

Archaeological watching brief at St Andrew's Parish Centre, Church Walk, Pershore, Worcestershire



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Archaeological watching brief at St Andrew's Parish Centre, Church Walk, Pershore, Worcestershire

Graham Arnold

With contributions by Rob Hedge

Illustrations by Carolyn Hunt

Summary

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken at St Andrew's Parish Centre, Church Walk, Pershore, Worcestershire (NGR SO 9483 4582; WSM 70016). It was undertaken on behalf of the Worcester Diocesan Board of Finance Ltd, during groundworks to extend a car park, for which a planning application has been granted, subject to conditions.

The site lies in the historic core of Pershore, to the east of Pershore Abbey.

The development area is located to the rear of the Grade II* Listed St Andrew's Church, which is of 12th century and later date (NHLE 1387033). The Vicarage, an early 19th century Grade II listed brick building (NHLE 1387024) stands to the north-east. The 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1888 shows the site as part of the gardens to the Vicarage.

The watching brief uncovered a cobbled roadway, brick foundations for a cart-shed, a brick well and pump, which are recorded on the 1st edition and 1904 Ordnance Survey maps and later mapping. The cobbled roadway with brick edging was also uncovered during an evaluation of the site in 2015. The cobbled surface had been truncated in places by tree roots. The surfaces and foundations were not damaged or removed during excavations and will remain intact beneath the car park. No evidence of any earlier deposits, features or structures was recorded, nor finds pre-dating the 19th century were recovered during the works. There is the potential for archaeological remains to exist within the site, as undisturbed natural was only observed where tree roots were removed.

Report

1 Background

1.1 Reasons for the project

A watching brief was undertaken at St Andrew's Parish Centre, Church Walk, Pershore, Worcestershire (NGR SO 9483 4582; WSM 70016). It was commissioned by the Worcester Diocesan Board of Finance Ltd, during groundworks to extend a car park. A planning application has been submitted to Wychavon District Council (reference W/16/03027/PN). This was granted subject to archaeological conditions.

The proposed development site is considered to include heritage assets and potential heritage assets, the significance of which may be affected by the application (NHLE 1387033 and 1387024).

The project conforms to a brief prepared by Worcestershire County Council (WCC 2017) and for which a project proposal (including detailed specification) was produced (WA 2017).

The project also conforms to the *Standard and guidance: Archaeological watching brief* (ClfA 2014a), and *Standards and guidelines for archaeological projects in Worcestershire* (WCC 2010).

2 Aims

The aims and scope of the project were to observe and record archaeological deposits, and to determine their extent, state of preservation, date and type, as far as reasonably possible within the constraints of the Client's groundworks.

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 Vaughan (BA (hons. Dunelm); MA; ACIfA). Illustrations were prepared by Carolyn Hunt (BSc (hons.); PG Cert; MCIfA). Robert Hedge (MA Cantab, PCIfA) 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

Cartographic sources

- 1st edition 1885 Ordnance Survey map 1:2500
- 1904 Ordnance Survey Map 1:2500
- 1938 Ordnance Survey Map 1:2500
- 1967 Ordnance Survey Map 1:2500
- 1970-1985 Ordnance Survey Map 1:2500

Documentary sources

Published and grey literature sources are listed in the bibliography (Section 9).

3.4 Fieldwork strategy

A detailed specification has been prepared by Worcestershire Archaeology (WA 2017).

Fieldwork was undertaken between 16 and 18 January 2018. The site reference number used by the Historic Environment Record to record archaeological "events", and site code used in the archive is WSM 70016.

The excavation for the car park area amounted to just over 135m². The location is indicated in Figure 2. Deposits considered not to be significant were removed under archaeological supervision using a 360° tracked excavator, employing a toothless bucket. 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). A metal detector was used to scan the topsoil and deposits removed.

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

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

3.6.1 Artefact recovery policy

Recovery of artefacts was undertaken according to standard Worcestershire Archaeology practice (WA 2012).

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 was produced for each stratified context. The date was used for determining the broad date of phases defined for the site. All information was recorded on Microsoft Access database.

No artefacts from environmental samples were examined.

