

# Archaeological watching brief at Land to the East of Church House, Bartestree, Herefordshire



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## **Archaeological Watching Brief at Land East of Church House, Bartestree, Herefordshire**

Graham Arnold (project leader)

With contributions by Rob Hedge

Illustrations by Carolyn Hunt

### **Summary**

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken at Land East of Church House, Bartestree, Herefordshire (NGR SO 56749 41006). It was undertaken for Wardell Armstrong on behalf of their client, Keepmoat Homes, who intend the construction of a new residential development for which an outline planning application has been granted by Herefordshire Council.

The site is located at the eastern edge of the settlement of Bartestree roughly 6km to the east of Hereford. Prior to the construction phase the site comprised pasture across two fields separated by a wood constructed stable block situated in the centre of the proposed development area.

Earthworks associated with a possible moated site and partial deserted medieval village (DMV) are recorded to the immediate east of the site and early maps depict a holloway leading to the moated site running through the centre of the site. A building known as Den Cottage is depicted on early maps in the centre of the site and ridge and furrow is recorded in the northern field.

Two small stone spreads were recorded in the north-western part of the southern field comprised of flat limestone and sandstone possibly forming the residue of a surface. A small quantity of 16<sup>th</sup> to early 17<sup>th</sup> century domestic pottery was recovered from one of these. Other finds recovered comprised a typical low-density residual spread of Roman, post-medieval and modern artefactual material.

The central area where 'Den Cottage' had been located had been developed later in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and was hardstanding and modern disturbance. This meant that no potential for archaeology survived in this area. No evidence of ridge and furrow was observed in the northern field.

Apart from the stone spreads, no features of archaeological significance were recorded.

## Report

### 1 Background

#### 1.1 Reasons for the project

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken at land East of Church House, Bartestree, Herefordshire (NGR SO 56749 41006). It was commissioned by Wardell Armstrong Limited, whose client Keepmoat Homes intends the construction of a new residential development which an outline planning application has been granted by Herefordshire Council. (Ref: P140747/O) .

The proposed development site comprised the construction of 51 new domestic properties along with associated services, car parking, road access and landscaping. The development is considered to include potential heritage assets. As a result the Local Planning Authority required a programme of archaeological monitoring during groundworks and construction activity within the site.

The project conforms to a brief prepared by Julian Cotton, Archaeological Advisor, Herefordshire Archaeology (Herefordshire Archaeology 2017 email dated 23 January 2017) and for which a project proposal (including detailed specification) was produced by Wardell Armstrong Limited (WAL 2017).

The project also conforms to the *Standard and guidance: Archaeological watching brief* (ClfA 2014a), *Manual of service practice, recording manual*, Worcestershire Archaeology, *Requirements for Archaeological Projects in Herefordshire* (HA 2005) and *Standards for the Deposition of Archaeological Archives with Herefordshire Heritage Services* (HHS 1999)

### 2 Aims

The written scheme of investigation stated that

- Where archaeological remains are present the programme of archaeological monitoring will aim to interpret, characterise and where possible record them. In addition the archaeological watching brief will help inform upon the significance of the potential impacts of the development. In instances where the watching brief remit is not sufficient the results will be used to inform the Local Planning Authority and allow an informed decision to be made upon the requirement for further archaeological work.

The general aims of the watching brief are to:

- allow the monitoring archaeologist to signal that an archaeological find has been made before it is destroyed;
- provide the opportunity for appropriate resource allocation if the archaeological find cannot be dealt with under the watching brief remit;
- determine the presence or absence of buried archaeological remains within the proposed development site;
- determine the character, date, extent and distribution of any archaeological deposits and their potential significance;
- determine levels of disturbance to any archaeological deposits from plough damage or from any other agricultural/industrial practices or later building activities;
- investigate and record all deposits and features of archaeological interest within the areas to be disturbed by the current development;
- determine the likely impact on archaeological deposits from the proposed development;

- 
- disseminate the results of the fieldwork through an appropriate level of reporting.

### **3 Methods**

#### **3.1 Personnel**

The project was led by Graham Arnold (BA (hons.), MSc) who joined Worcestershire Archaeology in 2009 and has been practicing archaeology since 2002. The project manager responsible for the quality of the project was Tom Rogers (BA (hons.); MSc). Illustrations were prepared by Carolyn Hunt (BSc (hons.); PG Cert; MCIfA), Robert Hedge (MA Cantab) contributed the finds analysis.

#### **3.2 Documentary research**

An archaeological desk-based assessment (DBA) was undertaken by CgMs Limited in March 2014 (CgMs 2014).

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

#### **3.3 List of sources consulted**

##### *Cartographic sources*

- 1815 Ordnance Survey First Series Drawing.
- 1839 Bartestree Tithe map
- 1888 Ordnance Survey 1<sup>st</sup> Edition
- 1929 Ordnance Survey
- 1971 Ordnance Survey
- 1995 Ordnance Survey

##### *Documentary sources*

Published and grey literature sources are listed in the bibliography.

