarse ceramic fragments found in 102, 106, and 307 may have been oven components.

Roman smelting slag was recovered from a number of fills, but with a representative sample only being obtained from context 208, a surface formed from this material. The slag comprised tap slag, including rods with internal shrinkage pores (probably as a result of solidification within holes through furnace walls), and also some block slag from inside furnaces. Small fragments of smelting slag were sieved from a soil sample taken from fill 107, but no smithing slag or hammerscale was found.

Other finds from Roman contexts included a possible iron nail from fill 106.

Medieval

A 13th-14th century Worcester cooking pot sherd (fabric 55) and an unglazed roof tile fragment were residual (pit fill 302). A green-glazed roof tile fragment was recovered from an unstratified deposit.

Post-medieval and modern

Post-medieval pottery, bottle glass and a clay pipe stem was found in pit fill 302, along with 20th century window glass. Garden layers and other disturbed ground also contained post-medieval pottery.

context	material class	object specific type	fabric code	count	weight (g)	start date	end date	*tpq* date range
Unstrat.	ceramic	roof tile	-	1	218	1200	1500	-
101	ceramic	pot	78	1	554	1600	1800	1600-1800
	ceramic	pot	78	1	210	1600	1800	
	ceramic	pot	78	1	18	1600	1800	
	ceramic	pot	12	1	18	100	300	
	ceramic	pot	12	1	6	43	400	
102	ceramic	pot	12	5	536	43	400	175-300
	ceramic	pot	12	1	26	43	400	
	ceramic	pot	12	1	36	43	400	
	ceramic	pot	12	1	118	43	400	
	ceramic	oven material?	-	2	70	43	400	

context	material class	object specific type	fabric code	count	weight (g)	start date	end date	*tpq* date range
	ceramic	pot	14	1	6	43	400	
	slag	smelting slag (tap)	-	1	6	43	400	
	ceramic	pot	12	1	130	175	300	
	ceramic	pot	12	9	278	43	400	
	ceramic	roof tile		1	158	43	400	
	ceramic	pot	43	3	16	100	200	
	ceramic	pot	22	1	20	120	400	
	slag	smelting slag (tap)	-	1	228	43	400	
	slag	smelting slag (block)	-	1	444	43	400	
	ceramic	fired clay	-	1	42	43	400	
	ceramic	oven material?	-	2	136	43	400	
	ceramic	pot	22	2	18	120	400	
	ceramic	pot	98	1	6	43	400	
	slag	smelting slag	-	1	1862	43	400	
106	ceramic	pot	12	10	376	43	400	200-300
	ceramic	pot	12	1	20	43	400	
	ceramic	pot	12	1	74	150	300	
	ceramic	pot	12	1	60	200	300	
	ceramic	pot	12	1	18	100	300	
	ceramic	pot	12	1	26	43	400	
	ceramic	pot	32	1	64	100	400	
	bone	-	-	2	152	-	-	
	ceramic	pot	33.1	1	170	100	400	
	ceramic	pot	12	2	18	43	400	
	ceramic	pot	3	1	96	43	400	
	slag	smelting slag (tap)	-	1	8	43	400	
	ceramic	pot	14	1	2	43	400	
	ceramic	pot	43	1	4	43	200	
	ceramic	pot	12	12	124	43	400	
	ceramic	pot	12	2	62	43	400	
	ceramic	brick/tile	-	2	68	43	400	

context	material class	object specific type	fabric code	count	weight (g)	start date	end date	*tpq* date range
	bone	-	-	25	138	-	-	
	ceramic	oven material?	-	1	38	43	400	
	metal	nail?	-	1	42	43	400	
	ceramic	pot	22	2	20	150	250	
	ceramic	pot	14	1	20	43	400	
	ceramic	pot	3	3	50	43	400	
	ceramic	pot	98	2	18	120	200	
	ceramic	pot	28	1	4	150	400	
107	slag	smelting slag (tap)	-	3	576	43	400	43-400
	ceramic	fired clay	-	5	674	43	400	
	ceramic	pot	3	1	180	43	400	
	ceramic	pot	12	3	150	43	400	
	bone	-	-	3	174	-	-	
	ceramic	pot	3	1	36	43	400	
	ceramic	pot	12	1	6	43	400	
	ceramic	pot	14	1	4	43	400	
113	ceramic	pot	19	1	94	200	300	200-300
	ceramic	pot	32	1	48	140	150	
	ceramic	pot	12	6	56	43	400	
	ceramic	pot	12	1	6	43	400	
	ceramic	roof tile		1	28	43	400	
	ceramic	pot	12	1	78	43	400	
	slag	smelting slag		2	6	43	400	
	ceramic	pot	19	3	66	200	400	
117	slag	smelting slag (block)		1	416	43	400	43-400
121	ceramic	pot	43	1	4	100	200	100-200
127	ceramic	pot	12	3	52	43	400	120-400
	ceramic	pot	12	1	14	43	400	
	ceramic	pot	12	1	44	43	400	
	ceramic	pot	98	2	14	43	400	
	ceramic	pot	43	1	6	43	200	
	bone	-	-	3	26	-	-	