The pottery and ceramic building material was examined by eye, with reference to the fabric type series maintained by Worcestershire Archaeology (Hurst and Rees 1992 and www.worcestershireceramics.org).

3.7 Environmental archaeology methodology

3.7.1 Sampling policy

Sampling was undertaken according to standard Worcestershire Archaeology practice (WA 2012). In the event no deposits were identified which were considered to be suitable for environmental analysis.

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 at a height of about 20m above Ordnance Datum (AOD). The geology of the site comprises bedrock deposits of the Charmouth Mudstone Formation overlain by superficial deposits of the Wasperton Sand and Gravel Member (BGS 2018).

The historical background is referred to in the brief (WCC 2017) and is referenced below:

The development area is located to the rear of the Grade II* Listed Parish Church of St Andrew's, which is of 12th century and later date (NHLE 1387033; WSM 05409). It ceased to function as a parish church in 1957 but services were occasionally held in it up to 1961. It is now a community parish centre.

The Vicarage, a detached property built c 1840 is a Grade II listed brick building (NHLE 1387024; WSM16010) that stands to the north-east of St Andrews Parish Centre. The 1885 Ordnance Survey 1st edition map shows the site as part of the landscape gardens to the Vicarage. Due to the high archaeological potential of the development area an archaeological field evaluation by trial trenching was undertaken in connection with a previous application for the site (14/02826) in August 2015 (One Ten Archaeology 2015). Of particular relevance to the current application are the results of trench 3:

In trench 3 the natural substrate was not reached, instead immediately below the garden topsoil was an *insitu* cobbled surface divided by brick edging or the remains of walling, to the north of this lay the partially exposed remains of what appears to be a former culvert, identified by a row of arched bricks. These features continued beyond the edges of the trench indicating that they formed part of a much larger area of paving, this would be consistent with a road way shown on the historic maps (OS 1885 & 1904) leading to a building (stable & cartshed) adjoining the side of the church (one ten archaeology 2015, 23).

An inhumation was found within the south aisle at St Andrew's Church during drainage works at St Andrew's Parish Centre in 2001 (WSM45203; Wainwright 2001). The burial was believed to date from the 18th or 19th centuries. The proposed site of a new manhole was moved southwards so the skeleton could be left in situ.

4.2 Current land-use

The site was an overgrown garden and adjacent hedgerow with a lot of tree stumps. The area had been used as a modern dumping ground in recent history during renovations to Pershore Abbey and other works (pers comm Mark Wild, on site). The above ground vegetation and some tree stumps were removed prior to archaeological supervision.

5 Results

5.1 Structural analysis

The trenches and features recorded are shown in Figure 2. The results of the structural analysis are presented below

Main deposit descriptions

Trench 1 – Car park area reduction

Maximum dimensions: Length: 19.00m Width: 7.50m Depth: 0.05 – 0.40m B G S

Orientation: NW-SE

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
100	Topsoil	A loose, soft dark brownish black humic sandy silt with frequent vegetational rooting and tree roots. Dumps of stone masonry from the Priory restorations and modern refuse including plastic bags.	0.00 – 0.40m
101	Made ground	Modern builders sand overlaying southwest corner of cobbled yard 104.	0.05m – 0.30m
102	Natural	Firm greyish yellow clay and gravels.	0.20m +
103	Structure	Brick building foundations with machine made bricks and lime mortar. Bricks measure 9" x 4 1/2" x 3". Two brick wide stretchers. Up to three course visible. Building recorded on 1 st ed 1885 OS map and still in existence in 1967 OS Plan. Demolished in late 1960s?	0.20 – 0.40m
104	Surface	Modern cobbled yard surface from tarmac hardstanding to back of outbuilding. Overlaid by tarmac and topsoil. Loose, unbonded brick edging along north side. Includes modern metal drains. Truncated and disturbed by lots of tree roots. On 1904 and 1938 OS maps.	0.05 – 0.40m
105	Arbitrary number	Cleaning layer for finds recovered around building 103	
106	Arbitrary number	Cleaning layer allotted to finds recovered from cobbled surface	
107	Well	Brick built dry brick well, 1.00m diameter, with modern capping and manhole 0.60m square for access. Bricks 9" x 4 1/2" x 3". Metal pipe for water pump and cast iron drain running into well. Base measured at 4.70m deep from ground surface. Used in 20 th century and on the 1938 OS map.	0.10m – 4.70m

5.2

5.3 Discussion

Topsoil from the garden was removed to provide a flat area for the car parking spaces. The topsoil was a loose, very humic sandy silt, with lots of tree and vegetation roots, and contained lots of dumps of modern refuse, including glass bottles, plastic bags and church masonry, that had been deposited after recent refurbishment work to Pershore Abbey (pers comm Mark Wild).