#### **3.4 Fieldwork strategy**

A detailed specification has been prepared by Wardell Armstrong Ltd (WAL 2017).

Fieldwork was undertaken between 10 April and 26 April 2017. The site reference number used by the Historic Environment Record to record archaeological events, and site code used in the archive is EHE80289.

Monitoring followed the progress of the construction team and included topsoil stripping of the entire field, with deeper excavations into the natural deposits for the access road, house footings, compound and storage area

The site area covered c.2.1 hectares. The location of the monitored areas is indicated in Figure 2.

The central area, where the Den Cottage was previously located, was covered by concrete hardstanding. This was not monitored archaeologically as it was subject to 20<sup>th</sup> Century modern disturbance and was subject to ground contamination testing.

All excavations were undertaken using a 360° tracked 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 and environmental samples, as well as to determine their nature. Deposits were recorded according to standard Worcestershire Archaeology practice (WA 2012).

### **3.5 Structural analysis**

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

### **3.6 Artefact methodology, by Rob Hedge**

The finds work reported here conforms with the following guidance: for general finds work by ClfA (2014), for archive creation by AAF (2011) and for museum deposition by SMA (1993).

#### **3.6.1 Recovery policy**

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

#### **3.6.2 Discard policy**

The following categories/types of material will be discarded after a period of 6 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 material, and;
- generally where material has been specifically assessed by an appropriate specialist as having no obvious grounds for retention.

## **4 The application site**

### **4.1 Topography, geology and archaeological context**

The site background information was set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation produced by Wardell Armstrong and is repeated below:

The site is located at the eastern edge of the settlement of Bartestree roughly 6km to the east of Hereford. It is limited to the east by the A438 and residential properties to the north, south and southwest, whilst an unnamed road runs to the west.

The area of investigation is approximately 2.1ha in size and is a broadly rectangular shape which follows the course of the A438 to its east (Figure 2).

Prior to the construction phase the site comprised pasture across two fields separated by a wood constructed stable block situated in the centre of the proposed development area. The ground rises gradually to the north and northwest from a height of approximately c.70m AOD (Above Ordnance Datum) in the southeast corner rising to a height of c.90m AOD along the northern boundary.

The underlying solid geology is mapped as a combination of siltstone and mudstone associated with the Raglan Mudstone formation laid down approximately 416 to 419 million years ago during the Silurian Period. The sediment was deposited through primarily fluvial action within a landscape dominated by rivers. No superficial deposits are mapped within the investigation area (BGS 2017).

An archaeological desk based assessment (CgMS 2014) identified that there were no designated heritage assets within the site boundary, although the surrounding landscape recorded 20 listed buildings, 48 entries in the HER monuments and find-spots database and four previous archaeological studies.

There is little known Prehistoric activity known within the local landscape with a single Iron Age coin (Ref: **HER 6528**) being recovered c.950m to the north of the proposed development area and



a possible Bronze Age barrow (Ref: **HER 5230**) based on cropmark evidence roughly 1km to the southwest being the only known recorded events.

There is little direct evidence for activity for the Romano-British period within the study area nothing recorded under roughly 1km from the site. A possible settlement is recorded c.1km to the southwest with the evidence comprising cropmark linear and enclosure features as well as recovered tile and mortarium fragments (Ref: **HER 5320 & HER 7007**).

The Roman Road between the fort at Stretton Grandison and Kenchester (*Magnis*) is located c.1km north of the site. Based on work in the wider landscape it has been demonstrated that the area comprised dispersed settlements surrounded by agricultural hinterland.

The settlement of Bartestree, first recorded in old English as Bertoldestreu and interpreted as relating to the martyring place of Beorthweald (AI 2008), is known to have been established prior to the Norman Conquest. Although at present the full extent of the settlement is unknown it is currently postulated that the focus of this earlier settlement was located around what became the later medieval Church of St. James (Ref: **NHL 1348720**) located c.40m west of the site.

The settlement at Bartestree shifted from the ownership of Leofflaed to Walter de Lacy following the conquest and formed part of the estate of St Guthlac's Priory in Hereford itself. Previous investigations at the church of St James has demonstrated that it is the third to have been built on the site with the earliest structure being a 'modestly proportioned' Norman chapel (**HER 8234**).

Earthworks associated with a possible moated site and partial deserted medieval village (DMV) (Ref: **HER 2502**) are known to the immediate east of the and early maps depict a Holloway leading to the 'moated site' running east/west through the centre of the site. A building known as Den Cottage (Ref: **HER 15274**) is depicted on early maps in the centre of the site and ridge and furrow is recorded in the northern field.