context	material class	object specific type	fabric code	count	weight (g)	start date	end date	*tpq* date range
	slag	smelting slag (tap)	-	1	246	43	400	
	ceramic	pot	22	2	34	120	400	
129	ceramic	pot	12	1	6	43	400	43-400
	ceramic	pot	14	1	6	43	400	
	ceramic	pot	20	1	40	43	400	
131	ceramic	pot	12	1	22	150	300	150-300
137	ceramic	pot	12	1	6	43	400	120-400
	ceramic	pot	22	1	4	120	400	
	ceramic	pot	14	1	4	43	400	
201	ceramic	pot	84	1	24	1760	1790	1760-1790
202	ceramic	roof tile	-	1	120	43	400	43-400
	ceramic	pot	12	1	6	43	400	
	stone	-	-	1	52	43	400	
	ceramic	pot	20	1	4	43	400	
204	ceramic	pot	84	1	1	1760	1790	1760-1790
206	ceramic	tile	-	1	148	-	-	-
	shell	oyster shell	-	1	4	-	-	
208	slag	smelting slag (tap)	-	4	920	43	400	120-200
	slag	smelting slag (tap)	-	4	442	43	400	
	ceramic	pot	12	1	2	43	400	
	ceramic	pot	22	1	16	120	200	
	ceramic	pot	14	1	3	43	400	
302	ceramic	pot	78	1	12	1600	1900	1900-2000
	ceramic	pot	84	1	4	1760	1790	
	ceramic	pot	85	1	8	1800	1900	
	ceramic	roof tile	-	1	84	1200	1500	
	ceramic	pot	14	3	54	43	400	
	ceramic	pot	14	1	28	43	400	
	bone	horn	-	1	164	-	-	
	ceramic	pot	42	1	38	43	400	
	ceramic	pot	12	1	14	200	400	

context	material class	object specific type	fabric code	count	weight (g)	start date	end date	*tpq* date range
	ceramic	pot	55	1	8	1075	1400	
	ceramic	pot	14	1	8	43	400	
	ceramic	clay pipe	-	1	2	1600	1900	
	glass	window	-	1	6	1900	2000	
	glass	vessel	-	2	120	1850	1900	
306	slag	smelting slag (tap)	-	2	124	43	400	43-400
307	slag	smelting slag (tap)	-	4	172	43	400	43-400
	ceramic	oven material?	-	1	86	43	400	
309	ceramic	fired clay	-	1	6	43	400	43-400
311	slag	smelting slag (tap)	-	1	12	43	400	43-400

Table 3: Summary of context dating based on artefacts (see Table 2 for key to pottery fabric codes)

5.2.1 Significance of the artefacts

The finds from this site are significant insofar as they give an indication of Roman occupation and use in this part of Worcester, but concentrated within a 2nd–3rd century date range. The slag found at this site is typical of that previously reported in the city (from smelting, rather than smithing), but quantities seemed insufficient to indicate close proximity to an ironworking area.

The finds provide no clear evidence for medieval activity in the vicinity, since the finds of this period were either residual or unstratified.

6 Synthesis

6.1 Roman

The majority of the archaeological remains are Roman in date. The finds from these deposits are consistent with 2nd to 3rd century activity across the site. There was no Roman pottery recovered later than the 3rd century. The quantities of slag from smelting found within the fills of features is typical of that found on other sites in the vicinity. Though there was no evidence of remains for secondary ironworking (eg smithing) on the site.

The surfaces identified in the west of the site are probable yards with features cut into them. The pits, especially the clay lined ones could have an industrial function i.e. associated with metalworking which has been identified to the south-west at Condor building (WCM 100591 and WCM 100592). However, a domestic/agrarian function for these features cannot be ruled out.

Directly to the north at Sanctuary House similar slag surfaces were encountered at a similar depth given that the land rises to the north. However, these were in use in the late 3rd to 4th centuries unlike the slag surface here which was of an earlier date.

In the east of the site Roman features are present but these are more than likely of an agrarian/domestic nature as less slag and pottery was recovered in this area. This is mirrored at the site to the north, Sanctuary House, where the probable features associated with iron smelting were situated towards the west of the site and less slag and pottery were recovered from the deposits in the eastern part of the site (pers comm Robin Jackson).

6.2 Post-Roman to earlier post-medieval soils

A layer of humic soils was identified across the site but was thicker in the west. This deposit has been interpreted as a post-Roman build-up of horticultural soils until the earlier post-medieval period, prior to the urban expansion of this area of the city. Only residual medieval artefacts were recovered.

6.3 Later post-medieval

Soils continued to form during this period and this is consistent with the cartographic evidence of the site being cultivated as gardens or for horticultural purposes. Part of a greenhouse and boiler room were associated with this soil horizon. As was probably a gully and a pit. A large pit in the east of the site was excavated in the earlier part of the 20th century to possibly remove deep intrusions, perhaps cellars associated with the row of houses shown on the 1885 OS map.

6.4 Modern deposits

The site was covered by a deposit of rubble, foundations, and other structural features relating to the garage complex and its demolition.

7 Research frameworks

The results from the fieldwork have the potential to address some of the research questions referenced in section 2 above.

Roman road network (RP3.7).

The Roman road located at several sites to the south appears most likely to run to the west of the site boundary, and it seems unlikely that it would be located in the 7.5m between trench 1 and the western boundary. The Roman road network does not form an important research topic for this site but it will be part of the context for the Roman deposits within the site.

The Roman iron industry (RP3.19-3.23).

The clay lining of features and quantities of slag suggests an industrial association but the evaluation was too limited in extent to make a definitive statement on the nature of activities that were undertaken on this site.

Other Roman industries (RP3.24).

As for the Roman iron industry research topic above.

Sampling and analysis of late Roman dark earth (RP3.26).

The accumulation of horticultural soils is continuous from the post-Roman period and more detailed investigation from elsewhere (MacPhail 1994, 83-85; and The Hive Dalwood pers comm) suggests that this site contains little that would add to this research topic.

Colonisation of back-plot areas and land in suburbs in the post-medieval period (RP6.1).

There is nothing to suggest that further investigation of this period would yield any significant information on this topic.

Landscapes of market gardening (RP6.22).

Sometime before 1885 when the area is shown in detail on maps (Fig 5; earlier maps show insufficient detail to make definitive statements) the site is part of a wider land unit that contains buildings, glasshouses tress, paths and sub-divisions. The buildings and glasshouse on the northern boundary are likely to have been disturbed by later activity as suggested by the watching brief. Beyond the existing documentary evidence it is difficult to suggest any productive line of further archaeological investigation in relation to this topic.