The excavations uncovered a cobbled surface (104) (Plates 5-6), with brick edging along the north-east side, within the south-western third of the excavation area, and the foundations of a brick structure (103) adjacent within the south-eastern corner (Plates 7-8). This had been previously recorded in Trench 3 of an evaluation in 2015 and was considered to be a cart-shed or stable (One Ten Archaeology 2015). The surfaces were overlaid with a modern, humic, topsoil (100), with frequent rooting from trees and a former hedgerow dividing the site. The structures are visible on the 1885 and 1904 OS maps. The cobbled surface appears to relate to the path off the corner of Church Street and Church Walk, which continued round the back of the church and to the Vicarage to the north-east (Fig 3). A well (107) (Plates 9-10) located in the north-western side of the site is denoted on the 1904 map as a pump (Fig 3). This was constructed of machine made bricks, measuring 9" x 4 ½ " x 3" with no mortar seen. It is thought to be contemporary with the cobbled surface and had a metal pipe used as a pump and a cast iron drain in the northeast side of the manhole. This had been capped in the mid-20th century with a gravestone (Plates 11-12) dating to 1707, thought to be reused from the adjoining churchyard. The gravestone was retained within the grounds of St Andrew's Church.

No significant features were revealed during the works and the surfaces and foundations were not disturbed, with the car park being built up from this level.

The maximum depth of the ground reductions was 0.40m below the existing ground surface. Undisturbed natural yellow grey clay was only recorded where tree roots had been removed in the eastern side of the site, along the line of the old hedgerow. A well-developed soil profile was not recorded overlying the natural, due to disturbance from the tree roots.

5.4 Artefact analysis, by Jane Evans

The artefactual assemblage recovered is summarised in Table 1.

The assemblage came from two cleaning layers (104 and 106) and was all modern (see Table 1).

period	material class	material subtype	object specific type	count	weight(g)	average weight
modern	ceramic	earthenware	pot	12	260	22
modern	glass		bottle	5	772	154
modern	glass		jar	3	315	105
modern	metal	copper alloy	coin	1	4	4

Table 1: Quantification of the assemblage by period

Broad period	fabric code	Fabric common name	count	weight(g)	average weight
modern	78	Post-medieval red ware	2	36	18
modern	81.4	Miscellaneous late stoneware	1	81	81
modern	85	Modern china	9	143	16
total			12	260	22

Table 2: Quantification of the pottery by fabric

Summary of artefactual evidence

For the finds from individual features, including specific types of pottery, see Table 3.

All finds were modern, the most closely dated being a 1973 penny (layer 104). The rest of the assemblage comprised complete or near-complete, machine-made bottles and fragments of modern pottery and tile. The bottles comprised a milk bottle from Worcester Co-op, a 'Tru-food' jar, and other assorted household jars and bottles. The fact that they are all machine-made supports a 20th century date, rather than earlier. The pottery included a small stoneware jar (Fabric 81.4), Willow-pattern and other transfer-painted wares, and a utilitarian red ware bowl, all broadly dating to the 19th century onwards (Fabric 85). The tile is likely to be broadly contemporary.