Little appears to have changed within the site boundary throughout the post-medieval period and the site, with exception of the southern field being an orchard in the latter part of the century, is recorded as fields from at least the 17<sup>th</sup> century. In the wider landscape the development of Bartestree Court c.100m to the north (Ref: **HER 15278, HER 26815 & NHL 1099876**) as well as the parks of Hagley Court (Ref: **HER 15296 & NHL 1099841**) and Longworth (**HER 31179**) to the west and south respectively, all help to reflect the parcelling up of the landscape throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

## 5 Results

### 5.1 Structural analysis

The areas monitored and features recorded are shown in Fig 2. The results of the structural analysis are presented below:

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
100	Topsoil	Friable mid greyish brown sandy, clayey silt and turf	0.00 – 0.40m
101	Subsoil	Moderately compact reddish brown silty clay. Cut by occasional modern tree pits filled with modern ceramics for drainage in the southern	0.30 – 0.70m

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
		field.	
102	Natural	Compact firm red clay marl with occasional blue grey silt mottling. Becoming weathered mudstone of the Raglan Formation with depth.	0.50 – 0.70m
103	Hardcore fill of track	Topsoil and modern hardcore creating a road surface, consisting of brick, concrete, tarmac and stone rubble with occasional metalwork and redeposited porcelain.	0.10m+
104	Modern Trackway	Cut for trackway	0.10m +
105	Spread of stone within subsoil	Spread of sandstone and limestone rubble within the subsoil. c. 0.50m x 0.20m size.	0,30m+
106	Spread of stone within subsoil	Spread of sandstone and limestone rubble within the subsoil c. 0.50m x 0.50m size	0.30m +
107	Geotech pit	Modern geotechnical pit 2m x 0.50m. filled with redeposited natural marl.	0.30m Unexcavated

### 5.1.1 Phase 1: Natural deposits

The natural strata consisted of a compact red clay marl with occasional blue grey silt mottling, becoming firmer weathered mudstone of the Raglan Formation with depth. This was overlaid by a moderately compact reddish brown silty clay subsoil with occasional stone inclusions and spreads of stone including residual medieval pottery. A friable mid greyish brown sandy silt topsoil covered all of the areas observed. The field was previously in use as open pasture for stables and horses.

### 5.1.2 Phase 2: Roman deposits

Two highly abraded undiagnostic body sherds of Severn Valley Ware (fabric 12) were recovered from the topsoil. These are considered most likely to be residual material incorporated into the site through agricultural processes, such as manuring.

### 5.1.3 Phase 3: Medieval and post medieval deposits

Two spreads of stone (105 and 106) were recorded within the topsoil (Plates 5 and 6) comprising flat sandstone and limestone fragments. Late medieval pottery was recovered from 105. The function of the spreads is not known.

Other finds included post-medieval pottery recovered from the topsoil are indicative of agricultural processes such as manuring.

### 5.1.4 Phase 4: Modern deposits

Several tree throws were recorded in the southern part of the site from which white porcelain tiles were retrieved.

The modern hardcore spread for the farm track containing brick, wood, concrete and tarmac hardcore ran north to south across the site, providing access from the road in the south into the field and the road to the east. A modern geotechnical pit backfilled with redeposited natural was observed in the north of the site,

## 5.2 Artefactual analysis, by Rob Hedge

The artefactual assemblage recovered is summarised in Tables 1 and 2. The pottery assemblage retrieved from the excavated area consisted of 15 sherds of pottery weighing 169g, in addition fragments of tile and iron were recovered. The group came from four stratified contexts and could be dated from the Roman period onwards, although most of the assemblage was of late medieval/post-medieval date (see Table 1). Using pottery as an index of artefact condition, this was generally fair, with the mean sherd size being about average. Robust post-medieval wares were in relatively fresh condition, with the medieval material markedly more abraded, and the Roman in very poor (ie abraded) condition.

period	material class	material subtype	object specific type	count	weight(g)
Roman	ceramic		pot	2	5
late med/early post-med	ceramic		pot	5	35
post-medieval	ceramic		pot	6	70
post-medieval/modern	ceramic		flowerpot	1	44
post-medieval/modern	ceramic		pot	1	11
post-medieval/modern	metal	iron	unident	1	167
modern	ceramic		floor tile	3	78
modern	ceramic		pot	1	48
Totals				20	458

Table 1: Quantification of the assemblage

### 5.2.1 Pottery

All sherds have been grouped and quantified according to fabric type (Table 2). Sherds were datable by fabric type to their general period or production span.