8 Significance

8.1 Nature of the archaeological interest in the site

The features cut into the natural deposits are predominantly Roman in date. The finds from the site are consistent with 2nd to 3rd activity. The surfaces, postholes, and pits, especially the clay lined ones, could be associated with iron working. However, these features could have a domestic or agrarian function. The nature of the archaeological site is comparable to other sites in the vicinity. There are also later soils and more recent building activity of a limited nature. Though the later accumulation of horticultural soils has protected the Roman deposits, there is considerable disturbance in the eastern part of the site.

8.2 Relative importance of the archaeological interest in the site

The site has a potential to add to our understanding of Roman activity in this area, especially with regard to industry or occupation. The preservation of these deposits is also good and they also exhibit remarkable features (clay linings). The presence of layers also suggests that an element of stratigraphy exists for this site, which is not always present in the city. Such deposits are not unique but it is only with the accumulation of information from all sites in the area that a comprehensive picture can be developed. Activity in this area is known to vary in intensity and the pattern of this variation is likely to be important to understanding the Roman town. The deposits cannot be considered to be of the greatest significance (as is described by the NPPF) but their appropriate treatment would be a reasonable expectation should they be disturbed by the proposed development.

Though deposits relating to later periods were identified these are not considered to be of any great significance.

8.3 Physical extent of the archaeological interest in the site

The significant archaeological deposits on the site are protected by a thick post-medieval soil across the site. The deposits exist between 20.90m OD in the west of the site and at 21.24m OD in the east of the site, a minimum of about 1.50m below the existing ground surface. This appears to conform generally with the geotechnical report, where depths of made ground were between 1.9-2.4m, the difference being explained by higher ground levels prior to demolition. Only one bore hole indicated a depth of 2.4m (the others being 1.90-2.00m; Wilson Associates) and as this was in the western part of the site may be explained by the location being over an archaeological feature. Comparison can be made with the adjacent site to the north, where depths of post-Roman deposits were between 1.09-1.60m (21.86-21.30m OD; Mann 2009). This is not too dissimilar to the current site.

Some parts of the site, however, have been truncated to a depth below that of which any significant archaeological deposits would exist (Fig 2, indicating areas of good and less good preservation). These are areas included where the fuel tanks were removed, in the east of the site, and the area where the boiler room was situated along the northern boundary. The eastern end of trench 3 was also truncated by modern intrusions. Other disturbed areas may exist in other parts of the site, especially along the northern and eastern boundaries which were partially built upon in the 19th century. Again this is reflected on the adjacent site, but this had been subject to much more recent ground disturbance affecting Roman deposits (Mann 2009).

The circumstances of preservation of this site probably extend for a considerable area beyond the site boundary and the value of the deposits on the site is augmented by the potential for building a far larger picture of activity, through the accumulation of results from different areas of investigation.

9 The impact of the development

It is believed that the proposed development will consist of office accommodation with provision for car parking. Although the design of the buildings has not been finalized it is likely that structures will be situated along the western, southern and possibly the eastern boundaries (Fig 2).

Significant archaeology exists about 1.50m below the existing ground and this will provide a cushion for any shallow groundworks. However, groundworks deeper than about 1.50m will impact on the archaeological resource. The proposed development is intended to be linked to the northern complex of buildings and it was noted that the ground level for this complex is at least 1m higher than that on the site itself.

If the development was designed so that the deeper groundworks, were situated in the eastern area of the site then the impact on significant archaeology would be reduced.

9.1 Impacts during construction

During the construction phase there will be particular impacts that cannot be avoided. These are likely to be deep foundations, drainage works like manholes and deeper drain runs, lift shafts and attenuation tanks.

9.2 Impacts on sustainability

The historic environment is a non-renewable resource and therefore cannot be directly replaced. However mitigation through recording and investigation also produces an important research dividend that can be used for the better understanding of the area's history and contribute to local and regional research agendas (cf NPPF, DCLG 2012, section 141).

10 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.

A programme of archaeological works was undertaken at the former City and County Suzuki Garage, Farrier Street, Worcester, Worcestershire (NGR SO 8480 5530).

The site lies on the northern side of the Roman town where previous archaeological interventions at Sanctuary House, the former Worcester Infirmary and at the Magistrates Court and Police Station have identified that well preserved layers and features associated with industrial activities survive.

The majority of the archaeological remains on the site are Roman in date. The finds from these deposits are consistent with 2nd to 3rd century activity across the site. There was no Roman pottery recovered later than the 3rd century. The quantities of slag from smelting processes found within the fills of features is typical of that found on other sites in the vicinity. Though there was no evidence of remains for secondary ironworking i.e. smithing on the site.

The surfaces identified in the west of the site are probable yards with features cut into them. The pits, especially the clay lined ones could have an industrial function i.e. associated with metalworking which has been identified elsewhere. However, a domestic/agrarian function for these features cannot be ruled out.

In the east of the site Roman features are present but these are more than likely of an agrarian/domestic nature as less slag and pottery was recovered in this area.

Roman features in all of the evaluation trenches were overlain by a dark earth layer which is found all over this part of Worcester and has been interpreted as a post-Roman return to agriculture. A thick deposit of post-medieval garden/horticultural soil overlay the dark earth. This was cut by several large pits.

A watching brief on the removal of deep modern intrusions, including fuel tanks, during the demolition of the 20th century garage revealed a boiler house and the probable remains of a greenhouse shown on the 1885 OS map. .

11 Acknowledgements

Worcestershire Archaeology would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project, Sophie Bell of Sanctuary Group and James Dinn of Worcester City Council Heritage and Design.