Unless specifically requested by the Curator and museum, the assemblage will not be retained.

context	material class	material subtype	object specific type	fabric code	count	weight(g)	start date	end date
104	glass		bottle	0	1	424	1905	2000
104	glass		bottle	0	1	173	1905	2000
104	glass		bottle	0	1	15	1905	2000
104	ceramic	earthenware	pot	81.4	1	81	1800	1950
104	metal	copper alloy	coin	0	1	4	1973	
105	glass		jar	0	1	112	1905	2000
105	glass		jar	0	1	109	1905	2000
105	glass		bottle	0	1	135	1905	2000
105	glass		bottle	0	1	25	1905	2000
105	glass		jar	0	1	94	1905	2000
105	ceramic	earthenware	pot	85	11	179	1800	2000

Table 3: Summary of context dating based on artefacts

6 Synthesis

The watching brief uncovered the cobbled roadway, cart-shed and a well to the rear of St Andrew's Parish Church confirming the findings of the earlier evaluation. All of the structures related to the 19th and 20th centuries and are on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map, although they may also be earlier. The finds assemblage is representative of typical 20th century domestic debris. Only the topsoil was removed and ground built up to create the car park area. The natural undisturbed clay was only recorded within the base of tree root throws along the line of a hedgerow on the site. Therefore deeper deposits relating to the vicarage or earlier activity is likely to survive within the site.

7 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.