Broad period	fabric code	Fabric common name	count	weight(g)
Romano-British	12	Severn Valley ware	2	5
Medieval/Post-medieval	69	Oxidized glazed Malvernian ware	5	35
Post-medieval	78	Post-medieval red ware	2	11
Post-medieval	81.3	Nottingham stoneware	1	24
Post-medieval	84	Creamware	1	6
Post-medieval/Modern	85	Modern china	3	40
Modern	101	Miscellaneous modern wares	1	48
Total			15	169

Table 2: Quantification of the pottery by period and fabric-type

## 5.2.2 Site dating

context	material class	material subtype	object specific type	count	weight(g)	start date	end date	TPQ date range
100	ceramic		pot	1	23	1800	1900	1800 - 1900
	ceramic		pot	1	6	1800	1840	
	ceramic		pot	1	3	1600	1700	
	ceramic		pot	2	5	43	410	
101	ceramic		pot	1	24	1690	1790	1900 - 2000
	ceramic		floor tile	3	78	1900	2000	
	ceramic		flowerpot	1	44	1800	2000	
	ceramic		pot	1	8	1600	1800	
	ceramic		pot	1	48	1900	2000	
105	ceramic		pot	2	23	1500	1630	1500 - 1630
	ceramic		pot	1	8	1500	1630	
	ceramic		pot	2	4	1500	1630	
106	ceramic		pot	1	6	1760	1790	1760 - 2000
	metal	iron	unident	1	167	1600	2000	

Table 3 Summary of context dating based on artefacts grouped in phase order

## 5.3 Period discussion

### Roman

Two highly abraded undiagnostic body sherds of Severn Valley Ware (fabric 12) were recovered from the topsoil. These are considered most likely to be residual material incorporated into the site through agricultural processes, such as manuring.

### Late medieval/early post-medieval (16<sup>th</sup> to early 17<sup>th</sup> century)

Five sherds of Malvernian oxidised glazed ware (Worcs. fabric 69; Herefs. fabric B4, eg in Vince 2002) pottery, characteristic of the later stages of the Malvernian industry, provide a 16<sup>th</sup> to early 17<sup>th</sup> century *terminus post quem* for rubble spread (105). Although more local sources might be expected, Malvernian pottery is not unusual in Eastern Herefordshire, particularly along the routes heading west from Worcestershire production centres (D Hurst, pers. comm.). Bartestree's situation close to the main Worcester-Hereford and Malvern-Ledbury-Hereford roads may thus account for the presence of this source of domestic ware.

### Later Post-medieval (mid-17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century)

Small fragments of typical domestic 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century pottery were recovered from topsoil (100), subsoil (101) and rubble spread (106), including Nottingham stoneware (fabric 81.3), creamware (fabric 84), black-glazed redware (fabric 78), and 19<sup>th</sup>-century transfer-printed whiteware (fabric 85).

### Modern (20<sup>th</sup> century)

A small quantity of 20<sup>th</sup> century ceramic floor tile was present within subsoil (101).

## 6 Recommendations

### 6.1 Further analysis and reporting

No further work on the assemblage is required.

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## 6.2 Discard and retention

The later post-medieval and modern material is not considered worthy of retention. However, it is recommended that the late medieval/early post-medieval material be retained, subject to the collection policies of the receiving museum. The final decision rests with Herefordshire Museums Service.

## 7 Synthesis

Apart from two small stone spreads, one of which is dated to the late medieval period, no features of archaeological significance were recorded. No deposits were recorded in the location of Dent Cottage or the

## 8 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.

*An archaeological watching brief was undertaken at Land East of Church House, Bartestree, Herefordshire (NGR SO 56749 41006). It was undertaken for Wardell Armstrong on behalf of their client, Keepmoat Homes, who intend the construction of a new residential development for which an outline planning application has been granted by Herefordshire Council.*

*The site is located at the eastern edge of the settlement of Bartestree roughly 6km to the east of Hereford. Prior to the construction phase the site comprised pasture across two fields separated by a wood constructed stable block situated in the centre of the proposed development area.*

*Earthworks associated with a possible moated site and partial deserted medieval village (DMV) are recorded to the immediate east of the site and early maps depict a holloway leading to the moated site running through the centre of the site. A building known as Den Cottage is depicted on early maps in the centre of the site and ridge and furrow is recorded in the northern field.*

*Two small stone spreads were recorded in the north-western part of the southern field comprised of flat limestone and sandstone possibly forming the residue of a surface. A small quantity of 16<sup>th</sup> to early 17<sup>th</sup> century domestic pottery was recovered from one of these. Other finds recovered comprised a typical low-density residual spread of Roman, post-medieval and modern artefactual material.*

*The central area where 'Den Cottage' had been located had been developed later in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and was hardstanding and modern disturbance. This meant that no potential for archaeology survived in this area. No evidence of ridge and furrow was observed in the northern field.*

*Apart from the stone spreads, no features of archaeological significance were recorded.*

## 9 Acknowledgements

Worcestershire Archaeology would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project, Jason Coopey (Project Manager, Bell Contracting), Nick Daffern ( Senior Project Manager, Wardell Armstrong Limited), Julian Cotton (Archaeological Advisor, Herefordshire Archaeology ).