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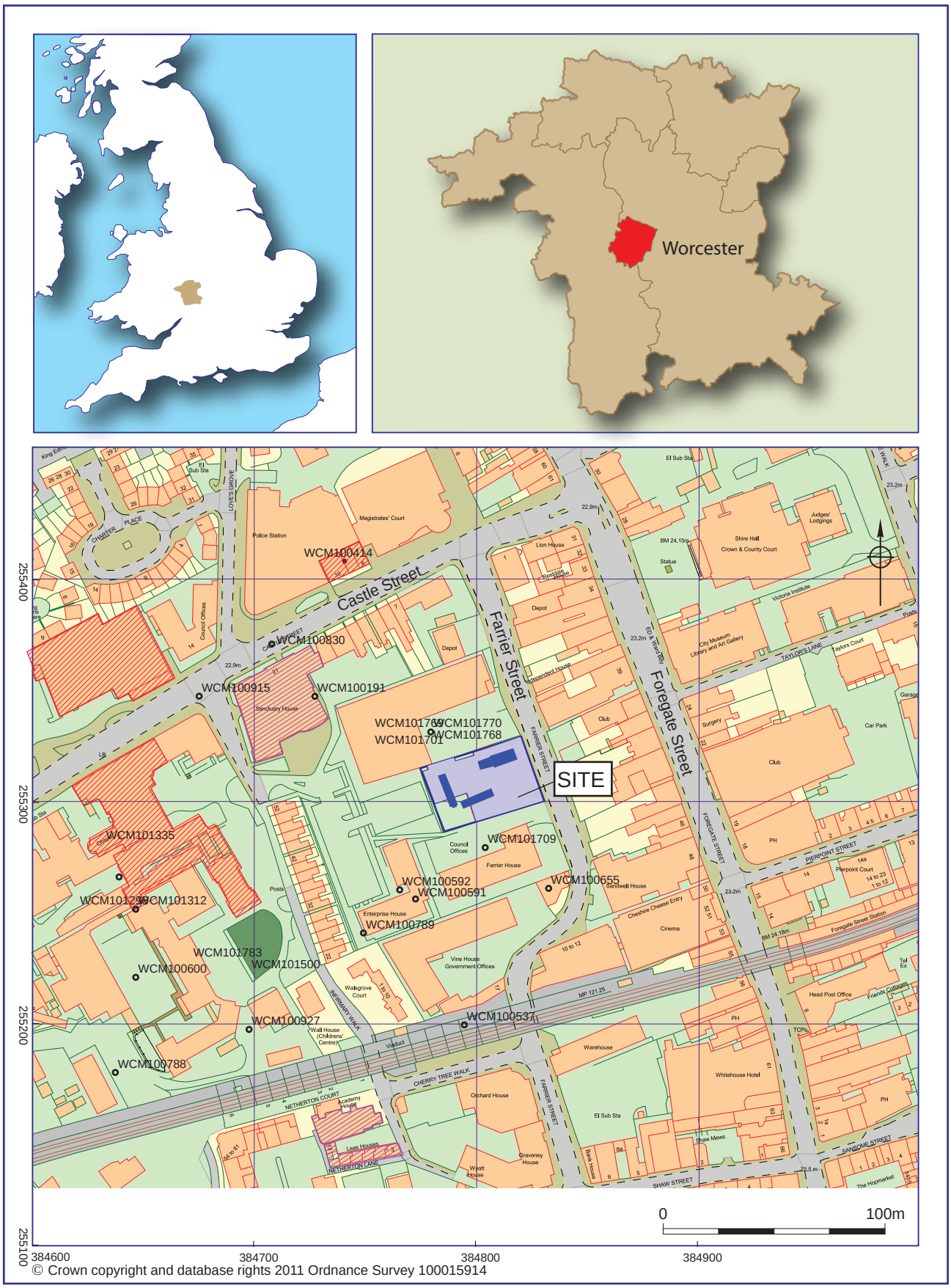