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8 Acknowledgements

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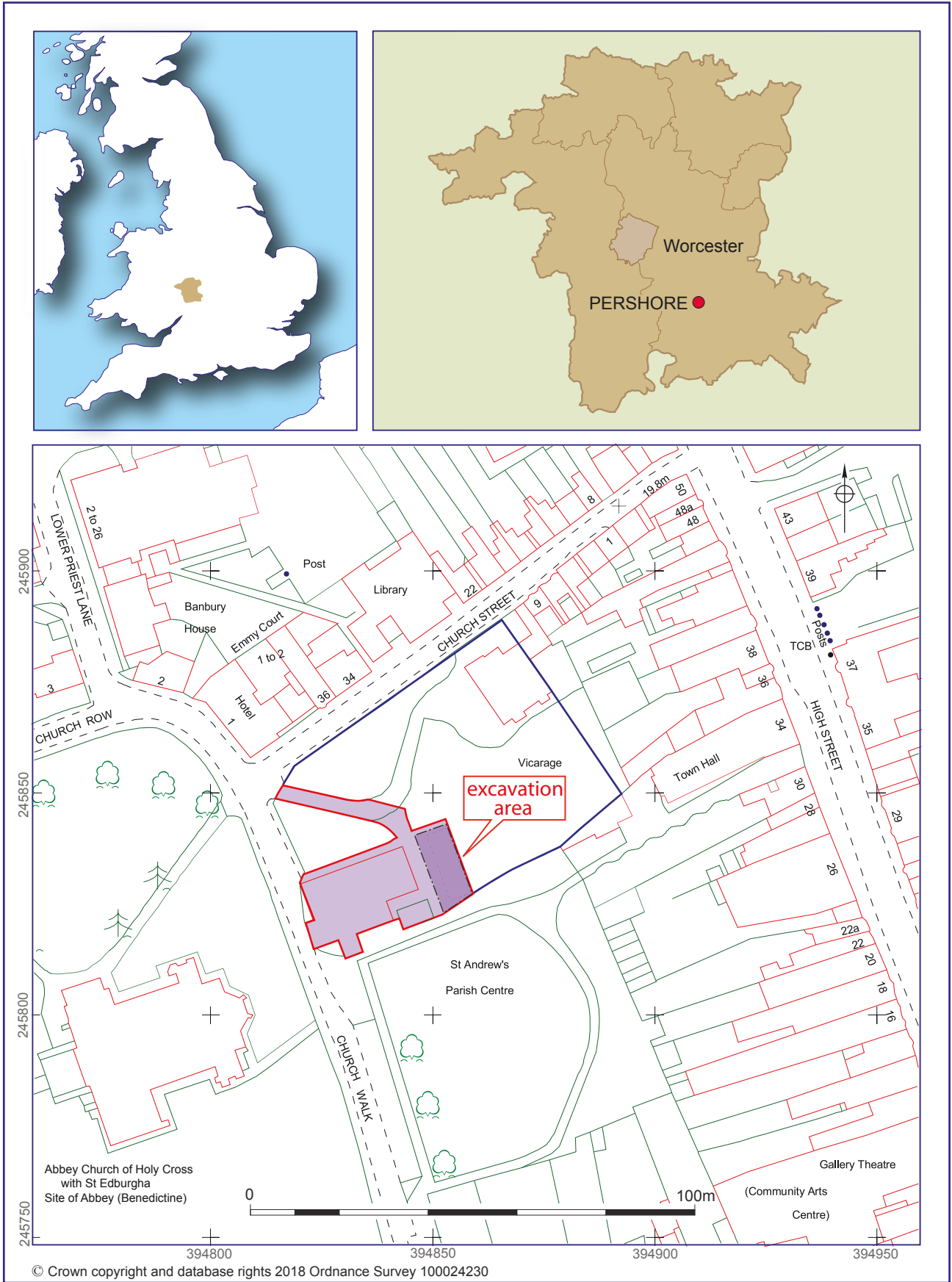
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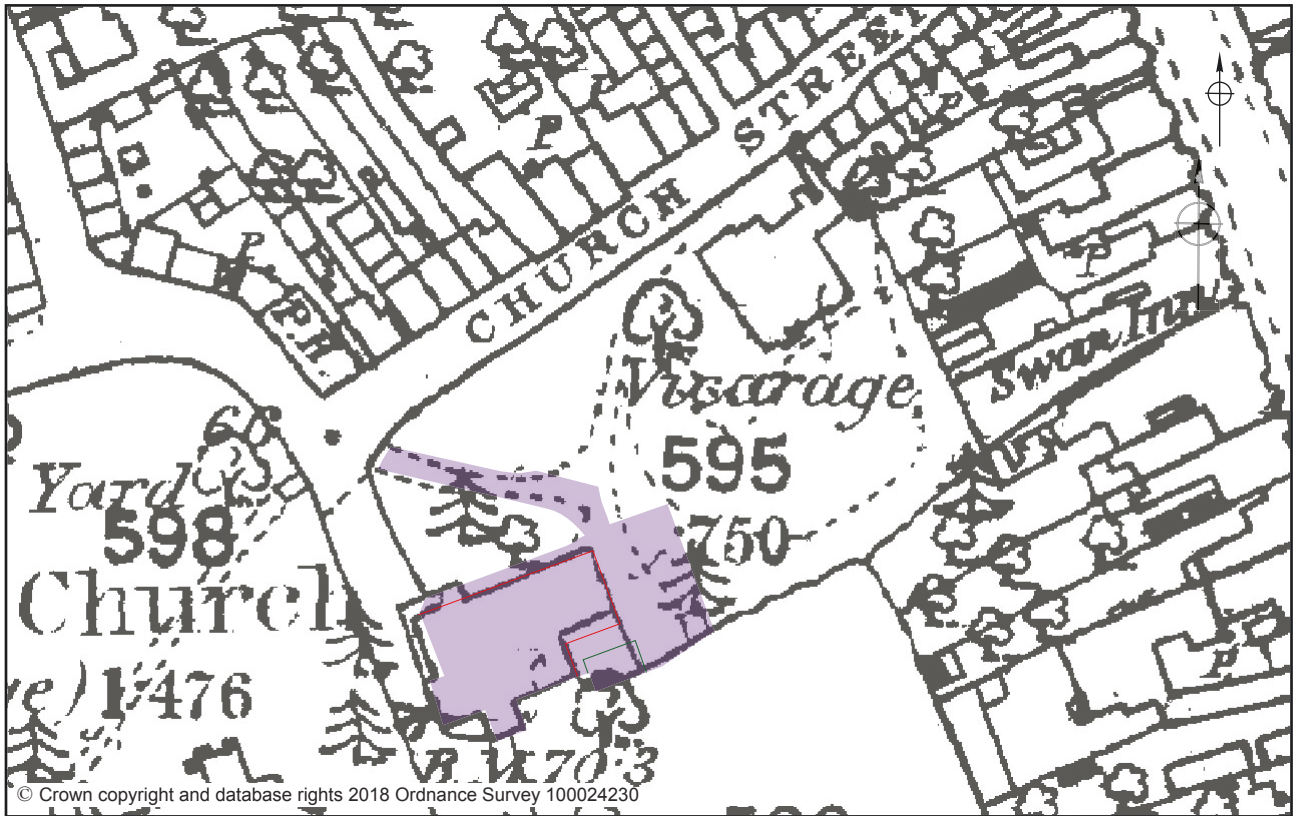
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Figures