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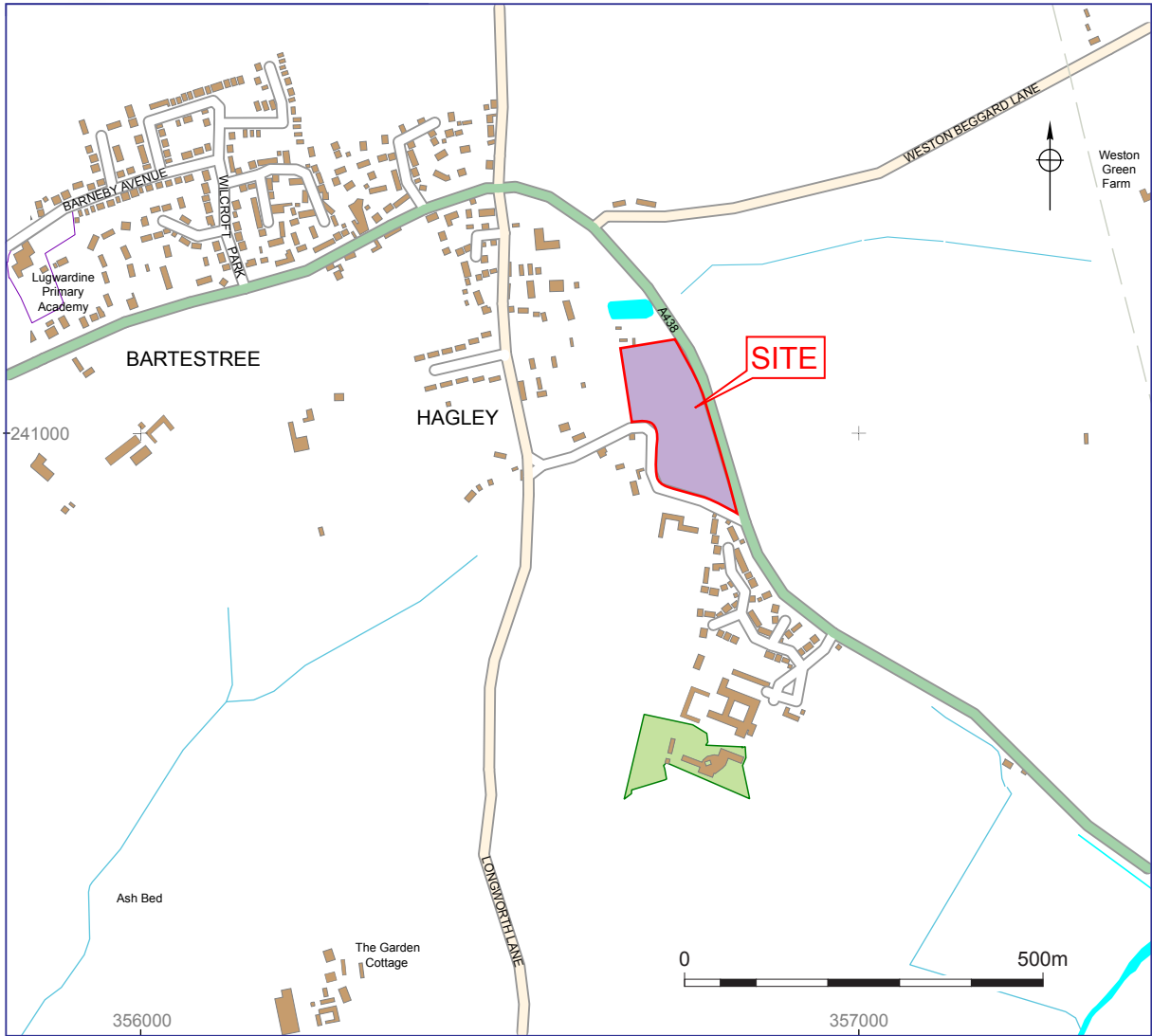
Wardell Armstrong 2017 *Keepmoat Homes Land east of Church House, Bartestree, Herefordshire* Written Scheme of Investigation *for an archaeological watching brief*, Wardell Armstrong Limited, unpublished document dated February 2017, **P5092**