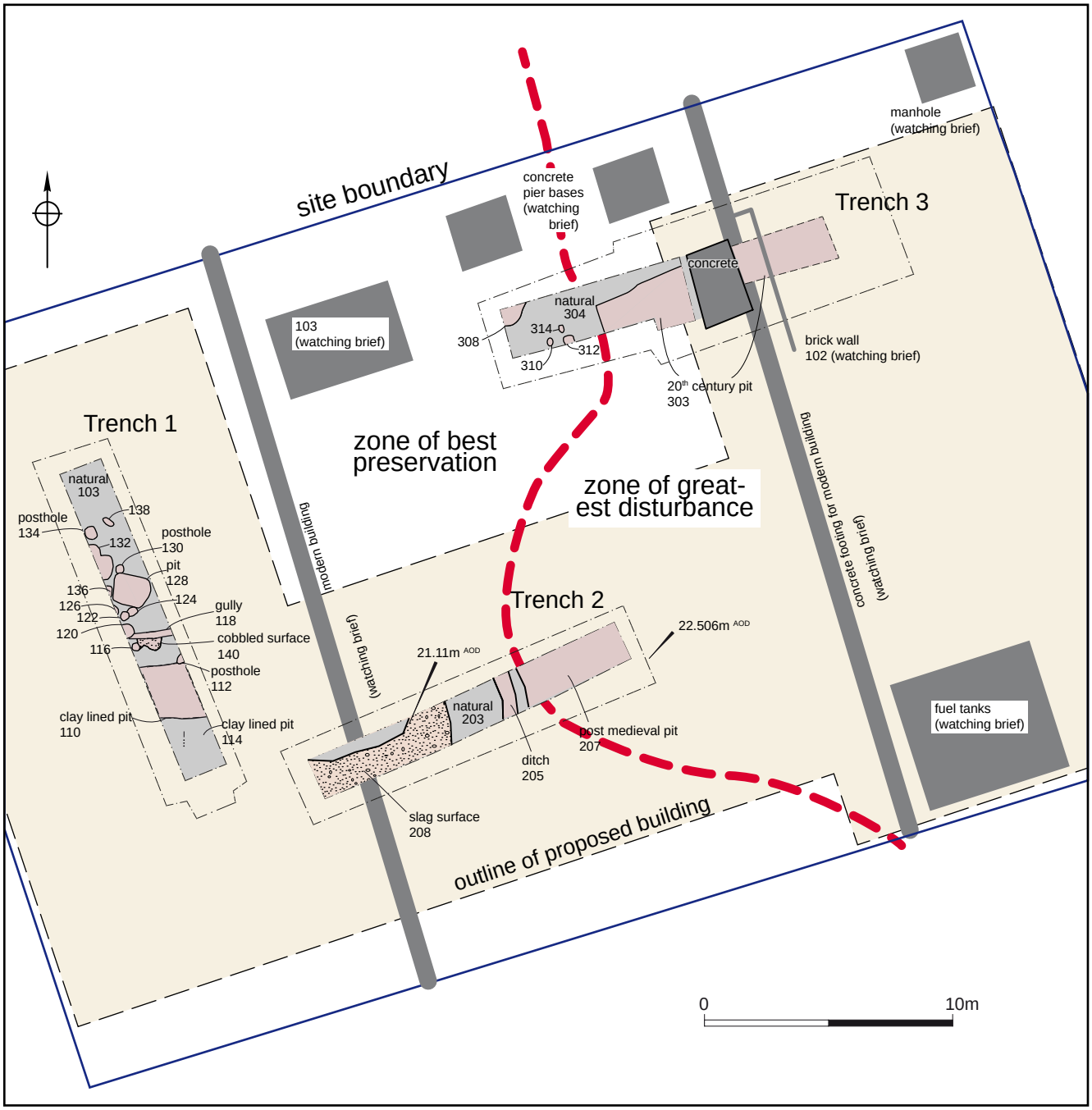
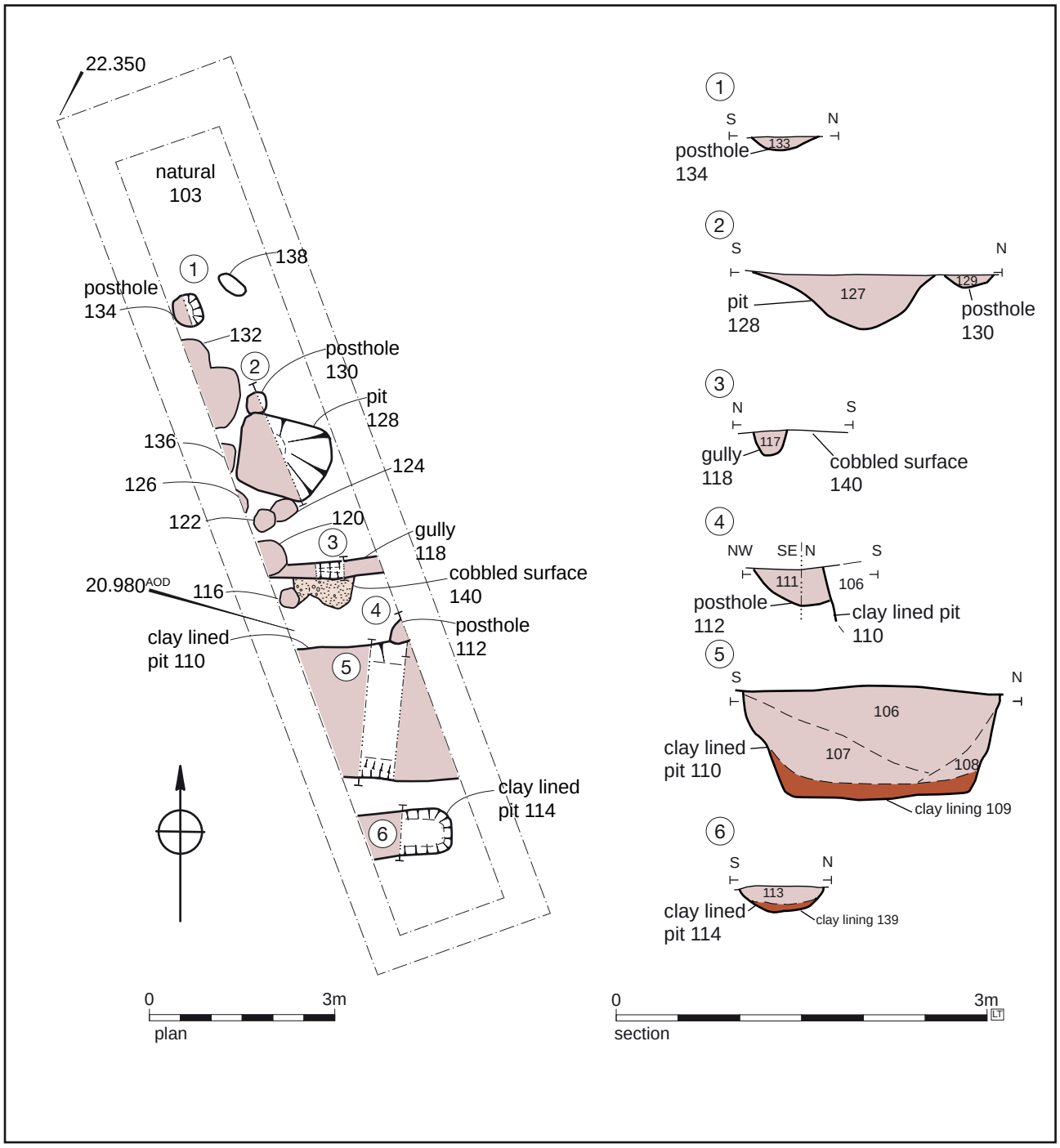
Figures