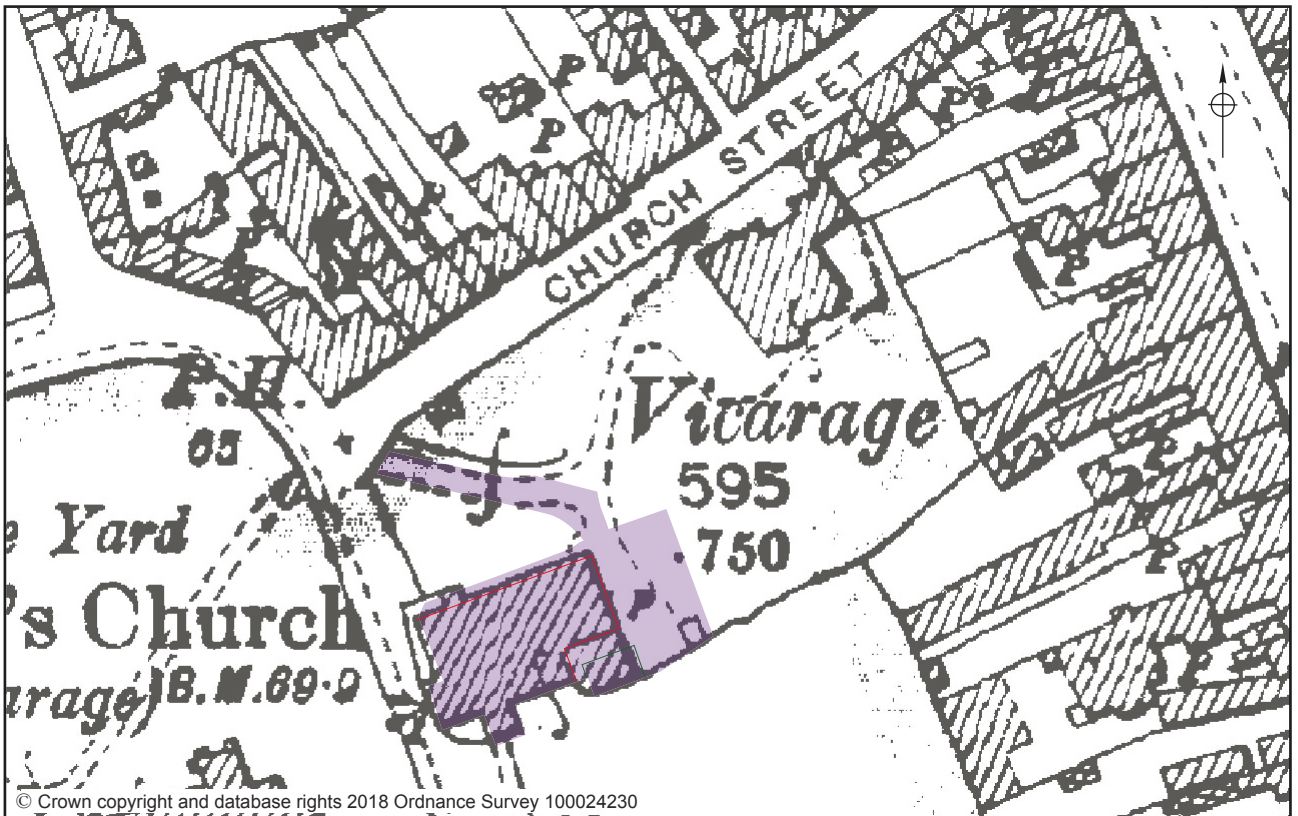


Location of the site

Figure 1



Extract of 1st edition OS, 1885



Extract of 1904 OS

Figure 3

Plates



Plate 1 St Andrew's Parish Church Centre looking north from Church Walk



Plate 2 Pershore Abbey and St Andrew's Parish Centre (to the far right), view north from Abbey Park



Plate 3 The site following clearance of vegetation, view north-east towards hedgerow



Plate 4 The site during clearance of vegetation, view north towards the Vicarage



Plate 5 Area of cobbled surface (104) after cleaning up, view north-west, 2x 1m scales