**Figures**

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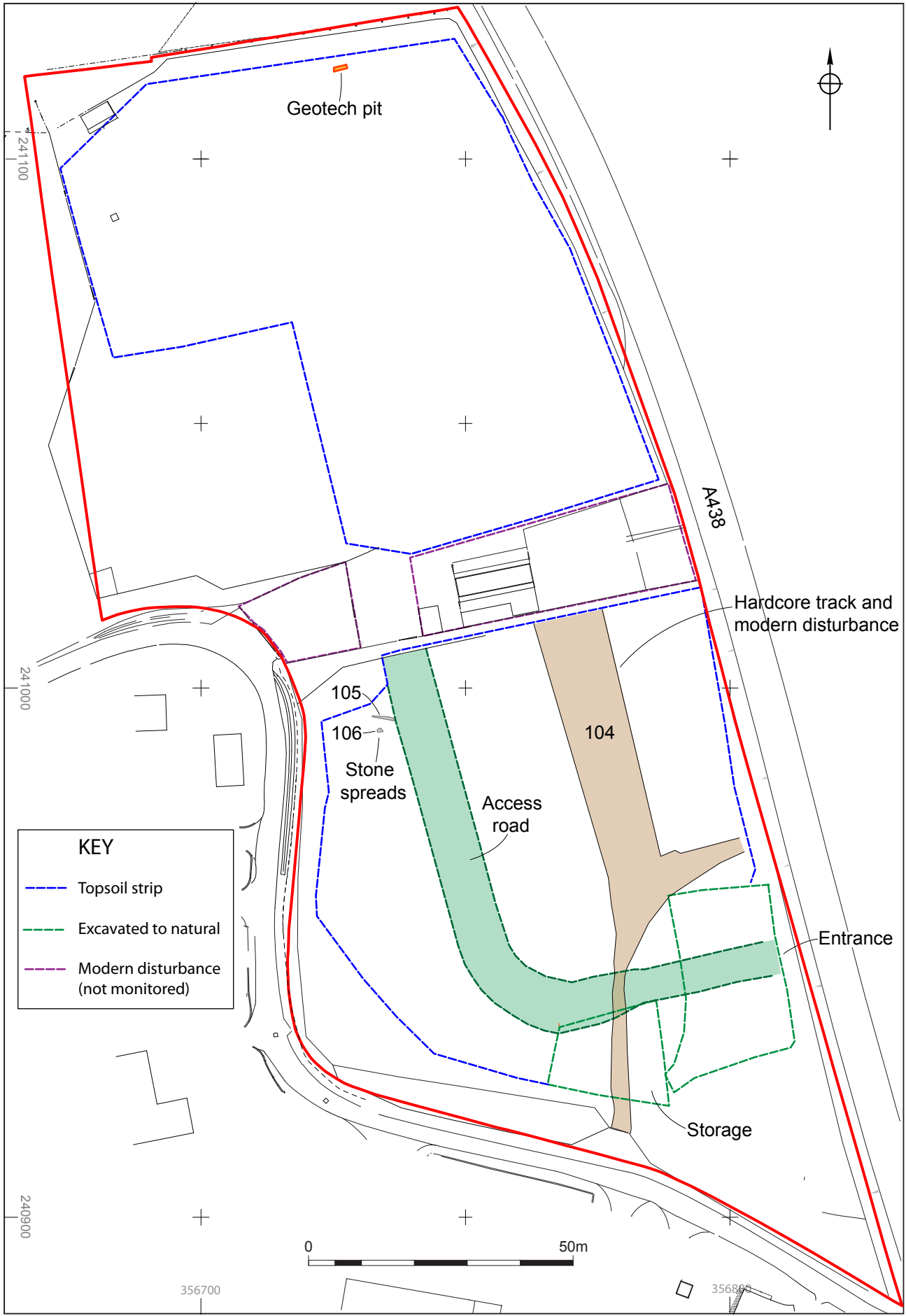