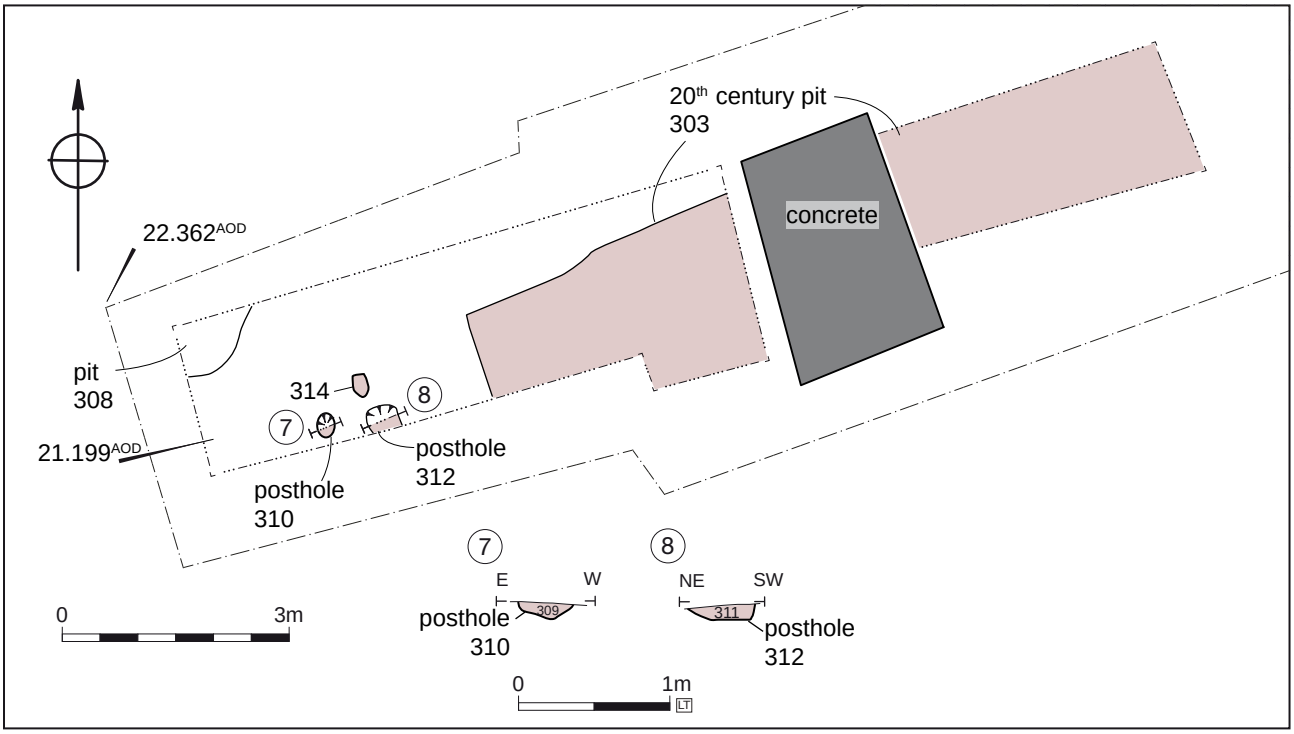
Location of the site *Figure 1*



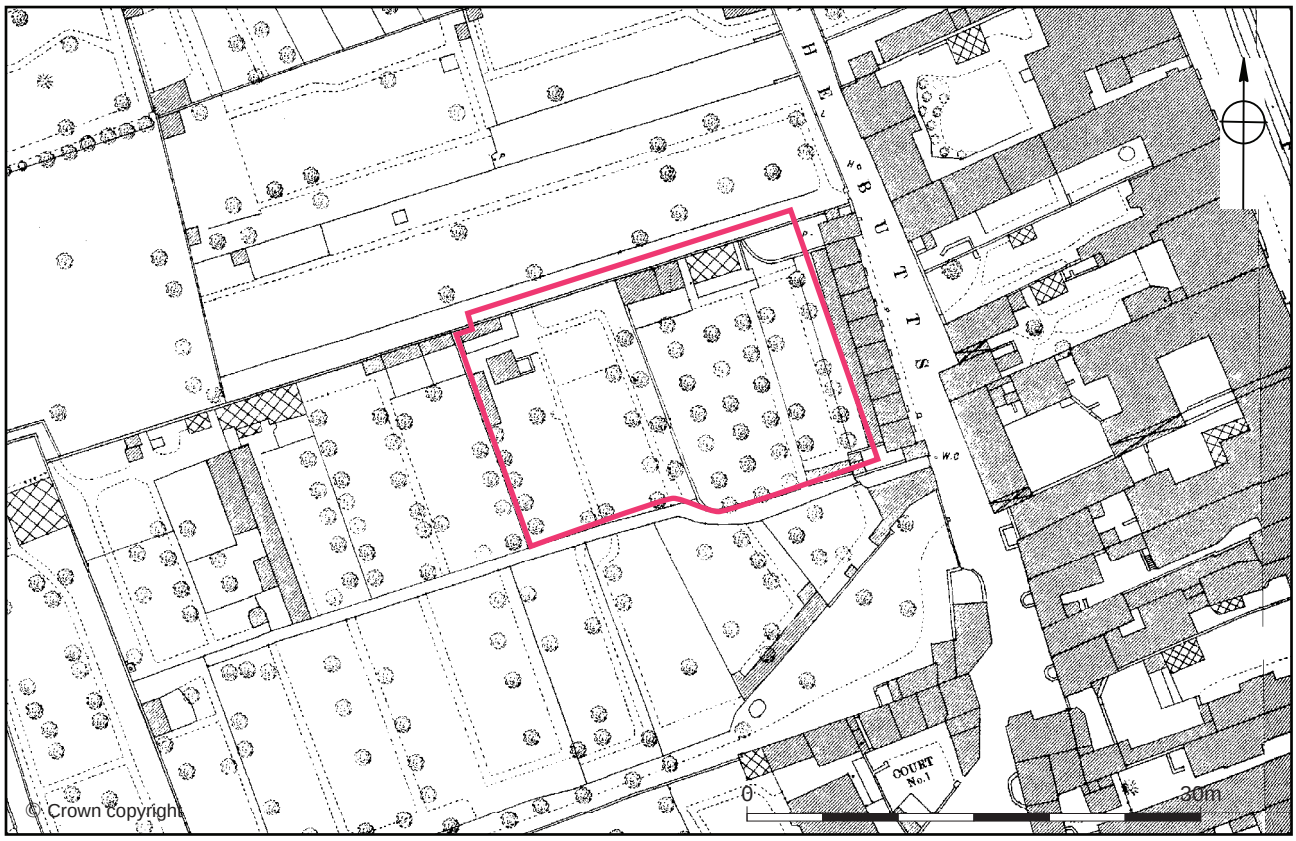
Trenches 1-3 showing excavated features *Figure 2*