Plate 6 Close up of cobbled surface (104), view north-east, 2x 1m scales



Plate 7 Brick foundations (103) possible cart-shed, view south-east, 2x 1m scales



Plate 8 Brick foundations (103), possible cart-shed, view south-west, 2x 1m scales



Plate 9 Manhole over capped well (107), view north-west, 2x 1m scales



Plate 10 Manhole over capped well (107), view north-west, 2x 1m scales



Plate 11 The gravestone used to cap well 107, retained by the church, 1m scale



Plate 12 Close up of gravestone used to cap the well (107)



Plate 13 View to southern edge of area following excavations, 2x 1m scales



Plate 14 The north-east edge of excavation showing the drop in levels, 2x 1m scales



Plate 15 The site after excavation, looking north-west, 2x 1m scales



Plate 16 The site after excavation, looking south-east, 2x 1m scales

Appendix 1 Technical information

The archive (site code: WSM 70016)

The archive consists of:

- 3 Context records AS1
- 1 Field progress reports AS2
- 1 Photographic records AS3
- 53 Digital photographs
- 1 Drawing number catalogues AS4
- 1 Scale drawings
- 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:

Worcestershire County Museum
Museums Worcestershire
Hartlebury Castle
Hartlebury
Near Kidderminster
Worcestershire DY11 7XZ
Tel Hartlebury (01299) 250416

Summary of data for Worcestershire HER

WSM 70016 (event HER number)

P5148

Artefacts (not retained)

period (note 1)	material class	object specific type	start date	end date	count	weight(g)	specialist report? (note 2)	key assemblage? (note 3)
modern	ceramic	pot	1800	2000	12	260	yes	no
modern	ceramic	roof tile	1800	2000	2	487	yes	no
modern	glass	bottle	1905	2000	5	772	yes	no
modern	glass	jar	1905	2000	3	315	yes	no
modern	metal	coin	1973		1	4	yes	no

Notes

- 1) In some cases the date will be "Undated". In most cases, especially if there is not a specialist report, the information entered in the Date field will be a general period such as Neolithic, Roman, medieval etc (see below for a list of periods used in the Worcestershire HER). Very broad date ranges such as late Medieval to Post-medieval are acceptable for artefacts which can be hard to date for example roof tiles. If you have more specific dates, such as 13th to 14th century, please use these instead. Specific date ranges which cross general period boundaries can also be used, for example 15th to 17th century.

period	from	to
Palaeolithic	500000 BC	10001 BC
Mesolithic	10000 BC	4001 BC
Neolithic	4000 BC	2351 BC
Bronze Age	2350 BC	801 BC
Iron Age	800 BC	42 AD
Roman	43	409
Post-Roman	410	1065
Medieval	1066	1539
Post-medieval	1540	1900
Modern	1901	2050

period specific	from	to
Lower Palaeolithic	500000 BC	150001
Middle Palaeolithic	150000	40001
Upper Palaeolithic	40000	10001

Early Mesolithic	10000	7001
Late Mesolithic	7000	4001
Early Neolithic	4000	3501
Middle Neolithic	3500	2701
Late Neolithic	2700	2351
Early Bronze Age	2350	1601
Middle Bronze Age	1600	1001
Late Bronze Age	1000	801
Early Iron Age	800	401
Middle Iron Age	400	101
Late Iron Age	100 BC	42 AD
Roman 1st century AD	43	100
2nd century	101	200
3rd century	201	300
4th century	301	400
Roman 5th century	401	410
Post roman	411	849
Pre conquest	850	1065
Late 11th century	1066	1100
12th century	1101	1200
13th century	1201	1300
14th century	1301	1400
15th century	1401	1500
16th century	1501	1600
17th century	1601	1700
18th century	1701	1800
19th century	1801	1900
20th century	1901	2000
21st century	2001	

2. Not all evaluations of small excavation assemblages have specialist reports on all classes of objects. An identification (eg clay pipe) and a quantification is not a specialist report. A short discussion or a more detailed record identifying types and dates is a specialist report. This field is designed to point researchers to reports where they will find out more than merely the presence or absence of material of a particular type and date.

3. This field should be used with care. It is designed to point researchers to reports where they will be able to locate the most important assemblages for any given material for any given date.