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Location of the site

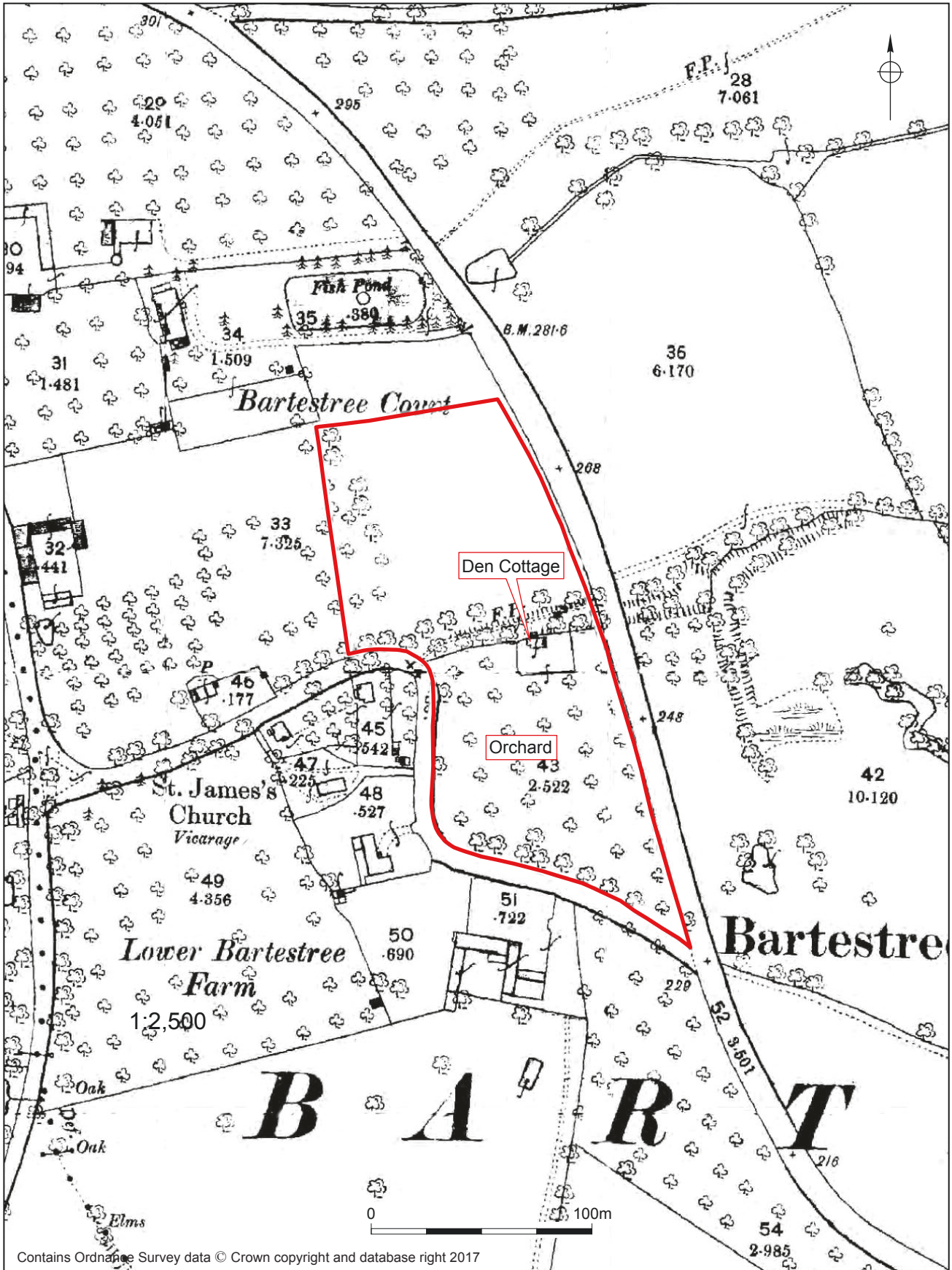
Figure 1



KEY	
	Topsoil strip
	Excavated to natural
	Modern disturbance (not monitored)

Trench location plan

Figure 2



Extract of 1888 Ordnance Survey

Figure 3

## Plates



*Plate 1 The site looking southeast towards the Malverns*



*Plate 2 Topsoil stripping the southern access road. View North. 2 x1m scales.*

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*Plate 3 The road excavation onto natural clay. View North. 2x1m scales.*



*Plate 4 The storage area to the south of the site. View east. 2x1m scales.*

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*Plate 5 Stone spread 105 within the subsoil matrix . 0.5m scale.*



*Plate 6 Stone spread 106 within the subsoil matrix. 0.5m scale.*



*Plate 7 Modern hardcore and topsoil farm track 104, across the access road.*



*Plate 8 The hardcore track 104. View southwest with Convent in background.*

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*Plate 9 House footings in Northwest corner of south field*