Trench 1 plan and sections *Figure 3*



East end of Trench 3 plan and sections *Figure 4*



Site area with 1885 Ordnance Survey, 1:500 scale *Figure 5*

Plates

Plate 1 Removal of the fuel tanks during the watching brief from the west

Plate 2 The site from the north-east after demolition of garage complex

Plate 3 Trench 2 from the west showing slag surface (208) in foreground

Plate 4 Trench 1 from the west, gully 118 and cobbled surface 140

Plate 5 Trench 1 pit 110 from the north-west

Plate 6 Trench 1 pit 128 and posthole 130 from the east

Plate 7 Trench 1 excavated showing pits 114 and 110 in the foreground. View from the south

Plate 8 Trench 3 post-medieval pit 306 from the north-east

Plate 9 Western part of Trench 3, from the west

Appendix 1 Trench descriptions

Trench 1

Maximum dimensions: Length: 13.10m Width: Max 2.0m Depth: 22.35-20.85m

Orientation: N-S

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
100	Demolition layer	General demolition material and crushed bricks	0.0-0.43m
101	Post-medieval garden soil	Mid to dark grey brown sandy silt with occasional small sub-rounded and rounded stone and charcoal	0.43-0.90m
102	Earlier soil horizon	Mid to dark grey brown sandy silt with occasional to frequent sub- rounded stones, occasional slag and charcoal. 'Dark earth'	0.90m-1.22m
103	Natural	Light brownish orange	1.22m+
104	Foundations	Concrete and brick foundations of garage or possibly building seen on the 1885 OS map. Fill of [105]	0.43-1.00m
105	Cut	Irregular cut for (104)	0.43-1.00m
106	Fill	Soft to moderately compact dark greyish brown sandy silt with occasional small sub- rounded stones and slag. Top fill of [110]	1.22-1.92m
107	Fill	Moderately compact dark grey brown slag fill within a sandy silt matrix. Occasional small sub-angular stones and charcoal. Fill of [110]	1.22-1.92m
108	Fill	Soft light grey brown silty sand with occasional sub-angular stones and slag. Slumped material into base of cut [110]	1.28-1.92m
109	Clay lining of pit [110]	Compact mid yellow clay with occasional sub-angular stones	1.92-2.05m
110	Pit	Probable ovoid cut with steep slightly concave sides and a flattish base. Cuts (103 and 111)	1.22-2.05m
111	Fill	Softish dark brownish grey sandy silt with occasional small sub-angular stones and charcoal flecks. Fill of [112]	1.22-1.52m

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
112	Pit	Probable sub-circular with concave sides and base. Cut by [110]	1.22-1.52m
113	Fill	Friable mid grey sandy silt with moderate rounded and sub-rounded stones, occasional slag and charcoal. Fill of [114]	1.22-1.36m
114	Pit	Sub-rectangular cut with concave sides and a flat base. Cuts (103)	1.22-1.36m
115	Fill	Mid grey brown silty sand with occasional charcoal and sub-rounded and rounded stones. Fill of [116]	1.22m+
116	Post hole	Sub-circular in plan. Not excavated. Cuts (140)	1.22m+
117	Fill	Moderately compact mixture of mid grey brown silty sand and yellow clay with frequent sub-round and rounded pebbles and occasional charcoal. Fill of [118]	1.22-1.40m
118	Gully	Open ended linear cut with a concave base sloping down to the east. Cuts (140)	1.22-1.40m
119	Fill	Mid grey brown silty sand with occasional charcoal and sub-rounded and rounded stones. Fill of [120]	1.22m+
120	Probable pit	Sub-circular cut. Not excavated. Cuts (117)	1.22m+
121	Fill	Mid greyish brown silty sand with 10% sub-rounded and rounded stones. Occasional charcoal. Fill of [122]	1.22m+
122	Post hole	Sub-circular cut. Not excavated. Cuts (123)	1.22m+
123	Fill	Mid to dark greyish brown silty sand with frequent sub-rounded and rounded pebbles and occasional charcoal. Fill of [124]	1.22m+
124	Post hole	Sub-circular cut. Not excavated	1.22m+
125	Fill	Mid to dark greyish brown silty sand with occasional sub-rounded and rounded pebbles and moderate charcoal. Fill of [126]	1.22m+
126	Post hole?	Probable sub-circular. Not excavated	1.22m+

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
127	Fill	Friable mid yellow brown sandy silt with occasional yellow clay fragments. Occasional sub-rounded stones, slag and charcoal. Fill of [128]	1.22-1.62m
128	Pit	Sub-square cut with gradual to steep sides	1.22-1.62m
129	Fill	Friable mid grey brown silty sand with frequent slag, moderate sub-rounded stones and occasional charcoal. Fill of [130]	1.22-1.33m
130	Post hole	Sub-circular cut with a rounded base.	1.22-1.33m
131	Fill	Mid greyish brown silty sand with moderate sub-rounded and rounded stones and charcoal. Occasional flecks of cleaner sand. Fill of [132]	1.22+
132	Pit/pits	Irregular shape in plan. Possibly two features. Not excavated	1.22m+
133	Fill	Friable mid greyish brown silty sand with frequent rounded and sub-rounded stones, occasional charcoal and slag. Fill of [134]	1.22-1.34m
134	Post hole	Sub-square cut with a rounded base.	1.22-1.34m
135	Fill	Mid to dark greyish brown silty sand with occasional charcoal and sub-rouned and rounded stones. Fill of [136]	1.22m+
136	Post hole	Sub-square cut in plan. Not excavated	1.22m+
137	Fill	Mid greyish brown silty sand with frequent sub-rounded and rounded stones and charcoal. Occasional flecks of cleaner sand. Fill of [138]	1.22m+
138	Post hole	Ovoid cut in plan. Not excavated	1.22m+
139	Clay lining of pit	Firm mid brownish yellow clay with occasional rounded and sub-rounded stones	1.54-1.62m
140	Cobbled surface	Compact small to medium sub-rounded and rounded stones which appear to be pressed into the underlying natural. Only a very small area survives. Cut by [116] and [118]	1.22-1.26m

Trench 2

Maximum dimensions: Length: 15.00m Width: Max 2.0m Depth: 22.60-21.07m

Orientation: E-W

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
200	Demolition layer	General demolition material and crushed bricks	0.0-0.70m
201	Post-medieval garden soil	Mid to dark grey brown sandy silt with occasional small sub-rounded and rounded stone and charcoal	0.70—1.33m
202	Earlier soil horizon	Mid to dark grey brown sandy silt with occasional to frequent sub- rounded stones, occasional slag and charcoal. 'Dark earth'	1.33-1.51m
203	Layer	Dirty light brownish orange sandy silt with occasional sub-rounded and rounded pebbles	1.51m+
204	Fill	Mid to dark grey brown sandy silt with occasional small sub-rounded and rounded stone and charcoal. Fill of [205]	1.33-1.51m+
205	Pit	Linear running north to south. Rounded base. Post-medieval	1.33-1.53
206	Fill	Mid to dark grey brown sandy silt with occasional small sub-rounded and rounded stone and charcoal. Fill of [207]	0.70-1.51m+
207	Probable pit	Large cut probably through (101). Not bottomed. Post-medieval	0.70-1.51m+
208	Layer	Metalworking debris within a mid to grey brown sandy silt overlying (103). Fairly compact	1.40-1.53m

Trench 3

Maximum dimensions: Length: 15.10m Width: Max 2.05m Depth: 23.43-20.77m

Orientation: E-W

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
300	Demolition layer	General demolition material and crushed bricks	0.0-0.30m
301	Post-medieval demolition	General demolition material from the 20th century and footings and concrete base of garage	0.30-1.30m
302	Fill	Mid to dark grey brown sandy silt with frequent brick and tile and occasional small sub-rounded and rounded stone and charcoal. Fill of [303]	1.00-2.66m+
303	Pit	Large 20th century pit which was probably excavated to remove some large intrusion	1.00-2.66m+
304	Natural	Orange yellow sands slightly dirty at the top	1.40m+
305	Post-medieval garden soil	Mid to dark grey brown sandy silt with occasional small sub-rounded and rounded stone and charcoal	0.90-1.24m
306	Earlier soil horizon	Mid to dark grey brown sandy silt with occasional to frequent sub- rounded stones, occasional slag and charcoal. 'Dark earth'	1.24-1.40m
307	Fill	Friable dark silty sand with occasional slag, charcoal and rounded stones. Fill of [308]	1.40m+
308	Pit	Probably sub-circular. Not excavated	1.40m+
309	Fill	Soft to friable yellowish grey sandy silt with occasional sub-rounded stones. Fill of [310]	1.40-1.47m
310	Post hole	Sub-rounded cut with a rounded base	1.40-1.47m
311	Fill	Soft mid yellowish grey sandy silt with occasional sub-rounded stones and charcoal. Fill of [312]	1.40-151m
312	Post hole	Sub-square with and undulating base	1.40-1.51m
313	Fill	Friable dark silty sand with occasional slag, charcoal and rounded stones. Fill of [314].	1.40m+

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
		Flat stone on top of fill. Not excavated	
314	Post hole	Ovoid cut. Not excavated	1.40m+

Features/Other deposits.

Contexts (315-319) These contexts were initially thought to be deposits and features but were actually formed by root action.

The watching brief

100 Modern footings of the garage

101 Modern demolition rubble

102 probable brick footings of 19th century building in east of site

103 Rectangular brick cellar seen in north of site. Probably housed boiler for greenhouses shown on the 1885 OS map

104 Brick wall or footing probably part of greenhouse shown on the 1885 OS plan

Appendix 2 Technical information

The archive (site code: WCM 101965)

The archive consists of:

23 Context records AS1

4 Field progress reports AS2

2 Photographic records AS3

117 Digital photographs

1 Drawing number catalogues AS4

10 Scale drawings

1 Sample number catalogues AS18

4 Trench record sheets AS41

1 Box of finds

1 DVD

1 Copy of this report (bound hard copy)

The project archive is intended to be placed at:

- Worcester City Museum