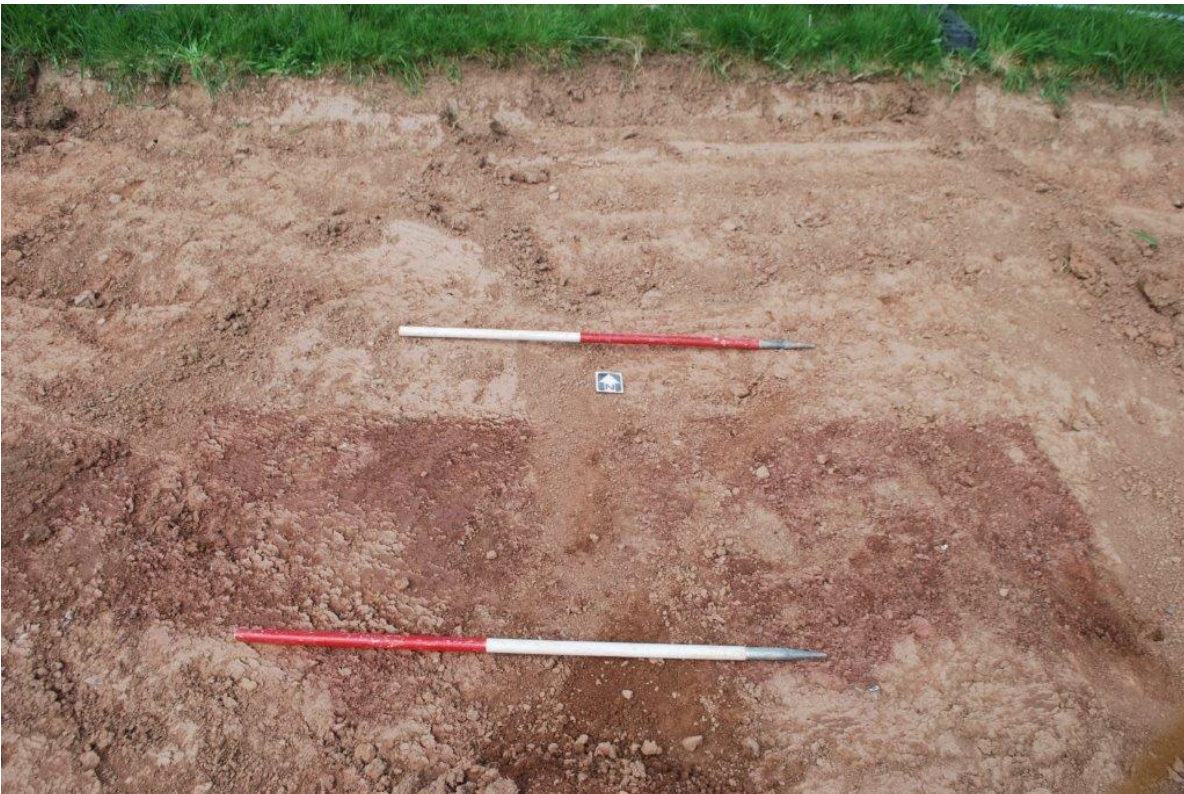


*Plate 10 House footings and ground reduction in south field*





*Plate 11 North field topsoil stripped, looking northwest. 2 x1m scales.*



*Plate 12 Geotechnical pit with redeposited natural. 2x1m scales.*

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## Appendix 1 Trench descriptions

### Trench 1

#### Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
100	Topsoil	Friable mid greyish brown sandy, clayey silt and turf	0.00 – 0.40m
101	Subsoil	Moderately compact reddish brown silty clay. Cut by occasional modern tree pits filled with modern ceramics for drainage in the southern field.	0.30 – 0.70m
102	Natural	Compact firm red clay marl with occasional blue grey silt mottling. Becoming weathered mudstone of the Raglan Formation with depth.	0.50 – 0.70m
103	Hardcore fill of track	Topsoil and modern hardcore creating a road surface, consisting of brick, concrete, tarmac and stone rubble with occasional metalwork and redeposited porcelain.	0.10m+
104	Modern Trackway	Cut for trackway	0.10m +
105	Spread of stone within subsoil	Spread of sandstone and limestone rubble within the topsoil. c. 0.50m x 0.20m size.	0,30m+
106	Spread of stone within subsoil	Spread of sandstone and limestone rubble within the topsoil. c. 0.50m x 0.50m size	0.30m +
107	Geotech pit	Modern geotech pit 2m x 0.50m. filled with redeposited natural.	0.30m Unexcavated

## **Appendix 2 Technical information**

### **The archive (site code: EHE 80289)**

The archive consists of:

- 1 Field progress reports AS2
- 1 Photographic records AS3
- 44 Digital photographs
- 1 Trench record sheets AS41
- 1 Box of finds
- 1 CD-Rom/DVDs
- 1 Copy of this report (bound hard copy)

The project archive is intended to be placed at:

Hereford Museum and Art Gallery,  
Broad Street,  
Hereford  
HR4 9AU

Tel: 01432 383593/260692

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## Summary of data for Herefordshire SMR

<b>Report name and title</b>	Archaeological Watching Brief at Land East of Church House, Bartestree, Herefordshire	
<b>Contractor's name and address</b>	Worcestershire Archaeology The Hive, Sawmill Walk, Worcester	
<b>Site name</b>	Land East of Church House, Bartestree, Herefordshire	
<b>Grid Reference (8 fig)</b>	SO 56749 41006	<b>Planning Application Number</b>
<b>SMR number/s of site</b>		
<b>Date of fieldwork</b>		
<b>Date of report</b>		
	<b>Number and type of finds</b>	
<b>Pottery</b>	<b>Period</b>	<b>Number of sherds</b>
<b>Other finds</b>	<b>Period</b>	<b>Quantity</b>
	<b>Number and type of samples collected</b>	
<b>Sieving for charred plant remains</b>	Number of features sampled: Number of buckets:	
<b>C14/scientific dates</b>	Number and type: Result:	
<b>Pollen</b>	No of columns/spot samples: Name of pollen specialist	
<b>Bone</b>	Number of buckets sieved for bone  <i>Quantity recovered</i> <i>Period</i>	
<b>Insect</b>	No of columns/spot samples Name of pollen specialist	
<b>Other</b>	Type and specialist	
<b>Summary of the report</b>		

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